

SPECIAL FEATURE SECTION: BIOCATALYSIS

Editorial

It is almost 4 years since we ran a special issue of Biocatalysis in *Org. Process. Res. Dev.* (OPRD), and the topic has moved on quickly in that period. Advances in directed evolution techniques have helped to improve the cost-effectiveness of biocatalysts, which can now be tailored towards specific solutions. Not only can yields and enantioselectivities be improved, but the factors important in scaling up chemical processes: robustness, space-time-yield, stability, lack of inhibition by substrate/product, also can all be designed into the enzyme/biocatalyst. It is no wonder that second-generation processes for pharmaceuticals already on the market, and generic processes for those coming off patent, are beginning to use biocatalysts. This shows how cost-effective a biocatalytic solution can be.

In the past few years there have been several new books on biocatalysis, and several new companies have been set up, both in Europe and the United States to exploit the advantages that biocatalytic solutions offer in chemical processes, with emphasis on environmental issues and green technology.

It is timely, then, for a second special issue on biocatalysis, where an excellent response was made to our call for papers. Some of these papers are concept papers of a more philosophical nature and should attract interest and possibly some follow-up letters.

My thanks go to all those who submitted papers and to those who reviewed them in a timely manner. Sometimes they are the same people! And no! I do not mean they reviewed their own papers, but some authors also did review other authors' papers in this special issue. My thanks also to Sue Parsons who coordinated this special issue with me—she did most of the work, I admit! I hope that in another 4 years or maybe even earlier, there will be another biocatalysis special issue in OPRD.

Trevor Laird

Editor

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