

Editorial

8th Conference on Methods and Applications of Fluorescence: Spectroscopy, Imaging and Probes

The contributions in this issue are contributed by the participants of the 8th Conference on Methods and Applications of Fluorescence: Spectroscopy, Imaging and Probes (8th MAF), held in Prague, The Czech Republic, August 24–27, 2003. We believe that this meeting, as part of the highly recognized series of conferences devoted to fluorescence, helped us to better understand the basic features of molecular fluorescence and, that it promotes and stimulates new cross-disciplinary ideas and collaboration among physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, and pharmacology where there are many important applications of fluorescence spectroscopy, probes, imaging, and other fluorescence-based techniques.

We are very grateful to all 305 participants from 35 countries and 5 continents for directly contributing to the successes of the Conference. In particular, we would like to thank the 23 plenary lecturers for accepting our invitation, to the 180 poster presenters for sharing their most recent scientific results and advances in technology and instrumentation, and to the contributors to this special issue of *Journal of Fluorescence*.

Special thanks go to the sponsoring firms and to the exhibitors at the Conference who helped us finance the 8th MAF meeting, and especially to those who enabled us to support young scientists and participants from less endowed countries. The organizing teams are grateful for the support and understanding provided by their home institutions: The Research Center for the Structure and Dynamics of Complex Molecular Systems and Biomolecules (grant MSMT CR LN 00A032), J. Heyrovský Institute of Physical Chemistry, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, and the Faculty of Nuclear Sciences and Physical Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague, CR (grant MSMT CR J04/98:210000022).

We, and we are sure, most of the participants of the 8th MAF are already looking forward to the 9th Conference on Methods and Applications of Fluorescence: Spectroscopy, Imaging and Probes, which will take place in Lisbon on September 4th–7th, 2005. Details can be found on the following website: <http://maf9.ist.utl.pt>

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