



## **Editorial: Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> Electronic Computational Chemistry Conference**

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It is our privilege to introduce this special issue of the International Journal of Molecular Sciences, which presents the Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> Electronic Computational Chemistry Conference (ECCC9). The conference took place entirely on the Internet (<http://eccc9.cooper.edu>) during the month of March 2003. Over 380 individuals from around the world participated in ECCC9, reading and discussing 38 peer-reviewed HTML-based presentations of research and scholarship. These presentations spanned a wide range of areas and disciplines related to chemistry, molecules and computation. No fees are collected for either registration or for the contribution of a presentation; the ECCC is always completely free and held completely on the Internet.

The ECCC Series is an amazing experiment. It continues to exist largely due to the goodwill and hard work of its participants and organizers. Originally conceived of and developed by Steven Bachrach (Trinity University) in 1993, it is organized each year by a loose-knit group of volunteers and does not enjoy the sponsorship of any particular scientific organization, journal, government or corporation. The ECCC torch was passed several years ago to Robert Topper (Monmouth University), who serves as the Principal Organizer. It is the longest-running virtual conference in the natural sciences, with the first ECCC held in November 1994. Since the conference is asynchronous but happens over a finite span of time, everyone can engage equally in the discussions, no matter what time zone they happen to be in.

Part of the reason for the success of the ECCC Series may be attributed to the rigorous peer review to which the abstracts of all contributed papers are subjected. In addition, there is subsequent

monitoring and follow-up to ensure that the content is delivered properly and that the presenters answer all questions posed to them during the conference in a timely manner. The ECCC Scientific Organizing Committee (SOC) ensures that this peer review and monitoring is carried out in accordance with the highest possible professional standards. The ECCC9-SOC consisted of David Chatfield (Florida International University), Thomas Cundari (University of North Texas), Olga Dmitrenko (University of Delaware), Walter Fabian (Karl-Franzens Universitaet Graz), Francis Muguet (ENS Techniques Avancees) and Robert Topper, Chair (Monmouth University). Their services to the international community of computational scientists are gratefully acknowledged. The web aspects of the conference were ably directed and implemented by the ECCC9 Web Organizing Committee, which consisted of Kenneth Mui, Garrett Bauer, Bob Hopkins, and Chris Lent (Cooper Union) and Robert Topper. Without their technical direction and assistance, ECCC9 would not have been possible.

The articles which follow this Editorial and constitute the ECCC9 Proceedings were submitted after the close of ECCC9, and then subjected to thorough, anonymous peer review and editing to help bring them into accord with the editorial standards of IJMS. We are especially grateful to Francis Muguet and Shu-Kun Lin for their assistance in facilitating the publication of these Proceedings. In particular, we would like to thank Francis for the encouragement and energy that he has provided to the ECCC in recent years. We gratefully acknowledge the IJMS and the Open Society Institute (OSI–SOROS Foundation) for providing the necessary financial support for the publication of these Proceedings, as well as Eleanor Baum and the Cooper Union School of Engineering for its sponsorship and steadfast support of the ECCC.