



I am honored to take office as president of the Society for Biotechnology, Japan (SBJ). SBJ has been in existence for more than 85 years, and now plays the role of a leading society for Biotechnology. It is my sincere hope to contribute to the further development of our society with the participation and support of all our members and directors.

During the past two years, the publication system of the Journal of Bioscience and Bioengineering has changed considerably, and the income and expenses of our society are now balanced. However, decreases in income are still evident and we can foresee severe future financial problems. Furthermore, many hurdles lie ahead for our society, and the most important issue at hand is associated with the changes in the law of corporation. At present, corporations are categorized as "Nonprofit General Corporations" and "Public Interest Corporations" as a result of the reformation to the regulation of the public service corporation system. The new regulation stipulates that in order to become a "Public Interest Corporation," our society must receive the authorization of the "Public Interest Corporation Commission" in five years. This commission will judge whether our society provides high public benefits before granting its authorization.

In any case, we must reorganize SBJ to adapt to the new regulation. I would like to clarify the framework of the new society as a "Public Interest Corporation" and solicit the opinions of all the members of SBJ.

Historically, many efforts have been made to reform our society, for example, the establishment of the identity of the society, the introduction of the electronic information system, and the reformation of the English and Japanese Journals by successive chairpersons. The opinions expressed by our members show me that open society activity (publicity) and member service are extraordinarily important for SBJ. These elements may affect our tasks and our future existence, as well as the financial foundation of our society.

On the other hand, I believe that the reinforcement of international cooperation with Asian countries has been a major task throughout the history of SBJ. In fact, due to the continuous efforts of the previous editing chairpersons of the Journal of Bioscience and Bioengineering, the number of contributions from foreign countries amounted to nearly 240 in a year, and our impact factor increased from 0.948 in 2005 to 1.702 in 2008.

This has culminated in the emergence of the Journal of Bioscience and Bioengineering as an international

journal in the field of Biotechnology.

For the further activation of SBJ, I will promote the following activities.

SBJ as a “Public Interest Corporation”

1. Change the organization of our society and accounts processing to adapt to the new law
2. Review of society activities to promote public interest
3. Review of society events, the improvement of the annual and sectional meeting and branch office activities

Aiming at improving member service

4. Further promotion and reformation of Seibutsu-kogaku Kaishi and the electronic information system
5. Reinforcement of industry-university cooperation
6. Promotion of the activities of JABEE (the Japan Accreditation Board for Engineering Education)

Raising the prestige of the society in the world

7. Improvement of the Journal of Bioscience and Bioengineering
8. Cooperation with the associated society of Asian countries and overseas members

I endeavor to do my best with the help of the directors and members of the office. In this regard, I am delighted to be able to rely on the cooperation of Vice President Yasushi Okumura, who is in charge of industry-university cooperation, and Vice President Satoshi Harashima, who is responsible for the future planning of the society. Fortunately for us, we also have strong directors who manage editing, globalization, accounts, and general affairs. I would like to determine a plan of action for each program as soon as possible, and I will embark on the development of our activities.

Should you have ideas or comments to contribute to this society, please do not hesitate to contact me. I sincerely appreciate the understanding and cooperation of all the members of this society.

June, 2009

The Society for Biotechnology, Japan
President
Shinji Iijima

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