



Spring 2022  
**ibdg** newsletter

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Inorganic Biochemistry Discussion Group, affiliated to the Royal Society of Chemistry (Dalton Division)

[www.ibdg.org.uk](http://www.ibdg.org.uk)



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## Message from the Chair

I must apologise for the delay in getting our newsletter out – it's been another difficult year for all, but I hope that you've managed to stay healthy and safe. Regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, things do at least look more optimistic now (though we've said that before!).

The possibility of in person meetings/conferences has been extremely restricted since March 2020. The Dalton 2021 meeting went ahead in an online format in June. IBDG 'hosted' parallel sessions featuring ~20 speakers and plenary lectures from Prof David Britt (UC Davis, USA) and Dr Claudia Bonfio (Cambridge). There was also a plenary from Prof Alison Butler (UC Santa Barbara) who is well known in the bioinorganic community. The meeting was a great success. My personal view is that online is a very effective way of conveying our science – assuming a good internet connection (which is not always as given), everyone can see and hear clearly (no heads in the way, poor acoustics). Even questions can be asked and answered effectively. It is the social aspects that I (and I know many others) miss – and it is impossible to re-create this online. So, I will be happy to get back to in person meetings, to see old friends and make new ones. However, what we have learned from online meetings won't be lost and there is an opportunity to use this technology to make meetings (or at least the science) accessible to a wider range of participants.

One of the meetings postponed due to Covid was ICBIC, which was due to be hosted in Australia in July 2021. The meeting will now take place in 2023, with subsequent planned ICBIC meetings moving back by two years. So, our successful bid to host the ICBIC meeting in 2025 in York is pushed back to 2027! We will have to wait a bit longer to bring the flagship meeting for inorganic biochemistry back to the UK for the first time since 1991.

In other news, Prof Dave Evans stepped down from his position as IBDG Treasurer and Committee member and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his enormous and dedicated contributions to IBDG over a very long period (>16 years). I am delighted to let you know that Dr Anna Peacock has taken over the role of Treasurer. Recently, we also said farewell to another Committee member, Prof Jon McMaster; Jon has also served IBDG excellently over many years in different roles, most recently as our website manager. We wish Dave and Jon continued success.

Finally, mine and Dr Jonathan Worrall's terms as, respectively, Chair and Secretary will shortly come to an end. I think I speak for both of us in saying that it has been an honour to assist IBDG in its activities. I can't really thank myself, but I can extend huge thanks to Jonathan for his superb service over many years. Actually, neither of us are done yet. Both Jon and I will remain as Committee members for the foreseeable future, seeking to assist our successors in their roles. On that subject, I am delighted to announce that Prof Paul Walton will take over as Chair, and Prof Claudia Blindauer as Secretary, in April of this year. There is a definite feeling of a changing of the guard at IBDG – we have a plan in place to ensure support for our new Committee Officers, but also see this as an opportunity for new blood!

Thus, I draw your attention to the vacancies we now have on the IBDG Committee – we wish to recruit new members who want to contribute to and influence the discipline. Please see Page 2 for more details. Don't be shy.

*Nick Le Brun*  
UEA, March 2022.



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## IBDG Awards 2022

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In 2022 the IBDG committee awarded Investigator and Early Career awards to two UK based scientists for their outstanding achievements in bioinorganic chemistry and inorganic biochemistry.

Dr Hanna Kwon, University of Leicester – **Investigator Award**

Hanna received the Investigator Award in recognition of her work on the structure and mechanism of heme enzymes and in particular her use of neutron crystallography to address protonation states of high-valent heme intermediates.

<https://le.ac.uk/lisrb/research-groups/hanna-kwon>

Dr Patricia Rodriguez Macia, University of Oxford – **Early Career Award**

Patricia received the Early Career Award in recognition of her interdisciplinary approaches to study mechanism of metalloenzymes and in particular a focus on [FeFe] hydrogenases.

<https://chem.web.ox.ac.uk/people/patricia-rodriguez-macia?>

We congratulate both award winners and wish them both continued success in their future endeavours.

Overall, the quality of nominations that were received for the two awards was very high, and the Committee commends all those put forward. Look out for the next nomination deadline at the end of 2023.



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## Future IBDG Meeting

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A Memorial meeting in honour of Prof Andrew Thomson OBE FRS is planned. It was originally going to take place at UEA close to Easter this year, but had to be postponed because of the Covid surge at the beginning of the year. We hope that it will now happen at the end of the Summer/beginning of Autumn. The meeting will be sponsored by IBDG.

Dalton 2023 Joint Interest group meeting (University of Warwick)



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## Nominations for Election to IBDG Committee

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The activities and future of IBDG depend entirely on our community. IBDG would like to invite nominations for election to its Committee. We are looking to elect up to 3 new members in 2022. RSC members interested in joining the committee should contact Prof Claudia Blindauer (c.blindauer@warwick.ac.uk) for more information on how to apply. Deadline for receipt of nominations to the RSC Networks Team is by **1<sup>st</sup> June 2022**.



## IBDG Committee

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**Chair:** *Prof Nick Le Brun*, University of East Anglia. **Secretary:** *Dr Jonathan Worrall*, University of Essex. **Treasurer:** *Dr Anna Peacock*, University of Birmingham. *Prof Andy Munro*, University of Manchester. *Prof Lars Jeuken*, University of Leiden. *Prof Claudia Blindauer*, University of Warwick. *Prof Paul Walton*, University of York, *Dr Luisa Ciano* (University of Nottingham).

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