

It is my great pleasure to present to you all the National Institute for Basic Biology (NIBB)'s 2019 Annual Report which outlines NIBB's research, educational, and international activities and its effective function as a center for collaborative research in Japan from January 2019 to March 2020.

NIBB aims to establish an international base for biological sciences by using not only model organisms, but also exotic non-model organisms. Consequently, NIBB established the Center for the Development of New Model Organisms in 2014. We have endeavored to develop a one-step pipeline to connect genome sequencing, assembling, and annotation to genome editing using non-model organisms such as carnivorous plants, unique insects, and regenerative newts, and this vision was expounded upon in the April 23rd, 2019 edition of Nature News.

NIBB also developed front bioimaging technologies to acquire high-resolution 3D images and promote quantitative biology in collaboration with Princeton University. In keeping with this, the 66th NIBB Conference/ABiS International Symposium "Cutting Edge Techniques of Bioimaging" and the 2nd NIBB-Princeton Symposium "Imaging and Quantitative Biology" were held in Okazaki. Collaborative studies by researchers from within and external to NIBB have used our bioimaging technologies to generate a lot of fascinating papers (see below).

Concerning changes on the staffing front, Professor Masaharu Noda, an active researcher in the field of integrative neurosciences at NIBB since September 1991, retired in March 2019; roughly one more prior to my appointment as the Director-General of NIBB in April 2019. Associate Professor Shuji Shigenobu was also promoted to the role of taking majority responsibility for managing the Center for the Development of New Model Organisms. Additionally, three assistant professors, two specially appointed assistant professors, and four research fellows were newly posted to NIBB within this year.

Moreover, both I and Vice-Director, Professor Naoto Ueno, visited Heidelberg, Germany in early July and finalized an academic exchange agreement with the Centre for Organismal Studies (COS) in the aforementioned location, and extended the academic exchange agreement with European Molecular Biological Laboratory (EMBL). Following this, "The 67th NIBB Conference/The 6th International "Quest for Orthologs" Meeting was held in September in Okazaki.

I would like to finish this introduction by congratulating Professor Mitsuyasu Hasebe who was awarded the Golden Spore Award 2019 from the International Molecular Moss Science Society.

To establish NIBB as an internationally leading institute in the field of basic biology, we always welcome your suggestions, comments, and queries concerning our activities, in addition to your warm support.



Kiyokazu Agata
Director General of NIBB
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