Editorial

This is an exciting time to work in a life science field such as skin biology and physiology. A tissue with all essential biological processes located at the interface to our environment, e.g. from stem cells to differentiation processes, controlled apoptosis to perfect barrier formation. The genetic code, the proteomic network and cellular machinery are being unraveled at an ever-increasing speed. We are moving from a descriptive approach based on molecules to an understanding of the underlying mechanisms. The barriers between disciplines are disappearing, thus allowing the comprehension of essential barrier systems of skin and its implication for pharmacology.

Physicians, pharmacologists, biochemists, cell biologists, developmental biologists, geneticists, immunologists, microbiologists, molecular biologists and neurobiologists are now using the same molecular tools and speaking the same scientific language. Therefore, a new organization named ISP – International Society of Skin Pharmacology and Physiology – has been launched, which will work in parallel with the existing national and international societies and workgroups. To encourage interdisciplinary exchange, The Society of Skin Pharmacology and Physiology needs to organize a regular meeting and act as a platform for scientific exchange in the same way as the famous ISD regarding skin biology and medical research.

Its initial goal is to organize annual meetings, which will provide a high profile international forum serving the interests of our scientific community. It will promote the scientific activities of skin pharmacology and physiology using molecular tools and state-of-the-art techniques and methodology. The highlight of the meeting will be the poster discussion sessions, which will take place in the midst of the scientific exhibition. The scientific exhibition is planned to become a platform allowing industry to present their products to the community. A major goal is

the intensification of the cooperation between public research institutions and industry and the know-how transfer of basic results and methods for industrial application. Another important function will be to promote the public understanding of new developments in the field of skin health and to provide a critical forum for discussing their clinical implications.

The Society will also act as a platform to attract young qualified scientists (career links) in industrial research and development, as well as for basic science institutions. It will bridge research with legislative authorities in skin pharmacology and skin physiology. Furthermore, it will interact with international organizations (e.g. NIH, WHO, European Union, European Regulatory Org., NIST, etc.) and play an active role in shaping research policies.

The first meeting of the ISP was held in June 2005, in Hamburg, as a joint meeting of the International Society of Skin Pharmacology and Physiology (ISP) and the International Society for Cutaneous Ultrastructure Research (SCUR). The meeting was attended by 120 participants and 60 presentations were given. The best seven presentations were selected and presented as invited papers in a special issue of the journal of *Skin Pharmacology and Physiology*, as this journal is the official organ of the International Society of Skin Pharmacology and Physiology (ISP).

Congratulations to the authors for the excellent results and papers.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 5–7, 2006 in Rome, Italy. A preliminary program and the abstract submission form can be downloaded from the ISP homepage (www.isp-society.org).

Jürgen Lademann, Editor, President of the ISP

Roger Wepf, Program Committee of ISP Meeting

Joachim Fluhr, Secretary of the ISP