Treasurer's comments on the financial position of the Biophysical Society of Japan

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My life in biophysics

Kyoto University is where I started my career as a biophysicist. As an undergraduate student there, I worked on designing module-substituted globin proteins. While playing with chimeric globins through trial and error, I gradually became interested in the folding and stability of proteins, and moved on to my Ph.D. study of the sub-millisecond folding kinetics of cytochrome *c* (Akiyama et al. 2000, 2002). After earning my Ph.D., I had the opportunity to join research and development projects on x-ray solution-scattering techniques at RIKEN Harima Institute at SPring-8 (now RIKEN SPring-8 Center). Fortunately, I was able to use this technique to reveal the assembly and disassembly dynamics of cyanobacterial circadian clock proteins (Akiyama et al. 2008). Since then, I have devoted myself mostly to interdisciplinary studies of biological rhythms and dynamics, especially those of circadian clock systems (Akiyama 2012; Abe et al. 2015).

I have been a member of the Biophysical Society of Japan (BSJ) since 2003. In my first experience with BSJ management, I served as one of the editorial committee members of a Japanese journal, *SEIBUTSU BUTSURI*, in FY 2009–2010. After being appointed to another term in FY 2013–2014, I was appointed as the vice chief editor of the journal in FY 2016–

2017. In this capacity, I had the opportunity to work fruitfully with successive chief editors, Dr. Y. Shichida, Dr. H. Nakamura, Dr. Y. Harada, Dr. H. Kandori, and Dr. Y. Sako. Since FY 2017, I have been appointed by nomination as one of the BSJ delegates, and since FY 2019, I have committed to managing the advertisement and accounting of the BSJ as a committee member.

This commentary is intended to summarize and comment on the financial position of the BSJ and related matters, and to share this overview with international colleagues and societies of biophysics. For more details, I refer the reader to other audited information (<https://www.biophys.jp/org/org07.html>).

Financial position of the BSJ

This report covers the period from May 1, 2018, to April 30, 2019 (FY 2018). During this time, the BSJ was financially healthy, with a net surplus of \$52,700 (JPY5,797,015; currency converted on the basis of JPY/USD = 110), as has been the case for the past 3 years (Fig. 1).

Revenue in FY 2018 totaled \$485,783 (JPY53,436,207) (Fig. 2). The BSJ has three major sources of income: membership dues (39%), annual meeting revenue (45%), and advertising revenue/publication charges in the Society's two journals (see below) (9%). In addition, the BSJ received JSPS KAKENHI (Grant-in-Aid for Publication of Scientific Research Results) (7%). The BSJ makes an annual activity plan on the basis of this income, and then executes a variety of activities and programs aimed to benefit the BSJ membership.

Expenditures in FY 2018 amounted to \$433,083 (JPY47,639,192). The largest expense was for annual and related meetings (51%), as has been the case in the past. The BSJ used its revenue to produce its two journals: the bi-monthly Japanese journal *SEIBUTSU BUTSURI*, which

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Fig. 1 Annual revenue (blue) and expenditure (orange) of the BSJ from FY 2015 to FY 2018. Currency was converted on the basis of JPY/USD = 110

publishes high-quality invited and submitted manuscripts under a peer review system (9%), and an open-access international online journal, *Biophysics and Physicobiology* (BPPB), launched in 2005 to promote biophysical research in the Asia-Pacific area (7%). The cost for the web page service in FY 2018 (3%) increased 280% relative to the previous year, but this was an inevitable expense for a large-scale website redesign in addition to regular maintenance. The Society offered continued support for activities encouraging early-career researchers and gender equality (2%), as well as for local branches of the BSJ (1%). Operating expenses, including business consignment expenses (25%), were the same as in the past.

Financial review and outlook

As mentioned above, the BSJ has been a financially sound organization over the past 4 years (Fig. 1). My only concern is that in recent years, we have seen a gradual decrease in advertising revenue from companies. This is a trend seen not only by the BSJ but also by

other societies and associations. The committee members of the BSJ are committed to providing various opportunities for partner companies and organizations that maximize the cost-effectiveness of advertisements.

At the same time, it is important to discuss how the accumulated assets are spent, keeping in mind our accountability to the BSJ membership. In my opinion, one possible use of surpluses is support for international activities. In 2006, the BSJ revised the official language of the annual meeting to accelerate the internationalization of the Society, and since that time, all of its scientific achievements have been presented in English. Upon hosting the IUPAB Congress 2023 in Kyoto, it would be of benefit to members to attract much interests of Asian and Oceanian countries in the BSJ's activities. The other example will be the employment and training of personnel dedicated to management of the annual meeting. The executive committee of the annual meeting has to spend a great deal of time not only to prepare for the scientific meetings and events but also to transfer the work even after that to the next committee. Although most of the routine work will be taken over by an outsourcing company, the accumulated techniques for developing new partners and established connections may not be transitioned so smoothly.

In conclusion, our ability to take on new challenges relies largely on the financial position of the Society. In that sense, I have an optimistic outlook about the future of the BSJ, and we should thank former senior members for their excellent management.

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Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

Fig. 2 Revenue (a) and expenditure (b) distributions in FY 2018. Currency was converted on the basis of JPY/USD = 110

Human and animal rights and informed consent This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

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