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Preface

The 13th International Symposium on *Frankia* and Actinorhizal Plants took place at the University of New Hampshire (Durham, NH, USA) from August 1–4, 2004.

The Conference focused on the nitrogen-fixing symbiosis between the actinomycete *Frankia* and its root-nodulated host plants. These actinorhizal plants consist of over 200 different species of plants belonging to eight different plant families, which are only distantly related to each other, and play an important role in the nitrogen economies of many terrestrial systems. This event brought together 33 scientists from four continents working on different aspects of the symbiosis. The oral and poster presentations were supplemented with discussion sessions on *Frankia* ecology, taxonomy and phylogeny, and *Frankia* genomics and genetics. As in the tradition of past *Frankia* conferences, there was ample time for sociable interactions, lively discussions, and establishing future priorities.

Progress on the genomics and proteomics of *Frankia* were presented including an update and discussion of the three *Frankia* genome sequencing projects. Data on two of these *Frankia* genomes have been released to the public and are available at the following websites:

http://genome.ornl.gov/microbial/fran_cci3/ and
http://genome.ornl.gov/microbial/fran_ean1/.

Thanks are extended to the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture at the University of New Hampshire for the support provided to the Conference and to the editorial staff of *Symbiosis* especially Professor Margalith Galun for their help in the publication of these papers. I would also like to thank members of UNH laboratory for their help running this conference including acting as taxi chauffeur and tourist guides for the region.

I look forward to the next *Frankia* and actinorhizal plants meeting scheduled in the summer of 2006 in Umeå, Sweden.

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