Preface: special issue celebrating the 130th anniversary of Wuhan University

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Wuhan University (WHU) stands as a pivotal national university under the direct administration of Ministry of Education in China. It proudly bears the distinction of being part of the prestigious “211 Project” and “985 Project” universities, receiving full support for its construction and development from both the central and local governments of China.

The roots of Wuhan University trace back to the establishment of Ziqiang Institute in 1893 by Zhang Zhidong, the governor of Hubei Province and Hunan Province during the late Qing Dynasty. Over the years, the institute underwent several name changes before being officially named Wuhan National University in 1928. It holds the honor of being among the earliest comprehensive national universities in modern China. By the end of 1946, the university had established 6 colleges focusing on liberal arts, law, sciences, engineering, agriculture, and medicine. In a significant development in 2000, Wuhan University amalgamated with Wuhan University of Hydraulic and Electric Engineering, Wuhan Technical University of Surveying and Mapping, and Hubei Medical University, marking a new chapter in its century-long history.

Throughout its existence, Wuhan University has constructed an exquisite architectural complex that seamlessly integrates eastern and western architectural styles, earning it the title of the “Most Beautiful University in China.” Its centennial legacy is encapsulated in its succinct motto: “Self-improvement, Perseverance, Truth-seeking & Innovation.”

Wuhan University’s impact on society is profound, having nurtured over 300,000 skilled professionals across diverse fields. Among its alumni are more than 100 esteemed members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Engineering, whose significant contributions have greatly influenced national development and societal progress. These remarkable accomplishments have earned Wuhan University international acclaim; in 1999, the renowned journal Science recognized it as one of China’s leading institutions of higher education.

In recent years, Wuhan University has actively engaged in international exchanges and collaborations, fostering partnerships with over 310 universities and research institutes across 53 countries and regions. Presently, the university is diligently working towards achieving the status of a world-class comprehensive research university, both within China and on the global stage.

As we celebrate the 130th anniversary of Wuhan University, we take great pleasure in presenting this special issue, featuring 34 high-quality papers in chemistry. This issue not only signifies the rapid growth of research in the realm of chemistry but also exemplifies the ongoing interdisciplinary pursuits at Wuhan University. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the authors, referees, and editors whose dedication and contributions have made the publication of this special issue possible.

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