

Report on Invitation Fellowship – March-April 2011  
Prof Phil Gale  
University of Southampton

I visited Japan on an Invitation Fellowship and was hosted by Professor Hiro Furuta at Kyushu University (in Fukuoka) in the Department of Applied Chemistry. I visited for 28 days between 28<sup>th</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at what was a difficult period for Japan after the earthquake and tsunami and during the problems at the Fukushima nuclear power plant.

I spent some very productive time in a number of supramolecular chemistry groups around Japan during the visit. Originally I had planned to spend a significant amount of time visiting groups in Tokyo but due to the Foreign Office travel advice my visit to Tokyo was cut short – but I did visit once the advice had changed giving talks both at the University of Tokyo hosted by Prof Shionoya and in Tsukuba at NIMS hosted by Professors Ariga and Hill. Whilst in Tokyo there were several strong aftershocks but it was really amazing at how little these affected life there.

However the majority of my time was spent in West Japan at Fukuoka (with Prof Furuta) and in Osaka (Osaka University (Professors Harada and Inoue, Osaka City University (Prof Tsukube) and Kansai University (Prof Ohya), Hiroshima (Prof Haino), Kitakyushu (Prof Sakuri), Kyoto (Prof Osuka) and at Ritsumeikan University (Prof Maeda). A number of collaborative opportunities in the area of transmembrane transport of anions arose during the visit and I hope will lead to future publications.

I found getting around in Japan was very easy. There was a much higher level of English spoken in the railway stations and in shops and restaurants than was the case during my first visits in 2001 and 2002 and usually when visiting a university I would be met on the platform at the station. Having a JR Rail Pass allowed easy travel on the Shinkansen (I'd certainly recommend getting one – or looking at just an East, West or Kyushu pass which also allows travel on the Nozomi trains) and the subways and railway stations were well signed in English.

I'd like to thank all my hosts for their hospitality and time and Prof Furuta especially for hosting me at Kyushu and organizing (and re-organising) my travel schedule.

Prof Phil Gale  
philip.gale@soton.ac.uk