

Correspondence

Impressive 2009 Impact Factor of 49.926 for *Acta Crystallographica Section A : Foundations of Crystallography*

The recent release of Thomson Reuters' Journal Citation Reports for 2009, the Impact Factor (IF) of **49.926** for *Acta Crystallographica Section A : Foundations of Crystallography* [pISSN 0108-7673], is the second highest IF for a scientific journal for 2009, with only *CA-A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* scoring higher¹. Interestingly, the 2008 IF of *Acta Crystallographica Section A : Foundations of Crystallography* was **2.051** ! (ref 2).

The main reason for this high 2009 IF is a single paper authored by George Sheldrick, A short history of *SHELX* [*Acta Cryst* (2008) **A 64**, 112-122] providing an account of the development of the *SHELX* system of computer programs from 1976 to date. Published in a special issue to celebrate 60 years of *Acta Crystallographica* and the International Union of Crystallography, this paper has provided the crystallographic community worldwide with a citable reference when one or more of the programs, amongst the most widely used in structure determination, are employed in the course of a crystal study. Most citations have been made by small molecule crystallographers, as also from articles on structure of biological macromolecules³.

The IF of a journal in a given year is the ratio of the average number of citations to those papers that were published during the two preceding years. The 2009 IF for *Acta Crystallographica Section A : Foundations of Crystallography* was calculated as follows:

Total number of citations in 2009 to items published in 2007 and 2008 (X) = 6091

Total number of papers published in 2007 and 2008 (Y) = 122

2009 IF = X/Y = 6091/122 = 49.926 [2008 IF = 201/98 = 2.051].

This extraordinary case proves the point that citations of an individual paper is very important besides IF of the journal while undertaking any evaluation exercise. One needs to watch the IF of this journal in the years to come.

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