



Special issue in honour of Professor Jackie Ying, recipient of the
Journal of Drug Targeting's Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020
Editor-in-Chief: Saghir Akhtar

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To cite this article: Saghir Akhtar (Editor-in-Chief) (2020) In honour of Professor Jackie Ying, recipient of the *Journal of Drug Targeting's* Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020, *Journal of Drug Targeting*, 28:7-8, 681-682, DOI: [10.1080/1061186X.2020.1798585](https://doi.org/10.1080/1061186X.2020.1798585)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1061186X.2020.1798585>



Accepted author version posted online: 19
Jul 2020.
Published online: 28 Jul 2020.



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EDITORIAL

In honour of Professor Jackie Ying, recipient of the *Journal of Drug Targeting's* Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020



A photograph of Professor Jackie Ying, recipient of the Journal of Drug Targeting's Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020 (courtesy of J. Ying).

It is time to honour the recipient of the *Journal of Drug Targeting's* Lifetime Achievement Award for this year – a brief moment of joy in what has been a difficult 2020 marred by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Lifetime Achievement Award is an unsolicited award given annually to honour the sustained outstanding scientific achievements of a researcher working in the broad fields of drug delivery and targeting. This year's winner, as always, was selected by a scientific panel comprising members of the Editorial board and representatives from Taylor and Francis/ Informa PLC, the publishers of the *Journal of Drug Targeting*.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Professor Jackie Y. Ying, from the NanoBio Lab, Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), Biopolis, Singapore, is the recipient of this year's *Journal of Drug Targeting's* Lifetime Achievement Award for her many outstanding contributions in the fields of nanotechnology and nanomedicine including drug delivery and targeting.

Professor Ying currently leads the NanoBio Lab as an A*STAR Senior Fellow and was previously the Executive Director of the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN), Singapore – a multidisciplinary institute that she founded in the early 2000s. This institute's aims were to advance the frontiers of engineering, science and medicine. Under Prof. Ying's successful leadership, it grew to over 170 research staff and produced more than 1,330 papers in leading scientific journals, with over 650 patents and patent applications – 133 of which have been licenced in the areas of nanomedicine, synthetic biosystems, biodevices, diagnostics, green chemistry and energy. At least 13 start-up companies have also emerged from the institute. As its leader, Prof Ying has overseen IBN staff's training of over 120 Ph.D students and mentoring of over 2,650 other students and teachers during research internships.

In her highly meritorious career thus far, Prof. Ying has authored more than 360 research articles in the broad fields of nanomaterials and nanotechnology including drug delivery and drug targeting, that have accrued over 27,790 citations. As further evidence of the impact her research has had, she was listed as a

Highly Cited Researcher (Cross-Field Category) by Clarivate Analytics in 2018 and currently has a *h* index of 78. She has published in top journals including *Nature*, *Nature Nanotechnology*, *Nature Chemistry*, *Nature Materials*, *Nature Communications*, and *Science Translational Medicine*. As evidence of her innovativeness and enthusiasm for cutting-edge translational research, Prof. Ying has filed over 190 primary patents, 37 of which have already been licenced to multinational pharma and start-up companies reflecting her considerable entrepreneurship. Of relevance, SmartCells Inc., one of the spin-off companies that she co-founded, has developed a delivery technology for auto-regulated insulin delivery in response to blood glucose levels. Additionally, Prof. Ying led the invention of a Dengue Test Kit, which was named one of the top 50 innovations in Singapore for 1965–2015 and more recently, she has also been involved in pioneering the development of a rapid diagnostic test for identifying COVID-19 positive patients.

Prof Jackie Y. Ying, the highly successful entrepreneur and scientist to be, began life in Taipei but was later raised in both Singapore and New York. She obtained her Ph.D from Princeton University (USA) after graduating with an B.E. *summa cum laude* in Chemical Engineering from The Cooper Union, New York in 1987. She then was a post-doctoral fellow in the laboratory of Prof. Herbert Gleiter at the Institute for New Materials, Saarbrücken, Germany prior to commencing her independent academic career at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Department of the Chemical Engineering where she rapidly rose through the academic ranks and became its youngest Full Professor at the age of 35. Despite relocating to Singapore in 2003, she remained an Adjunct Professor at MIT. She was also an Adjunct Professor at Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) and King Saud University (Saudi Arabia). Prof Ying also serves as an Honorary Professor of Jilin University (China), Sichuan University (China) and as an Adjunct Professor of Chemistry and Medicine at the National University of Singapore.

Prof Ying is a highly decorated scientist who has received numerous research awards from around the world, including the American Ceramic Society Ross C. Purdy Award for the most valuable contribution to the ceramic technical literature in 1993, the David and Lucile Packard Fellowship, National Science Foundation Young Investigator Award, Technology Review's Inaugural TR100 Young Innovator Award, American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) Allan P. Colburn Award for excellence in publications, and the World Economic Forum Young Global Leader award. Several other key awards have followed as she is also the recipient of the Crown Prince Grand Prize and the ASEAN New Invention and Innovation First Prize in the Brunei Crown Prince Creative, Innovative Product and Technological Advancement (CIPTA) Award, as well as the Medal of Honour from the Academy of Sciences (Iran). She was the inaugural winner of the prestigious Mustafa Prize 'Top Scientific Achievement Award' in 2015 for her research in bio-nanotechnology and a recipient of the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) Academy Prize in Science and

Engineering Sciences in 2018. She was also selected as an Inaugural Inductee for the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame in 2014 and also inducted to the U.S. National Academy of Inventors in 2017.

Prof. Ying has been the Editor-in-Chief of *Nano Today* (2008–2019) and is currently an Advisory Editor for *Materials Today* and *Molecular and Supramolecular Science*, a Honorary Editor of *Biomaterials and Biodevices*, Associate Editor of *The Nanotechnology and Nanoscience*, and Regional Editor of *Current Bionanotechnology*. She is on the Executive Advisory Board of *Advanced Biosystems*, Honorary Advisory Board of *Journal of Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering* and a member of the Editorial Board of numerous other journals including *ACS Nano*, and *Nanotechnology Reviews*.

Based on her excellence in conducting translational science, mentoring students and post-doctoral fellows and service to her profession, The *Journal of Drug Targeting* is delighted to bestow its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020 to Prof Jackie Ying. This award recognises her many sustained and outstanding contributions to the fields of nanotechnology and nanomedicine including drug delivery and targeting.

As part of this recognition, we are delighted to dedicate this special issue of the journal in honour of Jackie's achievements. It is fitting, given the year we have had, to include some articles on

COVID-19 in this special issue that otherwise contains an eclectic mix of papers reflecting and saluting the multidisciplinary nature of Prof Ying's research. In this regard, I am grateful for the help provided by Noreena AbuBakar, a colleague of Jackie's at the NanoBio Lab, in soliciting some of the articles. A print copy of this special issue, along with a commemorative plaque will be awarded to Professor Jackie Ying.

After reviewing her scientific accomplishments, I am sure you will all agree that Professor Jackie Ying is a deserving winner of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award. Our congratulations to you Jackie on this special achievement!

Saghir Akhtar

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