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Solar Hydrogen and Nanotechnology II

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Introduction

Solar energy can be converted to heat for warming space and water, to electricity and chemical fuels for energy use and storage [1-4]. However, the cost and conversion efficiency have hampered the potential use of solar energy. There are the emerging technologies using semiconductors for light harvesting assemblies, and processes for charge transfer to solar cells. Sunlight in the near infrared, visible, and near ultraviolet regions has considerable energy (about 0.9 to 3.2 electron volts per photon) and intensity. It could provide a significant contribution to our electrical and chemical resources if efficient and inexpensive systems utilizing readily available materials could be devised for the conversion process.

The electron-hole pair formation that occurs at the interface between a semiconductor and a solution upon absorption of light leads to oxidation or reduction of solution species. The fabrication of artificial photosynthetic systems for the conversion of H_2O and CO_2 to fuels (like H_2 and CH_3OH) has become a field of much current research interest and has encouraged new fundamental investigations of the interactions of light, electron flow, and chemical reactions.

Bandgap, band edge positions, as well as the overall band structure of semiconductors are of crucial importance in photoelectrochemical and photocatalytic applications. The energy position of the band edge level can be controlled by the electronegativity of the dopants, solution pH (for example, flatband potential variation of 60 mV per pH unit), as well as by quantum confinement effects. Accordingly, the band edges and bandgap can be tailored to achieve specific electronic, optical, or photocatalytic properties in nanostructure semiconductors.

The aim of this conference is to offer a forum of discussion for scientists, engineers, and members of industry involved in photoelectrochemical systems and nanotechnology for solar generation of hydrogen. The technical program will address the current status and prospects of solar hydrogen R&D activities, major achievements and latest performances, technological limitations and crucial remaining challenges, latest advances in fundamental understanding and development in semiconductor nanostructures, devices fabrication, modeling, simulation and characterization techniques as well as assessing and establishing the role and contribution of solar hydrogen in the hydrogen economy.

Interested and committed individuals from academia, national laboratories, industries and start-ups are kindly invited to contribute to future conferences by submitting their abstract on the following relevant topics:

- Fundamentals of photoelectrochemical water splitting
- Modeling and simulation of photocatalytic reactions
- Energetics and electronic structure of photocatalysts and semiconductor nanostructures

- Electron and hole transport in large bandgap semiconductors
- Surface and interface properties of photocatalysts/electrolyte junctions
- Optical, electrical, mechanical, chemical, and physical properties of photo-anodes
- Long term aqueous stability, corrosion, and photocorrosion of semiconductors
- Recent advances in nano-structural analysis of photocatalysts
- New approaches to bandgap profiling and engineering
- Development of advanced photocatalysts for efficient solar hydrogen
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- New morphology of classical metal oxide semiconductors
- Large bandgap semiconductors of low dimensionality
- Combinatorial chemistry approach to photocatalysts
- Spectroscopic and photoelectrochemical characterization
- New devices, methods, and apparatus for solar hydrogen generation
- Solar hydrogen generation from sea water
- Solar thermal water splitting
- Photo-biological generation of hydrogen
- National and international solar hydrogen energy systems, projects, and networks
- Societal, educational, environmental, and economic aspects of solar hydrogen.

This year, we had 2 plenary talks, 21 invited talks and 8 contributed talks. For the poster competition, Drazenka Svedruzic Chang, et al., received the Best Poster Paper Award for the poster entitled "Interaction of [FeFe] hydrogenases with single-walled carbon nanotubes." The current proceedings volume includes 25 papers.

Finally, I would to acknowledge the support of SPIE staff for assistance throughout the preparation of the conference and in editing the proceedings. I would like to acknowledge the committee members for their strong support. And also I would like to thank all speakers and attendees who made the conference successful.

Jinghua Guo

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