

THE EUROPEAN PEPTIDE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



ISSUE NUMBER 65, FEBRUARY 2024

37th EPS

European
Peptide
Symposium

14th IPS

International
Peptide
Symposium

SAVE THE DATE!
25 - 29 August 2024

Florence, Italy

Satellite Workshops
30- 31
August 2024



For more info: www.eps2024.com



A Message from the Chairpersons of the 37th EPS
36th European Peptide Symposium
10th International Peptide Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society
26th Polish Peptide Symposium
10th International Meeting on Antimicrobial Peptides
23rd Meeting of the French Peptides and Proteins Group
Peptide Chemistry Day Symposium
Giornata Scientifica della Società Italiana Peptidi Dedicata ai Soci Giovani,
Vittorio Ersparmer and Carlo Pedone Awards 2023
Sorrento Workshop on Peptide Materials 2023
12th Austrian Peptide Symposium
Raniero Rocchi (1932-2024)
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Cover photo: 37th EPS – Symposium Banner

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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Dear friends and colleagues,

We cordially invite you to join us in Florence, Italy, on August 25th–30th, 2024, to attend the 37th European Peptide Symposium and 14th International Peptide Symposium, a global peptide conference in the fantastic Tuscany environment.

The symposium will feature all the relevant aspects of peptide science: from new synthetic methods to emerging technologies, including structural and conformational studies, with focus on material, biological, and therapeutic applications.

We will gather in the modern Florence Congress Hall, nicely located inside a garden in the town center, in front of the Central

Railway Station and conveniently connected with many different accommodations. The program will give space to oral presentations of both well-established and emerging scientists, with special attention to young investigators, as well as to posters and exhibitors. Social events will take advantage from the world-famous Florentine environment.

Registrations and abstract submission are open on the Symposium website: www.eps2024.com.

We are looking forward to meeting you in Florence!

Anna Maria Papini & Paolo Rovero.

36th European Peptide Symposium

Sitges - Barcelona, Spain, August 28–September 2, 2022



The 36th European and 12th International Peptide Symposium was held in Sitges (Barcelona), Spain, from 28 August to 2 September 2022. The meeting, whose theme is “**From Peptides to the World,**” was an ideal occasion for scientists from academia and industry from around the world to learn about the burgeoning field of peptide science, exchange ideas, create new alliances, meet old—and make new—friends.

This year we had more than 750 participants from all over the world.

The conference was held at the Melià Sitges, a hotel and convention centre with a 1200-seat auditorium and 4000 square metres for commercial exhibition, poster sessions and coffee breaks, all in the pleasant setting of a 300-room establishment with an outdoor swimming pool, gardens and terraces overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

The Symposium was opened on the 28th of August by Meritxell Teixido, Chair of the 36th EPS, together with Norbert Sewald on behalf of the EPS executive. They welcomed the participants and open the symposium following the traditional gong banging.

They acknowledged David Andreu, Anna Maria Papini, and Dirk Tourwé for their service to the EPS and commemorate Ulf Diederichsen. Paolo Rovero announced the awardee for best paper published in the Journal of Peptide Science and introduce the J. Pept. Sci. journal.

Norbert Sewald introduced the EPS *Miklos Bodanszky Award* and announce the awardee: Prof. Kathrin Lang. The awardee gave her talk as opening of the YIMS mini symposium in Tuesday afternoon. Dr. Jordi Piró (representative of BCN Peptides, sponsor of Award) presented the certificate/award to Dr. Lang.

Prof. Fernando Formaggio introduced the EPS *Leonidas Zervas Award* and announced the awardees: Prof. Gilles Subra and Prof. Ali

Tavassoli that acknowledged Dr. Rao Makineni (not attending) for funding the award. Then Prof. Subra and Prof. Tavassoli gave their lectures.

Norbert Sewald introduced the winner of the *Josef Rudinger Memorial Lecture Award*: Prof. Herbert Waldmann. Dr. Jon Holbech Rasmussen (representative of Polypeptide Laboratories) to present the award to Prof. Waldmann, Then Prof. Waldmann gave his lecture.

The main Symposium took place from Monday the 29th to Thursday the 2nd of September, consisting of Invited Lectures and 49 Oral Presentations, delivered over 10 sessions.

Ten topics were presented in plenary talks, oral communications and poster presentations.

Their topics included: *Bioactive peptides Synthetic chemistry of peptides, amino acids and proteins, Peptide therapeutics and clinical application, Peptide prodrugs, targeting, delivery and uptake, Structure and conformational studies of peptides, Peptide materials and catalysts for the nanobiosciences, Peptide-sugar, –lipid, –nucleic acid and –drug conjugates, Emerging peptide-based technologies, Peptide mimetics, peptoids and peptide nucleic acids, Proteomics and peptide bioinformatics.*

In addition to the large number of local participants, over 762 international participants from more than 40 different countries could share discussions and data on international research in the field of peptide science during these sessions, the coffee and lunch breaks, as well as the cheese/ham and wine Posters and Exhibitors.

The programme of the 36th EPS also included a Young Investigator Mini Symposium (YIMS) on Tuesday afternoon.

As for the 36th EPS, German delegates (116) constituted the largest group of participants, followed by representatives from Spain,



UK, Switzerland and the United States. Other, Asian and European countries, as well as Australia and Canada were also represented among the participants.

31 Industry Exhibitors were represented at the meeting with a stand. All were located in the exhibition area.

Special events

Welcome reception. On Sunday, August 28, a Welcome drink was organised for all EPS 2022 attendees, just after the Opening reception and the Awards Ceremony scheduled on the first event day.

The Dr. Bert and Dr. Elizabeth Schram Mixer evening by the pool. This event was scheduled on Tuesday, August 30.

It was organized by invitation only, with two groups separated in Seniors and Young investigators and the development of the event followed guidelines to do group discussions during the evening.

Speakers dinner. On Wednesday, August 31, the speakers' dinner was celebrated at Vivero Restaurant in Sitges.

Mediterranean night. The final event of the EPS Symposium 2022 was the Mediterranean night. It took place on Thursday, September 1. It was celebrated at the Meliá Sitges restaurant and pool



areas. After the dinner, the attendees could enjoy a music show by The Pandicorns group.

Miscellanea morning. During Wednesday, August 31 in the morning, different activities were organized for the participants: Vineyard Visit and Wine Tasting at Torre del Veguer, Palau Maricel visit,

walking tour through Sitges, Football Match (unfortunately, because of the weather this match could not be played) and a round table titled Peptides Beyond the Bench (Scale-up, Production and Regulatory path issues).

At the end of the week in the closing ceremony, Norbert Sewald handed over the EPS gong to Anna Maria Papini for the 37th EPS, which will be held in Florence, Italy on August 25th – 30th, 2024.

Contributed by Meritxell Teixido.

10th International Peptide Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society

Varna, Bulgaria, 1–4 September 2023



The 10th International Peptide Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society (10th Anniversary Peptide Symposium of the Bulgarian Peptide Society) was held on 1–4 September 1–4, 2023 in the sea capital of Bulgaria – Varna city. The event was organized by the Institute of Molecular Biology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Neurobiology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy – Sofia, and the host organization – the Faculty of Pharmacy at the Medical University of Varna. This year's edition was held under the patronage of the Rector of the Medical University of Varna. Across the past two decades, the success of this biennial meeting never ceases to motivate our efforts; we strive to expand the coverage of the peptide science into new areas of research.

The aim of the symposium was to bring together all the research scientists who work on different aspects of the peptide science and present their new research, which is carried out in the scientific community in Bulgaria and abroad. The organizers wanted to establish new and maintain older contacts, to create and foster collaborations – importantly, for both seasoned scientists and young researchers. The BPS always aims to stimulate the active participation of young researchers. In this context, a special session for young researcher and young researcher's poster session was organized and the most outstanding young participants were awarded on the last day of the event – the 4th of September.

This year the Scientific Committee has thoughtfully curated a panel of internationally renowned experts in the field, from both academia and industry, ensuring a rich and interdisciplinary scientific programme. The different lectures and posters encompassed current challenges in modern peptide chemistry, recent successful case studies, as well as practical workshops on drug design.

There were 63 registered participants in the 10th International Peptide Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society from 8 foreign countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Poland, and Ukraine) and from Bulgaria, representing 21 research institutions. Bulgarian representants were from 5 different Institutes at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Institute of Molecular Biology,

Institute of Neurobiology, Institute of Organic Chemistry with Centre of Phytochemistry, Institute of Experimental Morphology, Pathology and Anthropology, and Institute of Solid-State Physics), University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy – Sofia, South-West University “Neofit Rilski” – Blagoevgrad, Trakia University – Stara Zagora, Medical University of Pleven, Medical University of Sofia, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, and Medical University of Varna. Among all participants, over 43% were PhD and MSc students, and postdocs.

The scientific program began with five splendid plenary lectures delivered by appreciated professors from the field of chemistry and biochemistry, and pharmacology of peptides: by Professor Anna Maria Papini (Italy) “From peptide-based drug and diagnostics to cosmetics to inspire next generation EU researchers to transfer academic results into the market”; by Professor Diana Imhof (Germany) “How peptides help to understand transient heme binding to proteins”, by Professor Illana Gosez (Israel) “Peptides and sex regulation: NAP (DAVUNETIDE) as a case study”, by Professor Peter Gmeiner (Germany) “Neurotensin-based GPCR ligands”, and by Professor Steven Ballet (Belgium) “G protein peptidomimetics to stabilize active GPCR conformations”. An introduction in the world of the virtual screening using “trillions of molecules” was performed by Dr. Marcus Gastreich from BioSolveIT (Germany) with its lecture entitled: “Green” navigation in trillions of on-demand compounds”. For first time during a BPS symposium, a free workshop for beginners was conducted. The workshop was organized by BioSolveIT and led by Dr. Gastreich. The workshop was addressed to young researchers with the purpose to introduce first knowledges in the field of protein-ligand complex-based drug design and modeling as well as fragment-based ligand design.

Keynote lectures were presented by Assoc. Prof. Nikolay T. Tzvetkov (Bulgaria); Prof. Atanas Atanasov (Austria); Assoc. Prof. Tatyana Dzimbova (Bulgaria); Prof. Dancho Danalev (Bulgaria); Prof. Reni Kalfin (Bulgaria); Prof. Nikolay Vassilev (Bulgaria); Prof. Lyubka Tancheva (Bulgaria); Assoc. Prof. Tsvetelin Georgiev (Bulgaria); and Assoc. Prof. Tamara Pajpanova (Bulgaria).

The main attention of the Organizing and the Scientific Committees was given to the young researcher's session on the last symposium's day with four young scientists lectures by Sirine Jaber (Bulgaria/Lebanon); Boryana Borisova (Bulgaria); Martina Peeva (Bulgaria), and Boryana Yakimova (Bulgaria). Along with oral presentations there was a poster session with networking and exhibition. During the poster session more than 52% of all posters were presented

by young scientists. A young scientific competition was organized and evaluated by Assoc. Prof. Nikolay T. Tzvetkov, Assoc. Prof. Tamara Pajpanova, Prof. Nikolay Vassilev, Prof. Reni Kalfin, Prof. Lyubka Tancheva, and Prof. Ivanka Stoineva. Three best scientist awards were given to Boryana Borisova (Best young scientist award peptide science), Martina Peeva (Best young scientist award interdisciplinary research), and Ivan Bogdanov (young scientist award for Best poster).

The lectures and posters covered different topics in the field of peptide science including synthesis of peptides, amino acids and proteins; green peptide chemistry and technology; peptide mimetics, conjugates and peptide amino acids; bioactive peptides and peptide-based therapeutics; structure and conformational case studies of peptides and proteins.

The financial support from the European Peptide Society, National Science Fund of Bulgaria, and from the industry, including

BioSolvelT (Germany), Elta'90 (Bulgaria), FOT (Bulgaria), Valerus (Bulgaria), Labprim (Bulgaria), and Chromservis (Bulgaria), make it possible to invite several distinguished scientists, young researchers and students.

Finally, the 10th International Peptide Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society (10th Anniversary Peptide Symposium of the Bulgarian Peptide Society) was a great success to the lecturers, participants, to our sponsors and donators, to the young scientists, and we already looking forward to the next 11th Peptide Symposium of the BPS.

Contributed by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolay T. Tzvetkov, Chairperson of the Organizing Committee

Prof. Dancho Danalev, President of the BPS and Representative of Bulgaria to the EPS

PHOTOS



Opening Ceremony 01.09.2023: Assoc. Prof. Nikolay T. Tzvetkov.



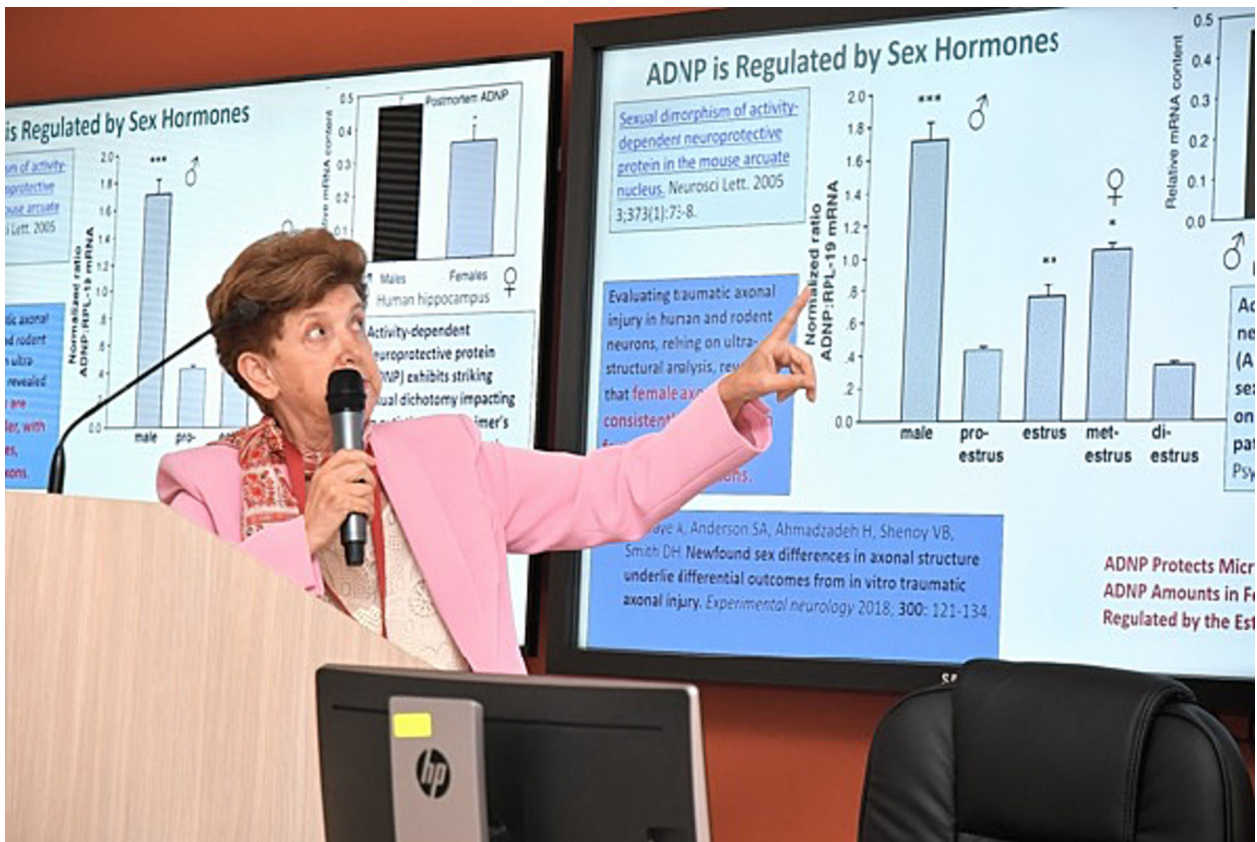
Opening Ceremony 01.09.2023: Cor. Member Prof. Dr. Christina Grupcheva, Deputy Rector of the Medical University of Varna.



Plenary lecture 02.09.2023: Professor Anna Maria Papini (Italy).



Invited lecture 02.09.2023: Professor Diana Imhof (Germany).



Invited lecture 02.09.2023: Professor Ilana Gozes (Israel).



Best young scientist award in the category “Peptide Science”: The winner PhD student Boryana Borisova (Bulgaria).



Best young scientist award in the category “Interdisciplinary Research”: The winner PhD student Boryana Borisova (Bulgaria).



Photo of conference participants.

26th Polish Peptide Symposium

Stare Jabłonki, Poland, 3-7 September 2023

On September 3-7, 2023 26th Polish Peptide Symposium was held at Hotel Anders in Stare Jablonki, next to Ostróda in picturesque lake district Masuria in Poland. It was organized by employees of the Department of Molecular Biochemistry, Faculty of Chemistry University of Gdańsk. The Polish Peptide Symposia (<https://www.ppc.univ.gda.pl/symposia.php>) have a long tradition and have been organized every two years for over 50 years by various Polish academic groups. The last meeting took place in 2019 because of the pandemic. The 26th Polish Peptide Symposium was attended by 108 participants from Poland and abroad related to peptide research, including representatives of all significant academic centers and institutes, representatives of the chemical and related industries, as well as students.

During the symposium, 37 speeches were given, including 9 lectures of outstanding, appreciated worldwide Polish and international scientists: Prof. Norbert Sewald from University of Bielefeld, Prof. Christian Becker from University of Vienna, Prof. Piotr Stefanowicz from University of Wrocław, Dr. Wioleta Rut (replacing Prof. Marcin Drag) from Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Prof. Marcin Sieńczyk from Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Prof. Paula Gomes from University of Porto, Prof. Michael Gütschow from University of Bonn, Prof. Elżbieta Jankowska from University of Gdańsk and Prof. Galia Blum from Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Eight topical sessions were accompanied by two poster sessions, and Young Scientists Minisymposium for PhD students. In addition, some sponsors and exhibitors presented innovative solutions and applications of their products in peptide and protein research.

We are pleased to inform you that during the meeting Dr. Emil Taszner award (founded by Chemat) for the best oral presentation for people with a doctoral degree was established. This will be awarded periodically at subsequent symposia.

The meeting was accompanied by an unofficial part, although equally important for future cooperation – participants had the opportunity to get to know each other better during events such as barbecue, the cruise to Ostróda, the kayaking trip, beach volleyball games and the gala dinner.

The scientific part of the symposium ended with the announcement of six winners of the oral and poster award competition. In this year's winner of The Emil Taszner Award was given to Dr. Monika Kijewska from the University of Wrocław. Additionally, the following were awarded for poster presentations: Dr. Natalia Miodowska (first prize, Wrocław University of Science and Technology), Dr. Paweł Nocerń (award, Wrocław University of Science and Technology) and Dr. Mikołaj Śleziak (award, University of Wrocław). During the Young Scientist Mini Symposium, the scientific committee decided to award the First Prize to Uladzislawa Tsylents (Center of New Technologies of the University of Warsaw), and a Second Prize to Aleksandra Czerchawy (Wrocław University of Science and Technology).

After the Award Ceremony the EPS President, Prof Norbert Sewald had a short presentation on the activities of the Society Then, the next organizer of 27th Polish Peptide Symposium, Prof. Marcin Sieńczyk (Wrocław University of Science and Technology), revealed the next symposium time and place, which will be the second or third week of September in 2024 in Szklarska Poręba.

We would like to express our gratitude to our patrons, sponsors and exhibitors whose support made the 26th Polish Peptide Symposium possible. Without their generous financial support, all this would not take place!

Contributed by Natalia Ptaszyńska and Agata Gitlin-Domagalska, Chairpersons of the Symposium.



Organisers and volunteers of the 26th Polish Peptide Symposium.



Participants of the 26th Polish Peptide Symposium.



Poster sessions.



Recreation and integration events.



Coffee breaks discussions.

10th International Meeting on Antimicrobial Peptides (IMAP)

Trieste, Italy, 6–8 September 2023

The 10th IMAP (International Meeting on Antimicrobial Peptides) was held at the University of Trieste, Italy, from the 6th to the 8th of September, 2023 www.peptideconferences.org/imap-2023. Since its first edition in 2008 in Leipzig, this annual Meeting has attracted a significantly increasing number of participants, especially among young scientists with a common interest in peptide science. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 10th IMAP, originally scheduled for September 2020, was postponed until 2023. Despite this interruption, the meeting succeeded in renewing the interest in antimicrobial peptide (AMP) science, bringing together more than 100 attendees. This has stimulated intense interaction among them and prompted the establishment of scientific collaborations as well as interpersonal relationships.

Meeting	Location	Attendants/Participants
IMAP 2008	Leipzig, Germany	40 participants from 8 countries
IMAP 2012	Leipzig, Germany	110 participants from 9 countries

(Continues)

Meeting	Location	Attendants/Participants
IMAP 2013	London, UK	55 participants from 22 countries
IMAP 2014	Graz, Austria	65 participants from 15 countries
IMAP 2015	London, UK	78 participants from 14 countries
IMAP 2016	Leipzig, Germany	120 participants from 26 countries
IMAP 2017	Copenhagen, Denmark	105 participants from 23 countries
IMAP 2018	Edinburgh, UK	144 participants from 29 countries
IMAP 2019	Utrecht, Netherlands	144 participants from 26 countries
IMAP 2023	Trieste, Italy	117 participants from 24 countries

The current conference has covered different topics within the field of AMPs, from their Prediction, Design & Synthesis; Prediction from Data Mining; Mechanism of Action and Resistance; AMPs on Surfaces & Biomaterials; AMPs/Host defense peptides (HDPs) in Immunomodulation to Applications & Therapeutics. The Organizing Committee consisted of Alessandro Tossi and Marco Scocchi, University of Trieste (co-chairs); Edwin Veldhuizen, Utrecht University; Lidia Feliu (Universitat de Girona); Kai Hilpert (St. George's University of



Group photo of participants of the 10th IMAP.

London) Ralf Hoffmann (Leipzig University); Maria Luisa Mangoni (Sapienza University of Rome). As with previous IMAPs, it was agreed that such a meeting should encourage the participation of PhD students and postdocs and provide them with plenty of space to present their skills and to divulge the results of their scientific work.



Keynote speaker Prof. Charles Bevins.

Ralf Hoffmann organized the first meeting in Leipzig in 2008 as a one-day meeting with about 40 participants from 8 countries. The 10th IMAP attracted a total of 117 international participants from 24 countries and apart from renowned experts on the topic (48 senior scientists), also young researchers, including 21 postdocs and 40 graduate students, who enjoyed the exchange of experiences and ideas in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

EPS sponsorship was acknowledged by the organizers during the meeting, and the logo of the Society was displayed on screen between presentations, on the printed material of the conference as well as on the website of the IMAP meeting.

Scientific and Social Programme

The keynote lecture was given by Prof. Charles Bevins (UC Davis) a pioneer in the field of AMPs, who spoke about the “New Insights on Human Paneth Cell Defensins”.

During the symposium, seven lectures were presented by the following invited speakers:

Alexander Mankin, from University of Illinois at Chicago who spoke about “Antibacterial peptides that target translation termination

Lorenzo Stella from Tor Vergata University, Rome who spoke about “Quantitative studies on the affinity and kinetics of AMP interaction with live bacterial cells: lessons learned and new questions.”

Neil O'Brien-Simpson, from University of Melbourne who spoke about “Using AMPs to improve implant success rates, by eliminating infection and aiding bone and tissue adhesion.”

Henk Haagsman, from Utrecht University who spoke about “Reprogramming the innate immune system by cathelicidin-derived peptides.”



View of the lecture room.

Miguel Castanho, from IMM University of Lisbon, who spoke about “A broad spectrum antiviral peptide-drug conjugate targeting the brain, from design to in vivo activity.”

Marina Rautenbach, from Stellenbosch University who talked about “Unlocking the natural potential of the sticky tyrocidines for self-sterilizing applications.”

Sonia Maffioli, from NAICONS who spoke about “Lantibiotics and lanthipeptides discovered at NAICONS.”

Of the 93 abstracts submitted, the Scientific Board selected 22 for oral presentation and 19 for rapid oral presentation.

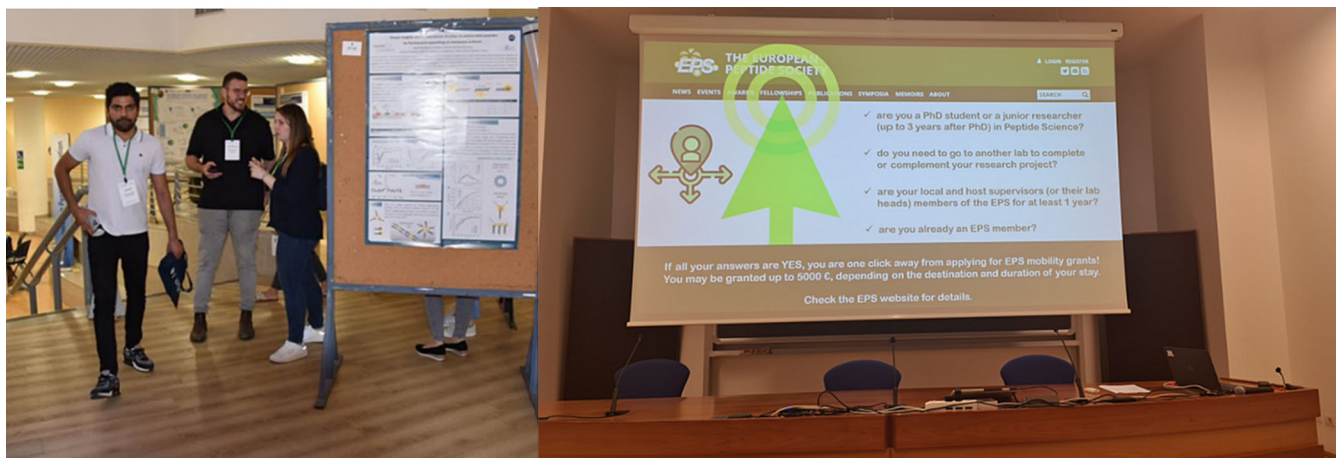
In total, there were four sessions, most of which included at least one presentation by invited speakers. The first session was dedicated to Prediction, Design & Synthesis; the second one was focused on Mode of Action & Resistance; the third one was dedicated to AMPs on Surfaces & Biomaterials followed by the final session on AMPs/HDPs in Immunomodulation.

The 49 abstracts that were not selected for oral presentation were presented by scientists during poster sessions held during lunch breaks on September 6 and 7. Unfortunately, of the 93 abstracts originally submitted, 3 were withdrawn because the authors could not obtain travel funds.

Italian Peptide Society (ITPS) sponsored the registration fee of a young Italian ITPS member.

The poster prizes were presented by Prof. John Wade, representing the Protein & Peptide Science Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry (sponsors of the poster competition) and Dr. Edwin Veldhuizen (chair of the judging panel). The winners of the Poster Competition were:

- 1st place Richard Lalor, University of Galway, for his poster “Sm16, a Schistosoma cathelicidin-like immuno-modulator”,
- 2nd place Ons Kharrat, CNRS, Orleans, for her poster “Molecular Overviews of the Essential Interaction with Fungal Glucosylceramides In the Antifungal Activity of the Insect Defensin ETD151”.



Participants viewing and discussing the posters.



Winners of poster competition.

The social events of IMAP included 5 coffee-breaks, a welcome reception, and 3 lunches, all served at the Conference Venue.

The social dinner was held at the Caffè degli Specchi restaurant located on the beautiful Piazza Unità d'Italia and was enjoyed by over 60 participants, organizing committee members and speakers.

IMAP 2024 will take place in King's College, London, UK in early September 2024 (the final date is yet to be fixed).

Contributed by Marialuisa Mangoni



Participants during coffee/lunch break and welcome reception.



The social dinner at Caffè degli Specchi.

23rd meeting of the French Peptides and Proteins Group (GFPP)

Fournols d'Auvergne, France, 17–21 September 2023

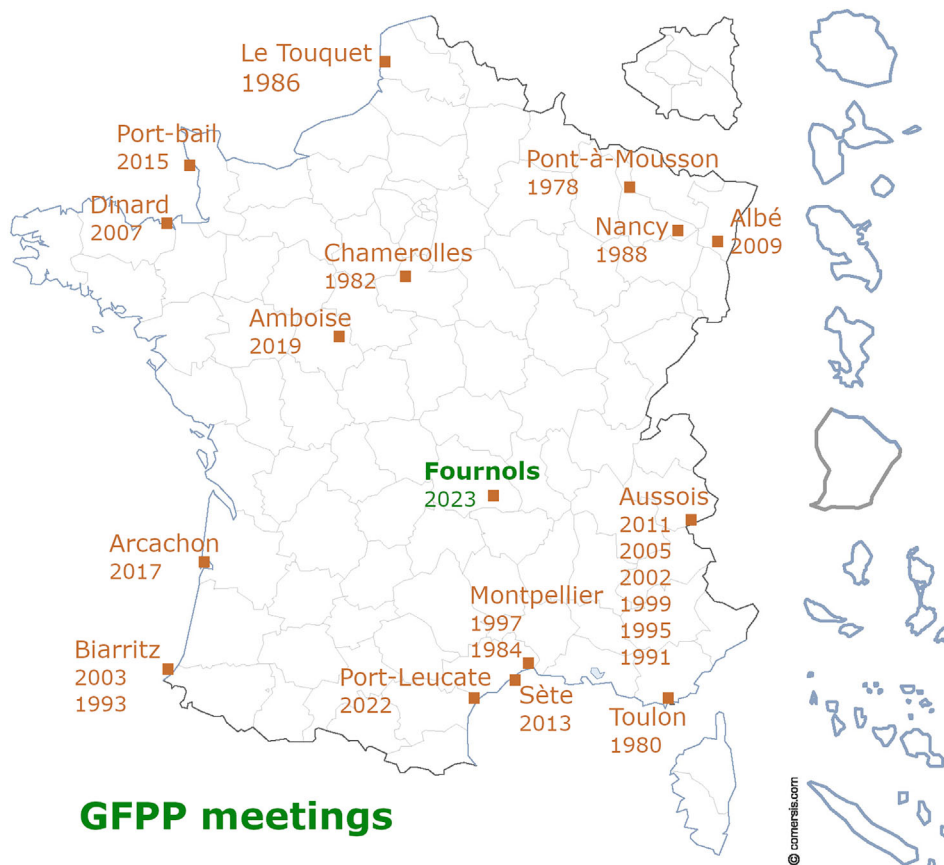
The 23rd meeting of the French Peptides and Proteins Group (GFPP) was held in Fournols in the heart of the natural park of Livradois-Forez in Auvergne Rhône Alpes. This conference followed earlier meetings that have taken place all around France every two years since 1978 and this was the first edition to take place in the Massif Central.

The 23rd GFPP meeting has brought together around 160 attendees from 9 countries (France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, Mexico) the participants being chemists and biologists from academic and private sectors. All conditions were optimized to promote interdisciplinarity and to stimulate scientific exchanges between participants. The official language was English, to make this GFPP event

accessible to international participants. In line with tradition, the GFPP board has awarded 16 fellowships to young researchers (Ph.D. students and post-doctoral researchers) to give them the opportunity to present and discuss their research work with their peers.

The [scientific committee](#) was composed of the elected members of the GFPP executive board and the elected French delegate to the scientific council of the European Peptide Society. This edition was co-chaired by Dr. Sophie Faure (ICCF, University Clermont Auvergne) and Dr. Gregory Chaume (CY BioCIS, CY Cergy Paris University) with the assistance of [a local organizing committee and a WEB team](#).

The Symposium started on Sunday evening (Sept. 17th) with a welcome reception followed by the inaugural conference given by Dr. **Muriel Amblard** (IBMM, Montpellier, France) about foldamers and PROTAC strategy for tackling complex biological challenges.





Participants of the 23rd GFPP

From Monday the 18th to Thursday the 21st of September, the scientific program has span cutting-edge themes in the peptide and protein science field, with eleven invited lectures from leading national and international speakers and 30 oral communications selected by the scientific committee from the submitted abstracts. In addition, two poster sessions were organized with a total of 61 posters. The scientific program included ten thematic sessions:

- Session “*Peptides and Health*” with the presentations by Prof. **Thierry BRIGAUD** (CY BioCIS, CY Cergy Paris University, France) on the incorporation of fluorinated amino acids into peptides for biological applications and Dr. **Céline GALÉS** (I2MC, INSERM, University of Toulouse, France) on G protein activation BRET sensors.

- Session “*Peptides and metals*” with the conference by Dr. **Pascale DELANGLE** (CEA, University Grenoble Alpes, France) on peptide design approaches for mimicking metal binding sites in biology.

- Session “*Peptides and Nuclear Magnetic Resonance*” with the conference by Prof. **Markus WEINGARTH** (Utrecht University, Netherlands) on the mechanisms of lipid-targeting antibiotics.

- Session “*Peptidomimetics and bioinspiration*” with the presentation by Prof. **Claude TAILLEFUMIER** (ICCF, University Clermont Auvergne, France) on peptoid foldamers. - Session “*Penetrating peptides and drugs*” with the conference by Dr. **Christian WIDMANN** (UNIL Lausanne, Switzerland) on uptake mechanisms of cell-penetrating peptides.

- Session “*Peptides and pain*” with the conference by Dr. **Eric LINGUEGLIA** (IPMC, Univ. Côte d'Azur, France) on peptide inhibitors of Acid-Sensing Ion Channels.

- Session “*Protein synthesis and chemical ligation*” with the conference by Dr. **Birgit WILTSCHI** (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, & ACIB GmbH, Austria) on non-canonical amino acids as building blocks for recombinant peptides and proteins.

- Session “*Peptides and supramolecular assembly*” with the presentation by Dr. **Veronica DODERO** (Bielefeld University, Germany) on supramolecular medicine.

- Session “*Peptidomimetics and materials*” with the presentation by Dr. **Vincent HUMBLOT** (FEMTO-ST, Univ. Bourgogne Franche-Comté, France) on peptides on surfaces.

- Session “*Peptides/proteins assessment*” with the conference by Dr. **Jean-Philippe COMBIER** (Micropep Technologies, Toulouse, France) on short peptides to replace agrochemicals.

Full details on the program and invited speakers can be found at the GFPP website: www.gfpp.fr

There was broad consensus among participants that the invited lectures, oral presentations and posters were of an impressive standard, with a special mention for the presentations of PhD students. The selection committee was impressed by the high quality of the oral and poster presentations and has selected four awardees sponsored by Genepep:

- Best oral communication awardees: Benjamin Grain (CIIL, Lille, France) and Sonia Khemaissa (LBM, Sorbonne University, France).

- Best poster awardees: Lucille Weiss (LIT, University of Strasbourg, France) and Francisco Tomas Ribeiro (DBS, University of Lausanne, Switzerland).

Besides the dense scientific program, activities/excursions were proposed on Tuesday 19th afternoon to allow participants to discover the Livradois-Forez regional park: a visit to the historic mill Moulin Richard de Bas and the house of the cheese in Ambert, a visit to the abbey La Chaise-Dieu, Cycle rail, VTT or hike with a guide. To complete the social program, a gala dinner was held on Wednesday evening.

The successful organization of such a scientific event can only be achieved with the support of [institutional and industrial partners](#).



Speakers of the 23rd GFPP



Awardees of both oral and poster competitions

Without them, the 23rd GFPP meeting in Fournols would not have been possible. We wish to say a big “Thank You” to all our private sector partners and also to the European Peptide Society, the Region

Auvergne Rhône Alpes, the University Clermont Auvergne and the CY Advanced Studies of Cergy Paris University.

Contributed by Sophie Faure and Gregory Chaume

Peptide Chemistry Day symposium

Zagreb, Croatia, 20 September 2023

The symposium “*Peptide Chemistry Day*” was held on September 20, 2023 at the University of Zagreb. Members of the organizing and scientific committee were:

Prof. Ruža Frkanec, University of Zagreb, President

Dr. Andreja Jakas, Ruđer Bošković Institute

Prof. Leo Frkanec, Ruđer Bošković Institute

Assist. prof. Daniela Kalafatović, University of Rijeka

Arijana Mihalić, University of Zagreb

Our first “*Peptide Chemistry Day*” symposium was conducted in 2019 and with a such successful start we decided to gather again this year. All of those interested in the field of peptide chemistry met at the second symposium “*Peptide Chemistry Day*” organized at the University of Zagreb in the very suitable new SEECCEL building. Professor Tomislav Josip Mlinarić, Vice-Rector for Innovation, Technology Transfer and Cooperation with Economic Sector opened the Symposium.

The Symposium was organised by the University of Zagreb together with Croatian Chemical Society, and Ruđer Bošković Institute. The Symposium was sponsored by European Peptide Society, BICRO BioCentre and Altium International.

At the symposium, ten lectures of prominent researchers from the University of Zagreb, Rudjer Bošković Institute, Department of Biotechnology, University of Rijeka, and the pharmaceutical company Pliva Zagreb were presented. Two lectures were given by the scientists from abroad, namely, one from the University of Trieste and another from the University of Graz. This year we had also four short oral presentation of PhD students and we introduced the possibility for young researchers to show their results with a poster presentations, so nine posters were put on display. The PhD student Emilija Petrović Hadar was awarded the first prize for the best poster presentation entitled „Thermodynamic and structural characterization of cyclopeptide complex with different ions in acetonitrile”. She received the poster prize certificate and symbolic prize, EPS promotional material (mouse-pad with built-in mobile phone charger and power-bank). While 82 participants were registered for the symposium even more of them were present. The sponsors also introduced themselves through short lectures and a video clips.

The lectures and discussions were well received and covered different fields of peptide research. Professor Antonella Bandiera from the University of Trieste presented HELP-platform (Human Elastin Like Polypeptide), a smart tool for the production of bioactive peptidic domains. Dr. Nermina Malanović and Dr. Danijela Bakarić presented results of their investigations of antimicrobial peptides, mode of their

action and interactions with lipid membrane. The rational design of synthetic small peptides and the integration of machine learning and human intuition into the discovery of functional peptides were discussed by Professor Mario Gabričević and Assistant professor Daniela Kalafatović.

Associate Director at Pliva/Teva Research and Development, and Group leader for analytical characterization and peptide development, Vladimir Radić gave an overview of comparative analytical methods for peptide therapeutics characterization. Dr. Zoran Kokan gave a short report about design and synthesis of peptidic ligands in enantioselective transition metal catalysis. Assist. prof. Toni Todorovski presented a comparative study of conjugation strategies to generate antiviral peptide-porphyrin conjugates which are able to cross blood-brain barrier. Prof. Lidija Barišić discussed the results obtained in the investigation of conformational and biological properties of ferrocene peptide derivatives.

The oral presentations of PhD students Patrizia Janković, Marcela Šišić, Marta Jurković and Barbara Bogović represented their investigations in the framework of doctoral theses and were respectively related to the synthesis of esterase inspired linear and cyclic short catalytic peptides, investigation of interaction of peptidoglycan monomer and specific lectins, chemical synthesis of fluorescent analogs of FRH tripeptides with high affinity for transition metals and the finally the application of C-glycosyl- α amino acids in peptide synthesis.

As a part of the symposium organization, the Book of Abstracts was published (ISBN 978-953-8250-35-4) by University of Zagreb and Croatian Chemical Society. The editors are Prof. Ruža Frkanec and Dr. Danijel Namjesnik.

The Symposium this year marks the 10th anniversary of the Centre for Research and Knowledge Transfer in Biotechnology at the University of Zagreb as well as continuous multidisciplinary research in the field of chemistry of biologically active peptides, especially glycopeptide, peptidoglycan monomer and adamantylpeptides.

We thank the University of Zagreb and all the sponsors whose support is invaluable and without whose support it would not be possible to organize this symposium.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all the speakers and participants for sharing their research achievements and thus contributing to the excellence of our meeting. We want to extend a very special thanks to our guest from abroad, who joined us and shared their latest results. Finally, we want to thank all our colleagues from the University of Zagreb, especially Arijana, Sandra, Maja, Bojana, Marcela, Danijel and Tomislav who all helped in the preparation of

promotional materials and registration as well as creating a positive and pleasant working environment for the organizers and the participants.

Our goal was for the symposium to be a meeting place for networking and exchange of information for scientists engaged in the peptide chemistry and, especially for younger colleagues and students.

We sincerely hope that we have succeeded and believe that all participants have enjoyed the socializing and the relaxed atmosphere of this meeting.

We are looking forward to the next *Peptide Chemistry Day!*

Contributed by Ruža Frkanec, President of the Organizing Committee



Participants at Peptide Chemistry Day symposium, September 20, 2023.



Members of the Organizing committee of Peptide Chemistry Symposium with Prof Antonella Bandiera and Dr. Nermina Malanović.



Assistant prof. Toni Todorovski (left) from Department of Biotechnology, University of Rijeka and Dr. Zoran Kokan (right) from Ruđer Bošković Institute presenting their lectures.



Dr. Nermina Malanović (left) from the University of Graz and PhD student Patrizia Janković (right) from Department of Biotechnology, University of Rijeka presenting their lectures.



Emilija Petrović Hadar was awarded the first prize for the best poster presentation.



Posters on display in the lobby.



Lunch time.



Participants from the Laboratory for biomimetic chemistry, Institute Ruđer Bošković. From the left Barbara Bogović, Mateja Matišić, Ivana Colić and Prof Ivanka Jerić, head of the Laboratory.

Giornata Scientifica della Società Italiana Peptidi Dedicata ai Soci Giovani, Vittorio Erspamer and Carlo Pedone Awards 2023

Florence, Italy, 23 September 2023

The “*Giornata Scientifica della Società Italiana Peptidi Dedicata ai Soci Giovani, Vittorio Erspamer and Carlo Pedone Awards 2023*” was held at the University of Florence, Learning Center Morgagni, on the 23rd September, 2023 <https://sites.google.com/view/itps-giornata-giovani>.

The “*Giornata Scientifica*” is a mini symposium dedicated to young researchers that the Italian Peptide Society (ItPS) organizes each second year. The 2023 edition was held in mixed mode with about 35 participants physically present and 12 more that participated online.

The Local Organizing Committee comprised Claudia Bello, Anna Maria Papini and Paolo Rovero from the University of Florence, supported by the members of the Interdepartmental Research Unit of Peptide and Protein Chemistry and Biology – PeptLab, in particular Fosca Errante, Michael Quagliata, Margherita Marino and Michele Casoria.

The Scientific committee of ItPS, comprising Walter Cabri (University of Bologna), Marta De Zotti (University of Padua),

Alessandro Gori (National Research Council, CNR- Milan), Silvia Marchesan (University of Trieste) and Mariano Venanzi (University of Rome Tor Vergata), was in charge of the mini-symposium program.

During the mini symposium the “Young Researchers Award” (Vittorio Erspamer award) is traditionally presented to a young member of the Society to acknowledge her/his distinguished contribution to peptide science. This year, in addition to the Erspamer award, the “Carlo Pedone award” for best doctoral thesis in the field of peptide science was awarded. Oral presentations were delivered by the awardees, Lucia Ferrazzano, Carlo Diaferia (winners of the Erspamer award) and Fosca Errante (winner of the Pedone award), followed by the award ceremony. The awards were presented by the President of ItPS, Maria Luisa Mangoni, with Daniela Marasco, Delegate of Scientific Affairs of ItPS.

The one-day mini symposium covered a broad range of topics, giving the possibility to twelve young members of our society, selected by the scientific committee of the society based on the



Group picture of the participants to the “*Giornata Scientifica della Società Italiana Peptidi 2023*”



Vittorio Erpamer and Carlo Pedone Awards ceremony

abstracts received, to present their work during the three scientific sessions of the day.

EPS sponsorship was acknowledged by the organizers during the mini symposium and the logo of the Society was displayed on the printed material of the conference as well as on the website of the “Giornata Scientifica”. The EPS mobility fellowship was advertised on screen between presentations and during breaks.

During the mini symposium a total of 15 oral presentations were delivered, starting with the two awardees of the Vittorio Erpamer award and the awardee of the Carlo Pedone award:

Lucia Ferrazzano – University of Bologna, who spoke about “GSPPS and SolPSS: the dual facets of the green peptide synthesis medal” (Vittorio Erpamer award)

Carlo Diaferia – University of Naples “Federico II”, who spoke about “Nanostructured functional materials from peptide self-assembly” (Vittorio Erpamer award)

Fosca Errante – University of Florence, who spoke about “Design, synthesis, and biological evaluation of bioactive peptides: collagen turnover modulators for cosmeceutical use and SARS-CoV-2 virus antigens for diagnostic and vaccinal uses” (Carlo Pedone award)

The award session was chaired by the President of ItPS Maria Luisa Mangoni (Sapienza University of Rome) and by Daniela Marasco (University of Naples Federico II).

The subsequent lectures were delivered by the following young members of ItPS during the three scientific sessions:

Session 1, chaired by Marta De Zotti (University of Padua) and Mariano Venanzi (University of Rome Tor Vergata)

Alice Romagnoli – Università Politecnica delle Marche, who spoke about *Targeting Cap-dependent translation through a CYFIP1-derived peptidomimetic: insights for cancer and fragile X syndrome*

Floriana Cappiello – Sapienza University of Rome, who spoke about *Antibacterial activity and corneal wound healing effect of Esc peptides in the treatment of Pseudomonas aeruginosa keratitis*

Claudia Honisch – Institute of Biomolecular Chemistry, CNR, who spoke about *Oxidative stress induced orexins misfolding*

Michael Quagliata – University of Florence, who spoke about *Antiviral peptides inhibitors of protein-protein interactions against SARS-CoV-2*

Fabia Cenciarelli – University of Bologna, who spoke about *Fragrances release in supramolecular peptide gels*

Session 2, chaired by Claudia Bello (University of Florence) and Walter Cabri (University of Bologna)

Sara Aquilia – University of Florence, who spoke about *Using rapeseed oil by-products to develop protein/peptide-based materials*

Daniele Florio – University of Naples “Federico II”, who spoke about *Bioinformatics-based design of small peptidomimetics able to enhance the amyloid aggregation*

Lorenzo Pacini – University of Florence, who spoke about *Investigation of green synthesis binary mixtures on the PurePep® Chorus taking advantage of induction heating*

Session 3 chaired by Antonella Accardo (University of Naples Federico II) and Alessandro Gori (National Research Council CNR-Milan)

Maria Rosa Loffredo – Sapienza University of Rome, who spoke about *Unnatural amino acid substituted antimicrobial peptide Esc(1-21) with improved activity against Staphylococcus aureus*

Michele Casoria – University of Florence, who spoke about *Bringing Immunology into the Realm of Chemistry: Structural and dynamic properties of TCR-peptide-MHC complex*

Adriana Di Stasi – University of Padua and University of Trieste, who spoke about *The designed antimicrobial peptide B7-005: biocompatibility, mode of action and antimicrobial activity against ESKAPE pathogens*

Andrea Di Santo – University of Florence, who spoke about *A novel method based on Surface Plasmon Resonance for detection and quantification of Adalimumab and anti-Adalimumab antibodies in sera of treated patients*

The social events included lunch and one coffee break served at the venue. The mini symposium ended with the closing remarks by the President of ItPS Maria Luisa Mangoni (Sapienza University of Rome)

and Michele Saviano (National Research Council CNR - Caserta) and was followed by the meeting of the Italian Peptide Society.

Contributed by Claudia Bello

Workshop: Sorrento 2013 – Sorrento 2023 A decade of Peptide Materials

Sorrento, Italy, 26 – 28 October 2023

After exactly ten years from the first meeting on Peptide Materials and following the PepMat Workshops organized in Barcelona in 2016 by Carlos Aleman and in 2018 in London by Ian Hamley we have organized a new event on Peptide Materials. The Workshop: “*Sorrento 2013 – Sorrento 2023 A decade of Peptide Materials*” has been held at the Hotel Tramontano in Sorrento (Naples) on October 26–28, 2023; the same location and venue and the same week of October of ten years ago. The event has had a high attendance of over 90 scientists of different countries from all over the world. The workshop was held under the auspices of the European Peptide Society (EPS) and of the Italian Peptide Society (ItPS) and has been organized by a joint effort of the Interuniversity Research Center on Bioactive Peptides (CIRPEB) at University of Naples ‘Federico II’, by the Dept. of Chemical Science and Technologies University of Rome Tor Vergata.

Chairmen of the workshop were Antonella Accardo, Francesca Cavalieri, Carlo Diaferia, Gianfranco Bocchini, Giancarlo Morelli and Mariano Venanzi.

The topics of the workshop were:

- Peptide Self-Assembly and Material Design
- Peptide Interactions with Materials

- Peptide Hydrogels and Hydrogel nanoparticles
- Peptide Biomaterials & Tissue Regeneration
- Peptide Materials for Opto/Electronic Applications

The theme of the workshop concerning the state of the art in Peptide Materials was covered by seven plenary lectures, twenty nine oral presentations, ten short communications and two poster sessions. Three intense days were completely dedicated to the peptide materials science.

The following plenary lectures were presented by distinguished scientists coming from all over the world:

- Frank Caruso (University of Melbourne Australia) “Bio-Nano Science “Insights for Nanomedicine”
- Carlos Aleman (Polytechnic University of Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain) “Peptide Interactions with Materials”
- Nurit Ashkenasy (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel) “Peptide-Based Electronic Material”
- Ian Hamley (University of Reading, United Kingdom) “Bioactive Self-Assembling Peptides and Lipopeptides”
- Hiroshi Matsui (Hunter-Weill Medical College of Cornell University, United States) “Control of Intracellular Biological Activities



Group Photo in the Hotel Tramontano Garden



The scientific committee during the opening ceremony

and Exosome Biogenesis by Peptide Self-Assembly for Future Cancer Treatments”

- Alberto Saiani (The University of Manchester, United Kingdom) “ β -Sheet Forming Peptides: from Molecular Self-Assembly to Biomedical Materials Design”
- Rein Ulijn (University of New York, United States) “Directed Discovery of Functional Peptide Materials and Systems”



The scientific committee award Tilmann J. Neubert

All were extremely interesting and stimulated a great participation from all the audience.

Due to terrible situation in Israel and Palestine, the participation of four Israeli scientists was assured by on-line presentations.

The workshop was sponsored by few companies and by The Royal Society of Chemistry. The Royal Society of Chemistry awarded 3 winners among authors with a prize of a £100 book voucher and a free 1-year RSC membership. The scientific committee selected one winner among the oral presentations (Tilmann J. Neubert, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany), one among the short communication (Valeria Gomes, University of Minho, Portugal) and the last one among the poster presentations (Hu Kaiyue, Politecnico di Milano, Italy).

At the end of the scientific sessions, the gala dinner, was also much appreciated by the participants. Finally, on Sunday 29th, was organized a special trip in Pompei with visit of famous ruins.

The Sorrento workshop has been a highly successful forum for the exchange of ideas on hot subjects and trends in peptide material science and an important and decisive stimulus for future work in the area. The pleasant weather of Sorrento, offered to participants, beside science, the occasion of enjoying the city and its coast with its natural beauty.

Contributed by Giancarlo Morelli

12th Austrian Peptide Symposium

Vienna, Austria, 5 December 2023

The 2023 meeting marked our 12th edition, returning as an in-person event in Vienna on the 5th of December. Co-organized by Christian Gruber (Medical University of Vienna) and Christian Becker (Austrian representative to the EPS, University of Vienna), the symposium maintained its successful tradition, kicking off with a speaker's dinner at Restaurant Ragusa the evening before.

The one-day event encompassed four scientific sessions, featuring invited lectures by esteemed national and international speakers, short oral presentations from Austrian early-career investigators, and a dynamic poster session showcasing 37 posters. The attendance reached a record-breaking 112 participants, marking a significant achievement. A highlight of the symposium was the presentation of the third "Bachem AtPS Award for Peptide Science."

The scientific program consisted of the following sessions:

Session 1: Peptide & Protein Chemistry

Chaired by Christian Becker (University of Vienna)

Nicholas Mitchell (University of Nottingham, UK): "Revolutionizing Site-Selective Modification of Peptides and Proteins Using Radical Approaches"

Daniela Kalafatović (University of Rijeka, Croatia): "Machine Learning Assisted Design of Bioactive Peptides and Peptide Assemblies"

Luisa Aguiar (Gyros Protein Technologies): "Automation in Peptide Synthesis and Purification: Streamlining Operational Complexity"

Session 2: Peptide/Protein Structure & Function

Chaired by Christian Gruber (Medical University of Vienna)

Arun K. Shukla (Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, India): "Structural Insights into Activation and Signaling of Peptide GPCRs"

Ines Neundorff (University of Cologne, Germany): "Tailored Peptides as Tools to Modulate Intracellular Protein-Protein Interaction"

Monika Swiontek (CEM GmbH, Germany): "Exploring Protein Function using Synthetic Peptide Libraries and Arrays on Solid Support"

Session 3: Hot topics in peptide science - Selected from submitted abstracts

Chaired by Anne Conibear (TU Vienna, Austria)

Russell J. Wilson (Johannes Kepler University Linz): "Coiled coil as molecular force sensors: from molecular mechanisms and design to biological applications"

Dörte Brandis (University of Vienna): "Real-time monitoring of Biomineralization with Solution NMR Spectroscopy"

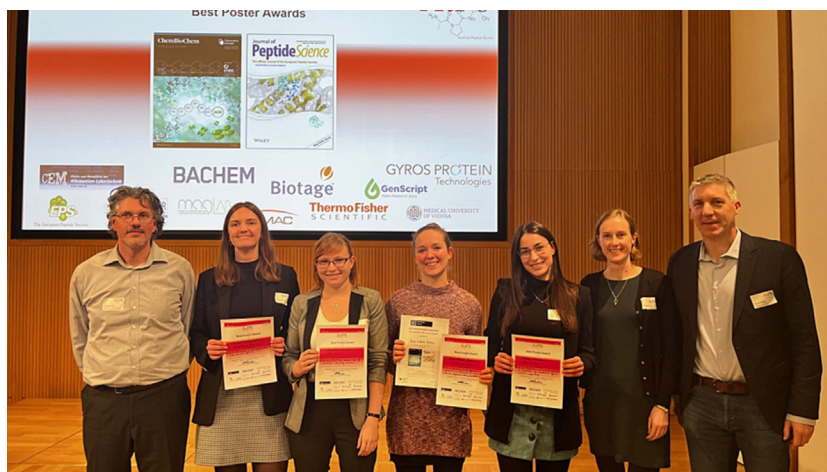
Kevin Schiefelbein (University of Zurich): "Expanding the Chemical Space of Lasso Peptides by Enzymatically Transforming Chemically Synthesized Precursors"



Group photo of AtPS2023



Bachem Award (from left to right): Christian Gruber (Organizer), Christian Becker (Organizer), Peter t'Hart (Award winner 2023) Rajesh Manancherry (Bachem)



Poster Awards (from left to right): Christian Gruber, Barbara Herrmann (TU Wien), Helene Hönigsperger (University of Ulm), Darja Isabelle Rohden (University of Vienna), Natasa Tomasevic (Medical University of Vienna), Anne Conibear, Christian Becker

Oliver Gajsek (University of Vienna): “Deciphering the impact of posttranslational modification on function and structure of Heat shock protein 90”

Debora Iaculli (Free University of Brussels): “Cyclic peptides as Connexin43 and Pannexin1 inhibitors”

Paula Schwarz (Medical University of Vienna): “Nature-derived Peptide Inhibitors of Prolyl Oligopeptidase modulate T cell Proliferation”

Session 4: Peptides in Drug Discovery, Treatment & Diagnosis

Chaired by Markus Muttenthaler (University of Vienna)

Mariana Damian (Biotage, UK): “New Biotage Technologies for a Faster Peptide Drug Discovery Workflow”

Nermina Malanovic (University of Graz, Austria): “Navigating Antimicrobial Peptides: From Mode of Action to Crafting Enhanced Properties”

Shiroh Futaki (Kyoto University, Japan): “Cytosolic IgG delivery using attenuated cationic amphiphilic lytic peptides”

Rajesh Mannancherry (Bachem AG, Switzerland): “Bachem - An Innovation Driven Company”

The third Bachem AtPS Award for Peptide Science in D/A/CH was presented to Peter ‘t Hart (Chemical Genomics Center, Max Planck Institute for Molecular Physiology, Germany) and the award lecture was titled “Macrocyclic peptide inhibitors of protein-RNA interactions”.

The scientific part of the symposium ended with the announcement of four winners of the poster award competition (one award was supported by Wiley), i.e. (in alphabetical order):

- Barbara Herrmann, TU Wien: “STOPTACS: Scissile turn-off proteolysis targeting chimeras”



Speakers Dinner

- Helene Hönigsperger, University of Ulm: “Discovery anti-inflammatory virus-derived peptides”
- Darja Isabelle Rohden, University of Vienna: “Unveiling Protein Dynamics: Synthesis and Utilization of Selectively Labelled Arginine in Advanced NMR Studies”
- Natasa Tomasevic, Medical University of Vienna: “Plant-derived circular peptides as modulators of cannabinoid type 2 receptor signaling”

We concluded the event with a dinner and social networking, while tasting wine from the Austrian winemaker Boris Kovacic from Projekt Wildtyp, Vienna/St. Margarethen, specializing on natural wines.

The next symposium is scheduled to be held on the 5th of December 2024 in Vienna, and we look forward to another successful gathering.

Last but not least, we are grateful to everyone, who helped making the event possible, in particular to our sponsors, which are: Bachem, Biotage, CEM, Gyros Protein Technologies, ThermoFischer Scientific, Genscript, Almac, Rieger-Industrievertretungen GmbH, MagLab, the Medical University of Vienna and the European Peptide Society. Without their generous financial support, all this would not have been possible!

Contributed by Christian W. Gruber and Christian Becker

In Memoriam: Raniero Rocchi (1932–2024)



Prof Raniero Rocchi (91) passed away on his home in Padova on 3rd January 2024. Until 2008 he was Full Professor of Organic Chemistry at the Institute of Organic Chemistry of the University of Padova.

Rocchi was a pioneer of the peptide research in Italy, joining at the end of sixties to the peptide chemistry group of Prof Ernesto Scoffone, that was involved in the chemical synthesis of analogues of peptide S of RNase A: the 20-amino acids N-terminal fragment released from the protein after digestion with subtilisin. The aim was the study of the structural requirements of peptide S that allows the non-covalent association of peptide S with the rest of protein and the full recovery of the enzymatic activity. After one year spent at the

Department of Molecular Biophysics of the Yale University, in the group of Prof. F. M. Richards, in 1970 Rocchi took the Chair of Applied Pharmaceutical Chemistry at the Institute of Pharmaceutical and Toxicological Chemistry of the University of Ferrara and five years later he moved as Full Professor to the University of Padova. His research interest was in peptide and protein chemistry, in particular on the synthesis of peptides, protein modification reaction, and conformational studies on polypeptides and proteins. In Padova his research focused on the study of the effect of the covalent attachment of carbohydrate derivatives on the pharmacological properties and conformational features of biologically active peptides (opioids, kinins and antimicrobial peptides). His research team synthesized a number of glycopeptides in solution and it was one of the first groups to use the solid-phase procedure for the synthesis of these compounds. Conformational investigations were also carried out on synthetic glycosylated threonine and asparagine homo-oligopeptides and on homo-polymers prepared by ring-opening polymerization of the sugar substituted α -amino acid N-carboxyanhydrides. Finally, Prof Rocchi turned to the synthesis and characterization of peptide-peptoid hybrids of selected opioid and antimicrobial peptides and tested the effect of the afforded modification on their biological properties.

For many years he was the Italian representative in the European Peptide Society and in the years 1998–2002 he was elected Chairman of the European Peptide Society.

Prof Rocchi was an excellent communicator and much loved by students for his clarity of presentation. He was an open, competent and scrupulous scientist and for all of us a unique human and professional reference.

Contributed by Marina Gobbo

Extract from the Minutes of the EC Meeting, 22 and 23 of March 2023 (Videoconference)

Part I 22/03/23, 14:30 to 17:00 h (CET)

Participants at start:

Norbert Sewald (NS), Krzysztof Rolka (KR), Fernando Formaggio (FF), Florine Cavelier (FC), Paula Gomes (PG), and Knud Jensen (KJ)

1 | WELCOME

The President (NS) welcomed all participants and opened the meeting.

2 | APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE EC MEETING HELD IN AUGUST 2022

The minutes of the EC meeting held in August 2022, during the 36th European Peptide Symposium (36EPS) in Sitges, Spain (Annex I.1), were unanimously approved.

3 | DISCUSSION ON THE AGREEMENT REGARDING THE 37TH EUROPEAN PEPTIDE SYMPOSIUM (37EPS)

NS opened the discussion on the request made by the organizers of the 37EPS, Anna Maria Papini (AMP) and Paolo Rovero (PR), regarding the signature of an agreement between the European Peptide Society and the Professional Conference Organizer (PCO). The draft agreement, which had been previously distributed to the EC members, was thoroughly analyzed given the unprecedented nature of the request. KR and KJ highlighted the fact that they signed similar agreements with PCOs on their own individual name, when they respectively chaired the Symposia held in Gdansk and Copenhagen. FF explained that, due to Italian law, such an agreement could not be signed by anyone on his/her own individual name, therefore the need to be signed by the Society. FC shared some concerns regarding how would the budget and eventual deficit or surplus be managed, and NS considered that a budget plan should be made available by the organizers before signing any agreement. KR pointed out that this new type of procedure should be somehow reflected in the Society's Bylaws. After some discussion, it was consensually agreed that several issues should be clarified with Drs. Paolo Gori and Pietro Bottani (see Part II), and with AMP and PR (see Part III).

4 | REPORT OF THE TREASURER

The Treasurer, FF, was invited to present his report (Annex I.2). FF highlighted the fact that, despite the balance of the Society's bank account had slightly decreased, it was still at a too high value for a non-profit organization. Considering the comments, it was consensually agreed that the EPS should increase the support to relevant events, and eventually promote and support new initiatives within scope of the EPS mission. In this regard, different possibilities were considered by the EC members. After some discussion, it was settled that:

- support to national meetings should be raised to 800, 1400, and 2000 Euros for, respectively, 1 day, 2–3 days, and longer events;
- in forthcoming Symposia, the number of grants to young participants should be kept high, i.e. totalizing an amount as close as possible to that which the Society will receive from the organizers;
- the Mobility Fellowships should be updated to a 1000 Euros/month allowance (or proportional value per diem), in addition to travel costs (with receipts), up to a maximum of 5000 Euros; KR was asked to arrange for the update of the information on the fellowships in the Society's website;
- maximum visibility should be given to Mobility Fellowships, starting by making mandatory their advertisement in national meetings sponsored by the Society; PG was asked to prepare a power-point slide to be distributed to meeting organizers for such purpose.

5 | REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary, PG, briefly presented her report (Annex I.3), highlighting new membership applications over the past 12 months, and the frankly positive assessment of the 36EPS by the participants, according to the results of the surveys carried out during the event. PG also informed on how the promotional items left over from the symposium were being distributed to organizers of national meetings upon request. NS reminded the Secretary that nominations for the EPS 2024 Awards should be timely arranged. PG confirmed she would send, by early January 2024, a call for nominations to all registered EPS members (two-months deadline), so that the SAC selects those to be voted prior to the EC meeting to be held in late March 2024). PG further informed that, also in early January 2024, arrangements will

be made regarding the (re-)election of National Representatives (NR) for France and Germany, as current ones will be ceasing their first mandate as members of the General Assembly (GA).

6 | REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATION OFFICER

The Communication Officer, KR, was invited to present his report (Annex I.4). After a brief explanation of the new publications and updates made on the EPS website over the past year, described in the report, KR pointed out that the organizer of the 36EPS, Meritxell Teixidó (MT) did not send a standard report on the event following the example/guidelines timely provided; instead, a technical report prepared by the PCO was received. PG volunteered to try one last time to ask MT for a standard report. It was further suggested that, in case this last effort fails, help from the co-organizer David Andreu (DA) might be asked.

7 | REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

The Scientific Affairs Officer, FC, was invited to present her report (Annex I.5). FC briefly informed on applications to EPS Mobility Fellowships and on national meetings, according to information on the report.

In regard to Mobility Fellowships, FC pointed out that (i) information should be updated on the EPS website according to decisions made during this meeting (see point 3.), and (ii) clear rules on the format and contents of the mandatory report to be sent by grantees following the mobility should be set; for instance, care must be taken in regard to both the scientific contents of the report and the adequacy of the pictures therein. KR suggested that grantees can be instructed to take as examples the reports from previous mobility events that are available on the EPS website.

Concerning national meetings, it was unanimously approved that the previous decision on increasing the values of the support from the EPS (see point 3.) should have immediate effect, i.e., be applied to events happening from the 1st of January 2023 onwards.

FC reminded all presents that a prior decision of the EC on keeping alive the virtual “Peptide Highlights” meetings should be put into motion, ideally having a concrete proposal for the 3rd edition (Fall 2023) to be voted in the General Assembly in May 2023. The procedure to call for proposals for early-career peptide science scholars as Chairpersons of forthcoming editions was briefly discussed. NS volunteered to invite Alberto dal Corso, from the University of Milan, to be the Chair of the 3rd edition; it was consensually agreed that proposals of Chairpersons for next editions should be asked along the invitations to attend this one. It was further considered that, in case a high number of valid proposals is received, two “Peptide Highlights” events might be organized per year, instead of only one.

Finally, FC highlighted the fact that two members of the Scientific Affairs Committee (SAC) had reached the end of their mandates, and adequate substitutes had to be identified. After a brief conversation and given the lateness of the hour and the need to start Part II of the meeting with Drs. Paolo Gori and Pietro Bottani, it was decided to adjourn the discussion of this issue to the following day (see Part III). Before closing this Part of the EC Meeting, a few changes to the agenda of Part III were consensually agreed.

Part III 23/03/23, 14:30 to 19:00 h (CET)

Participants at start:

Norbert Sewald (NS), Krzysztof Rolka (KR), Fernando Formaggio (FF), Florine Cavelier (FC), Paula Gomes (PG), and Knud Jensen (KJ)

8 | REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS OFFICER (RESUMED FROM PART I)

The discussion on possible substitutes for the leaving members of the SAC was resumed, and FC was committed to make the necessary contacts and invitations. It was also considered that a formal e-mail should be sent to the ceasing SAC members, like that usually sent to NR leaving the GA.

9 | REASSESSMENT OF THE AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED WITH THE PCO HIRED FOR THE 37EPS

NS re-opened the discussion on the signature of the agreement between the EPS and the PCO hired by AMP and PR to take care of the technical organization of the 37EPS. After a brief debate, at the light of advice and proposed changes in the agreement received from Drs. Gori and Bottani (see Part II), it was agreed that the revised agreement could be signed after a detailed budget plan and the registration fees were known. These aspects would be highlighted when discussing this issue with AMP and PR, later in the meeting (see point 11.).

10 | CHANGES IN THE SOCIETY'S BYLAWS

The draft of the new version of the EPS Bylaws, prepared in consequence of changes in the Society's statutes, was thoroughly revised and the Secretary was committed to make all necessary amendments. The need to also incorporate changes stemming from decisions made in this EC meeting was highlighted.

11 | END OF THE MANDATE OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

NS reminded those present that himself (President), PG (Secretary), and the Communication Officer (KR) complete their second four-years

mandates, therefore, must leave the Executive Committee after approval of the financial statements of 2023, i.e., in March 2024. In this connection, as the proposed successor of NS for the role of President of the Society, KJ was invited to join this entire meeting, and actively participate in all the discussions. KJ's intervention was particularly required to contribute to the discussion of this point of the agenda, by proposing new EC members for the roles of Secretary and Communication Officer. After some debate, a draft list of candidates was prepared, and KJ was committed to make the relevant contacts.

12 | REPORT OF THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF JOURNAL OF PEPTIDE SCIENCE

The Editor-in-Chief (EiC) of Journal of Peptide Science (JPS) Paolo Rovero (PR) joined the meeting at 16:30 h (CET) and was invited to present the report of JPS (Annex III.1). PR intervened, reporting that the number of submissions in 2022 decreased by 20% comparing to 2021, and that 54% of the manuscripts received did not meet the quality standards to be accepted for publication; still, this significant percentage of rejections was like those recorded in other Wiley journals. As in previous years, the EiC reinforced that stronger efforts should be made to attract contributions from Europe and other Northwestern regions of the world, and that EPS members should motivate their group members to submit their works to JPS.

PR also informed on ongoing and planned initiatives to raise the visibility and impact of JPS, namely,

- Editorial Initiatives (special issues)
“Ulf Diederichsen Tribute Collection” and “Naples Workshop on Bioactive Peptides Special Issue” (closed); “Peptide Talents Special Collection” and “Special Collection dedicated to Carlo Pedone” (open to contributions); and a special issue for the workshop “Sorrento 2013-Sorrento 2023: a decade of Peptide Materials” (planned);
- Planned events linking peptide science to industry
Industry&Start-up Session with round table “Starting a company”; session dedicated to famous peptide scientists through the ages (inviting the participation of companies that integrate, in their teams, researchers formerly affiliated to the groups of those top scholars in Peptide Science).

It was consensually agreed that a strong and good effort is being made towards improving the situation of JPS, although it was also considered that it is difficult to convince young researchers to submit their manuscripts to journals having low impact factors. NS remarked that, unfortunately, impact factors do not necessarily reflect the quality, but rather the number of published papers in a journal. KJ concurred and highlighted the emerging “impact-neutral journals”, and further suggested that the Nobel-prized peptide scientist Morten Meldal should be invited to contribute with a publication in JPS. The EiC

of JPS mentioned that, in line with this suggestion, Morten Meldal had been invited to impart a special lecture in the 37EPS.

FC considered that the discussion should be revived on the possibility of turning JPS into an Open Access journal and promote it by offering APC waivers to special contributors, e.g., Mobility Fellowships grantees, speakers in the “Peptide Highlights” virtual events, winners of the “best oral communication” in national meetings, among other possibilities.

After a few more considerations, NS thanked PR for the great work that is being carried out by the Editorial Office of the JPS.

13 | UPDATE ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE 37EPS

The 37EPS co-organizer, AMP, joined the meeting at 17:30 h (CET), and was invited to update the EC members on the organization of the forthcoming European Peptide Symposium to be held in Florence, in August 2024. AMP went through the general information on the venue and dates of the event and communicated that the Nobel-prized Morten Meldal had accepted to convey a special lecture in the event.

NS asked for more details about the fine planning of the event, namely, the budget plan and registration fees. The other co-organizer of the 37EPS, PR, intervened, to inform that registration fees would be comparable to those applied in the 36EPS. PR and AMP further informed that the budget of the 36EPS had been shared with them to serve as guide for the budget plan of the 37EPS, expectedly to be similar. AMP added that the website of the 37EPS was already active, and only waiting for the signature of the agreement between the EPS and the hired PCO (OIC S. r. l.) to start introducing all relevant information.

NS outlined that the need for the EPS to sign such an agreement was unprecedented, but that constraints imposed by Italian law were understood, therefore the Society will sign such an agreement, provided missing information is timely supplied, namely: appendix 3 (mentioned but missing in the draft agreement), budget plan, and final values for registration fees. Moreover, the EPS needs to know how an eventual deficit or surplus will be dealt with by the PCO. PR agreed that a final version of the agreement including all information requested by the Society would be prepared together with the PCO. In addition, PR clarified that the choice of this PCO was based on its highly regarded level in the business, as recognized by several institutions, including the Tuscan regional authority on congress management. He further explained that the PCO is willing to take all the risk, i.e., no deficit will be charged either to the EPS or to the local organizers, if the Symposium is not successful; in return, any surplus will be equally taken by the PCO, which in the perspective of the local organizers, AMP and PR, is a fair trade. In view of this, FC pointed out that there could be the risk of the PCO downgrading the quality level of the event to ensure a minimum profit; AMP assured such a risk was negligible, as she would accompany the whole event personally, not only as the local organizer and

as a Professor of the University of Florence, but also as an Ambassador of *Regione Toscana*, therefore the PCO would hardly put its high reputation at stake.

KR pointed out that it would be advisable to add Annex 9 of the Bylaws to the agreement, so the PCO was fully aware of the organizers' duties. With the agreement of all EC members, NS informed that the EPS would share with the local organizers the revised version of the agreement with the PCO, along with the annex, and could sign it once the budget plan and registration fees were communicated.

14 | FEEDBACK FROM THE 36EPS

FC shared several impressions collected from the 36EPS, which would be helpful for the organization of the 37EPS and ensuing Symposia. The relevant issues were compiled in a document timely distributed to EC members (Annex III.3) and were mostly related to the ESCOM Mixer and to the poster sessions.

Regarding the Mixer, it was observed that the number of people actually participating was, once again, lower than that of confirmed participations; this implies not only a waste in regard to catering, but also a non-compliance to the obligations that EPS has to ESCOM especially concerning the ratio of junior/senior participants. NS suggested that, given that this is a recurrent problem, eventually "over-invitations" could be done in forthcoming Symposia.

Constraints identified in the poster sessions were related to their short duration, having lectures taking place afterwards; this prevented both participants and the poster evaluation committee to have enough time for a proper assessment of posters on display. It was suggested that placing poster sessions after all the lectures.

FC also pointed out that it is usually difficult to recruit members for the evaluation committee of poster/oral communications with a proper advance. NS agreed that jury members should be invited well in advance, and FC suggested that one possible way to do that would be to recruit them from the list of invited speakers.

As the discussion of this point of the agenda reached its end, AMP and PR left the meeting (at 18:47).

15 | ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EC members shared their impressions on the way the meeting progressed, and no other topics were advanced for discussion. Therefore, as nothing else had to be deliberated, and no other members asked to intervene, the EC meeting was closed at 19 h. The present minutes were elaborated, approved, and signed as they stand.

Part II 22/03/23, 17:30 to 19:00 h (CET)

Participants at start:

Norbert Sewald (NS), Krzysztof Rolka (KR), Fernando Formaggio (FF), Florine Cavelier (FC), Paula Gomes (PG), Knud Jensen (KJ), Pietro Bottani (PB), Paolo Gori

16 | WELCOME

The President (NS) welcomed all participants and opened the meeting. NS then invited PB to present the Financial Statements for 2022.

17 | APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE YEAR ENDED ON 31/12/2022

The Financial Statements of 2022 (Annexes II.1a,b) were thoroughly analyzed and consensually approved.

18 | APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

The Budget Plan for 2022 was consensually approved, given that it reflected both a realistic scenario and the need for the EPS to increase its support to initiatives aligned with its mission, in order to decrease the bank balance that remains high for a non-profit organization.

19 | AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED BY THE EPS AND THE PCO HIRED FOR THE 37EPS

NS invited PB to share his thoughts about the contents and implications of the agreement to be signed by the EPS and OIC S.r.l., the PCO hired by the local organizers (AMP and PR) of the 37EPS to be held in Florence, in 2024. After highlighting the revisions made on the original draft agreement sent by the PCO (Annex II.2), PB answered to all the doubts and queries posed by the EC members. Following a brief debate on this issue, it was agreed that pending issues would be discussed in the following day with the local organizers, namely, the need to know the budget plan and the registration fees prior to sign the agreement (see minutes of the EC Meeting Part III).

KR asked if this unprecedented situation would go against the Bylaws, and changes on the latter, if any, would require approval by the General Assembly. PB clarified that the Bylaws are not legally binding recommendations, therefore, neither their literal implementation, nor approval of any changes to them by the GA, are mandatory.

20 | CALL FOR THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY (EXTRAORDINARY)

In agreement with the Society's Statutes, the GA meeting was scheduled for the afternoon of May 12, 2023, via teleconference. The Secretary, PG, was committed to draw the attention of GA members, when sending the call for the meeting, in regard to the new rules for quorum and to the fact that members of the EC, including the President of the Society, are ceasing their mandates and have to be replaced with the approval of the GA.

As nothing else had to be deliberated, and no other members asked to intervene, this part of the EC meeting was closed at 19:00 h, and their minutes were elaborated, approved and signed as they stand.

Norbert Sewald, President of the
EPS

Paula Gomes, Secretary of
the EPS

Extract from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the European Peptide Society of May 12, 2023

On May 12, 2023 at 14:00 (CEST), the members of the Council of the European Peptide Society participated via Zoom, according to the attendance sheet herein attached, to deliberate on the following agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Election of the next Executive Committee members
4. Update on the organization of the 37th EPS and agreement to be signed by its PCO (OIC S.r.l.) and the EPS
5. Approval of the minutes of the GA meeting of August 2022
6. Reports of the EPS Officers: Secretary, Communication Officer, and Scientific Affairs Officer
7. Appointment of new members for the Scientific Affairs Committee
8. Report of the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Peptide Science
9. Approval of the revised Bylaws of the EPS
10. Any other business

The President, Norbert Sewald (NS), welcomed all participants and opened the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Christian Becker, Rosário González-Muñiz, and Gábor Tóth and presented by the Secretary, Paula Gomes (PG).

After all participants confirmed to be able to intervene in real time at the discussion via Zoom, and to have timely analyzed all documents that had been previously sent by the Secretary, all matters of the agenda were thoroughly discussed, with deliberations as follows.

Election of the next Executive Committee members

NS reminded the participants that the second mandate of three of the Society's Officers, namely, the President, the Communication Officer, and the Secretary, was ending. As such, a new Executive Committee (EC) should be elected. After a brief presentation of the proposed composition for this new EC (Annex 10), each of the proposed members were voted individually, with the following results:

Knud J. Jensen (President, new appointment) – unanimous approval (2 abstentions)

Florine Cavalier (Scientific Affairs Officer, re-appointment) – unanimous approval (1 abstention)

Fernando Formaggio (Treasurer, re-appointment) – unanimous approval (1 abstention)

Beate Koksich (Communication Officer, new appointment) – unanimous approval (1 abstention)

Beata Kolesinska (Secretary, new appointment) – unanimous approval (1 abstention)

The President-elect, Knud Jensen (KJ) intervened, to thank the vote of confidence given to him, commit to doing his best in his new appointment, and thank the previous Executive Committee for the excellent work carried out. The resigning President (NS), Communication Officer, Krzysztof Rolka (KR), and Secretary (PG), thanked the other members of the current EC for the opportunity to work together in such a productive, friendly, and supportive atmosphere. Luis Moroder (LM) thanked the current EC, particularly its President (NS) for the job done and congratulated the President-elect. NS congratulated the President-elect and all the members of the new EC, and informed that the formal start of their appointments will take place in the General Assembly to be held on the forthcoming 37th European Peptide Symposium (37EPS) to be held in Firenze, in late August 2024.

→ *Anna Maria Papini (AMP) joined the meeting at 14:20 h*

Update on the organization of the 37EPS and agreement to be signed by the Professional Conference Organizer (PCO) and the EPS

Invited by the President, AMP, co-organizer of the 37EPS, updated the participants on the ongoing organization of the event. She informed that the event website had been created and will soon offer all relevant information on the event, including a mention to the opening lecture by Morten Meldal, Nobel co-laureate in Chemistry in 2022. The President thanked AMP for her detailed presentation and advised that train connections (including night trains) to Firenze from diverse European destinations should be also highlighted on the website, given the growing adhesion of European institutions to use railway rather than flight connections whenever practicable. Next, the president explained the participants that there was the unprecedented need for the EPS to sign a contract (Annex 9) with the PCO hired by the local organizers, AMP and Paolo Rovero (PR), as these could not sign such contract on their own personal names, as per

Italian law. NS further explained that the contract was signed after a few issues were duly clarified, namely, that (i) all financial risk would fall on the PCO, not on the local organizers nor on the EPS, (ii) revenues to the EPS would be as determined by the Statutes and organization procedures would fully abide by Annex 9 of the Bylaws, and (iii) registration fees would not substantially differ from those applied in the 36EPS, with an eventual increment preferably being kept lower than the rate of inflation. After a brief discussion, NS thanked AMP and PR for their efforts in putting together the 37EPS, and invited AMP to remain in the meeting as a guest.

Minutes of the last General Assembly

The minutes (Annexes 1a&1b) of the General Assembly held in Sitges – Spain, on August 29, 2022, were approved by unanimity.

→ Knud Jensen (KJ) left the meeting at 15 h

Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer, Fernando Formaggio (FF), explained in detail all relevant documents regarding the financial situation of the Society (Annexes 2a-2d), including Bank Transactions and Financial Statements in 2022. FF then highlighted the excellent financial shape of the EPS, and the need for a careful reflection on the Budget Plan, towards a stronger investment on young peptide scientists, in harmony with the Society's mission and with its statute of being a non-profit organization. Ingrid Dijkgraaf asked what the maximum EPS savings should be, and FF explained that there was not a fixed amount, but this could be a matter of debate. NS further explained that unlike in some other European countries, Italy does not have such a maximum amount established, but that the EPS should work towards a sensible balance; FF added that taxes are not too high in Italy for non-profit organizations. NS reinforced the need to advertise the EPS Mobility Grants amongst junior peptide scientists and asked for the cooperation of all the participants towards this end. In this regard, NS briefly explained the updated rules to apply for the mobility fellowships and informed that the Scientific Affairs Officer, Florine Cavelier (FC) would further elaborate on that later. Following this brief discussion, the documents presented were voted and unanimously approved.

→ Michal Lebl (ML) temporarily left the meeting at 15:15 h

Report of the Secretary

The report of the Secretary (Annex 3), including information on (i) enquiries made onsite about the organization of the 36EPS, (ii) new members joining the Society in the past 12 months, and (iii) status on the representativity of countries in the General Assembly, was briefly discussed and next unanimously approved.

→ ML re-joined the meeting at 15:25 h

Report of the Communication Officer

The Communication Officer, KR, briefly presented his report (Annex 4), emphasizing his perception that there is a declining interest of EPS members on the Society's website and e-mails. For instance, only 34% of the recipients open the e-mails from EPS, and the number of downloads and accesses to the 36EPS Proceedings is impressively low. As such, KR considered that the Society needs to have a careful look at its future regarding both dissemination strategies, and Symposium Proceedings. ML asked to intervene, and advocated that – in his perspective, the Proceedings have passed their time. In his opinion, EPS participants simply do not willingly adhere to the additional work required to write a proceedings paper from a poster communication, and possibly the publication of a collection of posters as they were presented would have higher adhesion. Brief articles could be asked only to those imparting lectures. Steven Ballet (SB) mentioned that whatever option, some kind of incentive – such as having a DOI, would be necessary, otherwise people do not adhere as their contribution will not be findable through the usual search engines, like Web of Science and others. KR and ML informed that latest Proceedings had associated DOI, and ML further explained that this is something relatively easy to manage, whereas the true hurdle is that the traditional Proceedings mean an additional effort with little return. Marc Devocelle (MD) supported the concept of “collection of communications”, asking if there should be a template associated, to which NS added that contents should be searchable, and a written consent from authors for copyright transfer might be necessary. ML and FC believed that findability could be assured by, respectively, a proper editorial handling and definition of the number of searchable keywords. ML further considered that copyright transfer agreement might not be necessary, as once on display, poster communications become public and can even be photographed, on which FC agreed. NS further asked how Open Access should be assured, and both ML and KR replied that this is likely possible as currently done for the most recent editions of the Proceedings, whose copyright belongs to the Society – access via the EPS website to all EPS members. After this discussion ended, the report by KR was voted and approved unanimously.

→ SB left the meeting at 15:40 h

Report of the Scientific Affairs Officer

The Scientific Affairs Officer, FC, started by addressing the additional changes made to the requirements to apply for Mobility Fellowships, to mitigate the recurrent problem of having low or no applications. Briefly, now any PhD students and junior researchers (up to 3 years after PhD) in Peptide Science from anywhere in the world can apply, if sending and receiving supervisors/lab heads are EPS members for at least 12 months, and the applicant has applied for membership. A fellowship of up to 5,000 € may be granted upon application, depending on the duration of the stay, and will cover travel costs (economy class, receipts need to be provided) and an allowance of

1,000 € per month (or proportional value per diem), but not daily expenses. Only the student is to be reimbursed (not institutions or labs), after sending a proper report approved by the supervisors, to be published in the EPS website. These changes were consensually supported by all participants, and KR was kindly asked to update the information on this matter in the EPS website. FC then briefly presented her report (Annex 5a), presented the updated values for supporting regional meetings (Annex 5b) taking place from Jan 2023 onwards, highlighted the need to endure in supporting the Peptide Highlights initiative. After a brief discussion, the documents prepared by FC were voted and unanimously approved.

Appointment of new members for the Scientific Affairs Committee

NS informed the participants that, given that (i) two members of the Scientific Affairs Committee (SAC) chaired by FC had reached the term of their mandates, and (ii) one other member of the SAC resigned from that appointment, it was necessary to appoint new members. A proposal for the composition of the new SAC was presented (Annex 6), and after a brief conversation, was unanimously approved. FC thanked the participants for their confidence in re-conducting her as Chair of the SAC and informed she would notify the other members about their appointment.

Report of the *Journal of Peptide Science* Editor-in-Chief

The Editor-in-Chief (EiC) of *Journal of Peptide Science* (JPS), PR, made a brief presentation of status of the journal and of developments made over the last year, his first year as the EiC. PR then went through the main points of his report (Annex 7), that stronger efforts should be made to attract contributions from Europe and other Northwestern regions of the world, and that EPS members should motivate their group members to submit their works to JPS. PR further informed on ongoing and planned initiatives to raise the visibility and impact of JPS, namely,

- Editorial Initiatives (special issues)
 - now closed* - “Ulf Diederichsen Tribute Collection”; “Naples Workshop on Bioactive Peptides Special Issue”;
 - open to contributions* - “Peptide Talents Special Collection”; “Special Collection dedicated to Carlo Pedone”;
 - planned* - “Sorrento 2013-Sorrento 2023: a decade of Peptide Materials”; “Women in Peptide Science”.
- Planned events linking peptide science to industry

Industry&Start-up Session with round table “Starting a company”; session dedicated to famous peptide scientists through the ages (inviting the participation of companies that integrate, in their teams, researchers formerly affiliated to the groups of those top scholars in Peptide Science).

An open discussion took place where it was widely recognized that a strong and wise effort towards improving the situation of JPS is being made, despite there is still the need to promote initiatives to counteract the low adhesion of young researchers to submit their manuscripts to journals having low impact factors, although these do not necessarily reflect the quality of the publications. Once the discussion ended, the report of the EiC was voted and unanimously approved.

Approval of the revised Bylaws of the EPS

NS informed the participants that, because of the changes made to the Society's Statutes, and formally approved in the GA held on May 23, 2022, the Bylaws of the EPS were revised accordingly. Although not legally binding, the Bylaws are important guidelines for the actions within the purview of the Society and can be more easily adapted to small changes than the Statutes. The revised Bylaws (Annex 8) were next analyzed, voted, and unanimously approved.

Any other business

The president asked if there were any other matters to be addressed, and PG asked to intervene, just to highlight that, currently, the General Assembly lacks representatives from Finland and Norway, and that efforts to identify new ones were unsuccessful. KR suggested that future efforts to resolve this situation might be reaching out the organizers of previous Symposia in countries that lack a national representative (e.g., organizers of the 30th European Peptide Symposium, held in Helsinki in 2008). Alesia Tietze (AT), the national representative from Sweden, volunteered to try to reach out colleagues from those two countries to identify possible candidates.

As nobody else asked to intervene and nothing else had to be deliberated, the meeting was closed at 4:30 pm. The present minutes were approved as they stand.

Paula Gomes, Secretary of the
EPS

Norbert Sewald, President of
the EPS

Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the International Liaison Committee (ILC)

June 26th, 2023, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM (MST)

Powell Boardroom – Westin Kierland Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona

Participants: David Craik (Australia), Lara Malins (Australia), Paula Gomes (Portugal), Elisabetta Bianchi (Italy), Emma Watson (Australia), Gong Chen (China), Paramjit Arora (USA), Ved Srivastava (USA), Lauren Cline (USA), Joel Schneider (USA), Christian Becker (Austria), Rakesh Arora (India), Marina Rubini (Ireland), Futaki Shiroh (Japan), Jeong Kyu Bang (Korea), Soo Hyuk Choi (Korea), Younhee Shin (Korea)

Chair: Ved Srivastava, Past President of the American Peptide Society

1. Welcome

Ved Srivastava welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked everyone to sign in with name, email, and country. Each person introduces themselves and tells what country and Society they are representing

2. **Minutes from the 2022 ILC meeting in Sitges, Spain** - the minutes were provided and presented and attendees were reminded that a decision is needed for the 2029 IPS meeting location

3. Reports from Peptide Societies:

- Chinese Peptide Society - Gong Chen explained that the China International Peptide Academic Conference occurs every other year usually in even years
- Korea Peptide Society - Jeong Kyu Bang explained that Korea has KPPS Annual Symposium. The 2023 meeting had 250 attendees, and there are usually four or five international speakers out of 20 total speakers. Korea and Japan run collaborative meetings with English as the spoken language
- Austrian Peptide Symposium - Christian Becker explained the Austrian Peptide Symposium is held annually
- Indian Peptide Society - Rakesh Arora explained that India would like to be added to the rotation to host the International Peptide Symposium
- Japanese Peptide Society - Futaki Shiroh informed that the 60th Japanese Peptide Symposium will be held November 8–10, 2023
- European Peptide Society: The 36th European Peptide Symposium and 12th International Peptide Symposium held in Barcelona in August 2022 was very successful with around 800 attendees. Next EPS meeting will be held in Florence, Italy, August 25–30th, 2025 and chaired by Anna Maria Papini. The website is now active.

Beginning in April 2024 there will be new executive committee members with Knud Jenson serving as EPS President

- American Peptide Society: Joel Schneider remarked how wonderful it was to have many different Societies represented at the meeting. He encouraged the group to have regular communication to know when conferences are scheduled so as to avoid overlapping each other, and to be able to advertise every Society's conferences. Ved Srivastava suggested that each Society keeps international links up-to-date on the websites. The 28th American Peptide Symposium had over 500 registrations, which was an increase from the 2022 Whistler APS which had a low attendance. Joel explained that we plan to have future meetings in United States. In 2022 the Symposium was not profitable, but the 2023 Symposium looks like it will be profitable. There were over 250 poster presenters. It was suggested by others that it is easier for Europeans to travel to the East Coast. Having the APS in big cities, makes international travel easier. Japanese said they would be willing to travel to the East Coast for a meeting
- Australian Peptide Society – Next meeting is October 15–20, 2023 and is in conjunction with the 13th International Peptide Symposium. Currently there were 50 invited speakers. Sponsorship money has been hard to come by- back-to-back meetings has been hard. Would help to get back on an alternating year schedule. The Symposium will also have a Satellite meeting focused on solid-phase synthesis

4. Status of the forthcoming ILC meetings

- Discussion began on the 2029 ILC meeting location. Korean representatives said they would prefer 2029. Indian representative also would prefer 2029 because they have their meetings every other year, which would line up nicely with 2029. They are asking Korea to host the ILC meeting in 2030. Korean representatives agreed to discuss internally and get back to Ved Srivastava in the first week of July
- The 2031 IPS would be held in Australia. Australian representatives agreed to consult their Society about this
- UPDATE from July 5, 2023: Jeong Kyu Bang confirmed that Korea will host the 2030 20th IPS so that India can host the 2029 19th IPS meeting
- Paramjit Arora will share a live, Google document with the IPS location information

Current info about the upcoming International Peptide meetings:

2023 – 13th IPS, Australia

2024 – 14th IPS, Europe (Italy)

2025 – 15th IPS, USA

2026 – 16th IPS, China

2027 – 17th IPS, Japan

2028 – 18th IPS, Europe (France)

2029 – 19th IPS, India

2030 – 20th IPS, Korea

2031 – 21st IPS, Australia? (TBD)

5. **Any other Business** – Rakesh Arora (India) shared the idea to have host country offer travel grants for international delegates to come to the meeting. Others shared that covering flights would be expensive, but registration may be an option. Paramjit Arora shared that hosting a student would be easier for American Peptide Society Council

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Vapourtec introduce the revolutionary Peptide-Pilot solid phase synthesizer



Described as a “marvel in engineering” the Peptide-Pilot completes a full cycle in ~ 30 minutes at 30 mmol scale whilst producing up to 80% crude purity for GLP-1

Fast-Flow peptide synthesis combines the benefits of continuous flow with the robustness of Fmoc/tBu solid-phase peptide synthesis.

- Synthesis scale 2.0 mmol to 30.0 mmol
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- Continuous in-line analytics including resin solvation data and UV absorption data
- State of the art peptide synthesis software including sequence generator with automated addition of side chain(s) and real time analysis of synthesis quality
- Minimises solvent and reagent usage. Solvent usage typically less than 60 ml per mmol / cycle even when using PEG resins

