

## **36<sup>th</sup> European Peptide Symposium (EPS) & 12<sup>th</sup> International Peptide Symposium (IPS)**

Postponed two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 36<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Peptide Symposium (EPS) took place in Sitges (Spain), from August 28<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022. Since its first edition in 1958, the EPS which is the main activity organized by the European Peptide Society, has been celebrated biennially, attracting numerous scientists from all over the world. "From Peptides to the World" was the theme of the 2022 EPS, and covered a wide range of topics, from peptide structure and synthesis to bioactive and therapeutic peptides, or even peptide nanotechnology and delivery. The 36<sup>th</sup> EPS edition is the first presential meeting of the peptide community after COVID-19 pandemic. Prof. Meritxell Teixidó had the honor to be the Chair of the event. In addition to the oral communications, the symposium included poster sessions, coffee breaks and commercial exhibitions.

The meeting was scheduled for five days, starting on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> and finishing on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup>. After the Opening Ceremony on Sunday, the Leonidas Zervas Award and the Josep Rudinger Memorial Award, supported by the European Peptide Society, were given to Prof. Giles Subra and Prof. Ali Tavassoli and to Prof. Herbert Waldmann, respectively, for their outstanding contributions to the peptide field. The awardees had the opportunity to present their interesting work in one hour lectures.

On Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, the first two sessions of the meeting were focused on synthetic chemistry of peptides, amino acids, and proteins. During these sessions, Dr. Rosario González Muñoz and Dr. Helma Wennemers, as invited speakers, talked about amino acid-derived- $\beta$ -lactams and synthetic collagen peptides, respectively. After lunch, the conference re-started with a peptide-sugar, -lipid, -nucleic acid and -drug conjugates session. These talks were focused on new tools for the discovery of antibiotics, as well as on tools for the diagnosis and treatment of different diseases. After that, poster session took place in a pleasant atmosphere, with cheese and wine for attendees to taste. Poster session provided a great opportunity for scientist to discuss the outcomes in the peptide world, and for networking. Session four on structural and conformational studies of peptides was the last of the day.

The first session on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> took the public directly into emerging peptide-based technologies. Among the communications, the one given by Prof. Christian Heinis, from the laboratory of therapeutic proteins and peptides (Switzerland), was remarkable. He talked about

the development of therapeutics based on peptide macrocycles using novel biological and chemical tools. After the coffee break, it was the turn for peptide therapeutics and clinical applications, including a talk on the SARS coronavirus peptide-based therapy, by Dr. Yoshio Hayashi. In the afternoon, two mini symposiums took place in which young researchers had the opportunity to present their work. A variety of topics were treated and Kathrin Lang was awarded with the Miklós Bodanszky Award.

Several leisure activities were scheduled on Wednesday morning for conference attendees to enjoy the wonderful views of Sitges. Activities included a vineyard visit and wine tasting, the Palau Maricel visit, a walking tour, and even a football match. There was also a roundtable on scale-up and production of peptides. After the lunch, Prof. Hiroaki Suga, from the University of Tokio, gave a talk entitled *The RaPID system for pseudo-natural products*. There were also two other invited communications. The second poster session, with ham and wine tasting, was also carried out in the afternoon.

Industry played a leading role on Thursday morning session. This session was an excellent opportunity to know in depth the work developed by the companies, and to look for future collaborations and projects. Companies, mostly dedicated to the synthesis of peptides and the development of therapeutic peptides, were from United States, Germany, and France. The rest of the sessions of the day were focused on bioactive peptides (antimicrobial, cancer, metabolism, neuropeptides, vaccines, etc.). In the night, the dinner of the event took place at the Melià Sitges hotel, with typical Spanish food for the guests to taste.

On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> the last two sessions took place, with ten communications on peptide prodrugs, targeting, delivery and uptake, and peptide materials and catalysts for the nanobiosciences.

The ceremony was closed by Meritxell Teixidó. The 36<sup>th</sup> EPS included a total of 77 oral presentations, including awardees and invited speakers, more than 450 posters, and the presence of important commercial exhibitors. It was a very grateful experience for me, and it gave me the opportunity to know a little bit more of peptides, a field yet to explore. I invite you to enjoy the next EPS, that will take place in August 2024 in Florence (Italy).

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