

Conference Report

3rd European Young Chemist's Meeting

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The 3rd European Young Chemist's Meeting (EYCheM) took place as a virtual event from the 19th to the 21st January, 2022. The conference was hosted by the youngSCS, EYCN and UniFr. Originally planned to take place in Fribourg in 2021, the conference had to be postponed to 2022 and was finally held online.

Despite the conference happening in a virtual setting, the scientific program remained unchanged. Unfortunately, on-site events, such as the Swiss Snow Day, the visits to the Cailler chocolate manufacturer and to the famous cheese-city of Gruyère had to be canceled. With 145 participants from 25 different countries – based on their institutions – the conference had one of the most diverse EYCheM attendances to date, which resulted in long and fruitful discussions.

After the official opening of the conference, the first plenary talk was given by Prof. Bettina V. Lotsch from LMU Munich. She presented her research on the modification of crystallinity and thermal stability of COFs, zirconium-cluster-based MOFs and the comparison of Liebig's Melon and PHI. The second plenary talk was held by Prof. Omar M. Yaghi, the pioneer of reticular chemistry. He presented his recent discoveries on the applications of COFs and MOFs for water harvesting. The initial results of these MOFs showed the ability of capturing drinkable water from desert climates. Next day, there were two talks, namely by Profs Cafer T. Yavuz and Miriam M. Unterlass. First, Prof. Yavuz presented his research on CO₂ conversion by nanocatalysts. Then, Prof. Unterlass illustrated the use of hot water as a solvent for the synthesis of different classes of organic polymers and small molecules in a process called 'hydrothermal synthesis'. On the final day, Prof. Michael Grätzel talked about molecular photovoltaics and artificial photosynthesis.

Since EYCheM is a young chemist's meeting, there was a strong focus on student presentations. With 20 oral contributions and 60 posters, this was quite a success. Although most aligned with the research interests of the speakers, EYCheM was open to all fields and hosted a plethora of presentations ranging from computational to organic chemistry and from materials to chemical biology. To

stimulate discussions, several breakout-rooms were available as well as a virtual poster session on Gather.Town. Prizes were awarded for the best posters and the best oral presentations as follows: Best oral presentation prize: G. Chanteux (UCL), J. Woods (UZH), A. Ruggi (UniFr), T. Pham (EPFL) and M. Mandigma (Universität Regensburg). Best poster prize: S. Trenker (MPI Stuttgart), L. Gallego (UZH), T. Goossens (UCL), S. Thiele (EPFL) and E. Peterson (John Hopkins University). All the above prizes were sponsored by SCNAT.

MDPI sponsored another best poster prize which was awarded to S. Trenker (MPI Stuttgart).

Special sponsor prizes were awarded to S.-J. Kim (KAUST, sponsored by UniFr), J. Barham (Universität Regensburg, sponsored by EYCN), J. Oliver-Meseguer (UPV-CSIC, sponsored by youngSCS), J. Karmakar (Ariel University, sponsored by NCCR Bioinspired Materials), M. Becker (UniBas, sponsored by AMI), W. Diment (University of Oxford, sponsored by Firmenich), O. Dumele (Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, sponsored by Helvetica), G. Rosetto (University of Oxford, sponsored by MPI), D. Kiebalá (AMI, sponsored by Chemistry Europe), L. Junkers (University of Copenhagen, sponsored by Merck) and C. Esen (MPI Potsdam, sponsored by Innomedica).

The conference concluded with three different workshops. The workshop on science communication given by Dr. Fernando Gomollon-Bel introduced attendees to various ways on how to communicate science and emphasized why it is so important that we, as scientists, share our scientific discoveries with the non-scientific community. Thereafter, there was a round-table discussion on diversity in science. Dr. Claudia Bonfio moderated the discussion with Dr. Rachel Hevey, Prof. Jovana Milic, Dr. Jess Wade and Prof. Tom Welton on why diversity is necessary in chemistry and how to increase it. The last workshop concerning publishing was presented by Dr. Ganna Lyashenko from Chemistry Europe. She provided insights on what editors look for in a submitted manuscript and tips for authors before submitting a scientific article.

Herein, we would like to kindly acknowledge the conference sponsors for their financial generosity, as well as both the scientific and the organizing committee for their continuous efforts and stamina, without whom this conference would not have been possible. Special thanks also to all the participants and lecturers who made this memorable conference a success. We look forward to the 4th EYCheM in The Hague, The Netherlands!

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Fig. 1. Pictures of the conference.