

Editorial

EuCheMS Organic Division, created in 2007 by Professor Jay Siegel, is currently composed of 27 member societies and has gained international recognition within the chemistry community. Since its creation, the Organic Division has been pro-active at various levels and was involved in the organization of numerous satellite symposia at the European Chemical Congresses; the Division also endorses on a regular basis a series of well-established and high-profile Conferences and Schools.

However, the EuCheMS Organic Division hallmark activity is the creation of the Young Investigators Workshop (YIW) to further promote and recognize academic excellence in organic chemistry within (and outside) Europe. This annual event is deliberately held close to either the European Chemical Congress (EuCheMS EEC) or the European Symposium on

Organic Chemistry (ESOC), as we encourage the attendees of the YIW to attend these events. The first YIW was held in Liblice on from July 16–18, 2009, in connection with ESOC 2009 in Prague. The second workshop took place in Regensburg, Germany, from August 27–29, 2010, in association with ECC3 in Nürnberg. The third event in the series was pooled with ESOC 2011 on the Island of Crete, Greece, from July 7–10. Last year, the YIW was held in Vienna, Austria, from August 23–26, just preceding the ECC4 in Prague.

For the workshops, each EuCheMS member society nominates up to two young investigators identified as rising stars in their respective country; participation in the workshop is typically limited to 30 attendees, as this restricted number ensures the highest quality output as well as interactive exchanges between participants. In 2011, Jay Siegel enhanced the YIW with the participation of the American Chemical Society; and a year later the workshop was extended to Asia (Japan, China, Thailand, and Singapore) and South America (Brazil). This year, we extended this European workshop to the Canadian Chemical Society as well as several industrial speakers. Notably, the event is attended by senior members of the Organic Division who offer mentoring, advice and help



on not only science but also other aspects of an academic career. The Young Investigators Workshop is currently one of the most influential networking events for academics at an early stage of their career.

The 2013 YIW held in Marseille just before ESOC-2013 gathered 24 young investigators from 23 countries, including representatives from the USA, Canada, and China. The local organizers, five young researchers from the Institut des Sciences Moléculaires de Marseille (Damien Bonne, Cyril Bressy, Xavier Bugaut and Olivier Chuzel) led by Gaëlle Chouraqui, did a great job and ensured that everything ran smoothly. Michael Schnürch, chair of the previous YIW, was helpful in sharing his experiences and served as a mentor during the workshop. The scientific program was highly impressive, with contributions spanning the entire field of organic chemistry. Organic synthesis was the central topic, with contributions dealing with new reactivity, new reagents, and new methodology as well as applications to natural product synthesis; but such diverse fields as medicinal chemistry, supramolecular chemistry, dynamic combinatorial chemistry, artificial photosynthesis, chemical bonding, and new synthetic technology were also represented. Contributions from three participants from industry provided more applied aspects and gave further insights to the discussions. Every single talk was impressive and it was a pleasure to meet so many enthusiastic and excellent young researchers. Each lecture was followed by intense discussions, which continued during coffee breaks, but there was also ample time for more relaxed conversations and, of course, excellent French food. Several collaborations were initiated during the two intensive days of the workshop, and several participants planned visits to their new colleagues. A large number of the participants joined ESOC-13, which started the following day, and some of them got the opportunity to present their results in front of a wider audience.

Once again, the benefit of an event which provides the opportunity for young scientists to meet and network was demonstrated, and that the workshop was highly appreciated was clearly expressed by all the participants. What may be even more important is that this event contributes to promoting European science and European organic chemistry – judging from what was presented

during this year's YIW, the new generation of scientists seems prepared to tackle future challenges. To illustrate the success of this workshop and the enthusiasm of the participating young researchers, see below some of their comments received after the workshop:

"I want to thank you for inviting me to the Young Investigators Workshop this summer. It was such a great experience. I was so invigorated intellectually, and I also made some great friends. This Workshop is so valuable to young faculty, and I hope you will continue it for many years."

"I would like to thank you all for a wonderful meeting you organized! It was great to meet so many talented people and see the great city of Marseille. I have not been a part of such a high level scientific meeting for a long time. Thank you being great hosts."

"The YIW was a great experience for me and that good experience has been followed up by the very good ESOC conference! It was so interesting and nice to meet and interact with so many excellent researchers from all over Europe, USA, and China. I have established many new contacts during these days. I would like to thank you for letting me be a part of this great meeting for young researchers."

"Thank you for selecting me to attend this meeting. I had a wonderful time and met many new contacts and friends."

"I would also like to echo the comments of the other participants and thank you all for organizing and running such a fantastic meeting. Your exceptional efforts to make us all feel welcome in Marseille were very much appreciated, as was the excellent scientific program you assembled."

We are grateful to see this year's Young Investigators Workshop participants sharing their most recent work with the readers of *SYNLETT* in this dedicated Special Issue.

Professor Ilan Marek
EuCheMS Head
of the Organic Division

Professor Christina Moberg
EuCheMS Member
of the Organic Division

October 2013