

## Meet the Executive Committee

Lesley Rhodes (President)  
Rex Tyrrell (President-Elect)  
Evelyne Sage (Past President)  
Francesco Ghetti (Treasurer)  
Francesca Giuntini (Secretary)  
Santi Nonell (Officer)  
David Russell (Officer)  
Patricia Vicendo (Officer)  
Norbert Lange (Officer)  
Amparo Faustino (Auditor)  
Kristian Berg (Auditor)  
Jacques Piette (Chair, PPS  
Ownership Board)

Words from the President

## London Heathrow, January 2014: Executive Committee delivers ESP Strategy for the biennium 2013-2015



Once the winter holidays were over, the members of the Executive Committee (EC) got together in Heathrow to plan the activities for the two years to come.

This was our main meeting after the debriefing that followed the XV Congress in Liege in September 2013.

Two days on, we were looking at a packed calendar, populated by major events, such as the **Photobiology School 2014** and the **ESP Congress 2015**, and by the preparative activities leading to these. The roadmap for 2013-2015 is inspired by our strategy, which focuses on enhancing

the visibility of ESP at various levels.

One of our aims is to raise the profile of the ESP in the wider scientific community; to this end, we will relay with national or international scientific Societies whose interests overlap, if only partially, with our own. To facilitate this, the ESP will award enhanced fellowships to its younger members to encourage their attendance to overseas meetings.

Promoting education and training will further our outreach: we will renew the programme of the Photobiology School to embrace emerging aspects of photobiology, and,

as of this year, an [ESP supplement to the PhD Degree](#) will be available for School attendees who pass the final exam.

We are also firmly committed to keeping contact with all ESP members: our approach to this is a regular newsletter, edited by the ESP Secretary Francesca Giuntini, conveying the highlights, the updates, and the events from the world of photobiology, from "in-house" or from around the globe, to your mailbox,

We hope you will enjoy the first issue, and will watch this space in the future.

## Inside This Issue

- 1 From the President. The EC plans strategy and activities for 2013-2015 in Heathrow.
- 2 Snapshots. A journey in Australia (AOCF 2013). ESP Photobiology School 2014
- 3 In the Spotlight. Young Investigator Awards at the last ESP Congress in Liege.
- 4 Catching up. News from out and about

## School time

The success of the Photobiology School launched in 2010 was reinforced in 2012, encouraging us to turn this experience into a regular biannual event. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the School was held in the picturesque town of Bressanone, Italy, (picture below), from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2014. This event, which highlights the strong commitment of the ESP to education, is designed for post-graduate students looking for an "initiation" to photobiology, and for more experienced researchers who wish to enhance their knowledge of the field.

The Faculty Members covered a full range of established and developing aspects of photobiology in the short time span of 5 days. The School, financially subsidised by the ESP, awards a certificate to those students who take the optional final exam, allowing them to apply for an ESP supplement to their Ph.D. degree.



## A journey in Australia

"Life on a sun drenched planet" was the captivating title of the 6<sup>th</sup> Asia and Oceania Conference on Photobiology (AOCP), for the first time in Sydney, Australia, in November 2013.

Organising Co-Presidents **Scott Byrne** for Medicine and **Min Chen** for Plants, accompanied by **Nick Girolamo** as organising member for Vision, provided the 3 main streams for the scientific content, which attracted much original work and high attendance.

The themes merged each afternoon into a super-session with topics that could not fail to interest all photobiologists including "**The bionic eye**" and "**The health benefits of sunlight**".

Delegates enjoyed a warm welcome and a very well-organised event, including a boat trip across Sydney Harbour for the Gala dinner at the exceptional location of Taronga Zoo.

The many ESP members at-

tending found it definitely worthwhile to make the long-haul flight to the conference, including **Lesley Rhodes** as President and **Rex Tyrrell** as President-Elect of the ESP.

ESP younger members were encouraged to present their work at the AOCP. This included an invitation to lecture to post-doctoral scientist **Suzanne Pilkington** (Manchester, UK) who presented her work on dietary omega-3 fatty acids in protection against UV-induced inflammation and immunosuppression in humans.

*(In the photograph, left to right: **Rex Tyrrell** and **Lesley Rhodes** meeting with **Tetsuro Majima** (Past-President of AOSP), **Min Chen** (President of AOSP) and **Gary Halliday** (Sydney, Australia).*

## Young Investigator Awards

Meet Katie Dixon and Abhishek Garg, recipients of the Young Investigator Award at the last ESP congress (Liege, 2013).

The XV Congress of the ESP, held in Liege (Belgium) in September 2013 saw two young researchers jointly awarded the ESP YIA.

Dr Abhishek Garg from the University of Leuven (Belgium) and Dr Katie Dixon from the University of Sydney (Australia) gave talks on their cutting-edge work. Both Abhishek and Katie worked on highly success-

ful projects that hold potential for significant outreach and impact for the public.

Abhishek and Katie have been repeatedly awarded prestigious prizes from the early days of their careers.

We are confident that it won't be long before the Photobiology community will benefit from further contributions by these two talented young scientists.

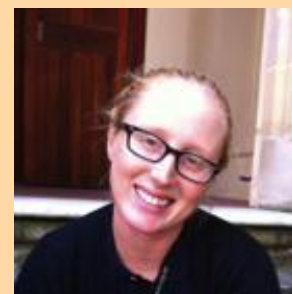
### Abhishek Garg

Abhishek is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Cell Death Research and Therapy (CDRT) Laboratory of the University of Leuven (Belgium). His work focuses on the discovery of new inducers of anti-tumour immunity and immunogenic cell death (ICD), through discovering new molecular determinants of ICD, new danger signals, new immunogenicity biomarkers/correlates and non-DAMP based danger signalling patterns induced by chemotherapy, radiotherapy or PDT.



Abhishek's efforts towards enabling the translation of ICD-based (PDT-induced) DC vaccines towards the clinic, granted him Belgian - 'FWO-Mckinsey & Company Prize 2012' for the best PhD thesis with social and economic relevance and demonstrable practical implementation.

Katie  
Dixon



Katie is a Cancer Institute New South Wales Early Career Research Fellow at the University of Sydney (Australia).

Katie's research focuses on unraveling the mechanisms of photoprotection by vitamin D compounds. From her studies it emerged that such compounds inhibit the formation of squamous cell carcinomas in hairless mice following long term UV exposure. Katie's research has also shown that vitamin D compounds modulate DNA damage and immune suppression caused by UV exposure, and that they mediate photoprotective effects through a non-genomic pathway.

Katie was also involved in studies carried out in humans, which showed that topical application of an active vitamin D metabolite immediately after irradiation results in reductions in DNA damage and sunburn cells. These exciting studies may pave the way to novel skin cancer preventative agents (e.g., low calcaemic non-genomic vitamin D compounds and other vitamin D-like compounds).

Katie became a member of the ESP in 2007 as a PhD student, and since then she has contributed both as an author and reviewer for *Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences*.

## The road to Aveiro



Photo: J. M. Pereira

The XVI Congress of the ESP might still seem far away in time (31<sup>st</sup> Aug - 4<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2015), but in Aveiro the Local Organising Committee warms up the engines.

While the webpage of the Congress is under construction, the topics of the Symposia have been chosen by the

Organising Committee, following the suggestions of the Scientific Advisory Board. The Congress will feature a total of 26 symposia, distributed over 4 full days, covering the latest achievements across the field of Photobiology, from PDT to photosensory biology, to photomedicine. Following their success and warm reception in 2013, we have increased the number of keynote lectures, and rearranged the schedule to ensure all can attend these inspiring talks.

Looking forward to seeing you in Aveiro!

## ESP members crossing borders

Evelyne Sage (photo), the Past-President of the ESP, has accepted an invitation to become the Secretary General of the International Union of Photobiology (IUPB). She



will take up her new role in autumn 2014.

## New website for the ESP



We are pleased to announce the release of our new website:

[www.photobiology.eu](http://www.photobiology.eu)

The layout of the site has been completely redesigned for faster browsing and easier access to information.

A regularly updated page will keep members and non-members informed on the events and initiatives organised by us and our sister societies in Photobiology.

## Dates for your diary

- [XV World Congress on Cancers of the Skin](#): 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> September 2014, Edinburgh (Scotland, U.K.)
- [International Congress on Photobiology](#): 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> September 2014, Córdoba (Argentina).
- [10<sup>th</sup> International Symposium Photodynamic Therapy and Photodiagnosis in Clinical Practice](#), October 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 2014, Bressanone (Italy).
- [XXV IUPAC Symposium on Photochemistry](#), July 13<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 2014, Bordeaux (France).

**EYE on ESP** is your newsletter: [contact us](#) if you have any news or events that you wish to share with the ESP community