



Newsletter No. 102

5th World Congress on Electroporation – A Month Later: A Recap of an Unforgettable Event

Newsletter by: Francesca Apollonio, Sapienza University of Rome, Italy
Caterina Merla, ENEA, Italy
francesca.apollonio@uniroma1.it; caterina.merla@enea.it

Just over a month ago, from 15 to 19 September 2024, the 5th World Congress on Electroporation was hosted at the Faculty of Engineering at Sapienza University of Rome. This event attracted scientists and researchers from over 30 countries, all focused on the study of electroporation and its wide-ranging applications in areas like medicine, biology, biotechnology, food processing, and environmental sectors.

The Congress began with a lively Opening Ceremony held in the magnificent Basilica of San Pietro in Vincoli. Attendees included representatives from the organizing institutions, ENEA and Sapienza University, along with officials from the City of Rome. The ceremony featured a brief presentation on the church's rich history and its most famous artwork, Michelangelo's Moses. The evening culminated in an enchanting string quartet performance, showcasing music from around the globe to symbolize unity and peace among nations, followed by a cocktail reception in the Cloister of the Engineering Faculty at Sapienza University.

This year's edition introduced exciting new initiatives, many of which were tailored specifically to engage young researchers. One of the highlights was the 3-Minute Thesis competition, inspired by the format from the University of Queensland, which gave a platform to PhD students and support their capacity to effectively explain their research in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience. Another new initiative was the Senior to Young Scientists (SENIOR2YS) Meeting Corner. This informal gathering allowed senior researchers to engage in direct conversations with younger scientists over a beer, creating a relaxed atmosphere for idea exchange and collaboration. We hope this initiative inspired new research ideas and fostered partnerships for the future. From the social side a notable event for early-career attendees was the Young Night at the Sanctuary in Rome, which provided young researchers with a chance to network, forge connections, and potentially cultivate fruitful collaborations for their future endeavours.

Another noteworthy addition to the 5th World Congress was the Industry Panel (<https://bit.ly/3BZboaZ>), which this year addressed the crucial topic of Cardiac Pulse Field Ablation Gaps and Challenges. This "hot" issue in the scientific community brought together leaders from academia and industry to discuss future challenges and the necessity of collaboration to advance industrial developments in this vital field. The panel was organized and moderated by Damijan Miklavčič.

Among the more established events, the Educational Session successfully returned for its second edition. We are grateful to all the speakers and to the chair for expertly moderating the session. This initiative offered valuable insights to new attendees into the various applications of electroporation and its future developments.

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Newsletter Editor

Damijan Miklavčič
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
damijan.miklavcic@fe.uni-lj.si

Newsletter Technical Editor and Website Administrator

Samo Mahnič-Kalamiza
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
samo.mahnic-kalamiza@fe.uni-lj.si

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Regarding the scientific programme (<https://bit.ly/4dZYJ7>), we had the privilege of featuring eleven exceptional plenary speakers offering their expertise in electroporation. We are deeply grateful for their insightful presentations, which stimulated lively discussions between the speakers and attendees. A special thank goes to the organizers of the Special Sessions, which covered a broad range of topics and saw enthusiastic participation and valuable exchanges. We also extend our sincere appreciation to all session chairs for their punctuality and precision, which ensured the smooth execution of a packed program.

On the social front, the traditional Congress Dinner took place at the stunning Palazzo Brancaccio in Rome. Following a delightful meal, many attendees hit the dance floor, making it a wonderful evening to strengthen bonds and further unite our community.

During the dinner, we had the pleasure of honouring students awarded with Travel Grants, generously supported by the Doreen J. Putrah Cancer Research Foundation, with essential contributions from Richard Heller, Bioelectricity, and Design MDPI. Additionally, the section editors of the Handbook on Electroporation were acknowledged for their dedicated efforts.

Among the prestigious awards presented during the Congress, the Justin Teissié Award was proudly bestowed upon Felipe Maglietti from Argentina. Felipe delivered an inspiring plenary lecture on Thursday afternoon, during which he shared insights from his distinguished career and highlighted his significant contributions to the field. His pioneering work has earned him this well-deserved recognition, marking a key milestone in his professional journey.

During the Closing Ceremony, 22 awards were presented to exceptional students and young investigators in four categories spanning from basic science to environmental applications of electroporation technology (<http://bit.ly/4e7igiT>). We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the winners for their dedication and hard work! A special thank you also goes to the Award Committee and its coordinator for their tireless efforts in selecting the deserving recipients.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all our sponsors (institutional <https://bit.ly/3UnuKx2> and industrial <https://bit.ly/40dcF8C>) and exhibitors (<https://bit.ly/3Upz0qZ>), whose unwavering support was acknowledged during the Congress Dinner. Their contributions were vital in bringing this event to life and in ensuring its success. Their generosity has played a fundamental role in enabling us to organize a Congress fostering innovation, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas across the field of electroporation. The commitment of our sponsors and exhibitors has helped us provide a platform for meaningful discussions, groundbreaking presentations, and invaluable networking opportunities. We are sincerely appreciative of their dedication to the community and look forward to continuing fruitful partnerships in the future.

This Congress was undoubtedly filled with dynamic sessions, exciting awards, and memorable social events—including a special mention for the brave participants of the Takis Race. Its success is a testament to the exceptional efforts of the Local Organizing Committee, the voluntary student staff and the technical team of the Sapienza University, to whom we owe our deepest gratitude. We are also immensely thankful for the enthusiastic participation of our entire scientific community, from young researchers and senior professors to industry leaders. Together, they contributed to creating an inspiring and collaborative atmosphere that made this Congress truly remarkable.

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