

## Rapporteur Report

<b>Partnership:</b>	ESF/EMBO
<b>Conference Title:</b>	Symbiomes: systems biology of host microbiome interactions
<b>Dates:</b>	5 – 10 June 2015
<b>Chair:</b>	Chair: Dr. <a href="#">Claudio Donati</a> , Fondazione Edmund Mach, Italy Co-chair: Prof. Duccio Cavalieri, University of Florence, Italy Co-chair: Dr. Marco Soriani, Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics, Italy
<b>Rapporteur:</b>	Martin Röllinghoff

### General Comments

The Chair Prof. Claudio Donati, Fondazione Edmund Mach, Italy, together with the Co-chairs Prof. Duccio Cavalieri, University of Florence Italy and Prof. Marco Soriani, GSK, Italy and a highly respected international faculty have come up with an excellent program of lectures and short talks, which covered almost all major areas of “Systems biology of host-microbiome interactions”.

In 5 sessions the following topics:

- The healthy human commensal flora and its alterations
- Homeostasis between microbiota and immune system
- Host-microbiome interactions
- Environmental microbiomes
- Therapeutic and preventive manipulation of microbiota

### Quality of the Scientific Programme, Presentations and Discussion

Many very excellent presentations were given by the invited faculty. The sessions included 20 selected short 15 minutes-talks of younger scientists. 12 posters were on display. The best short talk, the best poster and the most active questioner were honoured by a special award. Of specific impact were three well organized Round tables, each with a well-chosen title.

### Informal Networking and Exchange; Atmosphere

Of great interest to all scientists were the vivid discussions in particular by the younger participants after the talks and during coffee breaks. The outstanding faculty by their way of discussing the various topics was able to attract and to fascinate almost every participant.

There was ample space for informal and easy exchange of information and the young scientists were well integrated.

### Balance of Participants

53 participants out of 18 countries attended the meeting (36 Post-Docs and senior scientists, and 17 invited speakers). The delegates were mostly from Europe, but also from the US, Canada, Australia, Argentina, Korea, Singapore and Tanzania.

### **Outlook and Future Developments**

The participants, many of which do collaborate already with groups in Europe and the US, look forward to find new financial support for a meeting in 2 years' time, as ESF will not be able to do so.

### **Follow-up**

I am sure that after the intensive discussions further scientific collaborations will come about.

### **Organisation and Infrastructure**

The Symposium took place at the Dom Polonii Hotel, which is set in an old castle on the banks of the lovely river Narew in Pultusk, Poland. Accommodation was very good and catering excellent. However access to Internet (WI-FI) was available only in some places. In the hotel equipment for outdoor sporting activities was available. Volley ball was quite popular. The beauty of the place is, that all participants have to stay at the place of the conference. So there were lots of opportunities for intensive discussions.

The participants were very satisfied with the on-site administration and support.

### **Summary & Overall Assessment**

In summery I feel, the Symposium was a great success, because it was very well organized. The faculty was extremely well selected. It was good to see how well the young people discussed and interacted and how many female scientists took active part in the meeting. At the end of symposium the participants were asked to rank the lecturers, the posters, the poster sessions, accommodation, catering, etc.

The modest ESF money was well spent.

## About ESF Research Conferences

### The Scheme

This conference is part of the European Science Foundation's (ESF) Research Conferences Scheme. The Scheme aims to promote scientific excellence and frontier level research throughout Europe and the rest of the world. Conferences aim to provide leading scientists and other participants, including young researchers, with a platform to present their work, to discuss the most recent developments in their fields of research and to network.

### Conference Format

The core activities should be based on lectures by invited speakers, who are leaders in their respective fields, followed by extensive discussion periods. An informal exchange of ideas, both inside and outside the lecture room, should be encouraged, and the number of sessions in the daily timetable should be limited in order to allow sufficient time for interaction between the participants. Time should be reserved for a 'Forward Look Plenary Discussion' about future developments in the field.

Participants can take all their meals together to encourage further contact and networking, which can be particularly beneficial to younger researchers who may be less outspoken in the formal lecture room setting. In order to gain optimum benefit from the conference, both the speakers and the participants are asked to stay for the whole duration.

### Division of Tasks

The Conference Chair is responsible for ensuring the quality of the scientific programme through the selection and invitation of speakers, and through the selection of participants.

The ESF Conferences Unit is responsible for managing all the logistical aspects of the conference organisation, including the provision of an on-site secretariat.

Further information: [www.esf.org/conferences](http://www.esf.org/conferences)