

## **Conference Report:**

### **7<sup>th</sup> Austrian Peptide Symposium, Vienna, 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2017**

The 7<sup>th</sup> Austrian Peptide Symposium was held at the Van-Swieten Auditorium in Vienna on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2017 and was co-organized by Christian Gruber (Austrian representative to the EPS, Medical University of Vienna) and Christian Becker (University of Vienna). The event was held as a one-day symposium. It included invited lectures given by renowned national and international speakers, short oral presentations, which were selected from the submitted abstracts, and a poster session covering manifold aspects of peptide research. Overall, more than 70 participants from different European and overseas countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Israel and Serbia) attended the symposium. This mixture resulted in a truly international spirit of the meeting, which started-off with a speaker's dinner on the eve of the symposium.

The morning session focused on bioactive peptides: Roderich Süßmuth (Technical University of Berlin, Germany) held the opening lecture on ribosomal and non-ribosomal peptides from bacteria and fungi. JanTytgat (KU Leuven, Belgium) continued on topic and described the pharmacology and bioactivity of novel peptides from marine worm. The first session closed with a presentation of Lachlan Rash (University of Queensland, Australia) on spider toxin peptides, their pharmacology and development as research tools and drugs.

The second morning session concentrated on chemical protein synthesis and included the lectures of Norman Metanis (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel) on selenium chemistry for peptide research, followed by the lecture of Oleg Melnyk (CNRS Lille, France) on novel sulfur and selenium based chemistries for the total synthesis of proteins.

The poster session, which was held during the lunch break, featured 15 posters that were presented by PhD students and early-career researchers. There was also a poster award competition for the two best poster presentations.

The first afternoon session included six excellent short oral contributions selected from the submitted abstracts. Talks were given by Meder Kamalov (University of Vienna, Austria), Peter Keov (University of Queensland, Australia), Thomas Schlatzer (Graz University of Technology, Austria), Somnath Mukherjee (Indian Institute of Science), Vesna Stanojlovic (University of Salzburg, Austria) and Daniela Heilos (Medical University of Vienna, Austria).

The second and last afternoon session covered emerging technologies in peptide science with three lectures. The first speaker, Martina Marchetti-Deschmann (Technical University of Vienna, Austria) reported on the usefulness of MALDI mass spectrometry imaging. Then Monika Świąntek (European Life Science Technical Specialist, CEM GmbH) presented innovative techniques and tools for solid-phase peptide synthesis.

The scientific part of the symposium ended with the announcement of the two winners of the poster award competition: Peter Keov (University of Queensland, Australia) for his poster entitled "Identification of a cyclotide antagonist at the corticotropin-releasing factor type 1 receptor", and Philipp Schilling (University of Vienna, Austria) for her poster entitled "'CuAAC-supported synthesis of mannosylated peptides for binding studies with cyanovirin-N".

A social get-together including a winetasting provided by Michaela Jöbstl (Langenlois, Austria) followed the closing remarks. Overall, the meeting was successful and received a very positive feedback thanks to the comprehensive and high-level scientific program, the nice and friendly atmosphere among the participants and the stimulating place, the Van Swieten Auditorium of the Medical University of Vienna.

The seven Austrian Peptide Symposia hosted so far in Vienna, Graz and Salzburg have obtained very good resonance within the national and international scientific community, which strongly motivates the Austrian organizers to make of this event a consolidate tradition. Along this line, we are happy to announce that the 2018 meeting of the Austrian Peptide Society will be held in the beautiful city of Salzburg and co-organized by Chiara Cabrele (University of Salzburg), Christian Gruber (Medical University of Vienna) and Christian Becker (University of Vienna).

We are grateful to everyone who helped in the organization and realization of the 2017 Austrian Peptide Symposium, in particular all involved staff members from the organizing institutions. Finally, we very much thank the exhibitors and all sponsors of the symposium: Bachem, Bruker, CEM, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Intavis, peptides&elephants, Rieger-Industrievertretungen GmbH, and the European Peptide Society. Without their generous financial support, all this would not have been possible!

*Contributed by Christian W. Gruber and Christian Becker*

**Figures:**

**Photograph 1:** Group photo of all participants of the 7<sup>th</sup> Austrian Peptide Symposium at the Van-Swieten Auditorium of the Medical University of Vienna.



**Photograph 2:** Poster award ceremony. From left to right: Anne Conibear, Christian Gruber, Peter Keov, Philipp Schilling and Christian Becker.

