COST Reorganization Update

COST recently went through a large reorganisation, became independent, and signed an agreement with the European Commission, thereby receiving further funding within Horizon 2020 to continue its work. The oldest pan-European collaboration thus stepped into a new era (more at: http://goo.gl/JVuGE1). Coincidently, COST also changed the way of evaluating new proposals for COST Actions, and of evaluating ongoing Actions. Unfortunately, the rules have also changed, again (you can access them directly at http://www.cost.eu/Vademecum).

And – perhaps an even greater disappointment – in spite of the fact that COST received higher financial support for the forthcoming seven years, the funding available is on a yearly basis less than what was available in the last two years of the 7th Framework Programme.

Since our COST Action was recognised as a successful one, I was invited to the COST Science Night to Brussels, along with five other chairs and vice-chairs of COST Actions. The point I tried to make there was that COST Actions allow for networking and in an implicit way coordinate research, enabling thus to avoid expenditures for doing same research in different countries at the same time; thereby, COST Actions contribute considerably to wise and more efficient spending of research money that became more scarce and precious after 2008 in most countries of the EU.

For our COST Action, and in particular for most of you who are not burdened with the day-to-day management and reporting, there are no big changes to be expected. Even more so as we are now getting slowly into our final year of operation. Since our COST Action started officially April 10, 2012, it ends April 9, 2016.

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Our contractual/financial year 3 ends June 30, 2015, so the last (i.e. 4th year) will be shorter, and the budget will be lower!

Nevertheless, it is now time to start to prepare the Workplan for the final year. We have already planned the 1st World Congress on Electroporation as a milestone during the preparation of the Action as its main event. Naturally, we will devote most of our efforts and budget to the Congress. However, we still have a chance to have some other, smaller meetings and schools; and we do not want to forget the STSMs. So I would like to encourage you to come forth with proposals for the meetings and events to be (co)organised by our COST Action in the period from July 1, 2015, to April 9, 2016. Please send an e-mail to me, to the vice-chair, or to any of the Workgroup leaders before end of February. Our Budget and Workplan will be prepared in time for the Management Committee meeting in Toulouse, France, on April 16, 2015. The MC meeting will be preceded by a Workshop (for details, see: http://electroporation.net/Events/Electroporation-Workshop-from-basics-knowledge-to-industry).

Let me now get back to the 1st World Congress on Electroporation; it is now important to forward news about the Congress to your colleagues, companies you work with, and plan for it in your calendar and travel budget. Do not forget to bring your students with you to the event – we will have a competition (i.e. the Young Investigators Award) with awards provided by IFMBE and DIL. Finally, if we want to continue building our network, we need to plan for the 2nd World Congress and forming the new Society. But for this to be sensible and successful, we all need to contribute in spreading the word about the Congress, but first and foremost – BE THERE!

Forthcoming activities

School on PEF for Food Processing
Fisciano, February 7-12, 2015
http://www.prodalricerche.it/PEFSchool

Electroporation Workshop: from basics knowledge to industry (April 14-15) and the COST TD1104 Action Management Committee meeting (April 16)
Toulouse, April 14-16, 2015
http://ep-workshop2015.sciencesconf.org/