
Connective Issues:

BSMB Newsletter



Committee:

Prof Andrew Pitsillides (Chair), Prof Kim Midwood (Secretary),
Dr Tom van Agtmael (Treasurer), Dr Michal Dudek (Post doc rep),
Prof Jerry Turnbull, Dr Kasia Pirog, Dr Blandine Poulet, Dr Maria
Fragiadaki, Dr Anna Maria Piccinini and Dr Chrissy Hammond

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Editorial

Welcome to the 101st Connective Issues! It is enormously exciting to announce our return to in person BSMB meetings! The first since Autumn 2019 is being held in Liverpool on September 13-14th this year and promises an exciting dive into “the Matrix in Development”, alongside plenty of opportunities to socialise together once more. It will take place at The Maritime Museum and includes an excellent programme of UK and International speakers. For the first time, this meeting will be accompanied by not one, but two, satellite events – see below for more details. Registration opens on June 27th!

Following a much welcome resurgence of our own, and other societies’, face-to-face meetings, a reminder that a wide variety of travel bursaries and awards are available from both BSMB and the International Society for Matrix Biology (ISMB) to help support your presentation of matrix-related research at any conference worldwide. Please see below for details on how to apply.

Finally, as we say good bye and thank you to a number of committee members this year, this means that there are upcoming a number of opportunities available to join the BSMB committee. We are currently seeking a student rep, two committee members and nominations for Honorary Secretary. Do consider joining us and get involved in running your BSMB!

Kim Midwood, Honorary Secretary

Chair’s Letter

Dear Fellow Matrix Biologists,

Something for everyone in Connective Issues 101, our bumper Summer 2022

instalment with lots of news and updates. If you’re chin-deep in marking exams and your thoughts are instead more ‘Room 101’ – George Orwell’s torture chamber in 1984 where one’s worst fears were realised – then let BSMB bring you some solace.

If solace is to be found in *looking forward* to something stimulating and fun, then **get online now** and register for our Autumn 2022 meeting in Liverpool organised by Blandine Poulet (bsmb.ac.uk/meetings/). In a new adventure for BSMB, the official science programme will be preceded by a half-day symposium on 12th September allocated entirely to developing our Early Career Researchers. I am sure that you’ll join me in wishing Blandine every success. If solace is sought elsewhere then reflect on the origins of the word ‘Symposium’: a drinking party (convivial meeting) of specialists with intellectual discussion, music and conversation – surely, something for everyone.

Focus on ECRs has always been paramount for BSMB and it is now being formally advocated by George Bou-Gharios, our committee’s ‘Membership Tsar’. His view [sorry to paraphrase George] is that we should take advantage of the fact that ‘good things come in small packages’ and that BSMB can better serve to bring matrix biologists together more often, to enable networking, and develop a better sense of community. So, look forward to more standalone ECR events or, as in Liverpool, events linked to our two meetings each year that are designed to support our Fellow, Post-doc and PhD student members. If you are keen to run an event near you, just get in touch. I hope that this dovetails with our striving for a more personal approach to communication. Please give feedback on how we’re doing – it is much appreciated.

BSMB has many plans for future meetings too. Our Spring 2023 meeting (and AGM) is

being organised by Maria Fragiadaki and is scheduled for Thursday/Friday 20-21 April in Sheffield. Please plan ahead and put these dates in your diary now in order that you can take the opportunity to join us. There are also already plans being made by Jerry Turnbull for our Autumn 2023 meeting with a focus on proteoglycans, which embraces a 'Gordon Conference style'. Wider horizons bring the next Matrix Biology Europe meeting (MBE2022) to the fore, which is due to take place on 28-30th September, 2022 in the Palazzo degli Innocenti, Florence – super chance to catch up on exciting science and to embrace the tourist in you too.

Looking back: Since our last Newsletter, we have had the chance to gather for the Spring 2022 meeting organised by Giovanna Nalesso, which took place virtually in Surrey. I am sure that all those who attended will join me in congratulating Giovanna and her backstage team on doing an excellent job and for putting together a fantastic programme; much was learnt by all on lipid-matrix interactions in health and disease. BSMB is hugely grateful to Giovanna who now steps away after having completed her term of office on our Committee; **thank-you so much Giovanna**.

Our thanks and gratitude are also to be sent to our BSMB Medal Awardee, Kathy Cheah who gave us great science and splendid insights into how the matrix community can positively influence career trajectory. This emphasises how we should be making a special effort to 'speak to each other' more. On that matter, can I urge all members to publicise our meetings via Linked-in and Twitter Groups and to advertise via more formal routes and via larger Societies please. On which note, **congratulations** are due to **Qing-Jun Meng** who was recently elected to the ISMB Council.

Our massive gratitude is also extended to Tom van Agtmael for his long service (since 2016) as Treasurer and member of our BSMB executive. We will miss your budget-balancing acts (aka accounting), measured sense of proportion and most importantly your humour in all matters – **thank-you very much Tom**. James Whiteford will assume the new Treasurer role later this year. This has necessitated that James step down as Chair of the John Scott Award panel and it is with great pleasure, and with unanimous approval, that we welcome Anna Piccinini into this role – good luck Anna. Thanks again James for Chairing this panel over recent years and more strength to your arm in the Treasurer role – **congratulations James**.

You said/we did: In response to feedback, we have modified our Membership renewal processes to introduce more and varied options for you to renew your membership. Thanks are due to all on the Committee for grappling with this moveable feast and to James, again, for implementing these changes. This also serves as a reminder for everyone to **get subscriptions up to date please**.

Last, but certainly not least, please check out opportunities (below) and **nominate yourself** to fulfil vital roles for our matrix community and join the Committee.

I'll take this opportunity to wish you, and yours, a super Summer. I look forward with great excitement to meeting everyone again in Liverpool to both acclaim our science and to spending some quality time together.

Best wishes to all BSMB members

Andy Pitsillides, BSMB Chair

Mark your diary

BSMB Autumn 2022 Meeting

University of Liverpool
The matrix in development
September 12th – 14th 2022

BSMB Spring 2023 Meeting

University of Sheffield
RNA metabolism and the matrix.
April 20th -21st 2023

BSMB Autumn 2023 Meeting

International Proteoglycan meeting
September 2023

BSMB News

BSMB Autumn 2022 meeting: save the date!

The next Autumn Meeting of the British Society for Matrix Biology will take place IN PERSON at the University of Liverpool from the 12th to the 14th September 2022. The theme of the meeting is “The Matrix in Development” and we have an amazing programme of speakers.

Key dates:

- Registration opens 27th June 2022
- Bursary application deadline 22nd July
- Early Bird registration closes on 29th July
- Late registration closes 29th August
- Abstract submission will close 29th July
- Oral presentation notification: 23rd August 2022

For further information please visit:
bsmb.ac.uk

You can also follow us on...

Instagram: @matrixbiologyuk

Twitter: @BSMB1

Facebook:

@BritishSocietyForMatrixBiology

WELCOME TO NEW BSMB MEMBERS!

STUDENTS

Jingyi Feng (Cardiff)

Anna Hoyle (Manchester)

Theano Kyriakou (Liverpool)

Lashia Mulholland (Manchester)

Dominic Rutland (Liverpool)

Anders Jensen (Liverpool)

Alina Kurjan (Oxford)

Laura Gonzalez Trueba (Glasgow)

FULL MEMBERS

Javier Barallobre-Barreiro (King's College London)

Cameron Thomson (Glasgow)

Lewis Francis (Swansea)

Venkatesh Mallikarjun (University of Virginia)

Yutaka Kobayashi (Liverpool)

Dafni Ariadni Gyftaki-Venieri (Oxford)

Early Career Researcher Award AND the Dick Heinegård European Young Investigator Award

This year we are very pleased to run two very prestigious awards.

The BSMB Early Career Researcher Award is presented to an early career researcher who has made a significant contribution to matrix biology and has excelled in the early

stages of their research career. Following the generous bequest from the estate of Professor John Scott (1931-2012), the winner of the Early Career Researcher Award will be presented with a cheque for £1000, and will deliver the 'John Scott Lecture' at this years Autumn Meeting in Liverpool. To be eligible, applicants must have been a member of the BSMB for at least 6 months and have accepted in press at least one research manuscript and no more than three on which they are the corresponding author.

Applications should be sent to anna.piccinini@nottingham.ac.uk by no later than 5pm 30st June 2022. Eligibility criteria and further guidance for applicants can be found on our website.

The Dick Heinegård European Young Investigator Award, which is named in memory of the great European Matrix Biologist, Dick Heinegård, is targeted at early career post-doctoral researchers. Each affiliated European Matrix Biology Society will hold its own competition to select their national nominee for this Award. Nominees will present the abstract orally during the conference. The outcome of the competition will be decided at the MBE2022 conference in Florence, Italy. The Young Investigator Awards Committee of MBE will select the winner of the Award based on the overall quality of the science and the oral presentation. The award winner will receive a certificate and a cheque (~€2000), funded by the Matrix Societies of The Netherlands, Germany and France and the BSMB. Candidates must be current BSMB members, should have no more than 5 years postdoctoral research experience as of October 01, 2022, and a demonstrable track record of excellence in matrix biology research.

Nominations should be sent to anna.piccinini@nottingham.ac.uk by July 1st 2022.

In print!

In print: Abstracts from the Oxford BSMB Spring meeting 2021 and the Newcastle Autumn 2021 meeting are currently in print online in the International Journal of Experimental Pathology.

The review article from Dr. Doug Dyer, recipient of the 2021 John Scott Early Career Researcher Award is also out: Gray AL, Pun N, Ridley AJL, Dyer DP. Role of extracellular matrix proteoglycans in immune cell recruitment. *Int J Exp Pathol.* 2022 Apr;103(2):34-43. doi: 10.1111/iep.12428.

In prep: Abstracts from the Surrey BSMB Spring meeting 2022 will be in print soon in the International Journal of Experimental Pathology.

BSMB Committee news

There are a number of positions becoming available on the committee:





BSMB committee members enjoying our first in person committee meeting in 3 years in the sun at Shrigley Hall.

BSMB student rep

We are seeking a Student representative to join the BSMB committee. This role provides an exciting opportunity to see behind the scenes of how the society operates, and to meet matrix biologists at all stages of their career.

The role involves managing the society's social media accounts, reporting any concerns from the student members to the committee, and being on hand at conferences to welcome delegates and organize social events such as pub trips. It is a highly rewarding job that takes little time and is ideal for any student working in matrix biology who is energetic, sociable, and keen to get involved in the society.

Any current graduate student member in good standing is eligible. This post represents the student and community within the BSMB, and ensures that the views and interests of the younger members of the society are heard. Posts will be for 2 years in the first instance. The first qualified applicant to apply for the post will be awarded the position.

To apply: email your CV and a brief letter of support from your supervisor to Kim Midwood: kim.midwood@kennedy.ox.ac.uk

Two BSMB committee members

Any current BSMB member in good standing is eligible for this post. Committee members formulate policy and have responsibility for organising BSMB meetings. It is expected that each Committee member will take a major part in planning and organising one BSMB meeting during their tenure, and be available to attend most Committee meetings, and occasional further meetings as required. Appointees become BSMB Trustees. It is recommended that those interested read BSMB Constitution and trustee status (www.bsmb.ac.uk).

BSMB Secretary

The current BSMB Secretary, Kim Midwood, completes her term of office in 2023. Therefore, we are beginning the search for a successor.

The Secretary is responsible for overseeing communication within and beyond the BSMB, and together with the Committee, formulates policy, represents the Society as appropriate in interactions with other bodies, and promotes the mission and objectives of the BSMB.

The Secretary shall not normally hold that office for a term of more than three years. In any case, the Secretary shall not hold that office for more than six consecutive years, but they shall be eligible for election to any other office in the Society. The term of office will begin at the Spring 2023 BSMB meeting. It is an expectation that the Secretary will be available to attend all BSMB Committee meetings and conferences through his/her term of office. Candidates should be current members of the BSMB, and have previous experience of BSMB committee service.

Nomination process

Nominations for Secretary and committee member of the BSMB can be made by any 2

members of the BSMB, or members of the current BSMB Committee.

Any nominations, together with the written consent of the proposed nominee should be forwarded to the Honorary Secretary, Professor Kim Midwood, by midnight **Friday July 29th 2022**. These can be sent by e-mail to kim.midwood@kennedy.ox.ac.uk.

In the event of more than one nomination, a ballot of the membership by e-mail will be held. To this end, it would be helpful if nominees can send a brief (one page) CV together with a short statement outlining their aspirations for the Society should they be elected. In the event of no nominations, the Committee may elect to nominate and appoint a person to the posts of Secretary and BSMB committee member.

BSMB AUTUMN 2022 MEETING

The Matrix in Development

**At the University of Liverpool
September 12th-14th 2022**

Organized by: Dr Blandine Poulet

I am pleased to invite you to the next face-to-face Autumn BSMB meeting in Liverpool, taking place at the Maritime Museum from 1pm on Monday 12th September to 1pm Wednesday 14th of September 2022. A range of national and international speakers will present their recent research on "The Matrix in Development", and in associated matrix research. Confirmed speakers include:

Dr Claire Clarkin (UK, University of Southampton)
Dr April Craft (USA, Harvard Medical School)

Dr Ioannis Kanakis (UK, University of Chester)

Dr Audrey McAlinden (USA, Washington University)

Prof Cathy Merry (UK, University of Nottingham)

Dr Emily Noel (UK, University of Sheffield)

Prof Florence Ruggiero (France, University of Lyon)

Dr Sarah Snelling (UK, University of Oxford)

Dr David Turner (UK, University of Liverpool)

The BSMB-specific conference will take place from Tuesday 12.30pm (including a quick lunch) to Wednesday 1.30pm. The conference dinner will take place on the Tuesday evening at the Waterfront Hilton. There will be an opportunity to join the meeting online if needed.

Two pre-conference events will also take place in the same venue and are free for BSMB attendees: a pre-meeting workshop for ECR on Monday afternoon from 1pm, with speakers from non-academic scientific careers (such as industry and science communication) followed by a networking social event. The Tuesday morning will be used for the Satellite meeting for members of the national ECMAge network (organised by Dr Liz Laird and Dr Vanja Pekovic-Vaughan, University of Liverpool).

Abstract submissions for podium and poster presentations, and registration will open on June 27th: please keep an eye on the website for updates: <https://bsmb.ac.uk/meetings/>

Please don't hesitate to contact me as the local organiser (Dr Blandine Poulet) for any questions (b.poulet@liverpool.ac.uk).

Early Bird Registration will cost £160 for BSMB members and £110 for student members and includes access to the entire 2 day BSMB meeting plus the Early Career

satellite event, as well as conference dinner and refreshments during the event.

Abstract submission will close on 29/07/2022. Speakers will be notified by 23/08/2022.

We encourage submission of abstracts related to all areas of research pertinent to the BSMB and not only related to the theme of the meeting. Young investigators are particularly encouraged to apply.

Applications for meeting bursaries will close on July 22nd 2022, with outcomes notified by July 28th 2022.

Registration will open on 27th June 2022 with Early Bird rates available until 29th July 2022. Late registration closes 29th August 2022.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Liverpool in September.

BSMB Autumn meeting 2022: Matrix in Development

12-14th of September 2022

Provisional programme

Monday 12th September: ECR pre-meeting

1-2.30pm: Registration

2.30-4pm: Career workshop

4-5 pm (with coffee): Networking / mentoring / meet the professor

5-8pm: Social event (TBC)

Tuesday AM: Satellite meeting: ECM ageing network (Dr Liz Laird, Dr Vanja Pekovik-Vaughan)

Tuesday 13th September: start 12.30pm

11.30 – 12.30pm: Registration; coffee; lunch

12.30 -12.40pm: Opening remarks

12.40 – 2pm: Session 1: From stem cells to organs

Dr David Turner (30min)

2x selected presentations (10 min x 2)

Dr April Craft (30 min)

2 – 3.30pm: Coffee and poster sessions; AGM

3.30 – 4.50pm: Session 2: Epigenetic influences

Dr Ioannis Kanakis (30 min)

2x selected (20 min)

Prof Audrey McAlinden (30 min)

4.50 -5.30 pm: John Scott lecture

7pm – Dinner (Hilton)

Wednesday 14th of September:

9-10.20am: Session 4: Angiogenesis in development

Dr Claire Clarkin (30 min) - online

2x selected presentations (10 min x 2)

Dr Emily Noel (30 min)

10.20 - 11am: Coffee and Posters

11 – 11.50am: Session 6: BSMB open meeting

Dr Sarah Snelling (30 min) online

2 short talks - 20 min

12-1.20pm Session 5: Matrix composition and development

Prof Cathy Merry (30 min)

2x selected presentations (10 min x 2)

Prof Florence Ruggiero (30 min)

1.20 – 1.35pm: Poster/presentation prizes and closing remarks

BSMB Bursaries

BSMB Bursaries and Couchman Travel Awards are available.

Now that in person meetings have resumed and travel restrictions lifted in most parts of the world, it is time to go and present your matrix-related findings in conferences and reconnect and network with colleagues.

1) Applications are invited for a reporter bursary to attend in person the BSMB Autumn meeting to be held in Liverpool in Sept. 2022. Up to £250 can be claimed. For more details, please follow the [link](#) here.

2) The Couchman Travel Award, kindly sponsored by Professor John Couchman remains open to applications. Each Travel Award will cover up to £150 for a BSMB meeting, or up to £300 for a European matrix-related meeting (including the biannual MBE meetings). Please follow the [link](#) here.

3) For bursaries to attend the "Other meetings" category: These bursaries remain open. Please follow the [link](#) here.

4) For bursaries to attend the " Matrix Biology Europe (MBE) and American Society for Matrix Biology (ASMB) meetings" category: These bursaries remain open. Please follow the [link](#) here.

Applications should be sent to:

Qing-Jun Meng
(qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk),
Chair of the BSMB bursary committee

Meeting Reports

BSMB Spring meeting 2022

By Giovanna Nalesso

The BSMB 2022 Spring meeting entitled "Interactions between Lipids/Derivatives" was organised by Giovanna Nalesso at the University of Surrey. The meeting was originally planned for April 2020 but was cancelled because of the pandemic. It was therefore rescheduled for April 2022 in an online format, by using the virtual platform Spatial Chat. This was the first time that the lipid/matrix interaction was explored as a topic in a BSMB meeting, as it is a new and growing field of research.

65 participants registered for the meeting, and the programme consisted of 8 keynote presentations by invited speakers, 6 short talks and 4 poster presentations. A BSMB Medal Award was awarded to Prof Kathy Cheah, from the University of Hong Kong.

Day 1.

The meeting was opened by Giovanna Nalesso who welcomed everyone and introduced the online platforms for the meeting. The meeting was divided into four different sessions. The first was dedicated to the "Impact of lipid metabolism on the extracellular matrix". The first presenter was Prof Robert Snelgrove, who is a Professor of Respiratory Science at the Imperial College. He talked about the interaction between Leukotriene A4 hydrolase, the enzyme responsible for the generation of the pro-inflammatory lipid mediator leukotriene B4 and the matrikine Proline-Glycine-Proline and its perturbation in chronic lung disease. This keynote was followed by two short talks given respectively by Dr Sarah Choleschi, from the

University of Siena, and Dr Vivien Coulson-Thomas, from the University of Huston. Dr Sarah Cheleschi's talk explored the crosstalk between hydrostatic pressure and adipokine in the context of osteoarthritis. Dr Coulson-Thomas instead focussed on the description of the role of Hyaluronan Acid in the aging Meibomian Glands and its potential role in preventing age-related Meibomian Glands dysfunction. We concluded this session with a final keynote lecture from Prof Sirio Dupont from the University of Padua, Italy, who talked about how ECM biomechanics can influence lipid and glutathione synthesis. The session was followed by a 30-minutes Speed Networking event. Registrants were divided into 4 virtual rooms and were asked to take turns to answer 4 different questions (Name the most exciting instrument in your lab and why, How do you stay balanced? What inspired you to start doing the work you're involved with now? Do you have some hobbies outside of work?) and they had to rotate across the rooms. This event was organised to favour interaction between participants as the event was online. The discussions were lively, and people appreciated the format. The Speed Networking session was followed by the first poster session.

The second session of talks was dedicated to Cell-to-cell communication. It was opened by Dr Sunaina Surana from University College, London. Dr Suraina talked about the role of nidogens as novel ECM receptors, and their importance in regulating neuronal signalling, trafficking, and function. Dr Surana's talk was followed by that one of Dr Jin-Ju Kim from the University of Miami. Dr Jun talked about how deficiency in Perilipin-5, a lipid droplet related protein, can affect the communication between lipid droplets and mitochondria in Alport Syndrome, a disease characterised by mutations in Collagen type IV. The second session was closed by Dr

Rami Hannoush, a partner at Mubadala Capital, a life sciences company creation at the intersection of biotechnology, therapeutics platforms and biology. Dr Hannoush's talk illustrated the recent efforts of his team in providing new biochemical and structural insights into the Frizzled family of receptors and their mode of regulation by cis-unsaturated fatty acids. We closed the day with a talk given by Dr Steve Cross. Steve is a stand-up comedian, presenter and producer. Steve talked about how to communicate science to a lay audience and through public channels, such as social media. The talk was meant to be inspirational especially for young investigators and was well attended and received.

Day 2.

Day 2 of the BSMB 2022 Spring meeting opened with the opportunity for the attendees to view the poster followed by the BSMB Medal Award talk, which was given by Prof Kathy Cheah, from the University of Hong Kong. Prof Cheah's career was dedicated to characterising the functional genomics and developmental genetics of skeletal and inner ear development, and the molecular pathogenesis of human congenital and degenerative skeletal disorders. Her talk provided an eagle eye overview on her long and outstanding career. The first session of the second day of the conference was an open session, where the short talks were selected from abstracts from all fields of research related to matrix biology and not necessarily related to the topic of the meeting. The session was opened by a keynote given by Prof Stephen Badylak from the University of Pittsburgh. Prof Badylak provided an overview of his work related to the characterisation of matrix bound nanovesicles, their content and their role in physiology and disease. Prof Badylak's talk was followed by one short

talk given by Dr Cintia Scucuglia Heluany from the University of Surrey. Dr Heluany talked about the role of a cigarette smoke compound, hydroquinone, and its detrimental role on articular cartilage homeostasis. After another poster session, the final session of the meeting started. This was dedicated to “Mechanisms of disease”. We had two long talks, given by Prof Nicholas Davidson and Prof Dawei Zhang, from the University of Washington and the University of Alberta. Prof Davidson’s talk was focussed on describing the role of RNA binding proteins in hepatic lipid metabolism, fibrosis and hepatocellular cancer. Prof Zhang’s group is instead busy in characterising the role of Membrane type-1-metalloproteinase (MT1-MMP) as a therapeutic target to lower plasma cholesterol. These two keynotes were interspersed by two short talks given by Dr Barallobre-Barreiro from King’s College London, who talked about the role of proteoglycans in the remodelling of the ECM during heart failure, and Prof Dalli from Queen Mary University of London, who instead illustrated the role of pro-resolving mediator maresin conjugate in tissue regeneration (MCTR3) in mediating joint reparative and pro-resolving activities in a model of experimental inflammatory arthritis.

All the sessions were chaired by members of the BSMB committee.

The meeting closed with a presentation of poster and talk prizes by Kim Midwood and Andrew Pitsillides, the secretary and chairman of the BSMB. Two prizes for oral presentations were awarded to Vivien Coulson-Thomas and Javier Barallobre Barreiro, while two prizes for the best posters were given to Nicholas Day and Dionysia Valkani. The prizes were sponsored by the International Journal of Experimental Pathology and the Company of Biologists.

Despite the meeting being in an online format, it facilitated lively scientific discussion and networking, especially at the poster session which was very well attended. The meeting was very well received, with attendees commenting on high level and diversity of the talks and topics. We would like to thank IJEP, the Company of Biologists and for sponsoring this meeting.

OARSI 2022

By Emily Shorter

The Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) is the premier international organisation for scientists and healthcare professionals focused on the prevention and treatment of osteoarthritis. The OARSI Hybrid World Congress in Berlin, Germany, took place from the 7th-10th of April 2022. Through workshops, discussion group meetings, and oral and poster presentations, OA researchers and clinicians from over 50 different countries were able to share their work under the broad topic ‘Converging to advance OA research’. This was the first-ever OARSI hybrid meeting where all attendees (in-person and remote) had access to all plenary and concurrent sessions. A range of companies and institutions that work to aid OA research and treatment sponsored the event, including: Viatrix, Aptissen, GaitSmart, BioSeb and many more!

The first Plenary Session on the Thursday morning set the tone for the meeting, with exciting talks from invited speakers Valentina Pedoia and Gerjo van Osch on using machine learning and tissue engineering, respectively, in OA research. Following this were talks from some of the highest scoring abstracts, covering topics ranging from the molecular underpinnings of the disease to cross-sectional population

based studies. After an awards ceremony recognising lifetime achievement as well as rising stars in OA research, the day ended with a keynote address where Dr Stefan Kluzek and Dr Christian Thudium discussed their brilliant research into OA biomarkers. The meeting continued bright and early on Friday morning with breakfast poster tours and a workshop on Human Joint Explant Models for Preclinical Research. Following this were concurrent sessions 'Early Stage OA and Prevention' and 'Cell Signalling, Cytokines, Matrix Biology, Mechanobiology: Mechanistic Understanding' that were both kicked off by presentations by invited speakers Dr Gillian Hawker and Dr Richard Loesser and followed by short-talks of relevant abstracts. Choosing which concurrent session to attend was a reoccurring struggle throughout the conference, as all featured fascinating talks across a range of clinical and basic research themes. Following these concurrent talks was a lunch symposium Sponsored by 'TRB Chemedica' where 'CM-Chitosan' was discussed as a promising novelty for the treatment of advanced osteoarthritis. The afternoon featured a poster session attended by hundreds of researchers from a huge variety of OA-related fields and finally ended with concurrent sessions on the topics of gait, biomechanics, imaging, and omics in OA.

Saturday once again started with some breakfast workshops for those looking to discuss the link between osteoporosis and OA. The first concurrent sessions of the day were rang in by Dr Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley who talked about OA rehabilitation and Dr Byoung Hyun Min who discussed Stem Cells, Gene Therapy & Regenerative Medicine. This was followed by a plenary session on Epidemiology and Health Economics by Dr Elena Losina and then a 'Golden Nugget' workshop whereby early career researchers were given tips on how to establish international collaborations,

seize opportunities, and strive for excellence in research supervision. The highlight of the day was the debate between Dr Farshid Guilak and Dr Tuhina Neogi on what to target in OA – symptoms vs structure. This heated debate raised some interesting question, picking a side at the end was particularly difficult!

In between all the various events and talks, I managed to find time to explore Berlin, see some poignant historical sites and (of course) enjoy some currywurst and beer! It was great to attend such an interesting meeting in a beautiful city, meet fellow researchers, and hear all about the current goings on in the world of OA. I am very grateful to the BSMB for its generous support that enabled me to attend the first international conference of my academic career. Here's to many more!

News from the International Society for Matrix Biology

Deadlines are approaching for registration for the upcoming Matrix Biology Europe meeting (MBE2022) to be held in Florence on 28-30th September, 2022 in the magnificent Palazzo degli Innocenti. Visit the meeting website for more information: <https://mbe2022.org/>

ISMB provides international travel grants (on average 500€ for young scientists (graduate students or postdocs up to 5 years after Ph.D.) to allow them to attend major meetings in matrix biology anywhere in the world. While priority will be given to meetings directly supported by ISMB (including Matrix Biology Europe, the American Society for Matrix Biology and the Pan Pacific Connective Tissue Societies Symposium), applications are accepted for

any meeting, provided that the scope of the meeting agrees with the aims of the Society.

To apply for a travel grant, please submit your application via www.ismb.org and attach a single pdf file containing: (1) a letter giving information about the meeting, the amount requested and a detailed justification for support, (2) the abstract of your poster/short talk, (3) your curriculum vitae and list of publications. Please apply several months in advance of the meeting, before one of the following deadlines: January 1, April 1, July 1, October 1.

Candidates should be members of the ISMB (see membership page for details), and a graduate student or postdoc. up to 5 years after Ph.D., (with extensions for maternity leave, military service, etc).

Grants are for international travel only and will be awarded on the basis of scientific excellence and relevance to matrix biology. Successful candidates will be notified no more than one month after each deadline. Following the meeting, awardees will be expected to send to the ISMB a certificate of attendance as well as a short report (to appear on the ISMB web site with some selected for the ISMB newsletter) in the form of a personal perspective on their experience at the meeting. All reimbursement claims and reports must be received within 3 months after the end of the conference.

Kim Midwood

Current BSMB Committee

Chair, Prof. Andrew Pitsillides
Royal Veterinary College;
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SEE YOU IN LIVERPOOL IN SEPTEMBER!



“The Matrix in Development”

BSMB 2022 Autumn meeting
12-14th of September 2022

Maritime museum, Liverpool
Local organiser Dr Blandine Poulet



Pre-conference workshop for ECRs
12th September 2022

Focused on careers, including networking event

Invited speakers:

Dr Claire Clarkin (UK, University of Southampton)
Dr April Craft (USA, Harvard Medical School)
Dr Ioannis Kanakis (UK, University of Chester)
Dr Audrey McAlinden (USA, Washington University)
Prof Cathy Merry (UK, University of Nottingham)
Dr Emily Noel (UK, University of Sheffield)
Prof Florence Ruggiero (France, University of Lyon)
Dr Sarah Snelling (UK, University of Oxford)
Dr David Turner (UK, University of Liverpool)

Registration and abstract deadline: *tbc, by late July 2022*
<https://bsmb.ac.uk/meetings/matrix-development/>



L I V E R P O O L

REGISTRATION and ABSTRACT SUBMISSION
OPENS June 27th 2022