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# Connective Issues:

## BSMB Newsletter



Committee:

Prof Andrew Pitsillides (Chair), Prof Qing-Jun Meng (Secretary),  
Dr James Whiteford (Treasurer), Dr Doug Dyer, Dr Chrissy Hammond,  
Dr Anna Maria Piccinini, Dr Salvatore Santamaria, Prof Jerry Turnbull  
Anders Jensen (Student rep)

Registered Charity no. 281399

No. 103, June 2023

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## Editorial

Welcome to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Connective Issues!

Hope you are coping well with the heatwave. It somehow gives me a sense of *déjà vu* of the MBE 2018 meeting, when, for the first time, I realised that air con is not a default on Manchester campus buildings (perhaps for a good reason)!

Since this is the first newsletter I edit as your Secretary, I would like to thank my predecessor, Kim Midwood, for completing her 6-years term of office, in style. During the handover, I realised how amazingly organised she is, and how generous she has been with her time to the Society!

Following the success of the Liverpool and Sheffield meetings, we continue with our regular two meetings per year – Autumn 2023 in Surrey (a joint meeting with the Biochemical Society, registration is open) and Spring 2024 in Bristol. We are also pleased to announce the inaugural BSMB Early Career Researchers meeting in Manchester on 29<sup>th</sup> June, organized by our newest committee member Doug Dyer, jointly hosted with the Wellcome Cell-Matrix Centre. Please register and present your exciting matrix research at these meetings! There are plenty of bursaries available, so get in touch with your new Bursary Chair, Kasia Pirog.

I'm also delighted to announce Reinhard Fässler as the winner of the 2024 BSMB Medal Award. Reinhard will present his award lecture at the Spring meeting in Bristol - come and join the celebrations!

Finally, we are currently seeking two committee members and one post-doc rep on the committee- nominations are open - please join us in running your BSMB!

*Qing-Jun Meng, Honorary Secretary*

## Chair's letter

Dear Fellow Matrix Biologists,

Welcome from me too.

The onus – if there is one – of serving as BSMB Chair is lightened both by our superb Committee members and mostly by the skills, energy, drive and diligence (and too many other positive attributes to list) of the incumbent Honorary Secretary. So, on your (and my predecessor, John Couchman's) behalf, I extend my huge gratitude to Kim Midwood who has made my task a breeze and an absolute pleasure. I am sure that you'll join me too, in both thanking her for her massive contribution to our BSMB family and in wishing her every success with her new ventures. Thank-you so much Kim.

You'll have read our new Secretary's editorial and so please welcome Qing Jun Meng into his new role. Thank-you, Qing Jun for stepping up to fulfil this very significant role. Qing Jun has already signposted all the upcoming events. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* – the more things change, the more they stay the same.

On that note, isn't it odd that our previous Newsletter opened on strikes, inflation etc. Is it only me, getting a feeling of *déjà vu*. Anyway, moving on from French classes.

*Looking forward:* Get registered now for the Autumn 2023 meeting on Proteoglycans, with Matrix Biology and ECR sessions. This has been organised by a team led by Jerry Turnbull, including John Couchman, Linda Troeberg, Jessica Kwok and Cathy Merry, together with The Biochemical Society (BS) as a Harden Conference. It will take place in lovely Surry at the picturesque De Vere Horsley Estate & Towers: [89th Harden Conference: Proteoglycans: Matrix Master Regulators 2023 \(biochemistry.org\)](https://www.biochemistry.org/conferences/89th-harden-conference-proteoglycans-matrix-master-regulators-2023).

Pencil in your diaries and prepare to attend our Spring 2024 meeting in Bristol being led by our own Chrissy Hammond, entitled: The Dynamic matrix: mechanics, ageing and repair on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> to Weds 10<sup>th</sup> April (with ECR pre-event and evening social).

*Looking back:* We owe a debt of gratitude to Maria Fragiadaki, who organised our last Spring 2023 meeting in Sheffield, which again included a satellite ECR symposium. She brought together a super group of UK and International speakers and we learnt all about Vascular Inflammation and the ECM; a great success. Thank-you Maria.

Lastly, I hope everyone has a great Summer, finds some time to enjoy a break, freshen up and get raring to go for the Autumn.

Best wishes to all.

Andy Pitsillides, *BSMB Chair*

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## BSMB News

### Mark your diary

**BSMB Autumn 2023 Meeting**  
12th International Proteoglycan  
Conference/89th Harden Conference  
Surrey, September 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> 2023

**BSMB Spring 2024 Meeting**  
The Dynamic matrix:  
mechanics, ageing and repair  
Bristol, April 9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> 2024

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### BSMB Medal Award

The Medal Award Committee have elected Professor Reinhard Fässler (Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Germany) as the BSMB Medal Awardee for 2024, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to matrix

biology. Congratulations to Reinhard! He will receive the award at the 2024 BSMB Spring Meeting in Bristol.



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### Welcome to our new committee member:

Doug Dyer currently heads a lab at the Wellcome centre for cell-matrix research at the University of Manchester as a Wellcome Trust and Royal Society funded Sir Henry Dale fellow. Doug's glyco/chemokine immunology group is focused on using multi-disciplinary approaches from biophysics to in vivo real-time imaging to dissect the role of the extracellular matrix in regulating chemokine biology and increasingly immunology more widely. He was the recipient of the BSMB Young Investigator Award in 2020.



## WELCOME TO NEW BSMB MEMBERS!

### STUDENTS

Natalie Rogers (Manchester)  
Hannah McConchie  
Shaun Wright (Manchester)  
Amy Lock (UCL)  
Priyanka Hirani (QMUL)  
Hannah Tompkins (Manchester)  
Ivy Usansky (Manchester)  
Bilge Sari (Liverpool)  
Terri Holmes (UEA)  
Mary Hines (Liverpool)  
Yamini Meshram (Manchester)  
Omar Merhi El Hassan El Abdallah (Glasgow)

### FULL MEMBERS

Richard Naylor (Manchester)  
Gehan Bader  
Christopher Turner  
Stuart Dickens (Bradford)  
John Knox (Manchester)  
Christabel Dube  
Ruby Crisp (Manchester)  
Gehan Bader  
Stuart Dickens (Bradford)  
Arkadiusz Bonna (Cambridge)  
Takao Sakae  
Mark Naven (Bristol)  
Emma Shepherd (Aston)

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## BSMB Autumn Meeting 2023

### 89th Harden Conference - Proteoglycans: Matrix Master Regulators 2023

Organised by the Biochemical Society in  
collaboration with the British Society for  
Matrix Biology

4-7 September 2023  
De Vere Horsley Estate, Surrey, UK

Abstract deadline: 4 July 2023  
Earlybird registration deadline: 4 July 2023

Registration is now open - please note  
registration is limited, book early to avoid  
disappointment!

The 89th Harden Conference and 12th  
International Conference on Proteoglycans  
will be held in Surrey on 4-7th September,  
2023. This will be a highly interactive  
discussion meeting on a wide range of  
proteoglycan and matrix biology topics.  
Abstract and early bird registration deadline is  
4 July. There will be ~35 short talks selected  
from submitted abstracts, poster sessions and  
flash presentations invited for all posters.

Travel bursaries are available for members of  
BSMB or The Biochemical Society. Students  
who apply early have the chance of a £100  
reduction in registration fee. Shared twin  
room options are also available at a further  
discount (see under General Information on  
the meeting website).

Further details and a draft programme with  
invited speakers is accessible via the Biochem  
Soc website link:

<https://www.eventsforce.net/biochemsoc/frontend/reg/thome.csp?pageID=76891&eventID=154&traceRedir=2>

Themes in the programme include:

Hot Topics  
New Technologies & Tools  
Translational advances  
Structure-Function Relationships of  
proteoglycans  
Matrix Biology  
Cell Signalling & Trafficking  
Proteoglycans in Ageing & Chronic Diseases  
Proteoglycans in Cancer & Inflammation  
Proteoglycans in Stem cells, Biomaterials &  
Regenerative Medicine  
Proteoglycans in Neuroscience  
Biosynthesis of GAGs/PGs  
Proteoglycans in Healing & Infectious  
Diseases  
Chemical Biology of GAGs

## Social media

Engage with us prior, during and after the event! For questions, insights and feedback: #BiochemEvent

Share this conference: @BiochemSoc #BiochemEvent

For further information please visit: bsmb.ac.uk

You can also follow us on...

Instagram: @matrixbiologyuk

Twitter: @BSMB1

Facebook: @BritishSocietyForMatrixBiology

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## BSMB Spring Meeting 2024 Bristol

BMSB 2024 Spring meeting – Organised by Dr Chrissy Hammond, University of Bristol, with help from Drs Lizzie Lawrence and Nikki Stevenson.

As the host of the 2024 Spring BSMB meeting, I'm looking forward to welcoming you to Bristol. Our meeting theme will be 'The Dynamic matrix: mechanics, ageing and repair' and will be held at The Station, a vibrant venue run by a creative youth charity, located slap bang in the middle of the city close to the University and with easy access to public transport. The main meeting will run from lunchtime Tuesday 9th April to mid afternoon Wednesday 10th April, with a friendly satellite event for ECRs on the evening of Monday (8th) and morning of Tuesday (9th). The main meeting will have sessions on Modelling the matrix, the ageing matrix, the mechanical matrix and repairing the matrix each with a mix of invited speakers and orals chosen from abstracts, along with an open session reserved for short oral presentations from ECRs and poster pitching. On top of these sessions, there will be the prestigious BSMB Medal Lecture to be delivered at this meeting!

The ECR satellite meeting will have a sessions on career coaching, publishing, securing grants and on alternative scientific careers and science spin outs as well as a meet the Profs and a social mixer. More information to follow soon, but for now please mark the dates in your diary so that you can join us for what I fully expect to be a diverse, fun and engaging meeting in our lovely city.

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## Early Career Researcher Award Announcement

The call for this year's Early Career Researcher Award is now open and applications are welcome!

The prestigious 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 the Harden Conference in Surrey, 4-7 September 2023. 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](mailto:anna.piccinini@nottingham.ac.uk) by no later than 5pm 30st June 2023. Eligibility criteria and further guidance for applicants can be found on our website.

If you are a mid-career or established researcher and know a talented early career researcher who fulfils the eligibility criteria above, do encourage them to apply!

Anna Piccinini, Chair, ECR Selection Panel

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## In print!

In print: Abstracts from the BSMB Autumn 2022 Meeting: “Matrix in Development” are currently in print online in the International Journal of Experimental Pathology.

In prep: Abstracts from the BSMB Spring 2023 Sheffield meeting will be in print soon in the International Journal of Experimental Pathology.

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## BSMB Committee vacancies

### Join the Committee! Positions open ...

There are **two Committee positions** becoming available:

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](http://www.bsmb.ac.uk)).

### Nomination process

Nominations for a 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 Qing-Jun Meng, by midnight

**Tuesday July 18th 2023.** These can be sent by e-mail to [qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk).

In the event of more nominations for the number of vacancies, 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 post of BSMB committee member.

There is also a **Post-doc Rep position** available on the BSMB Committee. We are looking for someone who is enthusiastic about society work and actively engages with matrix research community and beyond through social media or other approaches. This is ideal for a post-doctoral matrix biologist to represent voices of post-docs in the matrix community, to help formulate BSMB policies, and to gain committee experience in a prestigious and highly supportive research society. Any nominations (self-nomination is welcome), together with the written consent of the proposed nominee should be forwarded to the Honorary Secretary, Professor Qing-Jun Meng. These can be sent by e-mail to [qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk).

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## BSMB Bursaries

**BSMB Bursaries and Couchman Travel Awards are available.**

BSMB members are encouraged to apply for bursaries to attend national and international matrix-related conferences and present their findings.

**1)** Applications are invited for **student reporter bursaries to attend the BSMB Autumn Meeting** to be held at De Vere Horsley Estate in Surrey in September 2023.

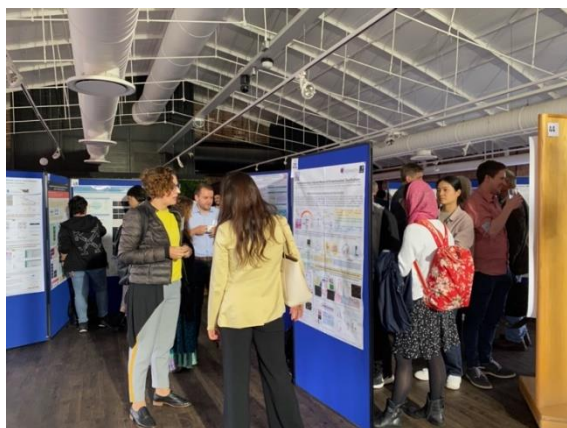
The meeting is organised as part of the 89<sup>th</sup> Harden Proteoglycans international meeting in collaboration with the Biochemical Society. First 5 student BSMB members applying will be eligible for a £500 bursary. The deadline to apply for these is 23<sup>rd</sup> of June (Friday). For more details, please follow the [link](#) here.

**2) The Couchman Travel Award**, kindly sponsored by Professor John Couchman, is open to applications. Each Travel Award will cover up to £150 for a BSMB meeting (~10 awards per year), or up to £300 for a European matrix-related meeting (~2 awards per year, including the biannual MBE meetings). Please follow the [link](#) here.

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

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

Applications for the BSMB bursaries should be sent to Dr Kasia Pirog ([katarzyna.pirog@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:katarzyna.pirog@newcastle.ac.uk)), Chair of the BSMB bursary committee.



## Meeting Reports

**BSMB Spring Meeting 2023: Vascular Inflammation and the Extracellular Matrix**  
By Cameron Thomson and Laura Gonzalez Trueba

The British Society for Matrix Biology Spring Meeting entitled "Vascular Inflammation and the Extracellular Matrix" took place at Sheffield University on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The meeting was organised by Dr Maria Fragiadaki.



The meeting was held in person with a 60-person strong turnout for both days. The meeting also offered a unique, pre-meeting satellite, which was available online as well as in person, and offered keen insights into sustainability in science.

The sessions offered numerous unique insights into the role of the ECM and the



vasculature under differing conditions, such as during inflammation, and highlighted the strengths of this growing field of research and

the important questions that are being addressed by the participants.

The pre-meeting satellite was opened by Dr Maria Fragiadaki, who welcomed everybody present and emphasised the importance of sustainability for Sheffield University. There were three speakers in this session. Dr Steve Allen introduced the concept of sustainability and leadership and how these intertwine. Dr Aina Roca-Barcelo talked about her experience as a student advocating for sustainability in her university and in her department and the obstacles her and her colleagues encountered, once more highlighting the importance of leadership involvement. Dr Luca Cacciolatti introduced the concept of “Slow Food” - antagonizing the fast-food industry by advocating good quality sustainable products.

The main meeting started after lunch. Dr Maria Fragiadaki once more welcomed everyone to Sheffield, this time with all there in person. She introduced the first speaker, Prof Ellie Tzima from Oxford University. Prof Tzima spoke about the importance of forces in the cardiovascular system, as flow patterns contribute both to vascular inflammation and gene expression profiles. Furthermore, composition of the ECM differs in areas with different shear force. She emphasized the role of focal adhesion in response to force, which was shown to be dependent on the composition of the substrate on which cells were seeded.

This talk was followed by two abstract - selected oral presentations. Laura Gonzalez-Trueba (Glasgow University) spoke about the effect of mutations in Collagen IV on vascular cell function, involving both endothelial and vascular smooth muscle cells. Megan Priestley (Manchester University) emphasized the importance of the glycocalyx for entry of inflammatory cells into the tissues from the circulation. Her focus was on the role of heparan sulfate in psoriasis-like skin

inflammation. Altering the glycocalyx was hypothesized to result in uptake of greater numbers of inflammatory cells by the endothelial cells, and this resulted in a greater than expected inflammatory response.

Dr Areej Alahmadi (Sheffield University) explained the roles of RNA-binding protein ANKDH1 in shear stress mediated endothelial dependent vasoprotection. She showed findings suggesting that ANKDH1 maintains vascular health, and attenuates atherogenesis by controlling critical inflammation, vasorelaxation and thrombosis processes.

After poster viewing and refreshments, Prof Paul Evans introduced Prof Anna Randi (Imperial College London). Prof Randi highlighted the role of von Willebrand factor in endothelial cell homeostasis. This was followed by an abstract - selected talk from Cameron Thomson (Glasgow University) who described the matrix - specific remodelling which is due to mutations in collagen IV. These are linked to the COL4A1 syndrome in which there are vascular defects. Dr James Whiteford (QMUL) highlighted the syndecan family of cell surface receptors and their role in angiogenesis from the perspective of Wet-Age related macular degeneration.

In the final session of day 1 Prof Andrew Pitsillides introduced the Fell-Muir Lecture which was delivered by Prof Jo Adams (Bristol University). Prof Adams' lecture described her research over many years that had emphasised the role of conserved evolutionary and cross-species mechanisms



**Prof Jo Adams receiving the Fell-Muir Award!**



implicated in modulating ECM composition. In turn ECM composition is involved in modulating cell phenotype and behaviour. Day 1 concluded with the BSMB dinner.

Day 2 of the meeting started with an (optional) fun run, followed by an opportunity for poster viewing and much-needed coffee. There were three themes: (i) Pharmacology, RNA and the ECM, chaired by Prof George Bou-Gharios (Liverpool University); (ii) The Kidney and the ECM, chaired by Dr Richard Naylor (Manchester University); and (iii) Developmental Pathways and the ECM, chaired by Dr Emily Noël (Sheffield University).

Dr Laura Denby (Edinburgh University) opened the first session with a talk on the use of miRNAs during kidney disease as a potential therapeutic target. Laura demonstrated eloquently how her group have established that dysregulation of several miRNAs is involved implicitly in renal dysfunction and fibrosis. There were two abstract - selected talks from Amy Lock (King's College London) who spoke about the cellular and molecular mechanisms which cause pain and pruritis in keloid scars; and from Rebecca Preston (Manchester University) who spoke about circadian rhythm of the glomerular matrix.

After refreshments Prof Rachel Lennon (Manchester University) gave an account of her work on Alport syndrome and of the interesting relationships between the unique podocyte and endothelial basement membranes within the kidney glomeruli. Raina Ramnath (Bristol University) gave an abstract – selected talk about the role played by MMP-9 in glycocalyx shedding. The final talk before lunch was given by Dr Fiona Macleod (Sheffield University) who spoke to us about her work under the supervision of Dr Fragiadaki and her post-doctoral work focussing on RNA binding proteins in polycystic kidney disease.

During the lunchbreak poster viewed was associated with animated and interesting conversations amongst the attendees.

The final session began with Prof Paul Evans, who shared his first findings from a relatively new venture into the ECM. Paul described the response of endothelial cells to shear stress and the newly understood roles of factors such as TWIST-1 and EndMT. The final abstract - selected talk was delivered by Dr Mark Naven (Bristol University) who gave a fascinating account of the role of circadian rhythms and gene regulation during zebrafish wound healing. The concluding talk from Dr John Davis (Manchester University) discussed the contribution of the ECM in developmental biology.

The meeting was closed with final remarks from those involved in the Organising and BSMB committees. Well-deserved prizes were awarded to Dr Mark Naven and Rebecca Preston for their talks and Natalie Rogers for her poster.



**Prize winners Natalie Rogers, Rebecca Preston and Mark Naven!**

The meeting was very well received, with attendees commenting on high level and diversity of talks and topics. We would like to thank all those involved in organising and all the attendees for their enthusiasm over the two days.

We missed you if you were not there and we hope to see you in the Autumn meeting in

Surrey 2023 and Spring meeting in Bristol 2024.

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## News from the International Society for Matrix Biology

### Distinguished Investigator Award

The ISMB Distinguished Investigator Awardee Taina Pihlajaniemi will deliver her lecture on “Transmembrane and Multiplexin Collagens in Development and Pathobiology” at the biennial meeting of the ASMB on October 22-25, 2023 in beautiful Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. Once again, our warmest congratulations to Taina on receiving the award recognizing her outstanding contributions to collagen research.

### Travel Funding

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](http://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 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.

**Matrix Biology Europe 2024 Save the date!**



Qing-Jun Meng and Kim Midwood

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## Current BSMB Committee

Chair, Prof. Andrew Pitsillides  
Royal Veterinary College  
[apitsillides@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:apitsillides@rvc.ac.uk)

Honorary Secretary, Prof. Qing-Jun Meng  
University of Manchester  
[qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:qing-jun.meng@manchester.ac.uk)

Honorary Treasurer, Dr. James Whiteford  
QMUL, London  
[j.whiteford@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.whiteford@qmul.ac.uk)

### Elected Members:

Prof. Jerry Turnbull  
University of Liverpool  
[J.Turnbull@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:J.Turnbull@liverpool.ac.uk)

Dr. Douglas Dyer  
University of Manchester  
[douglas.dyer@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:douglas.dyer@manchester.ac.uk)

Dr. Anna Maria Piccinini  
University of Nottingham;  
Anna.Piccinini@nottingham.ac.uk

Dr. Chrissy Hammond  
University of Bristol;  
Chrissy.Hammond@bristol.ac.uk

Dr Salvatore Santamaria  
University of Surrey  
s.santamaria@surrey.ac.uk

**Co-opted Members:**

Prof George Bou Gharios  
University of Liverpool  
g.bou-gharios@liverpool.ac.uk

Dr. Kasia Pirog  
University of Newcastle;  
[Katarzyna.Pirog@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:Katarzyna.Pirog@newcastle.ac.uk)

Dr. Blandine Poulet  
University of Liverpool  
B.Poulet@liverpool.ac.uk

Mr Anders Jensen  
Student Rep, University of Liverpool  
[hlajens2@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:hlajens2@liverpool.ac.uk)

**SEE YOU ECRS IN MANCHESTER IN JUNE!**



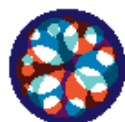
**Replenishing the matrix: Bringing together early career researchers in extracellular matrix biology**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2023, University of Manchester, Wellcome Centre for Cell-Matrix Research

Plenary speaker: Chloé Yeung (Copenhagen)

Confirmed speakers: Katarzyna Pirog (Newcastle), Salvatore Santamaria (Surrey), Joan Chang (Manchester), Blandine Poulet (Liverpool), Tara Sutherland (Aberdeen), Oliver Pearce and Katherine Long (KCL)

**SEE YOU IN SURREY IN SEPTEMBER!**



**BIOCHEMICAL  
SOCIETY**



**HARDEN  
CONFERENCE**

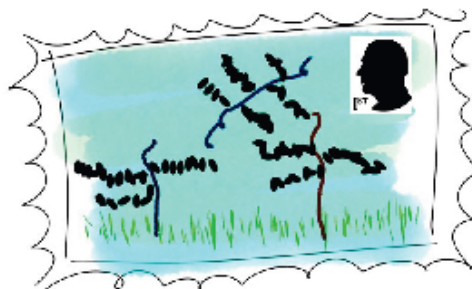
**89TH HARDEN CONFERENCE**

## **Proteoglycans: Matrix Master Regulators 2023**

**12th International Conference on Proteoglycans**

**4-7 September 2023  
Surrey, UK**

Proteoglycans (PGs) are a class of molecules with diverse and critical functions in cell regulation due to their functional interactions with proteins. PGs are highly complex and functionally diverse, and strategically positioned on the cell surface and in the matrix, impacting mechanistically on fundamental processes in health and disease.



Increased understanding of PG structure-function relationships is underpinning insights into their roles in disease processes and in normal repair mechanisms, leading to the emergence of novel therapeutic strategies and applications in bio-inspired biomaterials. The meeting programme will cover a broad range of topics at the forefront of the field and also advances in translation to biomedical applications.

There will be a strong focus on poster sessions, talks selected from abstracts, and ample opportunities for discussion and networking. On-site accommodation of delegates is at a historic estate with good transport links. ECRs and PhD students will additionally benefit from dedicated sessions focusing on skills and career development, with attendance supported by generous bursary schemes.

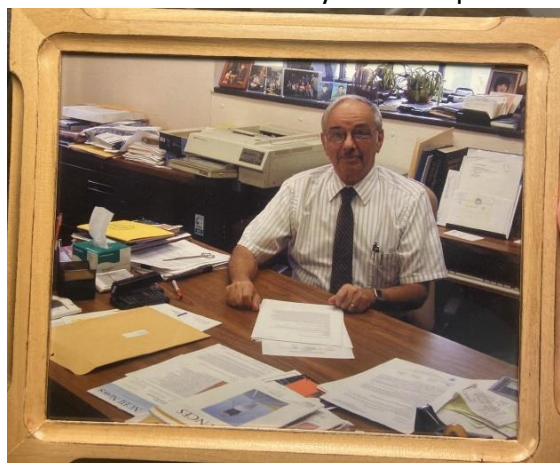
Register online:  
**[bit.ly/89-Harden-2023](https://bit.ly/89-Harden-2023)**

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**Obituary**  
**Arthur Veis**

Arthur Veis, PhD, passed away Sunday April 23 at age 97.

He lived a full life. Born in Pittsburgh in 1925, he moved with his family in the depression to



Chicago and stayed a die-hard Chicagoan for the rest of his life. After graduating high school in 1943, he spent a year in college prior to joining the Navy (in spite of not knowing how to swim). After officer training, he ended up on the USS Baltimore, an aircraft carrier, helping planes take off and land. He arrived in Japan just as the war ended and ran the Navy taxi service between vessels and shore, and gave tours of some of the bomb sites. Once home, he completed college and moved back to Chicago for his PhD studies at Northwestern University.

On his first publication, of his doctoral work, "The interactions of the alkali ions with some linear polyelectrolytes," he was the sole author. After spending 8 years studying collagen at Armour Company, he joined the faculty at Northwestern in 1960, where he remained until publishing his last paper in *Connective Tissue Research* in 2018 at age 92! In those 66 years as a working scientist, Art published over 250 articles on a wide range of topics in connective tissue biology, including the structure of collagen and its associated proteins, interactions with water, biomineralization, and complex coacervation. He was Editor-in-Chief of *Connective Tissue Research* for more than 25 years, from 1984-2012. He and his wife Eve traveled the world, often planning trips around scientific meetings. He met both Linus Pauling and Francis Crick at a conference in England in 1957. Sabbaticals were spent at Stanford, the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Grenoble, France, and at the Weizmann Institute in Israel. Art founded the International Conference on the Chemistry and Biology of Mineralized Tissues (first meeting in 1981, now heading into its 14<sup>th</sup> meeting). Throughout his career, Art supported and mentored many researchers, becoming lifelong friends with many. To him, they were truly his scientific family. Art was also extremely proud of his three children and 7 grandchildren, whom he valued as individuals and who all respected and adored him. He will be greatly missed.

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