

Report

13th joint meeting - Plant Physiology Societies Portugal and Spain

The Portuguese Societies of Plant Physiology of Portugal (SPFV) (www.spfv.pt) and Spain (www.sefv.es), organized the 13th joint Congress on Plant Physiology that took place in Lisbon last July (23-27) (<http://fisiologiavegetal.itqb.unl.pt>). The whole program is available at the congress website, as well as the book of abstracts, and a lecture requested by numerous participants and kindly made available by the Plenary Speaker Dr. Melvin Oliver.

Counting with over 400 participants, this event had a very high scientific quality, ranging from the more physiological studies to cell biology, biotech and evolution. The meeting was organized in 9 Sessions (including an Education Session and a roundtable on entrepreneurship and financing opportunities), and counted with 6 outstanding Plenary Lecturers and 7 exceptional Keynote speakers, from not only Portugal and Spain, but also US, Canada, Chile, Germany and UK. Special facilities were provided by both societies to allow the participation of young researchers (students) and by SPFV to facilitate participation of colleagues from Portuguese-speaking countries (mainly Brazil). This probably justified that about half of the participants were students. We had 224 Spanish colleagues, 152 Portuguese, 28 from Brazil, and still participants from UK (4), Canada (3), Venezuela (2), USA (2), Germany (2), Armenia (1), Poland (1), Italy (1), Slovakia (1), Uruguay (1), and Chile (1). The Italian participant, partially sponsored by SEFV, was a representative of the Italian Society of Plant Physiology with whom collaboration is envisaged.

Profiting from the activities of SPFV to commemorate and disseminate the Fascination of Plant's Day (18 May, launched by EPSO), the congress was also an opportunity to announce and award the winners of the various contests that Portugal organized (<http://www.plantday12.eu/portugal.htm>) including the contest "The Plant of the Future" (<http://pt-br.facebook.com/aquihaplanta>), directed to kids from 7-12 years-old, and over 12, and with three categories (stories, photos, and drawings).

Additionally, in order to increase the visibility of plant research to a wider audience, the congress organization promoted a contest directed to schools (10th - 12th years), the "VIP- Vamos Investigar as Plantas" (Let's Investigate Plants) contest. In this competition, the schools applied with teams willing to run for the best plant research project, or with the best project to equip schools with tools for plant research. There were 3 winners (including Junior and Senior categories) that the congress organization invited to attend the last day of the meeting. The winning teams received awards and a monetary prize to acquire didactic materials, and were allowed to join all Lecture and poster Sessions on Saturday. Moreover, each group had the chance of presenting his work as Poster, as well as a short Oral, which proved to be an enormous success.

SPFV is proud to say that this was an extremely successful meeting that was enthusiastically supported by both societies and acknowledged by the participants.