

News Article

## Fourth Annual *Science in the House* Exhibition at the New Parliament Building

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Members of Parliament, the House of Representatives and researchers were in attendance at the 4<sup>th</sup> annual *Science in the House* exhibition in the New Parliament Building in Valletta at noon of Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The event was inaugurated under the auspices of the Office of the Speaker by Ray Scicluna. Following comments by Prof. Alex Felice, speeches were presented by MPs Deborah Schembri and Claudio Grech. A few comments were made on behalf of the Faculty of Science by Prof. Emmanuel Sinagra to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Faculty of Science at the University of Malta. The formal opening of the event concluded with enlightening words from the University Rector, Prof. Juanito Camilleri.

Afterwards, food and beverages were served while the MPs and delegates surveyed the posters allowing for informal dialogue with researchers. The exhibition consisted of 12 posters representative of various research projects at the University of Malta from the Faculties of Science, Medicine and Surgery, Dental Surgery and Health Sciences. A commemorative poster was also displayed by the Faculty of Science to celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which coincides with the centennial of Einstein's theory of relativity. The posters remained on display in the reception area of the Parliament building the following evening at the *Science in the City* festival and left on display during the luminous Notte Bianca festival.

*Science in the House* is organised by the Malta Chamber of Scientists, the University Research Trust (RIDT) and the *Science in the City, European Researchers' Night* consortium. *Science in the City, European Researchers Night* is mainly funded by the EU Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action of the Horizon 2020 (H2020) Programme. It is recognised by Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe (EFFE).

Other supporting partners include the European Commission Representation in Malta, the Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sports, Karl Borg Events, The Central Bank of Malta, The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, The Malta Council of Science and Technology, Studio 7, Spazju Kreattiv, the Malta-EU Standing Action Committee, The Public Broadcasting Service plc, Levo Laboratories, Valletta Local Council, Notte Bianca, Arts Council Malta, Thought 3D, and the General Soft Drinks Company with Coca Cola.

More information can be found at [www.scienceinthecity.org.mt](http://www.scienceinthecity.org.mt) or on Facebook page [www.facebook.com/ScienceInTheCityMalta](https://www.facebook.com/ScienceInTheCityMalta).



**Figure 1:** Speakers and Members of Parliament at the inauguration of *Science in the House* at the new Parliament Building in Valletta. From left to right: Hon. Evarist Bartolo, Hon. Charlo' Bonnici, Clerk of the House Ray Scicluna, Prof. Alex Felice, Hon. Deborah Schembri, Hon. Claudio Grech, Prof. Emmanuel Sinagra and Hon. Chris Agius.

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**Figure 2:** From left to right: Hon. George Pullicino, University Rector Prof. Juanito Camilleri and Hon. Evarist Bartolo.



**Figure 4:** Research scientist Dr. Gabrielle Zammit (second from left) explaining her research to the Hon. Claudio Grech (left), Prof. Alex Felice (middle), Hon. Chris Agius (second from right) and Hon. Deborah Schembri.



**Figure 3:** The three columns with the science posters, one on each face of the poster boards before the commencement of *Science in the House*.

**Poster Titles and Contributors**

1. Regulation and Control of Haemoglobin in Blood

Prof. Alex Felice with numerous researchers including Dr. Joseph Borg of the Department of Applied Biomedical Science, Dr Godfrey Grech

of the Department of Pathology and PhD students, Ms Laura Grech and Mr Clint Mizzi, in collaboration with Prof. Sjaak Philipsen of the Department of Cell Biology and Genetics, Erasmus MC, Netherlands.

2. CALYPSO – HF Radar Protects Coastal Resources and Promises Safer Seas

Prof. Aldo Drago of the Department of Geosciences (Physical Oceanography Research Group) of the University of Malta with partners that include Transport Malta, Civil Protection Department, Armed Forces of Malta, Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell’ Ambiente – Sicilia, CNR-Istituto per l’Ambiente Marino Costiero, Università degli Studi di Palermo – Polo Univ. di Trapani and Università di Catania-CUTGANA.

3. Genetically Modified Fruit Flies for Studying Motor Neuron Disease

Dr Ruben J. Cauchi of the Faculty of Medicine & Surgery and postgraduate students Michelle Briffa and Rebecca Borgand, and undergraduate students Maia Lanfranco and Benji Fenech Salerno in collaboration with Dr Neville Vassallo’s research group, the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the Institute of Cellular Pharmacology Ltd.

4. Building Telescopes for Solving Astrophysical Problems

Dr Kristian Zarb Adami, the Director of the

institute with members and students from the Faculties of Science, Engineering and Information and Communications Technology.

5. The First Genome Sequencing of a Maltese Micro-organism

Dr Gabrielle Zammit of the Centre of Molecular Medicine and Biobanking within the Faculty of Medicine & Surgery. DNA sequencing was carried out at the Erasmus Medical Centre in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

6. Engineering Molecules with Sense and Logic

Dr David Magri and undergraduate and post-graduate students in the Department of Chemistry within the Faculty of Science.

7. Protein Studies for Designing New Drugs

Dr Thérèse Hunter, Prof. Gary Hunter, Dr Rosalin Bonetta, Ms Marita Vella, Dr Duncan Ayers, Mr Brandan Seychell and Dr Jean Paul Ebejer of the Department of Physiology and Biochemistry within the Faculty of Medicine & Surgery and collaborators Prof. Josanne Vassallo, Dr Robert Formosa (UoM) and Dr Chi Trinh Astbury of the Centre for Structural Molecular Biology, Leeds University, Prof. Arwen Pearson of Universitaet Hamburg and Prof. Paul Finn (CEO) of InhibOx Ltd Oxford.

8. Auxetic Meshing Designs for Skin Grafting

Dr Ruben Gatt, Prof. Joseph N. Grima, Dr Daphne Attard and doctoral students Mr Luke Mizzi and Mr Keith M. Azzopardi of the Metamet-rials Unit within the Faculty of Science; surgeons

and physicians Mr Joseph Briffa, Mr Aaron Casha and Dr Jeffrey Dalli of Mater Dei Hospital.

9. Studying Chlorates Levels in the Maltese Environment

Prof. Alfred J. Vella, Dr Colette Pace, Tamara Micallef and Cynthia Chircop of the Department of Chemistry within the Faculty of Science.

10. Using Cement for Dental and Bone Repair

Dr Cher Farrugia, Dr Maria Vella and project coordinator Prof. Josette Camilleri from the Department of Restorative Dentistry, Faculty of Dental Surgery. Collaborators include Dr Maria Teresa Arias Moliz from University of Granada, Prof. Denis Damidot from Ecole de Mines, Douai, France and Dr Amir Moinzadeh from ACTA Amsterdam.

11. The Effects of Diabetes Mellitus on the Risk of Heart Attack

Ms Ritienne Attard and Dr Philip Dingli, Dr Rosienne Farrugia, Dr Karen Cassar, Prof. Josanne Vassallo, Prof. Carine Doggen under the coordination of Dr Stephanie Bezzina Wettinger of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

12. New Strategies for Treating Epilepsy

Prof. Giuseppe Di Giovanni, Dr Roberto Colangeli, Dr Gergely Orban and Dr Gabriele Deidda of the Department of Physiology and Biochemistry within the Faculty of Medicine & Surgery in collaboration with Prof. Vincenzo Crunelli of Cardiff University and Dr Adrian Attard of AAT Research Ltd.