



Editorial

Giuseppe Di Giovanni

Editor-in-Chief of Xjenza online

This is the second issue of the new Xjenza series, renamed Xjenza Online, the official journal of the Malta Chamber of Scientist (ChoSci). As editor, I am pleased to report that over the past six months there has been an ongoing interest in the journal, from both authors and readers in the ever widening area of science.

We are pleased to show that the journal has a new cover design thanks to Jean Claude Vancell, this issues front image being the logo of the COST Action CM1103. Indeed, the ChoSci and its Physiological Society (MPS) hosted the International Annual meeting of COST Action CM1103 “Interdisciplinary Chemical Approaches for Neuropathology” in association with the “4th Neuroscience Day Malta University” in Valletta at the Old University this October. The University of Malta and the ChoSci organizing committee worked hard for a very successful event, both scientifically and socially. Dr Rona Ramsay, the Chair of the Action from the University of St Andrews, UK, and I put together an exciting program that covered a full range of interests, promoted the exchange of expertise between the various areas of structural-based drug design, synthetic chemistry and neuropathology that can all contribute information to diagnosis and treatment methods. This conference brought together international experts and Maltese scientists, fostering collaborations and dissemination of the work done in Europe. The ‘*Proceedings of the CM1103 “Interdisciplinary Chemical Approaches for Neuropathology in association with the 4th Neuroscience Day University of Malta”*’ can be found at the end of this issue.

With the aim to have as varied perspectives and methodological skills as possible I have increased the number of associate editors. Xjenza’s team is now made up of nine editors, with the new inclusion, in alphabetical order, of David Mifsud (Life Science), Ian Cassar (Economics), Ray Fabri (Linguistics) and Ian Thornton (Psychology and Sociology). In addition, I

have included an Advisory Board made of international scholars, such as Vincenzo Crunelli (Cardiff University, UK), David Eisner, (Manchester University, UK) Angela A. Xuereb Anastasi (University of Malta), Frank Vella (University of Saskatchewan, Canada) and Giovanni Romeo (University of Bologna, Italy).

This issue of Xjenza Online continues to be the premier outlet for work carried out in Malta. In addition, we have maintained our promise of taking the journal to an international level. Indeed, our first paper by Giuanluca Valentino and his Swiss colleagues at CERN highlight the use of the Large Hadron Collider together with the cleaning mechanisms used to ensure efficient particle collisions before insertion into beams. It also shows the complex process of beam alignment through a series of algorithms and how this is applied to ensure appropriate functioning of the system. We are also pleased to present to our readers an article by Francesco Crespi, an Italian worldwide expert on serotonin, with insight into neurotransmitter distribution throughout the CNS, its signalling mechanisms and new methods used for measurement of monoamines, in particular voltammetry and NEAR UV.

Briffa and colleagues in a Malta-Spanish collaboration carried out a study into nano-particle silane consolidants in the treatment and restoration of Globigerina limestone. The effectiveness of such treatments and how preventable future damage is, was then evaluated by a number of techniques such as salt crystallisation and capillary tests.

The paper by Victor Grech is concerned on the similarities exhibited in Star Trek to that of the myth of Galatea-Pygmalion. He gives a complex examination into many different scenarios and narratives in the works of Star Trek and their apparent relationships with Greek mythology in relation to science.

Sciicluna and her colleagues, in their research note, have presented a range of patient interpretations on whether or not they are experiencing a stroke and how

long these patients took to refer themselves to hospital. This contains specific investigation into the knowledge that patients hold on the symptoms associated with stroke and how this needs improvement.

The ChoSci believes that Xjenza Online might be essential in the scientific development of early-stage researchers in Malta, representing a learning platform on which to write and publish a scientific paper. In this second number of Xjenza Online there is a research article by Claudette Gambin and colleagues, supervised by Mr Lanfranco, in which material on Maltese honey and its pollen components, characterising them into specific groups of pollen type and pollen species is produced. Honey from all over the Maltese island was examined and allowed formulation of a pollen spectra as well as examination into incompetent honey production. A review article written under my guidance by Mr Vella, a fourth year medicine student is an in depth overview on how nicotine can administer addiction, with the neuropathophysiology of addiction development, areas of the brain associated with this action and adaptations experienced as a result of this addiction. Vella also gave an explanation of current and novel therapies for smoking cessation treatment. Jurgen Mifsud under the supervision of Kollegger at CERN, Switzerland has described research in which they evaluated the collisions of high-energy nucleons, with respect to the Glauber Model. This model is illustrated through a number of different equations and distribution models. They have also shown the relationships formed when particles are at central collision and off central collision. Mifsud and Attard have described the importance of improved public transport services for Malta's elderly

population. Through geographical evaluation, analysis of duration both to and on the buses and lack of available information, it has been shown that there is great difficulty for this particular population.

In this issue we present the first in the series of autobiographies by scholars of distinction. Professor Francis Vella has written an account of the highs and lows and the many achievements as well as challenges he experienced throughout both his academic and scientific career. He gives insight into his research, methods of development in his research and shows great aim to inspire younger individuals.

The news article is by Isabella Borg in which she describes the courses recently put in place on Medical Genetics and different methods of next generation sequencing. It explains how these techniques are of great importance in medical research and how the courses provided have shown researchers the benefits and techniques of these systems.

Once again I would like to pass on my thanks to the authors and associate editors for the high quality of material in this issue of the journal. I would like to single out Mr Jackson Said, without whose help this journal would not have been produced. With that, I thank the authors for their contributions to this issue and Ms Stephanie Chambers, a student from University of Exeter, UK, who is currently attending my laboratory, for her dedication and hard work as Editorial Assistant. As always, we thank our readers for their continued support and interest in our publications.

Giuseppe Di Giovanni,
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