

News Article

## 2014 Science in the House with Members of Parliament

David Magri

Department of Chemistry, University of Malta

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Scientists and researchers met on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September with Members of Parliament in the Committee Room at the Presidential Palace in Valletta for Science in the House. A poster exhibition consisting of 13 posters representative of various research disciplines studied at the University of Malta. The event was inaugurated under the auspices of the Office of the Speaker at the House of Representatives, The Grand Master's Palace, Valletta.

The researchers were met by the Deputy Speaker, The Hon. Censu Galea, in the presence of Project Coordinator for Science in the City and Acting Chair of the Malta Chamber of Scientists Prof. Alex Felice, University of Malta Rector Prof. Juanito Camilleri and Government Whip and MP Carmelo Abela. A common theme among the speakers was the importance of science and technology investment to the growth of a knowledge-based economy. A highlight of the discussion, stimulated by a poster with the text "Today's Science, Tomorrow's Jobs" and the University Research Trust slogan "Brighter thinking, broader future", was the importance of the national government in investing up to 3% of GDP for science and technology research by 2020.

Following the opening speeches, the Deputy Speaker and other speakers viewed the poster one-by-one, while interacting with the scientists and research students. Each poster gave a brief outline of the importance of the research and how the research impacts everyday lives. The exhibition provides a unique opportunity for Members of Parliament and researchers to discuss national science policy in an informal setting. The posters were left on display in the Committee Room in the Palace in Valletta during the 4<sup>th</sup> October Notte Bianca Arts and Culture Festival, and subsequently left on display for a

week in the corridor of the Palace for the parliamentarians to view at their leisure.



DOI - Photo - Pierre Sammut

**Figure 1:** The speakers at the opening of Science in the House. From left to right are: MP Carmelo Abela, Deputy Speaker The Hon Censu Galea, Science in the City Coordinator and Acting Chair of the Malta Chamber of Scientists Prof. Alex Felice, and the University of Malta Rector Prof. Juanito Camilleri.

### 2014 Science in the House Poster Titles and Researchers

1. Genetically Modified Fruit Flies  
*Untangling the Mysteries of Motor Neuron Disease*  
Ruben Cauchi, Michelle Briffa and Rebecca Borg
2. What a Drug is this Aspirin?  
*Aspirin and Cancer Cells*  
Rena Balzan and Gianluca Farrugia
3. Building Telescopes  
*Solving Problems in Modern Astrophysics*  
Kristian Zarb Adami, Jackson Said and members of the Institute of Space Sciences and Astronomy
4. Recreating the Big Bang

- Understanding the Secrets of the Universe*  
 Nicholas Sammut, Gianluca Valentino, Nicholas Aquilina, Marja Grech, Adrian Grima, Pierluigi Mollicone, Marija Cauchi, Miryca Borg
5. Got a Great Idea?  
*Let's Make It Work*  
 Takeoff -Anton Bartolo, Martina Pace and Monique Chambers
6. Decontamination Technologies  
*Improving the Quality of Fresh Foods*  
 Vasilis Valdramidis, David Millan Sango, Daniela Abela and Anna McElhatton
7. Where are the Fishes Staying?  
*Linking Seafloor Marine Life to Essential Fish Habitats*  
 Patrick Schembri, Julian Evans, Leanne Bonnici, Juan Jose Bonello and Kimberly Terribile
8. Life Bank for the Future  
*The Malta BioBank and Genome Research*  
 Alex Felice, Joanna Vella and others
9. Treating Neurological Disorders  
*Endocannabinoids in the Treatment of Epilepsy*  
 Giuseppe di Giovanni, Roberto Colangeli, Massimo Pierucci, Gergely Orban, Kenneth Scerri, Stefania Butini and Roberto Di Maio
10. Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean Region  
*A Case Study of Malta and Sardinia*  
 Rita Cannas and Nadia Theuma
11. Control of Human Haemoglobin Gene Expression  
*New Treatments for Blood Disorders*  
 Alex Felice, Joseph Borg, Godfrey Grech, Christian Scerri and Sjaak Philipsen
12. Information Processing with Molecules  
*Engineering Molecules with Sense and Logic*  
 David Magri, Maria Cardona and Kyle Paterson
13. Auxetic Patterns in Surgery  
*Improving Meshing Designs for Skin Grafting*  
 Joseph Grima, Ruben Gatt, Daphne Attard, Joseph Briffa, Aaron Casha, Jeffrey Dalli, Luke Mizzi and Keith Azzopardi