

Swiss-French Biomaterials Summer School 2023

On June 15th and 16th 2023, young researchers from France and Switzerland came to Zurich for the first Swiss-French Biomaterials Summer School. This event was co-hosted by the young scientist organizations of both the Swiss SSB+RM as well as the French BIOMAT. Our event offered a big variety of sessions from conventional “conference-style” keynote presentations and poster sessions to more soft-skill-oriented workshops and panel discussions. The goal was to provide the participants with valuable tools and skills to grow as researchers as well as to catalyze potential collaborations across the Swiss-French border. Due to the nature of our event, the background of our participants was even more diverse this time than it usually is. We had 46 young researchers coming from France and 40 from Switzerland. The majority were PhD students though there were also several bachelor students, master students, post-docs and even some assistant professors.

After registration and setting up the posters, we kicked off the official program on Thursday with the first keynote presentation by Dr. Yassine Maazouz from the RMS Foundation talking about how different structural cues affect the osteogenesis in calcium phosphate bone graft substitutes. After the break, we then continued with a round table discussion on the topic of career development. For this, we had invited 4 panelists: Dr. Daniela Gunz from the Career Services at the University of Zurich, Dr. Tanja Fauti from the Roche Innovation Center, Prof. Dr. Martin Ehrbar from the University Hospital Zurich and the University of Zurich as well as our



previous keynote speaker Dr. Yassine Maazouz. The greatly diverse backgrounds of our panelists as well as a lot of audience participation led to a very dynamic discussion with a lot of very interesting topics which we could have most certainly continued for many more hours. After a brief slot of rapid fire presentations, we then went into the first lunch break/poster

session. It was great to see many people discussing in our poster area, which comprised a total of 44 posters.

After lunch, the participants were split into 4 groups which went to different campuses in Zurich for our afternoon lab tours: Balgrist, Zurich Center, ETH Honggerberg and the Biotechnopark in Schlieren. Across the different campuses, we had 13 different labs opening their doors to us for which we would like to express a big “Thank you”. It was great to also see some first-hand impressions on the research being done here in Zurich.

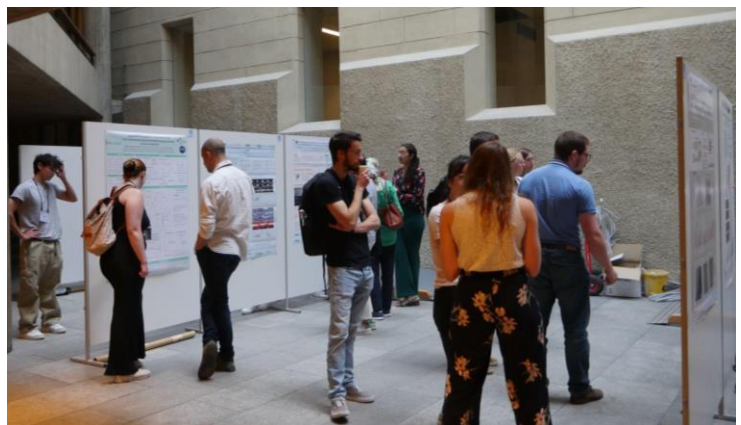
In the evening, we then gathered at Amboss Rampe for a social evening and to learn more about each other’s countries in our fun pub quiz - once again congrats to our winners that got a staggering 18/20 points!

On Friday, we kicked off the day with a talk by Dr. Carla Palomino Durand from the University of Lille on how she employs fibronectin-containing materials to improve the cell-material interaction of implants. After a coffee break/poster session, we had an abstract writing/storytelling workshop by Prof. Dr. Mark Tibbitt from ETH Zurich, which was very hands-on. Our participants were encouraged to “storyboard” one of their future papers/presentations and to present their ideas to other people from the audience. It was great to see so many



colorful post-it storyboards at the end of the session!

After lunch, we closed our summer school with a last workshop given by Dr. Michio Painter from the Therapy Development Accelerator of the University of Zurich on how to “turn ideas into companies”. He encouraged us that we should not be afraid of becoming entrepreneurs ourselves and gave us some first-hand examples from his own entrepreneurial past/present on how to master this transition from academia successfully.



Overall, we are extremely happy with how this event worked out and to see our participants so engaged in all of our sessions. The feedback that we received immediately after the event



was overwhelmingly positive, which makes us equally happy and proud of what our organizations were able to put together for this summer school.

Of course, this event would not have been possible without the support of certain institutions/individuals:

First and foremost, we would like to thank the sponsors of this event for their generous contributions, without which this summer school would have never been possible: Straumann, ETH Zurich, European Society for Biomaterials YSF, Rheolution, Readily3D, PBC Biomed and University Cergy Paris.

Secondly, we want to thank ETH Zurich for providing us with the necessary infrastructure to host this event as well as the financial contribution through the “Doctoral project funding” programme, without which this event would not have been possible.

Thirdly, our thanks go to the AO Research Institute Davos for sponsoring the nametags for our summer school.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all of our keynote presenters, round table panelists, workshop presenters and lab tour hosts for being part of this event - we greatly appreciate your contribution!

