

Devět Skal (Nine Rocks) for the Twenty-Third Time

On 20–23 May 2024, the 23rd annual conference for young scientists from various fields of natural sciences "Interdisciplinary Meeting of Young Life Scientists" (<http://www.interdisciplinarymeeting.cz/>) was held under the auspices of the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the CAS (or IOCB Tech s.r.o.), the Czech Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and the Czech Chemical Society.

As in previous years, the interest in this conference was high and the expert committee had a difficult job in selecting the winning 40 lectures and 30 posters. During the conference, a series of interesting lectures were given in the fields of biochemistry and molecular biology as well as organic chemistry, analytical chemistry, and materials chemistry. The highlight was the plenary lecture titled *My Love Affair: Monoliths*, given by Prof. František Švec, among others, the winner of the Neuron Prize 2023 and the author of more than 530 scientific publications including books and 75 patents. Indeed, readers can see for themselves the quality of the research of the presenting participants by looking at the abstracts published in the Czech Chemical Society Symposium Series (first issue of 2024, <http://www.ccsss.cz/index.php/ccsss/issue/view/43/77>).

The conference was generously sponsored by Merck Life Science s.r.o. (www.sigmaaldrich.cz), which has been the main sponsor of the conference since its inception. Their representative, MSc. Stanislav Kukla, delivered an up-to-date presentation on "Greening the Lab: Science in the Age of Sustainability". Additionally, other sponsors joined this year, including the Chemistry Europe association, which brings together chemical societies across Europe and manages several specialized journals.

The Interdisciplinary Meeting of Young Life Scientists has undergone several changes over its existence. It has been held in various locations and even weathered the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, however, marked its greatest challenge yet: the absence of its founders, Prof. Martin



Fusek and Prof. Pavel Drašar, who handed over the imaginary sceptre to their successors headed by Dr. Ondřej Baszczyński. Hopefully, even from a distance, they observed the events at Devět Skal and were not disappointed. The main idea of the conference has certainly remained the same – to facilitate meetings among successful young scientists from all corners of the country, broaden their scientific horizons, and establish contacts that no successful scientist can do without. Hopefully, the conference will continue in this spirit for at least another 23 years.

Eva Benešová



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