

## Conference Reports

### Macro Group UK Young Researchers Meeting

24-25<sup>th</sup> June 2013, University of Nottingham, UK

This year the Macro Group UK Young Researchers Meeting was held at the University of Nottingham in the Department of Chemistry. This two-day event brought together over 105 UK young researchers in the polymer chemistry community. Elegant talks ranging from the synthesis and applicability of novel biopolymers to industrial job opportunities for PhD students were delivered by keynote speakers: Prof. Charlotte Williams (Imperial College London), Prof. Alan Heaton (Chair of SCI ECSSC and formerly of Liverpool John Moores University), Prof. Filip Du Prez (Ghent University), Dr. Giuseppe Mantovani (University of Nottingham) and Dr. Peter Shaw (Synthomer).



**Delegates at Macro Group UK YRM2013 conference**

The meeting was opened by an inspiring talk from Prof. Charlotte Williams (Imperial College London) on 'Catalytic activation of renewables for polymer synthesis'. This was followed by six presentations from young researchers providing a fantastic opportunity to discover the novel and exciting research being undertaken in a variety of different polymer groups. Prof Alan Heaton from SCI (a parent organisation of Macro Group UK) gave a presentation about the options available to early career members of SCI. He also explained the travel bursary and scholarship schemes in place through SCI and how to become a member. Prof. Filip Du Prez (Ghent University) brought the first day to a close with another thought-provoking and exciting talk on 'Exploring chemical orthogonality in polymer science: from Janus beads to sequence controlled polymers'.

In the evening we had a choice of six different restaurants: the Bell Inn, the Iguana and the Canal House (contained an indoor section of canal with a boat!) just to name a few. After a delicious meal everyone regrouped at the Waterfront for evening drinks alongside the beautiful canal.

The following day got off to a great start with a talk on the 'sweet routes in drug delivery' by Dr. Giuseppe Mantovani. This day we were treated to nine presentations from young researchers which were again all of exceptional standard. Throughout the conference there was also an exciting poster session where young researcher had the opportunity to further discuss the hot topics of today's research. Three prizes were given for the best posters with the winner being Rachel Harbron (Imperial College London), the second prize was for Lizzy Jones (University of Sheffield) while the third was for Muxiu Li (University of Warwick).



**Winners of the speaker prizes**

Domino very kindly sponsored prizes for the best presentations which were awarded to Giovanna Sicilia (University of Nottingham) in first place, Daniela Kalafatovic (University of Strathclyde) in second and Paul Brooks (Durham University) in third. The conference ended with an interesting and very helpful talk by Dr. Peter Shaw (Synthomer) which provided valuable insight on applying for a job in industry. The Macro Group Young Researchers Meeting of 2013 was a huge success and we would definitely recommend going next year!

**Giovanna, Daniela and Paul**