



Editorial

FP9 bringing scientists and societies closer together to help build an inclusive, collaborative and globally connected Europe

EPSO Activities

- We Are EPSO – news from the 2017 General Meeting
- EPSO advises on science policy – Focus on FP9, CAP+ and specific areas via our Working groups
- Plant Biology Europe 2018, June 18-21, Copenhagen, Denmark
- EPSO Young Plant Scientist Award
- Plants for the Future European Technology Platform actions
- Fascination of Plants Day 2017 Celebrated Plants on All Continents

Members News

- Dirk Inzé receives GCHERA World Agriculture Prize 2017
- Strong support to feed the world through boosting photosynthetic potential
- EPPN2020: Call for access application to European plant phenotyping infrastructure

National Research Funding

- Panorama of plant research funding in the United Kingdom

European and Global Research Programmes

- Horizon 2020 Work Programmes 2018-20 published
- EPSO briefings on funding and collaborative opportunities tailored for plant scientists
- Erasmus+ 2018
- ForestValue ERA-Net
- LEAP-Agri ERA-Net

Career Opportunities

Upcoming Meetings

About EPSO

FP9 bringing scientists and societies closer together to help build an inclusive, collaborative and globally connected Europe

A core component of the EPSO vision for FP9 is the provision of intensive collaborative efforts for plant sciences contributing to the wider bioeconomy addressing the future needs of farmers and consumers for healthy plant-based food and for non-food products; to maintain and extend sustainable agriculture and forestry practices to meet increasing demands; and to address the challenges linked to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change as well as the circular economy.



Pan-European programmes enable knowledge generation as well as synergistic and cost-efficient collaboration across Europe, and are thus capable of achieving impact on a broader scale than independent national efforts. European efforts are also critical to global productivity where increasing lack of food and nutritional security, scarcity of natural resources like water, nutrients and land, but also loss of biodiversity and genetic resources, imperil sustainable development and political stability. These factors already contribute to social unrest and migration pressures on a global scale and if no action is taken, will increasingly do so in the future. Plant scientists in cooperation with researchers in other fields generate the knowledge required to underpin solutions to address the targets set under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In our [position on FP9](#), published 19.9.2017, we call upon policy makers to go beyond target setting: now is the time when the knowledge and skills of the European plant science sector are urgently needed if Europe is to deliver timely and effective solutions to these major societal challenges. The structure of FP9 will be crucial in enabling the involvement of the plant science community and in determining the effectiveness of their efforts in delivering innovative and transformative solutions for the wider European, and global, communities.

EPSO welcomes the success of the “Excellent Science” pillar and suggests continuing and increasing this in FP9. The European Research Council programmes as well as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions which have achieved major successes in terms of attracting, supporting and retaining excellent frontier scientists and training the next generation of scientists and entrepreneurs.



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Our recommendations on how to improve the societal challenges pillar address the UN SDGs, including for instance: FP9 needs to give more balanced consideration to basic research in relation to the other components (applied research, demonstration and innovation actions) of the research and innovation cycle. This can be achieved by calls focusing on or including collaborative basic research, as well as broadening the ERA-Networks and reducing their number. These actions will at the same time help to widen participation across all EU countries. Further on, FP9 should support all technologies in a balanced way by only defining the goals and not the path to get there, encouraging increased levels of trans-disciplinarity; Strengthen Europe as a leader of and contributor to global action; Include plant science research areas as key contributions to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the missions of this pillar.

Finally we suggest improvements across all pillars with regard to the evaluation procedure, Green open access, Open Science and improving links with other EU policies and programmes. EPSO offers to engage in the joint development of FP9 with policy makers at European and national level, as well as all stakeholders.

Contacts: [Karin Metzloff](#), [Svend Christensen](#) and [Ulrich Schurr](#)



We Are EPSO – news from the 2017 General Meeting

At the EPSO General Meeting (GM) in June 2017, several EPSO Representatives, such as Samuel Zeeman, Antonio Leyva, Uli Schurr, Eckhard George and Svend Christensen, gave impressive examples of how they and their colleagues engage in EPSO and lead an activity, calling upon all EPSO members to proclaim “**We are EPSO**”. This will reinforce the founding concept of EPSO that the practicing scientists across Europe and beyond come together to provide science advice to policy, to support the scientific community, to generate knowledge and to educate the next generation of scientists and entrepreneurs. This is crucial at the European level, but several EPSO members already translate this into national activities. All scientists working at an EPSO member institute or university can ask their EPSO Representative how they can engage in the activities, in the Working Groups, the next Fascination of Plants Day etc.

For instance, Uli, Eckhard and Jens Sundstrom each sent a colleague on internship to EPSO: Marina Korn focused on the collaboration with Developing Countries, whereas Heike Slusarczyk was driving finalization and publication of the Action Plans on innovation, research and education on behalf of EPSO, and Dennis Eriksson supported Jens and Karin (EPSO) in initiating and organising a series of workshops on sustainable growth between the European Parliament and the Plant ETP. Svend offers remote support to EPSO, he champions the EPSO involvement in the 2018 joint FESPB/EPSO

Conference and contributes to EPSO position papers, such as on [FP9](#).

Samuel explained how Wilhelm Gruissem and his colleagues from the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center and ETH Zurich have promoted and supported EPSO for the last 14 years. For instance, they contributed to the creation of the ERC through EPSO as a member of ISE – a success story, the collaboration with Developing Countries and founding and engaging in the Global Plant Council, as well as presenting the potential of plant science in the European Parliament and advising on agricultural technologies.

New Board Member: Ulrich Schurr, Forschungszentrum Juelich, Germany

EPSO needs to be a key driver for plant sciences in Europe. We all, in the board and beyond, should work together to improve the basis for plant sciences in Europe and beyond. This requires emphasising the enormous importance of plant sciences (based on facts, not fiction), adequate funding and collaboration options within the science community, with industry and society, state-of-the-art infrastructures as well as technology-open perspectives to implement plant sciences and, last but not least, communication with politics, industry and society. We need to mobilise effective channels to communicate at the European and the national level.





**Working Group Meetings
Agricultural Technologies 8.5.18
Plants & Microbiomes Spring
2018**



Contact [Karin Metzloff](#) for more information



**EPSO General Meeting
30 May 2017, Berlin**



Contact [Karin Metzloff](#) for more information



**EPSO/FESPB Copenhagen
Conference 2018
June 18-21, Copenhagen**



Contact [Karin Metzloff](#) for more information