



European Society for Photobiology

Newsletter

Autumn 2026



Welcome to ESP Newsletter

Connecting the European photobiology community through
science, education and collaboration

Created & curated by Rossella Labarile, Editor in Chief

Message from ESP President

Dear friends and colleagues,

On Monday, 5 October, the Nobel Assembly announced that the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine had been awarded jointly to Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann, and Georg Nagel "for their discoveries concerning light-gated ion channels and optogenetics." Their groundbreaking work established optogenetics as a transformative tool in neuroscience and medicine. The European Society for Photobiology is particularly fortunate that Professor **Peter Hegemann** accepted our invitation in June to be the **main plenary speaker** at the **22nd Congress of the ESP**, to be held in Krakow, Poland, from 22 to 26 August 2027. There are already many excellent reasons to attend our congress, and now you have one more!

June was a particularly busy and rewarding month for me. First, I attended the **8th ESP Photobiology School** (PBS) in Brixen-Bressanone, Italy. The School was **successfully organised by Santi Nonell, Giorgia Miolo, and Virginie Lhiaubet**. It brought together approximately 50 students from 20 countries, including a fully funded student from Ukraine, and a faculty of 20 lecturers. I continue to be impressed by how the organisers manage, edition after edition, to create such a wonderful event filled with excellent science, education, friendship, fun, and joy.

At the end of June, I joined several other ESP members at the **ICCP Congress in Kyoto**. This was a major international congress with more than 700 participants. I particularly enjoyed the Photoimmunotherapy Symposium organised by Janusz Dąbrowski and Tayyaba Hasan. It was inspiring to see the **strong presence of ESP members** and their important contributions to such a major international meeting.

Finally, I encourage all members to **take full advantage of everything the ESP has to offer**. Please visit our website to learn more about the many ways in which the Society supports the photobiology community: www.photobiology.eu

I wish you all a wonderful autumn and hope you enjoy nature's magnificent photobiological display as chlorophyll fades and carotenoids and anthocyanins transform the colours of the leaves.

With best wishes,

Pål Selbo

President, European Society for Photobiology



Celebrating Peter Hegemann's Nobel Prize!

The European Society for Photobiology warmly congratulates Professor Peter Hegemann on being awarded the **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2026, together with Karl Deisseroth and Georg Nagel**.

We are proud to celebrate this well-deserved honour with him and send our warmest congratulations!

MLA style: Peter Hegemann - Facts - 2026. NobelPrize.org. Nobel Prize Outreach 2026. Wed. 7 Oct 2026.
<<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/2026/hegemann/facts/>>

Join Us! Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for these exciting events:

AUG
22-26
2027

22nd ESP Congress Krakow



Preparations for the 22nd Congress of the European Society for Photobiology are in full swing!

From 22-26 August 2027, the Faculty of Chemistry of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków will welcome the international photobiology community for five days of scientific exchange and opportunities to build new collaborations. Following our initial invitation, we are pleased to share some developments as the congress takes shape.

An important milestone has been the signing of the agreement between the Jagiellonian University and ESP. This formalises our partnership and provides a framework for working together to make the congress a success, benefiting both institutions and, above all, the community we look forward to welcoming.

The **Local Organising Committee** comprises **Janusz M. Dąbrowski (Chair)**, **Justyna Łabuz**, **Krystian Mokrzyński**, **Przemysław Łabuz**, **Ewa Kuliś**, **Paweł Repetowski**, **Marta Warszyńska**, **Anna Hebda** and **Anna Kozłowska**. The team brings together colleagues from the Faculty of Chemistry, the Małopolska Centre of Biotechnology, and the Faculty of Biochemistry, Biophysics and Biotechnology of the Jagiellonian University. Working closely with ESP President Pål K. Selbo and the Executive Committee, we are coordinating the scientific programme alongside the practical arrangements that will help participants make the most of their time in Kraków.

We are delighted to announce **eight confirmed plenary speakers**: **Peter Hegemann**, **Christian Fankhauser**, **Ryan McCulla**, **Luis G. Arnaut**, **Tayyaba Hasan**, **Luisa De Cola**, **Silvia Vignolini** and **Lionel Larue**. Their contributions will reflect the breadth of contemporary photobiology, connecting fundamental discoveries with applications in medicine, materials and the environment. Tayyaba Hasan will deliver the opening lecture, while Ryan McCulla will give the traditional American Society for Photobiology Presidential Lecture, continuing the exchange between our two societies.

There is also a particularly exciting reason to celebrate: Peter Hegemann has just been awarded the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, jointly with Karl Deisseroth and Georg Nagel, for discoveries concerning light-gated ion channels and optogenetics. We extend our warmest congratulations to him and his fellow laureates. Having already accepted our invitation before the announcement, he will join us in Kraków at a moment when the transformative impact of photobiology has received worldwide recognition.

A series of planning meetings has already been devoted to the individual scientific sections and thematic symposia. Together with the section organisers, we are refining topics, discussing invited contributions and coordinating the programme to ensure the highest scientific standards. Particular attention is being given to connections between disciplines and to a schedule that enables participants to explore interests beyond their own specialities. Oral and poster presentations, educational activities, and opportunities for students and early-career researchers will complement the plenary programme.

Practical preparations are also progressing, including accommodation planning, sponsorship activities and development of the congress website. Beyond the lecture halls, Kraków will offer a setting for continuing conversations and renewing friendships. A highlight of the social programme will be the congress dinner at the Wieliczka Salt Mine, with an opportunity to explore its remarkable underground chambers.

We look forward to sharing further updates as the programme develops and to welcoming you to Kraków in August 2027!

OCT
26-30

6th PDT symposium Nancy, FR

The sixth PDT symposium devoted to all aspects of clinical photodiagnostics and photodynamic therapy will take place in Nancy, from October 26 to 30, 2026.

More info here:

[MORE INFO](#)

JUL
12-16

IPA 2027 Istanbul, TR

The 20th International Photodynamic Association World Congress will take place in Acıbadem University in Istanbul, Türkiye, from July 12-16, 2027. More information on the website:

[MORE INFO](#)

JUN
14-20

Photobiology School Brixen, IT

The European Society for Photobiology successfully organized the 8th ESP Photobiology School, which took place from June 14 to June 20, 2026 in the beautiful city of Brixen/Bressanone, Italy. Directed by the former ESP President Prof. Santi Nonell, this prestigious biennial educational event brought together **48 students from 20 different countries**, including five participants from outside Europe, reinforcing the school's global reach within the photobiological sciences community. The rigorous academic itinerary featured **specialized lectures given by 19 internationally recognised faculty members**, covering the critical pillars of our discipline, from physical and chemical photobiology, to environmental photobiology, sensory and plant photobiology, photomedicine, and photodynamic therapy.

The active participation of the attendees was highlighted during the two dedicated poster sessions, in which the students had the opportunity to directly discuss their results with the top specialists in their field. **Poster Awards** were granted to **Rasa Miliukaite (Vilnius University)** for her work on quantum dot effects on microalgae, and **Marta Warszńska (Jagiellonian University)** for her research on enhancing antitumor immunity using bacteriochlorin-based photodynamic therapy. Both laureates received free registration to the upcoming KRAKOW2027 ESP Congress. Demonstrating the excellent academic standard of this cohort, **41 students passed the final comprehensive examination**.

In addition to the scientific sessions, a networking-focused social program—including a welcome reception, a walk to the Novacella Abbey, and a gala dinner—fostered strong international collaborations among early-career researchers, which will be pivotal for their academic success. Following an analysis of 36 detailed student feedback evaluations, the ESP Scientific Committee is already designing the **9th edition, scheduled for June 11–17, 2028**.

[MORE INFO](#)

JUN
28-20

ICPP-14 Kyoto, Japan



Kyoto was the setting for this year's ICPP Congress, which brought together more than 700 researchers from around the world.

ESP members were well represented throughout the programme, with contributions spanning several areas of photobiology.

The congress was also a great opportunity to promote the ESP and its activities internationally, with our President proudly showcasing the ESP Congress poster in Kyoto.

The event provided many opportunities for scientific exchange, networking and new connections across the international photobiology community. It was a wonderful occasion for the ESP community to connect, exchange ideas and strengthen its presence on the international photobiology stage.

Interview with

Bianka Siewert, Action Chair of PanEuCOPT COST Action



Q: How did the idea for PAN EUCOPT come about, and what were the main motivations behind creating the network?

A: The seed of the idea for PanEuCOPT was planted during conversations with good friends and colleagues involved in EUCAST. Working with them made me reflect on what is still missing in the field of photoantimicrobials: clear, shared protocols and a common scientific language. We currently have many different protocols, and often several terms for essentially the same thing. Sometimes, the terminology seems to depend more on where people come from than on any meaningful scientific difference. This makes it difficult to compare results and build on one another's work. EUCAST was an inspiration in that sense. It prompted us to ask whether we could bring people together to develop a more consistent approach, rather than each group continuing to work with its own terminology and procedures. The idea began to take more concrete shape when I met Santi Nonell in Barcelona around Christmas 2022. He supported the idea and helped turn it into an application.

The main motivation behind creating the network was -and still is- to make a lasting, collective contribution to the field. Rather than having countless individual protocols, we want to work towards a shared foundation that the community develops together. I strongly believe that protocols and guidelines have a much better chance of being adopted and maintained when people have helped shape them. It is not just about agreeing on methods; it is also about establishing a shared scientific language. Ultimately, we want to give photoantimicrobials a better chance of moving beyond a research niche and towards practical applications, particularly in medicine. The field may remain specialized, but we believe that working together in this way can help it grow and support the translation of research into practice. That is the ambition behind PanEuCOPT; not something we have achieved yet, but something we want to build together.

Q: Which members of the ESP community are involved in PAN EUCOPT, and how do you see the two communities complementing each other?

A: Several members of the ESP community are involved in PanEuCOPT, including past and incoming ESP presidents. However, also many others from the board and the scientific advisory board are part. It is very encouraging and I am very happy to see this involvement. Nevertheless, I would not put ESP and PanEuCOPT on the same footing, though. ESP is a scientific society with around 40 years of history, whereas PanEuCOPT is a four-year project. They have different roles and time frames, so I clearly see PanEuCOPT as a project, which will help to enable us all to sit on one table discussing guidelines, names, and working together on teaching ideas. Thus, PanEuCOPT can clearly benefit from the experience and expertise within the ESP community, while also helping to build bridges to other scientific and clinical communities, such as dermatology or dentistry and create open-source deliverables, which will hopefully last much longer than the project itself. Ultimately, the value lies in bringing people together around shared goals, while recognizing the distinct contribution each community can make.

Q: What do you think PAN EUCOPT can bring to the ESP community, and how can researchers, especially early-career scientists, benefit from being part of the network?

A: I think PAN EUCOPT can offer the ESP community a practical framework for turning shared interests into new collaborations. We want to bring researchers together across disciplines and countries, exchange expertise, and give people opportunities to contribute to the development of the field.

For early-career scientists in particular, the network can be a place not only to learn, but also to bring their own ideas and help shape what comes next. One of the strengths of a COST Action is that it provides concrete tools to support these connections. Short-Term Scientific Missions, or STSMs, allow researchers to visit another institution, learn new techniques and work with colleagues whose expertise or facilities may not be available at home. Virtual Mobility grants support collaboration online, so working together does not always depend on being able to travel. These opportunities can benefit both early-career and experienced researchers.

There are also grants that help researchers share their work and become more visible internationally. Young Researcher and Innovator conference grants support researchers under 40 in presenting their own work, while Inclusiveness Target Countries conference grants help eligible researchers from those countries participate and present at international conferences. Dissemination conference grants serve a different purpose: they support presenting the Action's work to the wider scientific community. Together, these tools can help us connect individual research with the collective ambitions of the network.

For me, though, the real value goes beyond financial support. It is the opportunity to meet potential collaborators, exchange ideas and become an active part of a scientific community. Our ambition is for early-career researchers to feel that they have a voice in PAN EUCOPT—not simply that they are joining an existing conversation, but that they can help shape it. That is also what we hope to bring to ESP: new connections, fresh perspectives and opportunities to build something together.

Q: Looking ahead, what are you most excited about for PAN EUCOPT, and what would you like the network to achieve in the coming years?

A: What excites me most is not only what we hope to achieve during PAN EUCOPT, but what may become possible through the connections we build along the way. The Action has clearly defined goals: working towards a common scientific language, developing educational resources and guidelines, and finding better ways to communicate our knowledge to the people who could use it. These are important foundations, and there is still a lot of work ahead of us. But I also see those goals as a starting point, rather than an endpoint. If we imagine them as a summit we are trying to reach, the exciting question is: what will we be able to see, and where can we go from there? By then, we hope to have not only a more consistent way of working, but also new collaborations, stronger connections between communities, and even friendships. My hope is that these relationships will lead to new, interdisciplinary projects that extend beyond the lifetime of the Action; maybe within ESP.

I would particularly like to see us build stronger connections with clinicians and other professionals who have the expertise to help translate our science into practice. A shared language matters within the research community, but we also need to communicate beyond it: to understand what potential users need and how our knowledge could become useful to them.

Ultimately, I would like PanEuCOPT to leave behind more than agreed terminology or guidelines. I hope it creates something that continues to grow, reaches into new disciplines and countries, and develops ideas we cannot yet anticipate. The longer-term ambition is to help research on photoantimicrobials move towards applications that could contribute to treating disease. We are not there yet, but building the connections that could make that possible is what excites me most.

Interview with

Antonio Frances Moneris, 2025 Young Investigator Awardee



Q:What motivated you to apply for the ESP Young Investigator Award?

A:When you're passionate about research, and photobiology in particular, one of your goals is always to advance the field and do your part. The projects come one after another, until one day you look back and realize that, taken together, you've contributed. And then you think, "Why not?"

Q:Has the award opened up new opportunities or connections within the ESP community?

A:Absolutely. Recognition comes with visibility and more chances to make your name and work more visible, especially if you are active on the usual photobiology forums. This easily transforms into more connections and collaborations, that would have been more difficult or taken longer without the award. From that perspective, the award acts, in a way, as a catalyst.

Q:What advice would you give to young researchers aiming for their first award?

A:Be ambitious in your goals but patient with the process. Enjoy research in spite the setbacks. It sounds difficult, but it is totally possible. And the best advice I can think of is to be persistent, especially when results do not go as planned. This often opens unforeseen windows of opportunity if you take the time to reflect on it. Stay curious and resilient, recognition will eventually follow.

Important Security Notice

ESP members are advised to be aware of fraudulent emails impersonating ESP officers or organizers.

Official communications are sent only from: communication@photobiology.eu and/or paasel@ous-hf.no

If you receive a suspicious message requesting money, personal information, passwords, gift cards, or urgent action, please do not respond and verify the sender independently.

Thank you for helping keep ESP communications secure.

ESP Communication work group

The ESP newsletter is a key tool to keep our community informed about upcoming events and scientific updates in photobiology. There are several things that we can do for you.

Are you looking for a collaboration of a photobiology topic? Are you recruiting a PhD student? a postdoctoral fellow?

Would you like to advertise one of your recently published work? Anything else photobiology-related?

Contact us at communication@photobiology.eu



**Fabienne
Dumoulin**



**Rossella
Labarile**



**Carla Arnau
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**Martina Lukić
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**Nidia Maldonado
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**Pål
Selbo**

Our Journal: Photochemical & Photobiological Sciences

Photochemical & Photobiological Sciences, the official journal of the European Society for Photobiology, continues to develop its editorial profile and strengthen its position within the photochemical and photobiological research community.



As part of the latest changes of the editorial team, Professor **Franz Trautinger**, former President of the ESP, has been appointed as the next Deputy Editor-in-Chief of PPS.

Franz Trautinger has made exceptional contributions to the journal and has consistently ranked among its most active and highly valued editors in terms of manuscript-handling volume, responsiveness, reliability, and editorial judgement. His appointment further strengthens the journal's expertise in photomedicine, one of its largest and most important areas of research.

At the same time, Professor **Rex Tyrrell** has been awarded with the title of Honorary Editor and received the PPS Medal in recognition of his longstanding commitment to PPS as Editor in Chief. Through his pivotal role in the development and success of the journal, Rex Tyrrell has made a significant and lasting contribution to its scientific profile and international standing.



The recent performance indicators of PPS further demonstrate its continued development as a leading publication venue for the photobiology and photochemistry communities. In the 2025 evaluation, PPS achieved an **Impact Factor of 3.5**, while its Scopus rankings place it in **Q1** in the categories **Radiation and Biophysics**.

We warmly invite all members of the ESP to become more actively involved in PPS by taking on the role of Guest Editor for a Topical Collection. Such collections play an important role in shaping the scientific profile and future development of our journal and can provide a valuable focus for emerging or rapidly developing areas of photobiological research. Experience has shown that Topical Collections attract high-quality submissions to PPS and promote greater visibility and scientific exchange within the research community. We therefore kindly encourage ESP members to consider proposing topics that reflect current developments, emerging research areas, or fields in which the photobiological and photochemical communities would benefit from closer interaction.

All suggestions for new Topical Collections are very welcome and should be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief, Kristjan Plaetzer, at kristjan.plaetzer@plus.ac.at.

Franz Trautinger on his new role

"I cannot remember exactly, but it must have been more than 20 years ago when – much to my surprise – I was invited by Janet Bornman, then Editor-in-Chief of ESP's newly founded journal Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences, to serve as one of its associate editors.

Without saying, I accepted the role – even though I had absolutely no experience in journal editing – with pride, but also with a fair amount of humility and great respect for the task.

Fortunately, I found support and encouragement from a row of outstanding Editors-in-Chief, the other members of the Editorial Board, the ESP officers and many others who served as role models, teachers, colleagues and friends. Alongside Janet, the late Giulio Jori, Rex Tyrrell, Santi Nonell and Kristjan Plaetzer deserve special mention. Equally important, of course, are the insights I have gained from our authors and reviewers, who have continuously provided and challenged me with fresh, imaginative and fascinating insights into photobiology, particularly in my special fields of photomedicine and photodermatology.

Much like the experience of many years ago, I was once again rather surprised when the ESP Executive Committee recently offered me the position of Deputy Editor-in-Chief. And again, after only a very brief consideration, I happily accepted, in the hope that the continuing friendship and collegiality, so characteristic of our Society and its subgroups, projects and enterprises, will help me to fulfil this task and support our current and excellent Editor-in-Chief, Kristjan Plaetzer, as best I can.

I regard this appointment as a wonderful opportunity to continue my long-standing commitment to ESP and PPS, and look forward to seeing Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences continue to flourish."