



NANODRUG

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newsletter
Issue 1—November 2011



From left: Prof. Karsten Haupt, Dr. Juijun Zhu, Prof. David Kelsell, Dr Lino Ferreira, Dr Bernard Baumstuemmler, Dr Romano Droemer, Dr Emre Tureli, Prof. Klaus Liedl, Prof. Veronique Preat, Dr Marina Resmini

NANODRUG Partners meet for the first time at the Kick Off Meeting on 9th November 2011 at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels, Belgium



The beginning of a new adventure...



...and finally there we were.....after almost 10 months since the submission of the proposal on the EC EPSS system and more than 6 months since receiving news of the success we were at last all in Brussels for the kick off meeting.

Small problem....we still did not have a signed contract. I confess that I was getting increasingly worried despite trying to show a 'cool' approach. The number of times that I had received requests of confirmation from the partners was fast approaching 50 and I was still not in possession of a signed document. QMUL had signed the contract and returned it to Brussels, but our precious piece of paper was now floating somewhere among different desks in different offices in the humongous (new word coming from joining up 'huge' and 'enormous') palace that houses all the EC administrative staff.

Never mind, we convinced ourselves that nothing was going to go wrong and just decided to make the most of the occasion. David (Kelsell) and myself arrived in Brussels on Tuesday evening and started to check at the hotel whether anyone else had arrived. Shortly afterwards we met up with Klaus (Liedl) and decided to go for a drink and chat a bit.

The hotel, chosen with the approval of our host, Veronique was right in the Centre, in a really beautiful position, just next to the amazing church of Notre Dame du sablon.

The following morning Klaus, David, Jorge, Lino and myself met in the lobby and decided to go for breakfast somewhere outside, having agreed that 25 Euros for a single breakfast in the hotel was really too much,



and given that the contract was not even signed, it was really better to avoid any expenses that might get us in trouble. As we walked out of the hotel I spotted immediately a lovely shop that was selling croissants and cakes and immediately pointed eagerly my finger indicating a strong interest...but was convinced that we should start walking towards Parc Metro and that 'we would find plenty of coffee shops along the way' (quotation from Jorge Rosenfeld). Well as it turned out this was not to be the case. Jorge, who began feeling really guilty started using his perfect French to stop almost every single person along the way asking for a coffee shop. After being pointed in the right direction we unfortunately

discovered that on Wednesdays all coffee shops in Brussels were closed. At that point David confidently stated that we should get in the Metro and go to the University where we would find 'lots of coffee shops' everywhere. After being squashed in the Metro car for almost 20 minutes we came out at the other end and found ourselves in front of a large Pizza Hut. I must confess that it did cross my mind to forget the croissant and just point straight to the Pizza....only to realise within 3 mins that the Pizza Hut was also closed.

So we started walking and along the way, following the detailed instructions sent by Veronique, realised that our host was really not trusting us to be competent as she had attached 'NANODRUG signs' throughout the Campus indicating where to go. We started to feel really important....but we were still without breakfast. At that point Klaus decided to take matter in his



own hands and approached a couple of walking students...who at first almost did not respond and then start speaking French. After gaining the help of Jorge for the translation we were pointed in the direction of another place, only to discover that it was also closed! At that stage I began to have visions of croissants as my blood pressure started to drop, Klaus was clearly showing signs of caffeine withdrawal symptoms (although at that time we still did not know how severe this was) and David kept repeating 'this is a University there must be a coffee shop open'. The combined power of all our scientific minds then came to our rescue, as we all realised that as we approached our destination we could see students walking with paper cups clearly containing coffee. So we started following the flow and we finally reached a little coffee shop where we were able to sit down and recover from the whole adventure. At that point I calmly pointed out that this had just been a preset 'team building exercise' set by the Coordinator (how cool is that....?)

When we reached the venue we met our host, Veronique, who had organised a lovely meeting room with plenty of coffee, water, Coke, biscuits and we were

constantly attempting to use their computer and do some work (note to myself: remember next time to organise the meeting in a room where there is no wireless connection :))

Even more significantly the coordinator was totally stunned that one of the naughty ones (name begins with R....) had the courage to ask 'which website?' when the coordinator was talking about the NANODRUG website. Klaus on the other hand was providing a shining true first class performance throughout, showing to be on top of every single item on the agenda (I am actually now considering the possibility of handing coordination to UCBK and just relax for once).

At the end of the session a little surprise was in store for Karsten: it was his birthday and the Coordinator (me) had liaised with Veronique to organise a couple of beautiful cakes and some drinks. Unfortunately the 'birthday boy' although pleased with the surprise could not throw himself in the celebrations as he was soon to hit the road and swiftly return home for a well deserved family birthday party, but he was clearly hesitant at the thought of how much fun the rest of us were going to have!



shortly afterwards joined by the rest of the PIs.

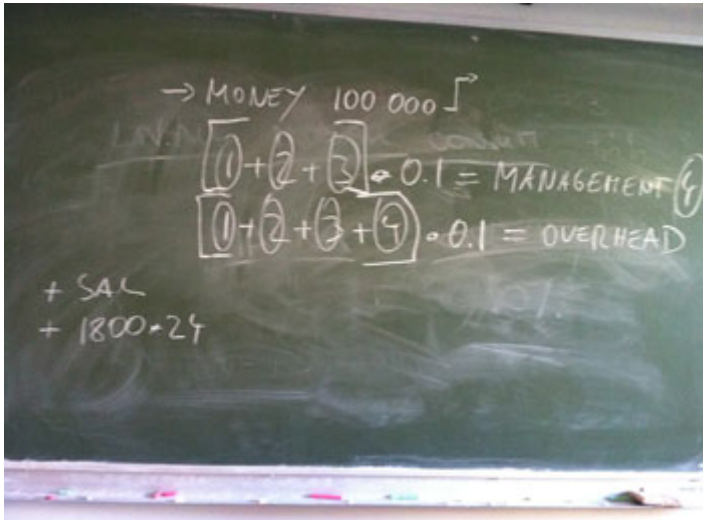
The first morning was dedicated to a short introduction followed by presentations by each PI, all carried out with perfect timing and it became very clear how well assorted this Network was with highly interdisciplinary yet complementary teams. At lunch time we were joined by Ian Forristal, from the QMUL Learning Institute, who came to lead and deliver a workshop on PhD supervision. It was interesting to see how the different teams were engaging at all levels and getting really carried away in the discussion. Of course a couple of the 'pupils' (Romano and Karsten) had to be reprimanded and threatened by the Coordinator with the possibility of being put on the naughty step for

The evening meal had been organised at Lola, a lovely restaurant just opposite our hotel, and it was an excellent opportunity to chat and get to know each other and share a lot of really funny stories. The mood was really good and everyone enjoyed the lovely food. After the dinner we went for a pleasant walk in the Centre and admired some really amazing buildings in Brussels and appreciated the lively atmosphere.

On Thursday morning, the agenda included a session on administrative issues and some preliminary discussions on the scientific objectives. Little did I know what was expecting me....3 hours of intense questioning on every possible administrative aspect of the Network. It was very demanding but hopefully useful

and will prevent the whole Consortium getting into trouble down the line.

At 12.30 it was decided that 'enough is enough' and that it was time to stop. We had covered every single possible administrative angle on the project and all we needed now was the contract signed. Time was moving fast and trains and airplanes were all awaiting the teams.



As we thanked our host and said goodbye to everyone I felt that the meeting had been a real success. All the partners had clearly enjoyed the event and the atmosphere was positive and truly supportive. I just knew at that moment that this was going to be another wonderful adventure.



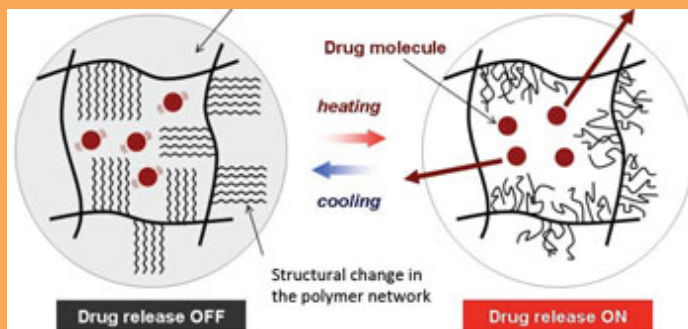
Dr Marina Resmini

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Monday 14th November 2011; the Coordinator has just received an e-mail from the PO containing the scanned copy of the signed Contract. YES, we can now charge the cost of the kick off meeting to the new budget.



Outreach Activities

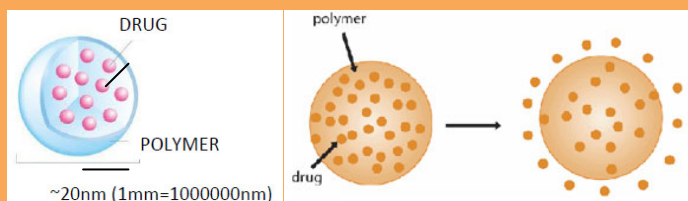


Dolça Fabregat, a PhD Student at Marina Resmini Research Group, will be giving a 30 minutes presentation on Drug Delivery Systems on 14th December 2011 at St Paul's Way Trust School for students aged 14-15 year old. The class would consist of 10 students on 4th year, who have already chosen to specialise in the sciences.

Dr Marina Resmini was invited to give a presentation and talk about her Marie Curie Career and the European Commission funded research projects at the 3rd European Innovation Summit conference which took place in the European Parliament in Brussels. This year's Summit was organized for the third time in partnership with the EU Presidency, the European Commission and the European Parliament. The Summit conferences provided a unique opportunity to present and debate the key topics along the innovation value chain from education to internationalization of companies. The focus of the Brussels event was on the need for talent, the role of business and transatlantic innovation cooperation. The summit ended with a fresh discussion on the future of innovation in Europe and lunch debates on wireless communications and EU-Russia innovation cooperation.

The speakers' presentations and discussions addressed most of the important aspects related to the complex issue of innovation thus providing a wealth of knowledge to be further exploited.

Dr Resmini spoke in the session titled "Europe's Future Nobel Prize Winners" which was attended by over 30 students aged 16-18 from the local "European School" all interested in studying chemistry. It was a wonderful opportunity for a good Q & A session not only with the students but also with the teachers. [link conference to website](#)



The aim is to try to inspire the next generation of scientists by giving short talks about scientific research, to nearby QMUL schools.



Michela Comune, from Italy, will start her employment on 2nd December 2011 as ESR at the Centre for Neurosciences and Cell Biology (CNBC), University of Coimbra, Portugal.

Selim Beyazit, from Turkey and **Jacqueline Maximilien**, from Barbados, will be employed as ESR at the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) Compiègne, France and will start respectively in January and February 2012.

Asli Arslan, from Turkey, has been recruited as ESR by MJR and will start in December or January 2012.

Recruitment

Forthcoming Events

Network Events



First NANODRUG Training School
25-26 June 2012
Queen Mary, University of London

First NANODRUG International Meeting
27-29 June 2012
Queen Mary, University of London

Marina would like to draw your attention to these forthcoming conferences. If you have any other suggestions please let us have the details.

Nanomedicine: Visions, Risks, Potential
19 and 20 April 2012, Berlin, Germany
<http://www.ea-aw.org/>

European Materials Research Society—E-MRS 2012 SPRING MEETING
May 14-18, 2012, Congress Center - Strasbourg, France
<http://www.emrs-strasbourg.com/index.php>

Molecularly Imprinted Polymers - Science and Technology—MIP 2012
27-30 August 2012, Paris, France
<http://www.mip2012.com/>

Colloids and Nanomedicine 2012
15-17 July 2012, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
<http://www.colloidsandnanomedicine.com/index.html>

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