

Editorial

## Preface and Statement of Peer Review

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The inaugural international meeting of Molecules4Life (M4L) took place from the 20th to the 22nd of September 2023 at the School of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Vila Real, Portugal. As a collaborative effort between the Centro de Química-Vila Real (CQ-VR) and the Portuguese Chemical Society (SPQ), this congress aimed to explore the dynamic intersection of new molecules with health sciences.

The focal points of this premier edition encompassed four major thematic areas: Healthy Food (HF), Drug Delivery (DD), Therapeutic Applications (TA), and Sensing and Diagnosis (SD). The event boasted 10 plenary conferences, 7 invited talks, 28 oral presentations, and 50 posters, attracting around 140 participants from diverse regions within Portugal, including the Azores and Madeira. Impressively, the gathering also drew attendees from international locations such as the United States, France, Germany, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, South Korea, Malaysia, Palestine, Israel, Turkey, England, Poland, and Croatia.

The participant demographic comprised esteemed university professors, postdoctoral researchers, and a noteworthy representation of doctoral and master's students, particularly from UTAD. The plenary conferences delved into cutting-edge topics, featuring speakers such as Prof. Richard Hartley (Univ. of Glasgow) on cellular redox, Prof. Tiago Outeiro (Univ. of Gottingen) on Parkinson's disease, Prof. Matilde Marques (IST) on health challenges and drug design, Prof. Belen Vaz (Univ. of Vigo) on indolebenzoazepinone synthesis, Dr. Bruno Silva (Empa) on nonviral gene therapeutics, Prof. Maria Blanco-Prieto (Univ. of Navarra) on nanomedicine for pediatric cancer, Dr. Rui Campos (IINL) on genosensors, Prof. Maria Gamella-Carballo (UCM) on electrochemical biosensing platforms, Prof. Pierre-Louis Teissedre (Univ. of Bordeaux) on grape and wine phenolic compounds, and Prof. Justin Siegel (UC Davis) on protein design for the future of the food system.

Recognition of distinguished oral and poster communications in each category was carried out by a panel of experts, including researchers like Christian Griesinger from the Max Planck Institute, Maria João Queiroz (UM), Samuel Silvestre (UBI), Ana Viana (UL), Romeu Videira (UP), Fátima Bento (UM), Helena Tomás, and João Rodrigues (UMA). João Siopa (UTAD), Daniela Malafaia (UA), Ivo Martins (UMA), and Isilda Amorim (UM) received Best Oral Communication awards. Outstanding poster contributions were acknowledged, with Mónica Silva (UTAD), Beatriz Morais (IST), Marina Amorim (UP), and Joana Martins (UC) receiving top honors.

The success of Molecules4Life was underscored by exceptional plenary sessions that not only provided valuable insights but also stimulated critical thinking and fostered productive dialogues among participants. Beyond these sessions, the event facilitated networking opportunities, further enhancing relationships among researchers. Heartfelt gratitude is extended to all participants for the high quality of the presented work, and sincere appreciation goes to the sponsors for their invaluable support.



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### Statement of Peer Review

In submitting conference proceedings to *Medical Sciences Forum*, the volume editors of the proceedings certify to the publisher that all papers published in this volume have been subjected to peer review administered by the volume editors. Reviews were conducted by expert referees to the professional and scientific standards expected of a proceedings journal.

- Type of peer review: single-blind.
- Conference submission management system: All correspondence related to submissions and review processes was managed through email.
- Number of submissions sent for review: 21.
- Number of submissions accepted: 14.
- Acceptance rate (number of submissions accepted/number of submissions received): 0.67.
- Average number of reviews per paper: 2.
- Total number of reviewers involved: 14.
- Description of the process of peer review and/or editorial oversight of all accepted content (e.g., detailed criteria or policy of peer-review, etc.): The papers have undergone a rigorous single-blind peer review, conducted by independent reviewers. These reviewers assessed various aspects, including scientific content, originality/novelty, quality of presentation, scientific soundness, interest to the readers, English proficiency, and overall merit.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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