



**YSF**  
European Society  
for Biomaterials



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## YSF Newsletter - July 2026

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8. EDA Julia Polak Award - 2026 Awardees
9. Follow our LinkedIn page

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### 1. Message from YSF's Spokesperson

Dear YSF and ESB members,

Welcome to the first newsletter from the newly elected 2026 YSF Board!

We are excited to share the activities and opportunities planned for the coming months, with a special focus on the upcoming ESB Congress in Belgium, as well as highlights from our vibrant young biomaterials research community.

The YSF is dedicated to supporting early-career researchers by fostering networking, collaboration, professional development, and recognition. We hope this newsletter inspires you to get involved and make the most of everything the YSF and ESB have to offer.

We look forward to meeting many of you at the ESB Congress!

Kind regards,

Anna Puiggali-Jou (On behalf of the YSF board)



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## 2. YSF events at ESB 2026 (Antwerp, Belgium)



### YSF Workshops

Monday, September 7 – 14:00-16:00 (CEST) - ♿ A Room with a Zoo

#### 14:00 - Round table AI Tools in Scientific Research

This round table will focus on the use of AI tools in scientific research, from literature analysis and data interpretation to scientific writing. Speakers will discuss practical applications, limitations, and ethical considerations for using AI responsibly into research workflows.

##### Speakers:

- Gerry Koons, MD/PhD Postdoctoral Researcher, Radboud University Medical Center, NL
- Maria Southall, Biomaterial Science Executive Editor, UK
- Sandra Pina, Principal Researcher at 3Bs Research Group, University of Minho, PT
- Matteo Santin, Professor of Tissue Regeneration, University of Brighton, UK

#### 15:00 - Round table Career Paths

This round table will highlight diverse career paths in scientific research, with particular emphasis on balancing professional ambitions with personal and family life. Invited speakers will share their experiences and perspectives on navigating career development, mobility, responsibilities, and well-being throughout a scientific career.

##### Speakers:

- Marcy Zenobi-Wong, Professor, ETH Zürich, CH
- Miguel Castilho, Associate Professor, Eindhoven University of Technology, NL
- Arpita Roychoudhury, Innovation Manager, xolo GmbH, DE
- Kyriakos Spanoudes, Founder and CEO, Vet Ex Machina Ltd, CY

### YSF's Night Out

Wednesday, September 9 – 19:30 (CEST) - ♿ Kavka, Oudaan 14, 2000 Antwerpen

Come meet fellow young scientists, reconnect with colleagues, and enjoy an informal night with the YSF and ESB community beyond the conference sessions at the YSF Night Out 2026! Located in the heart of Antwerp, Kavka is a lively concert and event venue with a creative, informal atmosphere, closely connected to the city's youth and music scene.

**The party:** Join us on **September 9th**, from **19:30 to 23:30**, for a relaxed YSF evening with a standing dinner concept, drinks, and DJ music. Each participant will receive two drinks as part of the

registration. Kavka can be easily reached by foot (about 20 min walk) or by public transport from the congress venue.

**Registration:** Tickets can be purchased during ESB 2026 registration for €25. Places are limited, so make sure to secure yours early!

Stay tuned for more details about the night's activities!

More info about the conference here: <https://esb2026.org/>

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### 3. YSF call for projects 2026 – results summary

The YSF-ESB Call for Projects is a yearly opportunity created by the YSF Board to support events and workshops that help young scientists develop their skills and share knowledge about biomaterials in Europe. This year, there was a total funding of 1,200 Euros available. We received seven applications from countries across Europe, including France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal. We judged the applications based on several factors: - How relevant and innovative the program theme was. - Whether the proposed budget was reasonable for the number of participants and costs. - How well different research groups collaborate in organizing the event. - The potential impact or benefit the event would have on attendees. After reviewing all applications against the available budget, we decided to fund the three top-scoring projects; two of which were tied. Call for Projects 2026 recipients are: Dr. Gerry Koons, Dr. Ilijana Kovrlija, and Nour Bousaïdi.

Ilijana Kovrlija will organize the ESB International workshop on “**Mapping the Interface: Molecular, Material, and Translational Dimensions of Host Response**” in Spring 2027 at RINN Medical Devices, previously known as CÚRAM, Research Ireland Centre for Medical Devices, Galway, Ireland. This two-day hybrid training event will strengthen early-stage researchers’ understanding of how biomaterials interact with the host at molecular, cellular, and tissue levels. Through expert lectures, student presentations, and two hands-on workshops, participants will explore how material properties shape immune responses and cell behavior.

Nour Bousaïdi will organize the BIOMATRIX Young Researchers Days “**When Extracellular Matrix Meets Biomaterials**” in February 2027 in Lyon, France. The event will bring together 80 young scientists at the crossroads of extracellular matrix (ECM) biology and biomaterials. The program combines keynote lectures of leading national and international experts, oral presentations, poster

sessions, and round tables with hands-on soft skills workshops and lab tours of local research groups. To learn more, see the flyer below and you can visit the BIOMAT [website](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

**Workshop**

Meaningful Human Control in AI-Assisted Biomaterials Design and Manufacturing

Date and Time: 11 September 2026, 12:00 – 16:00

Location: Radboud University Medical Center Nijmegen, Netherlands

Registration Link and Event Information:

Behind every AI-assisted biomaterials design process is a human who must control it.

Through expert lectures, interactive cases, and structured group work, you will gain experience with:

- Common AI-assisted workflows
- Interpreting AI outputs
- Understanding limitations of AI tools
- Validation and reporting necessities

Funding support provided by: European Society of Biomaterials, Young Scientist Forum

**BioMatrix Days**

When Extracellular Matrix Meets Biomaterials

Mark your Calendar: 22 – 24 February 2027

Location: Lyon, France

Confirmed speakers

- National speakers
  - Dr. Jean-Daniel Malcor, Lyon, FR
  - Dr. Carole Aimé, Paris, FR
  - Dr. Nicolas L'Heureux, Bordeaux, FR
- International speakers
  - Pr. Abhay Pandit, Galway, IR
  - Dr. Joan Chang, Manchester, UK

Logos: NBTE, European Society of Biomaterials, Radboudumc, BIOMAT, SFBMEc

Gerry Koons will organize a workshop on “**Meaningful Human Control in AI-Assisted Biomaterials Design and Manufacturing**” on 11th of September 2026, in Nijmegen, The Netherlands. This half-day workshop aims at training early career biomaterials researchers in the responsible and effective use of AI assisted tools for biomaterials design and manufacturing. Through an expert keynote, interactive case-based discussions, and structured group work, participants will critically examine where and how human judgment should remain central when AI systems are used in biomaterials research.

Importantly, the **rules for the 2027 call for projects will change**, and two calls for projects will be opened. A spring edition will open in **November 2026**, deadline on January 31st of 2027, and a fall edition will open in September 2027, deadline on November 15th of 2027:

#### Spring edition (2027 Call)

Event dates (eligibility): between March 1st and December 31st, 2027

Deadline: January 31st, 2027

Notification of results: no later than March 1st, 2027

#### Fall edition (2028 Call)

Event dates (eligibility): between January 1st and December 31st, 2028

Deadline: November 15th, 2027

Notification of results: no later than December 15th, 2027

We will be proud to support your national or European event!

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## 4. 3rd YSC Intersociety Symposium

On June 16th, we were delighted to take part in the 3rd Young Scientists Intersociety Symposium, organized by the Young Society of the Controlled Release Society (CRS). This 2026 edition brought

together four vibrant early-career researcher communities: CRS YSC, yESMI, YSF-ESB, and SYIS-TERMIS.

The symposium featured inspiring keynote lectures by Prof. Vitor M. Gaspar (University of Aveiro), Prof. Isabelle Aubert (University of Toronto), and Assoc. Prof. Hagar Labouta (University of Toronto), alongside outstanding presentations from young scientists of all societies. YSF-ESB was proud to sponsor the Best Presentation Award, which was presented to Jader Pires (Federal University of Goiás, Brazil). Congratulations once again, Jader!

**CRS** ONLINE EVENT  
16th June 2026  
08:45 AM EDT – 1:00 PM EDT

**3rd Young Scientists Intersociety Symposium**  
CRS YSC meets yESMI, YSF-ESB and SYIS-TERMIS

At the interface of drug delivery, imaging, biomaterials science and tissue engineering

- Unique interdisciplinary online event
- Cutting-edge invited speakers:

Prof. Vitor M. Gaspar  
University of Aveiro

Prof. Isabelle Aubert  
University of Toronto

Ass. Prof. Hagar Labouta  
University of Toronto

- Several young scientists short-talks selected from abstracts
- 2 awards for best oral talks
- Networking opportunities for young scientists

FREE REGISTRATION, abstract submission and more information:

Deadline abstract submission: 28th May 2026 (11:59 pm EDT)  
Deadline registration: 15th June 2026 (11 am EDT)

Further information: crsyc@gmail.com

## 5. 5th ISBF ECR Online Poster Conference

YSF was pleased to contribute to the 5th ISBF ECR Online Poster Conference, held on June 11–12, 2026 and organized by ISBF Early Career Researchers in collaboration with ESB and TERMIS-EU. The event brought together young scientists working in biofabrication, biomaterials, and regenerative medicine, offering an interactive online platform for scientific exchange, poster presentations, and networking across societies. During this edition, 55 posters were presented, including 11 biomaterials-related contributions hosted in a dedicated YSF-ESB space. This offered visibility to young ESB members and to researchers working at the interface between biomaterials and biofabrication.

**5th Online Poster Conference**  
International Society for Biofabrication  
for Early Career Researchers  
11-12 June, 2026

YSF European Society for Biomaterials

TERMIS

Sharmeen Tanzeer  
Najla Al-Harbi  
Diana Pacheco  
Viktoriya  
Marta Pacheco  
Charlotte Bice  
Julian Gonzalez  
Diana Gonçalves  
Joanna Babiotti  
Daria Caboli  
Sofia Guedes  
Lukasz Marcin Matysiak  
Jader Pires  
Marta Pacheco  
Diana Pacheco  
Viktoriya  
Marta Pacheco  
Charlotte Bice  
Julian Gonzalez  
Diana Gonçalves  
Joanna Babiotti  
Daria Caboli  
Sofia Guedes  
Lukasz Marcin Matysiak  
Jader Pires

The conference program also included keynote lectures by Khoon Lim, Rita Sobreiro-Almeida, and Max Yavitt, together with a workshop on peer review practices led by Jessica Wheeler.

To further support early-career researchers, YSF-ESB sponsored a Best Poster Award, which was won by Fabiana Cavarzan (Politecnico di Milano, Italy), for her excellent contribution in the biomaterials section. Congratulations once again, Fabiana, and thank you to all presenters for contributing to this interactive and successful online event!

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## 6. Welcome to our three new National Chapter Representatives

**This year, Norway, German and Latvian chapters saw changes in their representatives, and we are very happy to welcome three new national representatives. We wish you great success in your new roles!**

### **New National Chapter Representative for Norway**

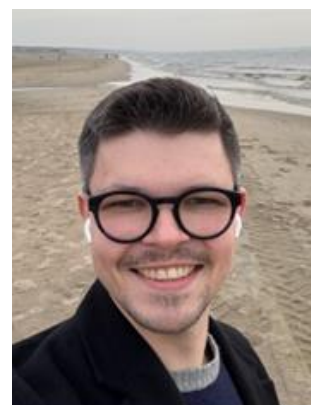
The Norway chapter of the YSF has a new representative, Marco Santacroce. Marco Santacroce. He is a doctoral research fellow at the Biomaterials Science group (Prof. Håvard Jostein Haugen) of the Institute of Clinical Dentistry, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Oslo. His research interests include periodontal and peri-implant regeneration, synthetic bioactive peptides, dental implant surfaces, biomaterial–tissue interactions, and the clinical translation of regenerative strategies. He is a member of the European Association for Osseointegration (EAO), the Spanish Society of Periodontology and Osseointegration (SEPA), and the International Team for Implantology (ITI).



*"I am excited to represent the YSF community in Norway and to help strengthen connections among young researchers across disciplines and borders. I believe that bringing together different perspectives is essential for translating biomaterials research into meaningful clinical solutions."*

### **New National Chapter Representative for Germany**

The German chapter of the YSF is now represented by Johannes Windisch. He is a PhD candidate at the TFO / Centre for Translational Bone, Joint and Soft Tissue Research (Prof. Michael Gelinsky), TU Dresden. His research interests include the development of bioinks and 3D bioprinting technologies for tissue engineering in microgravity, working with both mammalian and non mammalian cells. He conducts parabolic flight campaigns and experiments aboard the ISS and other space platforms and supports research teams working at the ESA Ground-Based Facility. He is a member of the ESB, the DGBM and the DGBM YSF.



*“One of the most important things I got to learn during my PhD on 3D bioprinting in space was that the solutions rarely lie in just one lab, one scientific discipline, or one country. As the new representative for Germany, I want to help lower the barriers between national chapters, connect young researchers across Europe more closely, and support them in finding solutions together within the ESB community. Because I am pretty sure: if we are able to print tissues in microgravity, we can definitely also build a few more bridges here on ground.”*

### **New National Chapter Representative for Latvia**

Finally, the Latvian chapter of the YSF is now represented by Jana Vecstaudža. She is a Leading researcher at the Institute of Biomaterials and Bioengineering, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology, Riga Technical University. Her research interests include calcium phosphate-based biomaterials for bone regeneration, organs-on-a-chip, 3D bioprinting and material property-structure relationships. Member of the European Organ-on-Chip Society (2026), Latvian Material Research Society (since 2014), Association of Latvian Young Scientists (since 2012), the European Society for Biomaterials (2019-2020, 2023-2024), and the Scandinavian Society for Biomaterials, ScSB (2021-2023, 2026 - became the ScSB YSF National Chapter representative).



*“Try! What if it works out?”*

If you are from a country that does not have a representative yet (but does have a society affiliated to the ESB) or have an inactive one (list of all the reps can be found here: <http://www.esbiomaterials.eu/cms/content/ysf-representatives>), please contact Dr. Isabelle Martinier, National Chapters Liaison Officer (i.c.martinier@umcutrecht.nl). Only together we create a strong community!

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## **7. ESB 50th Anniversary Logo Competition - Winner Announced!**

We are pleased to announce that the winning design for the ESB 50th Anniversary Logo Competition is Celebrating Five Decades of Biomaterials Research, created by Sharun Khan, Postdoctoral Fellow at Aalborg University, Denmark.

Sharun's design is a thoughtful piece of visual storytelling. At its centre sits a biomaterial scaffold, a nod to the scientific foundation upon which ESB was built, encircled by a golden ring representing 50 years of progress. Deliberately left open-ended, the design speaks not only to what we have achieved, but to the possibilities that lie ahead. It is a logo that reflects innovation, collaboration, and the enduring spirit of biomaterials research.



Thank you to all participants who submitted designs, the creativity on display was genuinely impressive, and to everyone who took the time to vote. A particular acknowledgement to the Young Scientists Forum for their contributions throughout the competition.

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## 8. EDA Julia Polak Award - 2026 Awardees

The EDA Julia Polak Award recognises outstanding early-career researchers in the field of biomaterials, honouring the legacy of Dame Julia Polak, a pioneering scientist in tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. The award is presented by the European Society for Biomaterials to support and celebrate the next generation of biomaterials researchers across Europe.

This year marks 20 years since the inaugural EDA Julia Polak Award was presented, a milestone that reflects the award's enduring role in recognising excellence in early-career biomaterials research across Europe.

With this, we are pleased to congratulate the 2026 cohort of awardees:

- **Simao Pedro Barbosa Teixeira** - International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL), Portugal
- **Paula De Dios Andres** - Aarhus University, Interdisciplinary Nanoscience Center (iNANO), Denmark
- **Konrad Kwiecień** - AGH University of Krakow, Poland
- **Diana Juanes Gusano** - University of Valladolid, GIR BIOFORGE, Spain
- **Francesca Tivano** - Politecnico di Torino, Italy
- **Henry Richard Chijcheapaza Flores** - INSERM U1365, University of Lille, France
- **Paulina Nuñez Bernal** - University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands





We extend our congratulations to all seven awardees on this well-deserved recognition.

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## 9. Follow our LinkedIn page

Get updated and/or start a conversation with our members! Looking forward to hearing from you!

Connect with us on LinkedIn here  <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ysf-esb> or scan the QR code 

