



**Society of
Spanish Researchers
in the United Kingdom**

Web: <http://www.sruk.org.uk>
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Pathway to excellence: Cooperation between Spanish and UK Science

On the 18th of May the Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom (SRUK/CERU) celebrated its second session of the Cycle of Seminars and Roundtables 2013 at the University of Cambridge. This event counted with the sponsorship of the Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Embassy of Spain in the United Kingdom and the Clare College Cambridge.

The conference started with an informative session about SRUK/CERU split in three talks. The audience, around fifty researchers, learnt about the origins, aims, and achievements of the Society with a presentation by Dr Lorenzo Melchor, President of SRUK/CERU. Then, the online impact of the Society through its social networks (almost 1000 followers on Facebook) and its website (highly visited) was explained by Tomás Gonzalo, one of the members of the Online Management Department. Lastly, Dr Cristina Nombela and Dr Ana López gave a summary of the 1st International Symposium of SRUK/CERU, celebrated last 1st April in Madrid.

The event concluded with a high note: Dr Ginés Morata from the Centre of Molecular Biology of the Spanish Research Council (CSIC), and Dr Peter Lawrence, from the University of Cambridge, gave an inspiring seminar on their outstanding scientific work, setting an example of what can be achieved with a long-term collaboration between Spanish and British researchers.

In the mid seventies, Dr Morata and Dr Lawrence formed one of the most successful scientific collaborations in the area of developmental biology research. Their groundbreaking work on compartmentalization in *Drosophila* has been fundamental in our current understanding of how genes work in development.

In their inspiring talk, both scientists stressed the importance of taking risks in order to be successful, praised life and friendship outside the laboratory and advised avoiding fights over authorship to cultivate long-term scientific collaborations. They also compared the kind of science done today with that of the 60s and 70s, pointing out the pros and cons of each scientific era. The debate continued with comments as to scientific mobility, the current economic crisis, pressure from funding grants and the role of h index in the life of a scientist.

Dr Morata and Dr Lawrence also talked proudly about their joint Príncipe de Asturias award in 2007. They recalled anecdotes from the award ceremony: *"There were 50 people playing bagpipes, we thought that they must be expecting somebody important, then someone told us that they were playing for us. We even had body guards!"*

The next event of SRUK will take place in London, on the 20th of July.

To listen a podcast with an interview to Dr Morata and Dr Lawrence, visit <http://www.sruk.org.uk/gallery/audio-gallery/list>

To see an album of pictures of the event, visit our gallery on <http://www.sruk.org.uk/gallery/image-gallery/list>