



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

Comunidad de
Científicos Españoles
en el Reino Unido

Annual Report 13-14

Annual Report 13–14

A summary of our direct impact on the scientific community and the general public

Year II, 5th July 2014



Introducing our Society	Page 3		
Letter from the President	Page 3	Inspiring a new generation	Page 18
The goals of our society	Page 5	Representing our membership	Page 19
Our membership in numbers	Page 6	Influencing science policy	Page 19
Networking our membership	Page 8	Fostering collaborations	Page 20
London Constituency	Page 8	Setting our strategic plan for the future	Page 21
Cambridge Constituency	Page 11	The treasurer report	Page 21
South West Constituency	Page 13	SRUK self-assessment	Page 22
The Midlands Constituency	Page 14	Our strategic plan	Page 23
Promoting science in society	Page 15	The plan for 2014–15	Page 25
Online and Community Management	Page 15	Sponsors and partners	Page 26

Cover image designed by



Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom SRUK/CERU
 Renal Labs, 5th Floor Tower Wing, Guys Hospital, Great Maze Pond, London, SE1 9RT (United Kingdom) info@sruk.org.uk
 Registered Private Company Limited by Guarantee #8160501
 Initiated in 2011 and formally founded on 16th June 2012

Letter from the President

Dr Lorenzo Melchor promoted the origins of SRUK in 2011 and was elected as president in 2012

Dear friends of the Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom:

This annual report shows how SRUK has continued with its commendable endeavour as both its impact and presence in the society have grown steadily.

We have **consolidated our network** of the Spanish scientific minds in the United Kingdom. The regional constituency of the Midlands has recently joined our active constituencies (London, Cambridge, and South West), and more are to come. As a result of this network and our social events, different scientific collaborations have been established.

Our society has insisted on **spreading science** everywhere. We have hosted scientific seminars and debates addressing timely issues such as open access, women and science, science communication, scientific knowledge international networks, among others. SRUK, alone and together with the social enterprise Native Scientist, has also visited schools to show children the role of a scientist in today's society, thus inspiring a new generation of scientists. Lastly, we have brought science to pubs, to enjoy it in a friendly environment and to make it accessible to the general public.

For all these years, SRUK has **represented its membership before public and private institutions**, both from Spain and from the UK. Thus, we have had a

meeting with the Secretary of State for Research, Development and Innovation Ms Carmen Vela. We have given to her our perception of the situation of science in Spain, proposing possible solutions to some of the problems. We have achieved that members of SRUK who were interested in participating and had the appropriate academic merits, could join the panel of experts reviewing annual national calls for scientific projects and the Ramón y Cajal Fellowship programme. As a scientific organisation as we are, we have supported the “Colectivo Carta por la Ciencia” in Spain and the campaign “Science is Vital” in the United Kingdom; and we have also started to collaborate with other key scientific organisations from both countries such as the Royal Society, COSCE, SENC, and others.

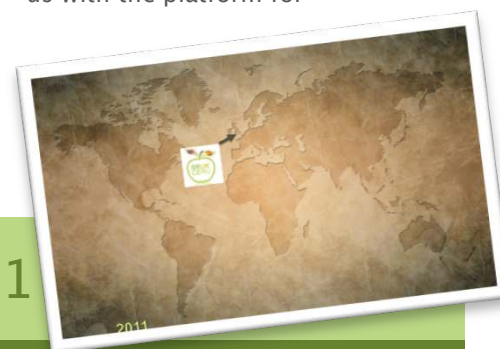
Our **strong presence in Social Networks** and our website, always kept up to date, have been our best showcases, thanks to the good performance of our Department of Online Community Management. This department has also disseminated our membership's scientific achievements in international and Spanish media. Needless to say that, for one more year, SRUK has been the object of reports and interviews in different mass media.

Facilitating collaborations between both countries was another of our founding aims. Our efforts in these regards soon shall

crystallize with the “Red de Universidades de Valencia” and organisations such as the Cambridge Trust. In the meantime, we have collaborated again with the INNOVACEF survey, as well as with the “From brain drain to brain gain” survey, whose conclusions will be very important for the assessment of the R&D system in Spain.

For the last year, we have established our membership fee, which has allowed us to guarantee our **financial independence** and increase our range of activities.

Having said this, we must not forget **the support from our sponsors**. The Ramon Areces Foundation, which has supported us one more year for the organisation of our annual symposium and, for the first time, for the celebration of roundtable and workshops in the UK. The Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Embassy of Spain in the UK not only has enabled us to reach further in our activities and aims as an association, but also has sponsored our cycle of seminars and roundtables and co-financed our first travel grants ever. The Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology has collaborated in spreading news about our activities and provided us with the platform for



Networking scientific talent since 2011



the joint cycle of webinars with CERFA. The Fundación Banco Santander will shortly join this family of supporters, as it will sponsor the organisation of an interesting conference event. In addition, we have signed collaboration agreements with Derby and NH Hotels and the restaurant Jamon Jamon for significant discounts for our membership.

I should not stop stressing the fact that all these achievements are the result of **the collaboration of all members and friends of SRUK**, who have given bits of their spare time to perform small tasks that altogether have accomplished successfully our biggest goals. I would like to emphasise the dedicated support from the members of the board and each constituency's working group. Their time commitment and activity, often quietly, results key to reach our goals.

I have the pride and honour of having led this initiative from its very beginnings in 2011. I can, therefore, state that it has been three intense years in which we have made sure to establish ourselves with **a serious and professional attitude**, providing constructive critics and with clear and reachable goals at mid and long term.

Considering all our achievements to date, it would be convenient to evaluate where we are and how we

can keep on growing. This is why we have delineated in these pages a **strategic plan 2014–16** based on a deep analysis of our current state.

Three years ago, we planted the seed of SRUK in a soil already fertilised by all the Spanish scientific mobility to the UK. Our seed sprouted two years ago to take root during the next one and to consolidate the trunk during this current year. Soon, our fruits shall enrich the science and innovation system not only in the

Our scientific diaspora is getting organised now more than ever

United Kingdom, but also, and specially, in Spain.

Indeed, we have **inspired other scientists, both Spanish and from other nationalities, to get organised**. Thus we have supported those to establish their communities in Germany (CERFA), Denmark, Sweden, USA, Australia, Pacific and Japan... as well as to those scientists who have returned to Spain. Something is being stirred in the community of Spanish scientists abroad. Our scientific diaspora is getting organised now more than ever with the clear intentions of reverting the process of brain drain to that of a brain gain, improving our R&D system, and

more importantly, making scientific thinking to influence all society spheres from both our country destination and origin.

I shall end this letter by bidding farewell, proud of having represented SRUK for all these years, and handing over the honour of its presidency to the new President 2014/15, elected for such a task in the last general assembly on 20th July 2013. I wish María Hernández and her board to continue ensuring that SRUK collects as many successes as to date. To this task, they will require the effort from all and every members. May we will make all our objectives come true. It is everyone's responsibility.

A big hug,



Dr Lorenzo Melchor
President of the Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom, 2012–2014

Postdoctoral Researcher at the Institute of Cancer Research, London



The goals of our society

SRUK established four main objectives around which a wide range of activities are delineated

Social Network

Creating a social network of researchers and students working in the United Kingdom. We aim to facilitate the arrival of the new ones, to offer advice, and to share professional and life experiences.

Science Communicators

Increasing **social awareness** of the value of Research and Development (R&D) in the public opinion of both British and Spanish societies. It is our wish to close the existing gap between Scientists and general

public by organising seminars, roundtables, conferences and outreaching activities.

Science Representatives

Being the voice of the Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom before not only British and Spanish institutions, but also social and mass media. We aim to serve as **scientific advisors** for both public and private organisations, because we believe our knowledge and experience as professionals are worth sharing. We also want to represent our

affiliates **giving our opinion** about scientific issues under discussion on the media.

Scientific Mediators

Facilitating **collaborations** between British and Spanish, public and private, R+D institutions. It is our opinion that both exploring and establishing collaborations between UK and Spain will bear fruits on the long run for the success of both R+D systems.

The structure of SRUK

Since our very beginnings in 2011, our firm intention has been to be an **open, dynamic, transparent, and participative** learned society. We aim to be a professional association with a **clear impact** not only on the scientific community, but also, specially, on general public.

We try to create a **constructive and social atmosphere** for every member to participate with ideas and get involved in any activity, action, or collaboration.

The Board of Directors

Elected in our annual general meeting, this board leads SRUK activities and represents the membership on a daily basis.

Local Constituencies

The membership is scattered in constituencies across the UK. Each active region has a local board and a working group.

Online Management Department

In charge of communications and social networks.



The Board

Lorenzo Melchor (President)
María Hernández (Vicepresident)
 Laura García Álvarez (Secretary)
 Irene Rebollo-Mesa (Treasurer)
 Beatriz Lorente (Roving Director)
 Andrea Alenda (Online Manager)
 Eduardo Oliver (London)
 María Jiménez (Cambridge)
 Verónica Celorrio (South West)
 Nuria Lastra (The Midlands)

Our membership in numbers

Our Roving Director Dr Beatriz Lorente presents statistics of number of members, geographic distribution, and professional profiles

557 members

Our total number of members is 557 (on 11th June 2014), which represents an increase of 109 members when compared to our last report (20th July 2013), also considering fluctuations from members coming/leaving the UK after a temporary stay.

This membership is distributed in different categories as shown in the table below:

Type	Number
Founding	24
Regular	360
Associate	51
Friend	80
Others (blank)*	39
Total	557

*Includes members with missing information

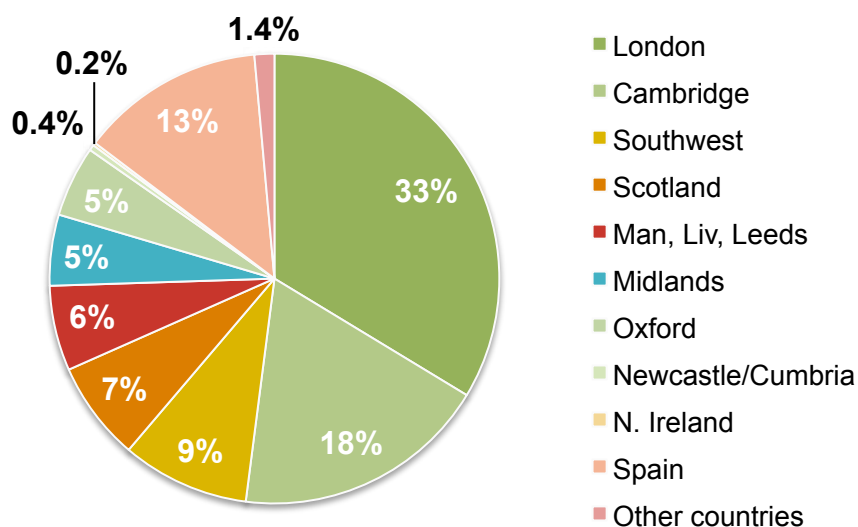
Distribution

Our members are spread across the UK and grouped in different **constituencies**. We also have members in Spain and abroad.

We currently have 4 official constituencies: **London** (183 members, 33%), **Cambridge** (99, 18%), **South West** (54, 9%) and the **Midlands** (37, 5%), the latter being officially established last 22nd February 2014.

Scotland has also started organising events along this year and soon will become official. Even more recently, on 26th June, some members from **Manchester–Liverpool–Leeds** organized their first event.

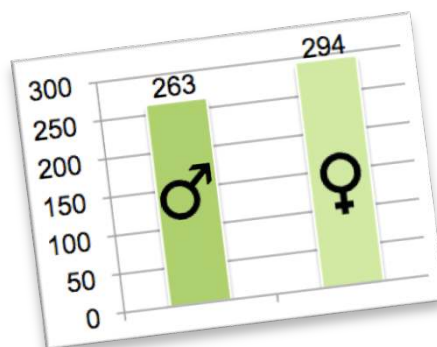
Finally, we are contacting SRUK members in **Oxford** to encourage them to get together.



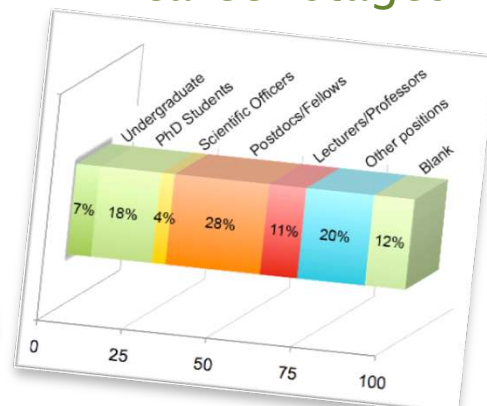
Returning to Spain

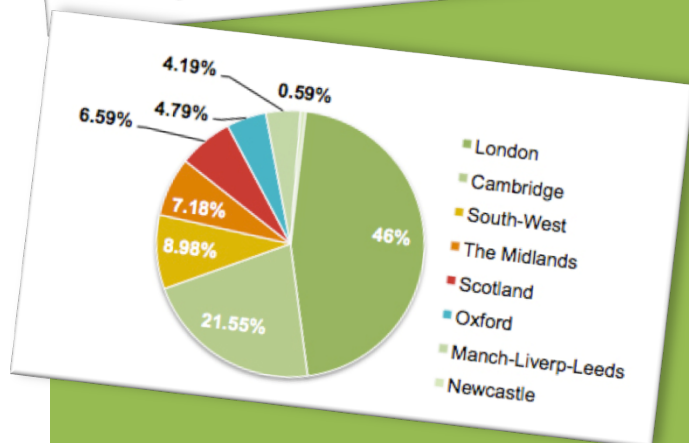
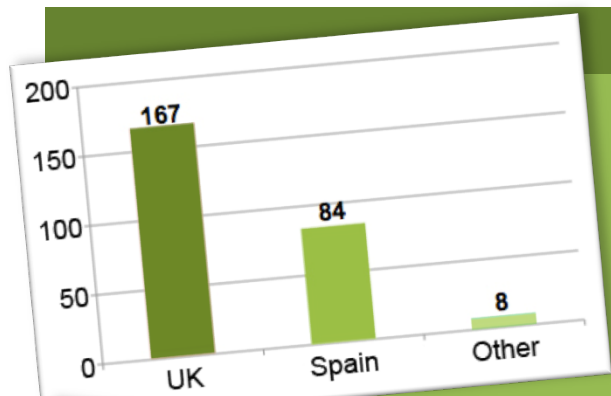
Along this year we have seen an increasing number of members returning to Spain. Some of these former members, together with others from CERFA and elsewhere, have boosted the origin of a new association “**Científicos Retornados a España**” (CRE), which was officially established in April 2014.

Equally diverse



All career stages





Around 50% of members greeted the introduction of fees

On the 2nd annual general meeting (20th July 2013), the membership approved to setting up a symbolic membership fee to guarantee financial independence.

Fees have been collected since January 2014 and a period of grace was given to all members in order to make the payment effective. On the 20th June, and after successive reminders, the board consolidated the membership status only for those members who paid.

The total number of members who paid represents the 46% of the total number before we introduced the annual membership fee (259/557 members), 167 of which are based in the UK.

As shown in the graph on the left, 113 members out of the 167 (around 67%) are mainly based in London and Cambridge and the rest of members, 54, are distributed in other cities along the UK.

Membership types

Founding member

Members who signed the memorandum of association on the 1st annual general meeting (17th June 2012)

Regular member

Members who have Spanish nationality, whose primary work is related to R&D, and who currently live and work in the UK

Associate member

Members who living and working in the UK do not fulfill any of the other two criteria to become a regular member (not Spanish nationality or not working on R&D)

Friend

Any researcher or non-researcher who living abroad UK wish to join SRUK

Type of Membership	Fees		
	Student Or Annual Income <20,000	Junior Post-Docs, Research Fellows, Lecturers Or Annual Income >20,000 & <40,000	Senior Senior Lecturer/Research Fellow, Reader, Professor Or Annual Income >40,000
Founding	£10	£20	£30
Regular	£10	£20	£30
Associate	£10	£20	£20
Friend	-	-	-

Interested in joining SRUK? Visit www.sruk.org.uk and become a member



London Constituency

This vibrant and dynamic group has been the host and organizer of many SRUK events since our beginning. The London Constituency beats at the very heart of SRUK

The London Constituency is currently formed by 183 members: 158 regular members (20 of which are founding members) and 25 associated members.

The 2nd Annual Local Meeting Thursday 7th November 2013 at the Spanish Embassy. The current local board was elected, and the **Statement of Recommended Practices for SRUK constituencies** was approved. The meeting ended with a networking event at a pub.

Seminars

One of our major activities is the organization of high-profile seminars and roundtables, with the aim of rising topics of the utmost importance to the broad scientific community, both enjoying and learning the point of view from leading figures and experts.

The Circle of Leadership Saturday 20th July 2013 at King's College London. We celebrated the 1st anniversary

of the Society's establishment and the 3rd session of our 'Cycle of Seminars and Roundtables 2013' with the most recognized cardiologist worldwide, **Dr Valentín Fuster** – Principe of Asturias award 1996 and General Director of the Spanish National Cardiovascular Research Centre, CNIC (Madrid) and the Mount Sinai Hospital (New York). Dr Fuster explained how the cardiovascular field has shifted from focusing on complex heart disease to its prevention by promoting a healthy lifestyle. Dr Fuster also encouraged SRUK to pursue its goals and activities, as SRUK scientists will change the future of our society.

The seminar was followed by our 2nd Annual General Assembly.

International Research Networks

Saturday 23rd November 2013 at Imperial College. We celebrated the closing session of our 'Cycle of Seminars and Roundtables 2013' in

collaboration with Imperial College Spanish Society (ICSS). On this occasion, the pharmacologist **Prof Sir Salvador Moncada**—Principe of Asturias award 1990—discussed about research networks. Prof Moncada stressed the need to nurture science through long-term



Rising topics of the utmost importance to the broad scientific community

investments to produce results and succeed in transforming knowledge into wealth. "It takes generations of scientists to produce results but only a few years of lack of investment to destroy it" argued Moncada.



Science and Publishing: past, present and future of the scientific journals

Thursday 27th March 2014, Imperial College, organized in partnership with ICSS and The Queens Gate Hotel. This 1st event of the “SRUK–Ramon Areces Foundation Workshops 2014” gathered a panel of lead-experts to discuss the past, present and future of science publication: **Cameron Neylon**, advocacy director for the Public Library of Science (PLOS); **Eva Amsen**, Outreach Director for Faculty of 1000 Research; and **Juan Arechaga**, Professor at the University of the Basque Country and Editor in Chief of The International Journal of Developmental

Biology. With open access being one of the hottest topics in the scientific community, our roundtable proved to be controversial with a heated debate stressing the lack of agreement amongst experts in science publishing.



Women and Science

Tuesday 17th June 2014, in collaboration with the Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Embassy of Spain in the United Kingdom. More than 80 attendees enjoyed the

presentations and debate with four of the most successful women in Science: **Prof Utah Frith**, Fellow of the Royal Society and Emeritus Professor of Cognitive Development at the University College London; **Dr Helen Lee**, Research Director of the Department of Hematology at the University of Cambridge; **Prof Flora de Pablo** from the Centre for Biological Investigations and former president and founder of the Association for Women Researchers and Technologists; and **Dr. Inés Sánchez de Madariaga**, Director of Women and Science Unit at the State Secretary of Research, Development and Innovation.

Bringing science closer to the general public

In our aim to disseminate science, we organize more informal events targeted to lay audiences. These initiatives bring scientific concepts and scientists' experiences from volunteers closer to society.

Meet the Scientist

A new format launched in 2013. Each event brings together four researchers from

different fields to present their work to the general public in “plain English” in a pub. On **Thursday 6th March 2014**, two associated members of SRUK, **Alejandra Sel** and **Álvaro Díez**, and two other researchers working in the UK, **Matthew Davies** and **Paola Torrani**, joined us at Canal 125. Among other things, they

discussed why the English always talk about the weather, and how we can recognise our own face in the mirror.

We plan to consolidate this format, as it is a great opportunity for our members to present their work and mingle with other UK scientists.



Christmas Lunch

14th December 2013. SRUK organized its customary Christmas Lunch in Jamón Jamón at Soho (attended by 60 people and 6 children). A pre-lunch gymkhana was organized at the National Gallery and won by Cristina Nombela, as she provided the right answer to all questions and demonstrated great artistic flair in the creative task.



The London Working Group

Eduardo Oliver (Director)
Ana Viñuela (Vicedirector)
Asier Jaio (Secretary)
 Iria González-Becerra
 Almira Bartolomé
 Esther Morel-Barcena
 Irene Sanjuan
 Tomás Gonzalo
 Miguel Sánchez-Álvarez
 Susana López Alcántara
 Nati Garrido Mesa
 Enrique Gallego Colón
 Esmeralda Parra-Peralbo
 Nuria Maicas
 Ana González

Science in the Pub

During 2013 and 2014, we have consolidated our original science dissemination format. The speaker, usually a member or friend of SRUK, gives an informal lecture on a certain scientific concept or provides a



general description of his/her research work.

"Particle Physics, the Higgs and Beyond". Wednesday 23rd October 2013. Our founding and working group member **Tomás Gonzalo Velasco**, Physics PhD student at University College London, commemorated the 2013 Physics Nobel Prize awarded to Peter Higgs and Francois Englert. Tomás explained in a humorous and engaging manner the science behind the Higgs boson particle.

"Spanish Science, 1898–1976: from convergence with Europe to civil war, purge, exile... and reconciliation". Thursday 20th February 2014. Our founding member and usual collaborator **Dr Francisco A. González-Redondo**, Lecturer in History of Science at Universidad

Complutense de Madrid, talked about the history of Spanish Science from 1898 to 1979. Dr González-Redondo also recalled his personal experience from his undergraduate years studying Maths to being appointed as Lecturer in History.

Partnership Agreements

We have secured commercial agreements and discounts for our members and events.

The Spanish restaurant **Jamón Jamón - Bar de Tapas** – at Soho offers a *20% discount* to all SRUK members as well as preferential use of one of their rooms for our events.



Two Spanish Hotel chains expressed their desire to collaborate with us. They offer important discounts in their normal rate and availability of their meeting rooms. **Derby Hotels:** a *10% discount* for their Hotels in Madrid, Barcelona and London; and **NH hotels:** *15% discount* in rooms for our members in the NH Harrington Hall in London.



If you are a SRUK member and wish to use these discounts, write an e-mail to London@sruk.org.uk



Cambridge Constituency

An engaging membership committed to discuss scientific issues and to bring science and technology to the general public. The academic environment of Cambridge provides the air that SRUK breathes

The Cambridge Constituency is currently formed by 99 members: 92 regular members and 7 associate members.

The 2nd Annual Local Meeting Wednesday 20th November 2013. The local board was elected, and the **Statement of Recommended Practices for SRUK constituencies** was ratified.

Seminars

The Cambridge Constituency is the second most important host for SRUK global events.

Science Communication Roundtable

Saturday 28th September 2013, Hughes Hall College, Cambridge. This event was the 4th session of the “Cycle of Seminars and Roundtables 2013”. The debate was focused on how to best communicate science to the general public, with more than 50 attendees.

Three renowned science communicators told their experiences: **Dr Javier Sampedro**, developmental

biologist and scientific journalist, usual writer in *El País*; **Dr César Tomé**, chemist and scientific communicator, Editor-in-Chief of *Mapping Ignorance*; and **Mr Moheb Costandi**, neuroscientist and scientific blogger, usual writer in *The Guardian*.



Learning how to best communicate science

Dr Laura García Álvarez, veterinary researcher specialized in epidemiology, also participated and told us about her experience as a scientist who had to deal with mass media after one of her breakthroughs.

This inspiring debate highlighted different social

perceptions of Science in the UK and Spain.

The Theory of Democracy: a Tribute Seminar to Juan Linz Wednesday 30th April 2014. **Dr Thomas Jeffrey Miley**, Lecturer in Political Sociology at the University of Cambridge discussed about the main contributions of Juan Linz to the fields of comparative politics, democratic theory, and sociology, with a particular emphasis on the continuing pertinence of many of his lessons for the most salient political debates in contemporary Spain.

The event gathered around 20 attendees.



Outreach

On a bimonthly basis, the Cambridge Constituency holds scientific seminars that are aimed to all scientists and to the general public in pubs.



A Pint of Knowledge

"Black holes, a journey of extremes" on Wednesday 18th September 2013. Speaker: **Dr Pau Figueras**, Stephen Hawking Advanced Fellow DAMTP, Centre for

Mathematical Sciences and Centre for Theoretical Cosmology in the University of Cambridge.

"Margateria, a cor(e)ography. The anthropology of forms of life in the región of Margateria (León, Spain)" on Wednesday 7th November 2013. The event showed this documental, followed by discussion from the Director Mr **Pablo Alonso González**, PhD Student, Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge.

"Cell division: better make it than break it" on Wednesday 29th January 2014. Speaker: **Dr Isabel Peset Martín**, Post-doctoral Associate Researcher at the Cancer Research UK Cambridge.

"Small proteins fighting big diseases" on Wednesday 9th April 2014. Speaker: **Dr Albert Isidro Llobet**, medicinal chemist in the University of



Cambridge and Pharmaceutical Industry.

"Realistic illumination in movies and videogames" on Wednesday 11th June 2014. **Dr Alex Méndez-Feliu**, software engineer.

The Cambridge Working Group

Maria Jiménez (Director)
Nerea Irigoyen (Vicedirector)
Anna Vilalta (Secretary)
 Ana López
 Dacia Viejo
 Meritxell Nus
 Laura Carro
Fernando González-Zalba
 Ghita Ghislat



Embedding SRUK in Cambridge

The Cambridge Constituency has also participated in the **Science Festival** of the University of Cambridge. We sent SRUK members as volunteers to give talks in primary schools across Cambridge.

Additionally, this Constituency

has gathered financial support from renowned Colleges in Cambridge, such as **Clare College** and **Jesus College**.

We are also liaising with the **Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust** to help them finding partners in Spain.



South West Constituency

The presence and input of the membership of the South West helps giving shape to our aims



The South West constituency currently has 54 members.

Networking

We have organised four social events with different formats.

Pub Mini-Talks

Bristol, Wednesday 14th August 2013. We met at The Colston Arms with 7 attendees. Speakers were **Dr Miguel Montes Bajo** and **Mr Manuel Nuno**, who both gave short talks about their research in 10 minutes and just using a blackboard.



Social Dinner

Bristol, Saturday 14th September 2013. We organised an informal dinner.



Annual Local Assembly

Bristol, Monday 25th November 2013. A new local board was elected and the **Statement of Recommended Practices for SRUK constituencies** was ratified.

Science Date

Tuesday 13th May 2014. Seven people gathered in this new format to speak about their research as well as to solve personal doubts.

Roundtable

Charities and research

Bristol, Saturday 8th February 2014, *Hamilton House*. The 'Cycle of Seminars and Roundtables 2014' inaugurated the year with a debate about the role of charities in both supporting research and public engagement. The speakers were **Dr Lorenzo Melchor**, who showed differences in R&D funding from charities in the UK and in Spain; **Ms Nicola Amoroso**, Trustee of Cris Cancer Foundation, a charity operating in both countries; **Mr José Ignacio Fenández-Vera**, CEO of the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT), who told about the charities'

involvement in R&D in Spain, and **Dr Antonio Crespillo**, from the newly crowdfunding platform MasScience. The roundtable had an interesting Q&A session and was followed by a snack at The Canteen.



On the radio

Radio Celtiberia Bristol interviewed our local Secretary Aránzazu Rodríguez-Cerón for the weekly programme "*Onda y partícula*". The interview was broadcasted three times during the last week of May and is available online.

Future events

We are planning a social event for Summer time to meet new members and encourage participation.

The South West Working Group

Verónica Celorrio (Director)
Manuel Nuno (Vicedirector)
Aránzazu Rodríguez (Secretary)



The Midlands constituency currently has 28 members.

Networking

We have organized different social events to know each other. These events also comprised cultural activities and guided tours.

Science Beers in the Midlands Lincoln, Saturday 13th July 2013. We met in Stokes and High Café at 1pm. We visited the cathedral and the castle. After the guided tour to these picturesque buildings, we had lunch in the Lion and Snake.



Nottingham, Saturday 30th November 2013. We met in the Pitcher and Piano at 12 pm. We visited the famous Nottingham Castle. After the visit we had lunch in the Roebuck Inn and where we had the first attempt to officially establish the Midlands Constituency.

The SRUK Seminar 2014 in the Midlands

Saturday 22nd February 2014 *University of Sheffield*. This event consisted of two presentations. The first one, by **Dr Lorenzo Melchor** (president of SRUK), served as an introduction of the society to all new members from the Midlands region. For the second one, **Dr Francisco A. Gonzalez Redondo** gave a talk entitled "*On the history of (each and every) science: conceptual problematics and the intellectual challenge*". The event concluded with a local assembly where we officially established **the Midlands Constituency**. To conclude the day, all participants had lunch together in a pub nearby.

Originality

Science Outdoors

Saturday 14th June 2014, *Loughborough University*. This event, entitled *Ecology and Management of Ancient Woodlands*, consisted in a presentation and a guided tour run by **Dr Jonathan Millett**. He is a Lecturer in Physical Geography at Loughborough University and his research is focused on the ecology of terrestrial ecosystems.

The Midlands Constituency

The most recent constituency brings enthusiasm and energy, expanding our range of activities and objectives. The Midlands membership has come to lead SRUK to the next level

Jonathan gave us an introductory talk about Charnwood Forest and then we went for a guided tour of the 16 hectares of ancient semi-natural woodlands owned by Loughborough University. After the event, we had lunch in Loughborough city centre.



The Midlands Working Group

Nuria Lastra-Calvo (Director)
Celia Incerti-Pradillos (Vicedirector)
Estrella Luna-Diez (Secretary)
 Ana López-Sánchez
 Alejandro Pérez-Deluavo
 Pelayo García-Gutiérrez
 Sabela Balboa-Méndez
 Saúl Herranz-Martín
 Mónica López-Puerta
 Laura Quintana-Gómez
 Ginés Escudero-Andreu
 Isabel Douterelo-Soler
 Antonio Lafuente Carballo
 Vanessa Silvestre González



Department of Online Community Management

Social media has played a fundamental role in the birth and growth of SRUK. This department showcases our society to the whole world in a daily basis



The Department of Online Community Management updates our social media profiles and our website. It has served to connect researchers, to aid at forming constituencies, to spread the word for events and gatherings of SRUK and to generate debates on scientific topics.

The fact that SRUK is present in a varied range of social media might seem as a redundant effort. Yet the statistics of each media reveal that SRUK is reaching different demographics of followers. This we believe is one of the major strengths as it enables SRUK to tailoring its communication with the user's preferred social media.

For 2014–2015, the department will be divided into two: Online & Press Departments in charge of the social media and press, respectively. This division of functions will improve the efficiency of SRUK.

Our website

These are the statistics from September 2013–June 2014:

www.sruk.org.uk

Number of visits: 6,979

Average duration: 3min 34sec



Worldwide visitors mostly from the UK, Spain and the US

Users by age groups: 25–34 years old (33.50%), 18–24y (27.50%), 35–44y (15.50%), 45–54y (12.50%), 55–64y (5.50%) and >65y (5.50%).

Twitter

Since SRUK started its Twitter account in 2012 it has tweeted 3,271 tweets.

In 2012–2013 we tweeted 3.7 tweets per day and 77 tweets per month, with most of the activity occurring by morning, reaching a peak at midday.

In the past 6 months the followers from CERU twitter account have increased from

500 users in January to 620 users in June.

LinkedIn

From 185 in September 2013 to 318 followers in June 2014, 41% of these are linked to research and are largely at a senior level.

Our users are mostly based in London (15%), followed by Madrid (12%), Cambridge (10%), Barcelona (3%), Manchester (3%) and other areas in UK (3%).

And yet due to the characteristics of LinkedIn, in addition to group members, SRUK has extra 101 direct connections with access to SRUK posts. Our updates are thus seen by 419 people who potentially share our news with their personal connections.

Facebook

With 1700 followers this is by far the social media where SRUK reaches more people. In less than a year (September 2013–June 2014) the number of followers has increased almost 30%. The peak time users visit is at 9pm.



The demographics of the SRUK Facebook users are mostly women (53%), with the most frequent age range being between 25-34 years old, followed by 35-44 year-old users (25%) and 15-24 years of age (11%).

Although there are users from Latin America and USA, most of the users are located either in the UK or in Spain.

YouTube

This year we have started our Youtube Channel, **CERUtube**, where many of our events are available and streamed. Currently there are eight videos accessible to the public related to SRUK events, talks or activities. All these videos sum up 220 visualizations. We believe that this channel will become especially useful with time, as it will also serve to increase the visibility of the quality of SRUK events.

Webinars

SRUK and CERFA have organised a cycle of webinars throughout the year (six webinars in total). Each of which covers a scientific topic and counts with specialized speakers. These webinars provide a great platform for scientific exchange and discussion between Spanish scientists located in different countries and who belong to different learned societies.

The Online Team

The Department of Online and Community Management has expanded. It is currently composed by 10 people, each of which has a main section of responsibility yet may help with other sections when required.

Andrea Alenda

(Director, Twitter, Press)

Laura Carro-Santos (Facebook)

Ginés Escudero (Web)

Enrique Gallego

(CERUtube and webinars)

Tomás Gonzalo (Web)

Fran J Hernández (Twitter)

Susana López Alcántara

(LinkedIn)

Beatriz Lorente-Cánovas

(LinkedIn)

Eduardo Oliver

(Facebook, Twitter)

Ana Viñuela (Facebook)

SRUK on the media

From September 2013, SRUK has appeared on Spanish media on more than twenty occasions. In El País, El Confidencial, La Sexta, Canal 24H, EFE, Carta de España, El Iberico, Radio Celtiberia, La Información, SINC, Madri+d. Zoom News...

We have enabled the contact between our members and journalists giving scientific research higher visibility in mass media (mainly in Spanish newspapers, but also in Latin American and American specialized press).

We have helped to disseminate



the work of Lorenzo Melchor on Cancer, the work on Plant Immune System by Estrella Luna Diaz and Ana Lopez and the discussion on the use of Archaeological treasures for Particle Physics research by Fernando Gonzalez-Zalba and Elena Perez-Alvaro.

If you have recently published your research and would like to get press coverage, contact us on press@sruk.org.uk and we will put you in contact with scientific journalists.

SRUK represents its membership before mass media and institutions

Different TV channels, radio stations, newspapers and blogs require the opinion of the Spanish researchers working abroad. These journalists contact the Department of Online Community Management and are forwarded to the right profile they are seeking

Additionally, our board actively participates in the scientific debate by sending opinion letters to the main papers

Lastly, SRUK representatives are also required to attend science policy events in the UK (London) and in Spain (Madrid, Valencia, Murcia)





Inspiring a new generation

Through our outreaching activities we aim to attract interest of young students in the value of science to build a better future

Science Week in the Cañada Blanch School

Once again, for the third time, SRUK took part in the **Science week** organised by the **Cañada Blanch Primary and Secondary School** in London, between 12th and 16th May 2014.

A group of SRUK scientists conducted a clinical study on how breakfast affects young health, dividing students as

researchers and patients. All students from different ages were involved in this task, implementing the process, analysing the results and drawing conclusions. Our scientists also showed how to design and perform experiments in a research lab. Lastly, students



also had the opportunity to learn about environmental and biological research.

School projects with...



This year SRUK has signed a partnership agreement with the social enterprise **Native Scientist**, which aims to empower bilingualism through science outreach.

On Monday 31st of March 2014 six volunteers and regular SRUK members participated in the first School Project in Spanish, which was organised in collaboration with **ALCE** (Association for Spanish

Language and Culture in the United Kingdom). The school project took place at the school **Sarah Bonnell** in London, where 25 pupils enjoyed learning a bit of science, while improving their mother language, Spanish.

If you wish to participate in future school projects, please contact our Native Scientist SRUK ambassador and Spanish Project Manager **Dr Natividad Garrido**

nativescientist@sruk.org.uk





Influencing science policy

Through meetings with public and private institutions, offering advice to improve science policy, and engaging with science-promoting actions and surveys

Spanish institutions



State Secretary for R&D (27/12/13) SRUK met with **Ms Carmen Vela**. We introduced our society and gave her an opinion report about the decreasing public funding and the structural shortcomings of the R&D system in Spain. We also explored collaboration opportunities.

Minutes of the meeting were sent to the membership, who received it favourably, and are available to members upon request.

General Secretary of Universities (04/06/14) Our interim representative in Scotland, **Dr Jesús Menéndez**, met with **Dr Federico Morán**, to discuss about the university system in Spain, the plans to reform it, and its differences to the UK.

British institutions



SRUK has kept in contact with the **Royal Society**, and attended the 2nd Networking Nations in Madrid. We are writing a report to the magazine *Science in Parliament*, initiating conversations with other learned societies and with the **Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust**.

Scientific Forums

IV Jornada de Tecnología para la Salud, Valencia (26/09/13) President Dr Melchor explained what aspects of the successful model of translational medicine in the UK could be imported to Spain

I CMN International Conference for Young Researchers in the Mediterranean, Murcia (25/10/13) President Dr Melchor introduced SRUK to young researchers in a dynamic and participative roundtable with other associations

La Europa Excelente: I Conferencia en Investigación e Innovación para el Desarrollo y el Crecimiento, Madrid (19/12/13) Vicepresident Dr Hernández-Fuentes explained the crucial role of science and technology in empowering European economy.

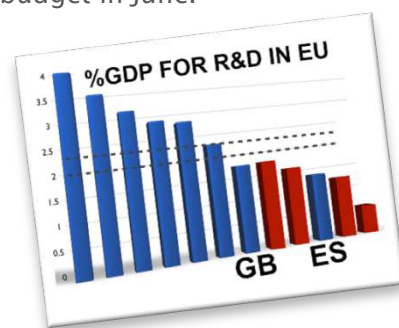
Developing networks in global science and technology, London (28/03/14) President Dr Melchor told the origins and impact of SRUK, offering advice to setting similar networks for other nationalities.



Supporting public funding

In Spain: *Carta por la ciencia*
We have supported both the 1st and 2nd open letters from the Spanish group *Carta por la ciencia* as well as seconded its demonstrations to urge government to increase science budget in Spain.

In the UK: *Science is Vital*
We have joined the group *Science is Vital* to support their petitions. The last one aims to persuade the UK government to increase the 2015–16 science budget in June.



Writing guides

EURAXESS-FECYT

We have collaborated with Euraxess Spain to writing a guide for scientists who move to the UK. This contains FAQs involving from mundane matters to managing taxes, GPs or your professional career.





Joining efforts

Spanish scientific diaspora

We have actively assisted the establishment of other societies alike in Germany (CERFA), Denmark (CED), Sweden (ACES), US (ECUSA), Australia and Pacific (CEP)... Of note, our solid understanding with **CERFA** is demonstrated in our common events, opinion articles, and participation in expert panels.

Científicos Retornados a España (CRE), see also page 6

Former members of SRUK and CERFA, upon their return to Spain, gathered other scientists with similar interest. They established CRE to recombine the Spanish system with their experiences from abroad. We helped them in their first steps.



Confederación de Sociedades Científicas Españolas (COSCE)

The official adhesion of SRUK to COSCE occurred last year. In 2014, SRUK representatives attended the COSCE annual meeting (20/03/14), and actively participated to join efforts and share ideas.

Spanish Society of Neuroscience (SENC) We have assisted SENC to develop their European Map of Neuroscientists, and organized parallel session in their annual conference.

Crowdfunding

MasScience

The promoters of this new international science communication website and crowdfunding platform for science projects, requested the scientific expertise and support from SRUK. We have advised them since October 2013.

EU elections

SRUK is an **independent** organization that may offer **external consulting** to any party. For the EU elections'14, Partido X requested us advice regarding their R&D programme. After addressing our suggestions, the final programme was considered to be one of the best two science policy programmes of all parties, as stated by *Ciencia con futuro*.

Policy Surveys

Ensuring participation of scientists in policy surveys is key to collect robust results. SRUK has collaborated with the **Universidad a Distancia de Madrid (UDIMA)** in two surveys

8TH INNOVACEF Survey 2013

"81% of Spanish scientists likely see themselves moving abroad"

Survey 'Implantación en España de un enfoque *brain gain* (IBGE)'

"52% of Spanish researchers abroad "would like but are not able" to return to Spain to continue their career"

SRUK President Dr Lorenzo Melchor and CERFA President Dr Raúl Delgado participated in an online debate about reverting the brain drain to brain gain during the IBGE data survey presentation (16/06/14).

Fostering collaborations

Even though the fourth aim of SRUK requires time, prestige, and recognition, we are already working towards nurturing **bilateral collaborations** between institutions from UK and Spain. We are mediating and collaborating with:

- Fundación Ramón Areces, FECYT and the Royal Society

- IKERBASQUE and the Wellcome Trust Foundation
- Red de Universidades valencianas para el fomento de la I+D+I (RUVI) and British universities





The Treasurer Report

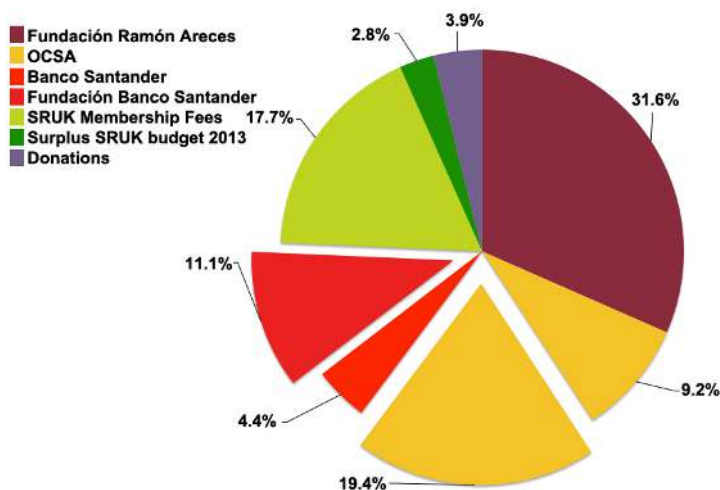
Treasurer Dr Irene Rebollo-Mesa shows here the income and expenditures of our society

The Society is a private company limited-by-guarantee operating as a non-for-profit organisation. To perform its wide range of activities, SRUK

applies for funding in open calls to public institutions, and presents event proposals with close budgets to private institutions. The Society also

has received the gentle donation of sponsors. Since January 2014, SRUK collects membership fees.

Income (£12K)



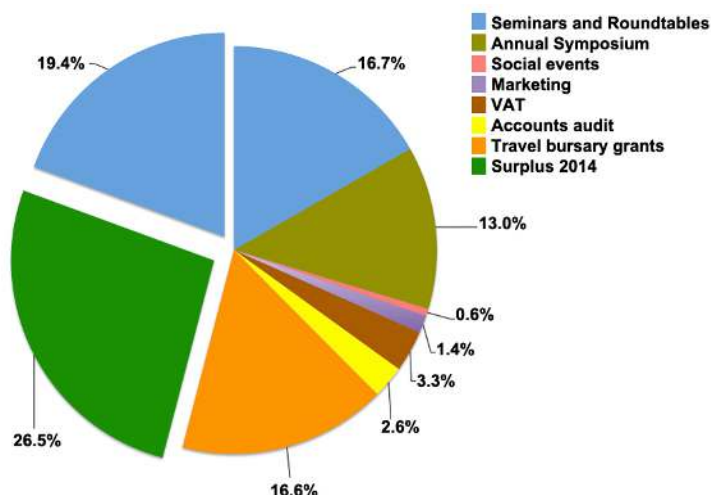
The Society has almost doubled its income since last year, mostly due to the implementation of membership fees and private donations. SRUK perceives a public grant from the Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Embassy of Spain (OCSA) 100% bigger than in 2013. From private foundations, the Fundación Ramón Areces maintains its level of contribution as our major sponsor, and Fundación Banco Santander is supporting SRUK this year. Of note, membership fees have provided a huge boost as compared with previous years where no fees were in place.

Dragged out slices represent income agreed to be received during the current year.

Expenditure (£12K)

The Society operates with a low-budget policy trying to make the most out of every income received. Almost 50% of the budgeted expenditure is focused on both our cycle of seminars and roundtables across the UK and our annual symposium. For the first time this year, SRUK in collaboration with OCSA gives travel bursary grants. With the implementation of membership fees and the generous response from SRUK members, a bigger surplus for 2014 than expected may occur.

Dragged out slices represent expenditure yet to be used during the current year.





SRUK self-assessment

Before planning where we are going, it is important to assess where we are: our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Positive internal factors that we have at present and represent advantages

Negative internal factors that we have at present and represent disadvantages

STRENGTHS

- A network of >500 members with 4 constituencies
- Active online presence
- Active calendar of events
- Public engagement activities
- Institutional support
- Growth as a funding body
- Growth as an advisory body for institutions
- Fair amount of media attention
- Collaboration in surveys
- Collaboration with other learned societies
- Membership discounts

WEAKNESSES

- Drop in membership due to fee implementation
- Temporary membership due to short stays in UK
- No professional staff, so high volunteering efforts
- No constituencies in key regions: Oxford...
- Scattered membership in small constituencies
- Everchanging participation in the working groups

SWOT

OPPORTUNITIES

- Establishment of agreements between countries
- Influencing science policy in Spain
- Subdivision in scientific fields with delegates
- Growing profile in the EU and in the ERC
- Consolidation of a Spanish Scientific Diaspora
- Gaining visibility for Spanish scientists
- Attracting financial support from companies and charities for travel grants and fellowships
- Attracting scientific recognition
- Information hub for Spanish Researchers

THREATS

- Lack of value to science from general public
- Lack of institutional attention
- Lack of financial support
- Being perceived as a biomedicine society
- Being perceived as not politically independent

Positive and external situations that could bring advantages

Negative and external situations that could bring disadvantages



Our strategic plan

Our board, local working groups, online team, and volunteer members have all contributed to delineate the following plan for the next years

Our 1st objective: Being a social and professional network

What have we achieved?

- >500 virtual members
- Self-autonomy with fees
- Four active constituencies
- Scientific collaborations
- Membership discounts
 - Travel grants
- Participation in COSCE
- British Spanish-Society (BSS)
- Nature Expo Ambassadors
- Helping similar societies
- SENC neuroscience map
- Financial supporters



Any plan for 2014-15?

- Grow membership numbers
- +1-2 more constituencies
- To generate scientific field groups and delegates
- To estimate more membership participation and debates
 - More grants (BSS)
- To generate a CRM database
- To increase influence in COSCE
- To implement joint membership with BSS
- To liaise with more societies
- Getting more sponsors from UK, Spain or EU



Any long-term goal?

- To encourage multidisciplinary scientific collaborations between members from different areas
- To collaborate in the establishment of a confederation of the Spanish Scientific Diaspora if necessary
- To build a strong relationship with the Royal Society in the UK and the Reales Academias de las Ciencias in Spain
- Professional staff part-time assisting in bureaucracy and routine work

Our 2nd objective: Promoting the value of science in society

What have we achieved?

- Scientific seminars and debates
 - Renowned speakers
- Public engagement activities at universities, schools and pubs
 - Annual conferences
- Collaboration in Embassy's activities
 - Active social networks
- Collaboration with Native Scientist



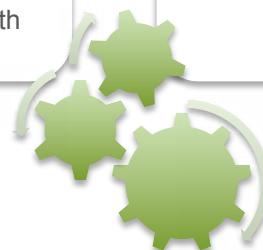
Any plan for 2014-15?

- New seminars and debates with top figures
- To organise meeting in Bilbao with CERFA and other societies
 - Engaging in UK-based campaigns
- Workshops for career advice
- To consolidate Native Scientist collaboration
- Recruitment of more volunteers in the Online Department
 - Establishing awards
- Periodic collaboration with media or blogs



Any long-term goal?

- To develop programmes of exchange, short studentships
- To produce our own podcast, or blog
 - To establish an online repository for members' publications for public awareness
- Collaboration with STEM activities in the UK
- To help establishing more STEM outreaching activities in Spain





Our 3rd objective: Science representatives before institutions

What have we achieved?

- Meetings with Embassy, MINECO, SEIDI, FECYT, ANECA, ASEBIO, Royal Society
- Opinion reports delivered to institutions
- Senior scientists in the UK to join ANEP
- Collaboration with SINC and Madri+d for science news
- Many interviews and opinion letters
- Collaboration in surveys (INNOVACEF, UDIMA...)

Any plan for 2014-15?

- Follow-up meetings with MINECO and SEIDI
- To introduce SRUK to UK BIS Minister
- To introduce SRUK to the European Research council and to UK Research Council
- Establishing a science policy committee
- Presentation of a SRUK policy report for a better science policy in Spain, timely for general elections in 2015
- To continue participating in policy surveys

Any long-term goal?

- Meeting with new Spanish and British governments
- Consideration of SRUK membership as a pool for experts in diverse scientific fields as well as in science policy

Our 4th objective: Mediating collaborations between countries

What have we achieved?

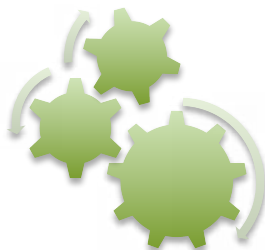
- Assisting in collaborations between Spanish institutions (FECYT, Fundación Ramón Areces) and the Royal Society
- Financial support for Building Bridges Seminar Series
- Willingness from RUVID to collaborate with British institutions
- Mediating the contact of Ikerbasque with the WellcomeTrust Foundation

Any plan for 2014-15?

- To crystallise more collaborations and consolidate the established ones
- To organise the Building Bridges Seminar Series
- To assist the Cambridge Trust to get more visibility in Spain
- Link Spanish and British research centres for Horizon 2020 bidding projects

Any long-term goal?

- To create opportunities for bidirectional science mobility through short-stay fellowships or postdoctoral fellowships
- To promote collaborations between Spanish and British Universities and Research institutions and to stimulate international joint grants applications



The plan for 2014–15

Dr María Hernández-Fuentes was one of the leading forces in the origins of SRUK, being elected as the first SRUK Secretary in 2012 and as president-elect in 2013. She writes here about our future

Dear members, acquaintances and friends of the society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom,

Almost two years ago we registered this “company” thus commencing its official sail. We can now say that the age of continuity has started. The **first baton** is being passed and I have the honour of having been chosen for the task.

In these pages you can read the activities we have organised this year, the range of varied meetings and all occasions when we have been representing the society. This clearly establishes **the magnitude of the task ahead**.

It is now my turn to lead this society that has *matured*. The board of directors has had some experience, the wheels have been turning for a number of months, the responsibilities are better defined, its members are confronting the new challenges with **a great deal of enthusiasm and professionalism**. The board is being supported by the working groups from the different constituencies. These have gone through a good turnover of members, thus already showing signs of sustainability that will ensure their ability to move forward. These teams are very important, as they are the guarantors that this society will continue to organise activities up and down the UK.

Our website, our **window into the world**, has a very intense activity, our members already enjoy space for interaction – please use it! – and as anybody would agree is one of our best assets. I am going to take the opportunity to mention and acknowledge the MAMOTH and incredibly specialised work of Tomas Gonzalo (London) and Gines Escudero (The Midlands). Our webmanagers, they are the fingers behind the images, links and updates of the website. THANK YOU GUYS!!!

The year ahead already is loaded with a number of planned activities, and we may end up adding “one or two” as needed.

Currently our members are contributing to the **economic independence** of our Society by paying fees; we hope that you can clearly see and enjoy the advantages this brings about.

SRUK has a **national and international visibility**; I couldn't say is massive but it's certainly not small. One of the task ahead is to increase it, hence the intention to link with the European Commission and the European Research Council. Of course, we will keep supporting our sister societies that are starting to sprout around the world. They know that they can count with our experience, our documents, our contacts, etc. We will keep using the latest technologies available to strengthen the links with an international community of scientists ... *of the world*.

We cannot forget to **build up our connections** with the Spanish institutions. We aim to keep our lines of communication open and active, this is what will allow us scientists to *have a voice*, loud and clear. This voice is our chance to influence science and R&D policy; and consequently change the vision that the Spanish society has of science in general and its scientists.

We will maintain our collaboration with Native Scientists and our strong presence in the “Science Week” at the Cañada Blanch school. Thus, we can continue and increase our educative role with the next generation of scientists.

Our sustainability fundamentally relies on our sponsors, we need to consolidate and expand this list of supporters. Here we acknowledge the relations opened with Fundación Ramón Areces, the Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs of the Spanish Embassy in the UK, Spanish

Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT), and the Santander group. We aim to expand our sponsor panel to maintain active the challenges our society has.

We aim to **sprinkle the British geography with outreach and science communication events**. We want the

general public to learn to enjoy science in general, therefore we will take this wherever allowed: *Pint of Knowledge*, *Science in the Pub*, *Lager of Wisdom*, we will communicate where is scientific progress taking humanity in any possible area. Be it progress we are contributing to, or others are contributing to; as long as we have a good time communicating it we will do it.

Last but absolutely not least to mention the COLOSSAL figure of **Lorenzo Melchor**, the president that has willingly accepted to hand over his job. All of you bear witness his huge dedication, his zest, his passion and professionalism, a genuine *savoir fair*. The bar has been set frighteningly high, particularly if we think that we might have to leave it even higher. Notwithstanding, he has taken a lot of pains to leave the SRUK machinery well oiled. I hereby wholeheartedly salute you and your work, I add a ton of respect and wonder, and I can only say this: Lorenzo don't you worry my friend your are leaving your society in good hands, the only way now is upwards and forwards.

A big hug to all,

Dr María Hernández-Fuentes
Senior Lecturer King's College London



Performing with enthusiasm and professionalism!

Supporting SRUK

The generous contribution from our supporters and key collaboration from our partners have enabled us to develop our wide range of activities. SRUK wishes to thank them here.



Gold Supporter



This Spanish private foundation, the national reference on the patronage of science, did not hesitate to sponsor us in 2013 for our website development and an international symposium in Madrid. For 2014, the Fundación Ramón Areces supports our annual symposium, the organisation of two roundtables in the UK, and a career advice scientific workshop that our membership will impart in Madrid.



Silver Supporter



Banco Santander supported the event with Dr Valentin Fuster in 2013, and now, we are proud to receive the support from Fundación Banco Santander to launch a new type of annual events: the Building Bridges Seminar Series, aimed to nurture collaborations between research institutions in both countries.



Silver Supporter



EMBASSY OF SPAIN
OFFICE FOR CULTURAL
AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

The first Spanish Embassy to have an Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs back in 2011 offered us institutional support since the beginning. Last year, it supported the Cycle of Seminars and Roundtables. For 2014, it keeps its support for our new cycle, now to be expanded to the newest constituencies, and contributes significantly to our travel bursary grants. Its support results crucial to reach both Spanish and British institutions and to disseminate our activities.



Bronze Supporter



This Spanish public foundation has contributed to our activities since 2012. Last year, FECYT assigned a scientific advisor to OCSA who also closely collaborated with SRUK. FECYT has disseminated our activities and promoted our international symposium in Madrid. Additionally, FECYT is the kind sponsor of the joint Webinar series SRUK and CERFA.

Corporate Partners



Sociedad de Científicos
Españoles en la
República Federal de
Alemania
www.cerfa.de

NATIVE
SCIENTIST



PARSUK
PORTUGUESE ASSOCIATION
OF RESEARCHERS AND
STUDENTS IN THE UK



British Spanish Society



COECE
CONFEDERACIÓN DE SOCIEDADES
CIENTÍFICAS DE ESPAÑA



SENC
SOCIETAT ESPANOLA DE NEUROCIENCIA

ECUSA



Científicos Españoles en
Dinamarca
Danske Forskere i
Danmark



CRE



MasScience

Asociación de Científicos
Españoles en Suecia

