

An Interview with Fabio Rui Conducted by **Anja Wiechmann**

Introduction:

Fabio is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow here in CBS and he is working in the group of Weng Chan in the Division of Medicinal Chemistry and Structural Biology in the School of Pharmacy.

Before he came to Nottingham, he graduated with a Masters Degree in Chemistry at the University of Padua, Italy. After a one-year course in Industrial Microbiology and one year working as analytical chemist in a biotechnology company in Italy, he went to the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology of Jena, Germany for his PhD studies on the “biosynthesis of hydrocarbons in algae”.



After that, he moved to Portugal, to study at the seaside near Lisbon, where he performed investigations towards the autoinducer-2 systems of bacterial communication, which enable bacteria to “communicate” interspecifically.

After finishing his first Postdoc, he joined the group here in January 2012, which at that time just received a MRC grant between Weng Chan and Paul Williams. This made it possible for him to carry on with his research on molecules for bacterial communication. His project focuses on modifying the communication molecules bacteria use to develop new treatments against bacterial infections, which cannot be treated with common antibiotics.

CBS Researchers Forum:

The CBS Researchers Forum was founded by David Foley in 2012 the Head of CBS (after being initialised by Peter Fischer) to get the different Schools in CBS together to allow for the exchange of knowledge and to enhance the communication between researchers here in CBS.

David Foley was also the one who asked Fabio to join the forum in its 2nd year. After David's leave in 2013, Jody Winter and then Fabio took over the chair position of the CBS

Researchers Forum, for organisation of the Annual CBS Researchers Symposium and of other activities that will improve the community of scientists and staff in this building.

Since Fabio is the chair of the CBS Researchers Forum, I thought it would be a good idea to interview him to get an introduction for the forum and a personal opinion about why and what the forum is good for.

1. Why did you join the CBS Researchers Forum:

Fabio: I joined the forum because I was interested in other research topics outside my research, especially since I am coming from a chemistry/microbiological background and joined the Medicinal Chemistry and Structural Biology Division. I wanted to learn more about medical research, which of course is a big research topic here in CBS. Having an annual symposium with presentations of several CBS working groups, including medical research groups, who explain their research in an understandable way, helps me to adapt their methods towards my own work.

2. What did you learn so far by being the chair of the forum?

Fabio: By organising the researchers symposium last year, I learned a lot about time management, how to approach people and I also got in contact with people in different research groups, which helped me to get to know many people in CBS. I like the idea of walking downstairs and saying 'hello' and 'how are you' to people which are not directly related to my research.

3. Do you think the researchers forum is helping researchers in CBS?

Fabio: Yes, of course. It is very nice to have a forum. Before I joined the forum in 2013 there were a lot of socials organised which helped people getting together and probably like me, improved the feeling of CBS being a community and not just separate research groups.

In addition, all the people that just joined the forum two months ago have many ideas and it was nice to see, that by bringing in an initial idea, suddenly we have a [Twitter account](#), a [Facebook page](#) and will have a proper website soon. All members of the forum are very helpful, show a lot of initiative and are very excited to even further improve the CBS community. It made me see people in a different way, after just meeting them on the corridor

before. However, I am still surprised what ideas and power you can get when you put different people together.

4. What specific ideas do you have towards the future of the forum?

Fabio: In the last two years the forum just organised the symposium but with many new people involved we hopefully can organise other meetings of CBS researcher, for example a monthly journal club. Another idea brought up by forum members were pub-quizzes or pub-talks, in which you can discuss your research informally over a pint of beer.

5. What is your favourite equipment in CBS?

Fabio: It's not directly a machine, it is a bead resin, on which we can synthesis peptides. You just "grow" the peptides on the resin by addition of amino acids and when your peptide is synthesised, you can cleave it. It's a very nice tool, because it's quicker and cheaper than synthesising peptides in solution.