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## CORE TECHNOLOGIES FOR LIFE SCIENCES

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### QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER JULY 2023

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**CTLS 2023**  
27<sup>TH</sup> - 29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE | DUBLIN IRELAND  
Core Technologies for Life Sciences

#### Message from CTLS2023 Local Organising Committee

(Robbie Sinnott, Dublin City  
University)

On behalf of the local organising committee, we would like to express our deepest appreciation to all speakers, chairs and delegates for contributing to an incredibly engaging event.

We were genuinely thrilled to be

#### CTLS 2023 – The sense of belonging

(Michael Pancher, CTLS  
Communications Working Group  
Vice-Chair)

After three years of remote connections, the event that would bring us together again had finally come: CTLS2023! I never been in Ireland before, but I've always been fascinated by this green land and its history, so I was very happy to go to

able to host CTLS2023 in Ireland and we have no doubt it will have a hugely positive impact on core facility operations and networks on the Island.

It was also fantastic for us to bring everyone to the historical home of our national sports, Croke Park, so hopefully everyone that attended enjoyed the event and we look forward now to CTLS 2025 in Brno.

Some facts from the event:

- 235 delegates
- 23 countries represented
- 64 Irish delegates
- 2 keynote speakers
- 43 speakers
- 16 sponsors

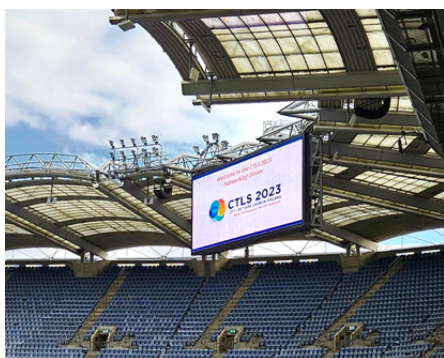


Dublin, but I was confused: Why organise a Congress about Core Technologies at Croke Park, inside a stadium?

The first day, after the registration, things started to take form. I was welcomed in a large cosy room overlooking the playing field, there was a hallway full of sponsor booths next to two big conference rooms. In such a nice place, enriching and inspiring sessions would have taken place for the following two and a half days.

Funding, Sustainability, Innovation, Data Management and Careers were the primary topics. Facilities Showcases allowed participants to discover interesting Core realities located worldwide. Focus roundtables, panels and open mic sessions encouraged lively discussions about hot topics for Core Facilities staff, such as benchmarking, quality assurance, mentorship, instrumentation management, access rules and communication skills.

After intense days, the social activities gave people enjoyable networking opportunities. Personally, I met a lot of directors, managers and technicians who shared with me their stories and experiences, opening collaborations or mentorship opportunities that



could represent important resources for my professional growth.

Finally I understand why I went there, in the stadium, for the CTLS. That place is a symbol for Irish people, not just a sports symbol, but something related to their history, to their community. That's why, the fantastic group of organisers of the CTLS2023 decided to bring all of us there, to renew a spirit of unity and collaboration that should be embraced by every single CTLS member, to make our job easier and better, to make good science, for the better of everyone.

Hope to see you all next time at CTLS 2025 in Brno with the same spirit!

Thank you, Michael



## Look out for news about CTLS 2025!

The CTLS 2025 Congress will be hosted by [CEITEC](#) in Brno, Czech Republic, in 2025.

Click [here](#) to watch the invitation video!



## Turning diversity into an asset in your research environment

In our daily life, we work and interact with people coming from different backgrounds, cultures, disciplines, gender, personalities. It is enriching but can be challenging at times as cultural differences may lead to misunderstandings that could escalate and hinder our productivity and wellbeing in a work environment.



How can we best address these situations? What are the skills needed to master these challenges? Are there strategies to turn diversity into an asset for our interactions and collaborations with others?

Before the CTLS2023 in Dublin last month we ran a workshop in the [RITRAIN+](#) framework where participants reflected on diversity in their research setting. Through raising awareness, sharing experiences and providing concrete and applicable tools, we were empowered to contribute to the creation of an inclusive culture in their work environment.



Understanding what diversity, equity, equality and inclusion really mean and being aware of common biases we may have in life and in our workplace, are the first steps toward a constructive and creative space that will bring positive outcomes in challenging situations.

We improved the skills and tools that are required to master these situations and collected best practices on how to address diversity in a team and in collaboration with our colleagues and users, by sharing experiences and best



practices – we do not have to reinvent the wheel and learning from each other's experience is always fruitful.

Keep an open mind and learn from your peers and colleagues, listen to them as everyone's experience is different and they can all contribute to improve your work environment and your productivity. People that feel well at work will perform better and will contribute to the common goals of success of the group.

We were guided to identify concrete actions that we, our institution or CTLS could take to implement, support and enhance DEI in core facilities. Some interesting suggestions came out and will be the basis of future activities of our working groups...stay tuned!

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### **CTLS Shadowing and Staff Exchange Programme 2023** **[Expression of Interest closes soon on 31 July 2023](#)**

There are a number of places available for CTLS Awards (up to a maximum of 1,000 EUR) for Visits to Hosts before 1 December 2023. To be able to submit a full application you need to complete an Expression of Interest before 31 July 2023. At this stage you do not need to have identified a Host.

Shadowing involves a CTLS Member visiting a Host core facility and spending time with another individual or team, learning new management skills and developing professional networks. Visits usually involve mobility between European countries from Monday to Friday. Staff Exchange is similar but entails a two-way process with two individuals visiting each others' core facilities.

Further details on this program and the application process can be found [here](#). Please contact Ian Brewis (Lead for the Shadowing and Staff Exchange Focus Group which is part of the Training Working Group) at [shadowing@ctls-org.eu](mailto:shadowing@ctls-org.eu) if you have any questions or wish to discuss your plans.

### **Summary of the 2022 Programme Visits**

### Photos from some of the 2022 CTLS Shadowing Visits



Top left - Daniele Peroni; top right - Elisa Moretti; bottom left - Viktoriya Sadarovich; bottom right - Kate Burgoyne

The 2022 Programme was very successful and seven people received CTLS Awards for Shadowing Visits. Colleagues from France, Italy, Portugal, Scotland and England visited Hosts in Germany, Sweden and England. We highlighted the first CTLS Shadowing Visit of Ana Margarida Biscaia Fernandes dos Santos (Comparative Pathology Unit, Instituto de Medicina Molecular, Lisbon, Portugal) in a previous CTLS newsletter. Ana visited Julia Fernandez-Rodriguez at the Cellular Imaging Core Facility, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

For your interest these are some brief details of the other Shadowing Visits that took place at the end of 2022:

- Daniele Peroni (Proteomic and MS Facility, Department of Cellular, Computational and Integrative Biology, University of Trento, Italy) visited Carina Sihlbom (Proteomics Core Facility, University of Gothenburg, Sweden). Daniele had the chance to discuss and share some daily management challenges of a proteomic platform and some best practices that he experienced have been implemented into his facility to enhance scientific performance and data rigour. He strongly recommends participating in this experiential learning to improve your expertise and career progress.
- Elisa Moretti (Masters student, University of Trento, Italy) visited Eugenio Fava, Head of Core Research Facilities and Services at the DZNE Screening Facility, Bonn, Germany. Elisa found this a truly enriching and enlightening experience and was grateful for the opportunity to have gained hands-on experience in a world-class research facility with a team who were

passionate about advancing the field of neurodegenerative diseases. It gave her new insights into core facilities at an early stage of her career and was an invaluable opportunity.

- Julien Fernandes (Institut Pasteur, Paris, France) visited Julia Fernandez-Rodriguez, (Cellular Imaging Core Facility, University of Gothenburg, Sweden). Julien is a research engineer in the Unit of Technology and Service Photonic Bio Imaging (UTechS PBI) with a lot of technical experience in light microscopy. He was looking for other types of knowledge more linked to user management, teaching skills and other soft skills and this Visit enabled this as well as the development of Julien's professional network.
- Viktoryia Sidarovich (University of Trento, Italy) visited Anja Mezger at the Eukaryotic Single Cell Genomics Unit at the Science for Life Laboratory, Stockholm, Sweden. Viktoryia has worked in a High Throughput Screening and Validation Core Facility for about five years and was recently appointed as a coordinator for a Single-cell Facility being established from scratch. This Visit enabled a better understanding of sustainable models for this type of facility and generally deepened knowledge regarding management strategies, quality controls, user support and SOP milestones for instrumentation and sample management. A key part of this experience was the establishment of an ongoing collaboration for contact in the future.
- Rudi Grosman (High field NMR Shared Research Facility, University of Liverpool, England) visited Gary Thompson (NMR Facility Manager, University of Kent, England). This Visit enabled Rudi to gain hands on experience of the day-to-day operations of a well-established facility, including how new users are inducted and supported, how facility issues are handled and how in-house software is used to improve facility management efficiency. Rudi highly recommends the scheme as a way to explore different management styles and processes to improve facility operations as well an excellent mechanism to strengthen relationships between facilities. In this case there is agreement to collaborate on a method development project.
- Lastly Kate Burgoyne (Aberdeen Proteomics, University of Aberdeen, Scotland) visited Prof Claire Evers (Director, Centre for Proteome Research (CPR), University of Liverpool, England). The CPR operates as both a research group and shared resource facility which provided a unique experience of facility management within that type of model. Kate engaged in discussions on the similarities and differences between their approaches to project management and service delivery compared with Kate's home facility. The experience also gave Kate a lot more confidence networking in a professional environment.

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### **Update on CTLS Mentoring program**

On Day 2 of the recent CTLS2023 Congress in Dublin, Ian Brewis and Josh Rappoport co-Chaired a Parallel Session on Mentorship. In addition to Ian and Josh, Peter O'Toole from the University of York, and Rebecca Thompson from Thermo Fisher Scientific also presented. The session provided an overview of the various mentorship activities supported by CTLS, and focused specifically on the perspectives of both a mentor (Pete) and a mentee (Becky). Following the presentations, there was a very interesting and lively panel discussion with excellent questions from the audience.

Please visit the [CTLS Mentorship page](#) for more information.



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### **News from the Partnership & Funding Working Group (PF WG)**



At CTLS2023 the PF WG representatives (Spencer Shorte and Josh Rappoport) met with the sponsors to receive on-the-spot feedback and discuss potential partnerships and initiatives that could boost the relationships and impact the activities of CTLS.

The sponsors gave their input on opportunities that could be beneficial for them while impacting positively the organization, and concurrently learned about the benefits of joining CTLS. As results, a company verbally agreed to join as corporate partner and the group is moving further with the suggestions and comments gathered at the meeting.

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**REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR CTLS  
MEMBERSHIP!**

And remember to invite your  
colleagues and friends to join too!



CTLS membership has many  
benefits including:

- Reduced rates and priority registration at CTLS congresses and events
- Access to CTLS sponsored trainings at preferred rates
- Networking opportunities with other core facility staff
- Access to CTLS webpages with news, job listings and event

Click [here](#) to renew or join.



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