

## **GEMS: revealing the hidden treasure of the European crystallographic community**

**H. Butkiewicz<sup>1</sup>, W. Clegg<sup>2</sup>, K. Dziubek<sup>3</sup>, A. Guerri<sup>4</sup>, J. Helliwell<sup>5</sup>, I. Madura<sup>6</sup>, C. Massera<sup>7</sup>, M. Morana<sup>8</sup>, M. Pisačić<sup>9</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Chemistry, University of Warsaw, Pasteura 1, Warsaw, Poland <sup>2</sup> School of Natural and Environmental Sciences, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK <sup>3</sup> Institut für Mineralogie und Kristallographie, Universität Wien, Josef-Holaubek-Platz 2, A-1090 Wien, Austria, <sup>4</sup> Department of Chemistry "Ugo Schiff", via della Lastruccia 3-13, Campus di Sesto Fiorentino, Sesto Fiorentino (FI), Italy <sup>5</sup> Department of Chemistry, University of Manchester, M13 9PL, United Kingdom <sup>6</sup> Faculty of Chemistry, Warsaw University of Technology, Noakowskiego 3, 00-664, Warsaw, Poland <sup>7</sup> Università di Parma, Parco Area delle Scienze 17/A, Parma, Italy, <sup>8</sup> Department of Earth Sciences, University of Florence, Via G. La Pira 4, 50121, Firenze, Italy, <sup>9</sup> University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science, Department of Chemistry, Horvatovac 102A, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia

*mpisacic@chem.pmf.hr*

Being involved in a world of science, especially crystallography, undoubtedly brings an immense amount of delight and fulfilment that exponentially grows with any advancement of the current knowledge. Even from the early days of a student's life, resolving diverse scientific puzzles and making new findings that no one in the entire world has yet found, encourages one's further eagerness and involvement in research and education. However, despite all the excitement that science provides, it is likely that, sooner or later, one will face and must cope with impediments and doubts related to different aspects of their work and professional growth. Determining the career path or establishing yourself as a researcher in a certain scientific area are only some of the common and frequent struggles of early-career scientists. In those difficult times in one's career, advice from those who are more experienced and have already gone through that path would be more than welcome and appreciated.

Inspired by that, the three general interest groups within the European Crystallographic Association (ECA, GIG-01 Young Crystallographers, GIG-02 Senior Crystallographers, and GIG-03 Education in Crystallography), are launching a mentoring project dedicated to the members of the ECA. "GEMS" (i.e., GIGs ECA Mentoring Scheme) will match potential mentors and mentee among the members of the ECA, thus providing a mentoring opportunity for the members of the association. The project is intended mostly for early-stage crystallographers, but anyone facing some career challenges is welcome to apply, for example, mid-career scientists facing a career ceiling can also be assisted by mentoring. Analysis of a mentee's skills set by a mentor can provide valuable insights into their effectiveness at work. Experienced researchers, without age limits, are more than welcome to act as mentors, ideally forming a diverse pool of mentors with expertise in different countries and areas, ranging from university to industry. Everyone interested in joining as a mentor or a mentee will be asked to provide some basic information about their needs and expectations and will be matched with a mentor or a mentee based on their requests. After six and twelve months since the match of the mentor-mentee pairs, both parties will be sent a brief survey to help the organisers understand if the project is working and how to improve it. A "pilot season" will start in October, and everyone interested is welcome to apply; the only condition is that they have to be an ECA member. Having a wide range of experienced crystallographers within the European Crystallographic Association and numerous talented early-career researchers who are welcome to apply as mentees, therefore resolving some of the possible struggles, we are positive that this project will result in great success.