

Conference Report in English:

International Congress of the European Society for Redox Biology (SFRR-E) in Mainz

Mainz, June 18, 2026 – During the week of June 1 to 6, 2026, the international congress of the European Society for Free Radical Research (SFRR-E), dedicated to Redox Biology research, took place in Mainz <https://www.sfrremainz2026.com/>. This year's congress was organized by Univ.-Prof. Dr. Andreas Daiber (University Medical Center Mainz) and his co-organizer Univ.-Prof. Dr. Tilman Grune (German Institute of Human Nutrition) from June 3 to 5 under the scientific theme "Redox Biology, Environmental Exposures, and Lifestyle Risk Factors," under the patronage of SFRR-E. The main congress at the Hilton Hotel Mainz was accompanied by satellite symposia at the Johannes Gutenberg University campus, the EXPOHEALTH Symposium with 70 participants (June 1-2 at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, <https://www.unimedizin-mainz.de/expohealth/uebersicht.html>), and the GREXS Symposium with 100 participants (June 6 at the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research). Besides the current topic, the location, history, and numerous opportunities of the Rhine-Main science hub in general and Mainz in particular were also decisive for the award: Its location in the center of Europe, close to Frankfurt Airport, and in the heart of Germany's wine-growing region; the Roman name of Mainz, 'Mogontiacum,' and one of Germany's largest cathedrals reflecting the city's significant history. Mainz thus followed in the footsteps of Vienna, Istanbul, and Galway, where the congress had been held in previous years.

The SFRR-E Conference 2026 brought together 300 scientists from various disciplines and regions across Europe and beyond to present and discuss topics in redox biology related to environmental stressors and lifestyle risk factors. More than half of the participants were early-career scientists (students, PhD candidates, and postdocs). The international experts and conference attendees were impressed by Mainz's rich history, its picturesque old town, the hospitality, and the scenic Rhine promenade. Participants took advantage of the time before and after the congress, as well as the evenings after the scientific program, to explore these cultural highlights of Mainz. In addition to expert-reviewed symposia and competitively selected presentation sessions, numerous sessions for early-career researchers were offered as part of the conference, as well as thematically focused satellite symposia, and they were successfully attended by the participants.

The congress week full of scientific exchange, as well as the initiation of new and refreshing of existing collaborations, kicked off with the EXPOHEALTH Symposium, which on the first day focused on environmental and lifestyle risk factors and was supported by numerous speakers from the SFRR-E community and the EU environmental research consortium MARKOPOLO <https://markersofpollution-markopolo.eu/>. On the second day, selected excellent research structures and institutions from the University Medical Center and the Johannes Gutenberg University presented themselves to the participants (Cardiology, CTH, IMB, PKZI, TRON, MPIP, LIR, MPIC). The environmental topic contributed to the international visibility of the EXPOHEALTH high potential area, a research network on the health impacts of environmental risk factors such as noise and fine dust at the University Medical Center, Johannes Gutenberg University, and other Rhine-Main universities. The presentation of the excellence research structures and institutions showcased the numerous possibilities of top-level research in Mainz and will undoubtedly lead to many new international scientific collaborations. The first day was opened by the local host Dr. Thomas Berkemeier at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry and the speakers of the EXPOHEALTH potential area, Univ. Prof. Andreas Daiber and Univ. Prof. Daniel Wollschläger. The second day was kicked off with a lecture on history, major scientific breakthroughs, and modern cardiology by Univ.

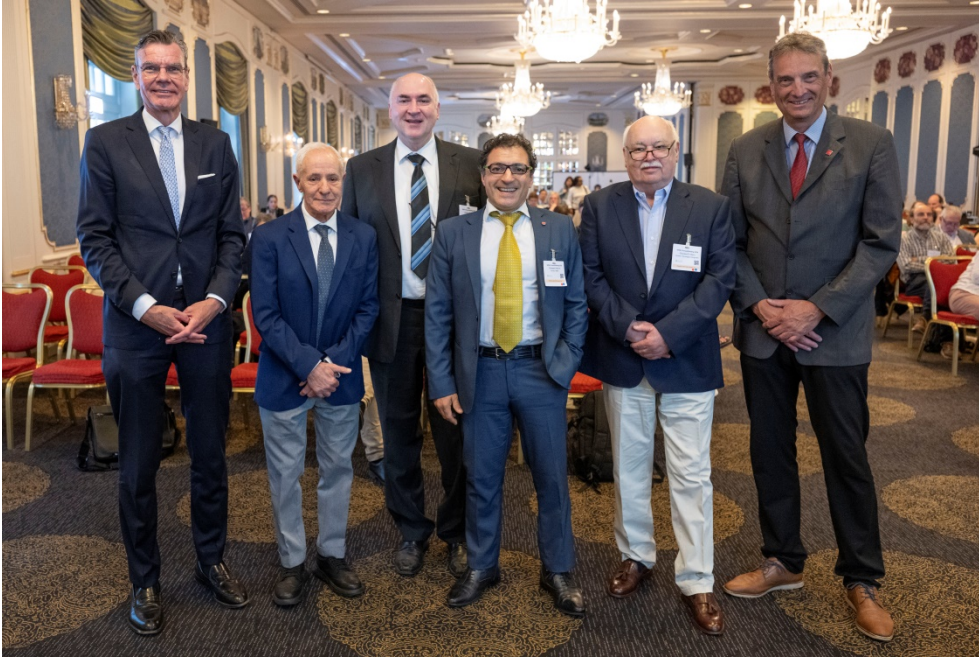
Prof. Philipp Lurz (Director of the Center for Cardiology) (Picture 1, left). Overall, the symposium included 32 lectures from local and international experts. The EXPOHEALTH symposium was supported by funds from the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, the Dr. Hans Riegel Foundation, and travel grants for 10 international early-career scientists through the EXPOHEALTH high potential area (funded by state funds from the Rhineland-Palatinate Science Initiative) – the awards ceremony took place during the lunch break on the first day (Picture 1, right). The highlight of the social program at the symposium was a vineyard tour in Mainz-Bodenheim to introduce international participants to the Rhine-Main wine culture.



Picture 1: Left: Opening lecture on the second day of the EXPOHEALTH Symposium by Univ.-Prof. Philipp Lurz (Director of the Center for Cardiology). Right: Presentation of the certificates for EXPOHEALTH travel support to the award winners by the speakers of the EXPOHEALTH potential area, Univ. Prof. Andreas Daiber (Cardiology) and Univ. Prof. Daniel Wollschläger (IMBEI).

The main congress started on June 2 with a welcome reception and registration. On June 3 at 9 a.m., the opening session took place in the Gold Hall of the Hilton Hotel, where, in addition to the congress organizer, the President of SFRR-E, Prof. Giuseppe Valacchi (Ferrara, Italy), the President of the Oxygen Club California, Prof. Enrique Cadenas (CA, USA), and the representative of the International Society for Free Radical Research (SFRR-I), Prof. Giovanni Mann (London, UK), gave their welcome greetings to the participants. The support of the congress by the University Medical Center and the Johannes Gutenberg University was highlighted by the presence of the Vice President for Research and Young Scientists, Prof. Stefan Müller-Stach, and the Scientific Director of the University Medical Center and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Philipp Drees (Picture 2). Their words of greeting created a very nice link between the science presented at the congress, the numerous international experts and young researchers, and the cultural and scientific environment in Mainz and the Rhine-Main area. The contributions from the representatives of the University Medical Center and the Johannes Gutenberg University, Univ.-Prof. Stefan Müller-Stach and Prof. Philipp Drees, were regarded by the SFRR-E society's leadership team and the congress organizers as a great appreciation and honor. With a total of 246 presentations (100 talks and 146 posters), high-level scientific exchange was offered, with highlights such as the lectures by the SFRR-E award winners, the opening lectures on noise and fine dust as health risk factors by Senior-Prof. Thomas Münzel (Cardiology) and Univ.-Prof. Sanjay Rajagopalan (OH, USA), and the industry lecture on the success story of the company Cardior: from development in the lab to the clinical Phase II study of a novel

heart medication, presented by Univ.-Prof. Thomas Thum (Medical School Hannover, founder of Cardior). On Thursday and Friday, the conference program each day started with the traditional sunrise free radical lectures, which already began at 7:30 a.m. Highlights of the social program included a dinner of the SFRR-E executive committee and selected keynote speakers at the Heilig Geist restaurant in Mainz, and the conference gala dinner in the Fürst von Bismarck Hall at the Eulchen Brewery with 230 conference participants.



Picture 2: Delivering the welcoming remarks at the opening session of the SFRR-E main conference in the Gold Hall of the Hilton Hotel in Mainz. From left to right: Prof. Philipp Drees (Scientific Director of the University Medical Center), Univ.-Prof. Enrique Cadenas (CA, USA, OCC President), Univ.-Prof. Andreas Daiber (Cardiology, University Medical Center, Organizer), Univ.-Prof. Giuseppe Valacchi (Ferrara, Italy, SFRR-E President), Univ.-Prof. Giovanni Mann (London, UK, SFRR-I), and Univ.-Prof. Stefan Müller-Stach (Vice President of Johannes Gutenberg University).

The congress week wrapped up with the GREXS Symposium on June 6 at the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research, organized by Dr. Uladzimir Barayeu in collaboration with the Japanese Redox Biology Society. With 100 participants, about half of whom were sent by the Japanese and Asian Redox Biology Societies, this satellite symposium was also extremely successful and contributed to the international character of the congress week. With 19 presentations, this last day of the congress was full of scientific highlights and concluded in the evening with a social program and a BBQ dinner.

In summary, the congress week, as many participants have already confirmed, was a complete success. It was clearly possible to combine high-level scientific exchange with a social program, which has sustainably contributed to the international visibility of Mainz as a scientific hub and the Rhine-Main cultural region. In total, 193 participants came from Europe (46 of them from Germany), 29 from Asia, 15 from South America, and the rest from other regions. Fifteen participants from Mainz actively helped organize the event. This great success would not have been possible without the numerous conference sponsors. Above all, the generous support from SFRR-E itself and the society's main supporter, the publishing house Elsevier, the Oxygen Club California (Platinum), as well as a considerable number of international and

national industry sponsors (Silver, Bronze), must be mentioned. But also support from locally acquired funding from the German Research Foundation, the EXPOHEALTH high potential area (funded by state funds from the Rhineland-Palatinate Science Initiative), each Platinum, the Mainz Heart Foundation and the Dr. Hans Riegel Foundation (MINT TANK), and the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry (Silver and Bronze) is highly appreciated. In addition, numerous speakers were supported through funds from the EU environmental research consortium MARKOPOLO as well as an 'Outreach' proposal to promote networking with other scientific disciplines of the SFRR societies. All conference abstracts were published in a special conference issue in the traditional journal of the Redox Biology societies, Free Radical Biology & Medicine, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/free-radical-biology-and-medicine/vol/249/suppl/S1> (Picture 3).



Picture 3: Conference volume in the traditional journal FRBM.

Image source: Andreas Daiber (EXPOHEALTH Symposium) and Peter Pulkowski (SFRR-E Conference).

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About the University Medical Center of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

The University Medical Center Mainz is the only institution providing supramaximal medical care in Rhineland-Palatinate and is an internationally recognized center for research and clinical excellence. It encompasses more than 60 clinics, institutes, and departments that work across disciplines to provide inpatient and outpatient care to around 403,000 people annually. Specialized patient care, research, and

teaching form an inseparable unit. Approximately 3,700 medical and dental students and around 590 trainees in healthcare, administrative, and technical professions are educated here. With roughly 9,000 employees, the University Medical Center Mainz is one of the largest employers in the region and a key driver of growth and innovation. Further information is available at: www.unimedizin-mainz.de

About the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU) is one of the largest universities in Germany, with around 33,000 students from over 130 nations. As the only full university in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, it brings together nearly all academic disciplines under one roof, including the Mainz University Medical Center and two art schools—a unique integration in the German higher education landscape. With 75 fields of study offering a total of 242 courses, including 106 bachelor's and 116 master's programs, as well as seven additional, advanced, and supplementary study programs, JGU provides an exceptionally wide range of study options. Around 4,360 researchers, including 540 professors, teach and conduct research in more than 150 institutes and clinics. More information is available online at <https://www.uni-mainz.de/>.