REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL MICROORGANISM DAY

The Concept behind
The world is much more than you can see! There is an invisible multitude of microorganisms which are our life support. A crowd on which we depend. Discovering, recognizing and exploring the importance of microorganisms is a long road that is not yet appreciate by all. The aim of creating the Day of the Microorganism is to raise awareness among young people and society in general of the role of microorganisms as life supporting systems and biotools.

The organization
The Portuguese Society of Microbiology, Ordem dos Biólogos, UNESCO Portuguese Commission and Ciência Viva Agency organised an exciting and very diversified exhibition and invited citizens from all ages to explore microorganisms and help them realise that there's an invisible world out there formed by a multitude of microscopic organisms from which we are highly dependent.

The date
The 17th of September was chosen to celebrate the day when the Dutch scientist Anton van Leeuwenhoek, in 1683, has sent a letter to the Royal Society of London making him the first person to observe and describe single-celled organisms. These were originally referred to as animalcules (now, microorganisms), thereby launching the basis for Microbiology, one of the most important branches of Life Sciences.

The Venue
The International Microorganism Day was celebrated, for the first time, on September the 17th 2017, at Pavilhão do Conhecimento, in Lisbon. Pavilhão do Conhecimento is the home of a Contemporary Science Centre since 1999, with interactive exhibits, experiments, conferences and workshops constituting the perfect venue for disseminating science and share experiments with the public.
The Logo and the Mascots:
A logo was designed to launch this special date.
Two mascots were designed and build specifically for this event, representing two major groups of microorganisms: the yeasts and the bacteria.

Saca (The yeast) The logo and Bak (The bacteria)

The mascots interacted with the visitors throughout the exhibition and were highly appreciated by both children and adults.

The International Microorganism Day in numbers:
40 stands were provided with interactive experiments, involving 128 scientists, including 50 Ph.Ds (teachers and researchers); 48 post-grad students (M.Sc. and Ph.D.) and 30 under-grads from 22 organizations, including public organisms:

- ECVA/DEBA/CQVR from the University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto-Douro (UTAD);
- CESAM, University of Aveiro;
- CEMPRE and CEF from the University of Coimbra;
- iBB-IST, FFUL, cE3c–FCUL, BioISI-FCUL and MARE–FCUL from the University of Lisbon;
- ITQB-UNL from the Nova University of Lisbon;
- INIAV, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
- Pavilhão do Conhecimento;
- CCVSintra, Centro Ciência Viva;
- SPECO

and private companies:

- Gleba Nossa (natural bread production);
- ProEnol (yeast starters for oenology);
- Trichodex (microbial production for agriculture);
- Asfert Global (biofertilizers);
- Soilvitae (design of bioconsortia),
- Micnatur (promoting natural capital)
- Musse Ecological & Sustainable Design
- d’Ourique (artisanal beer)

Over 850 people have visited the exhibition raising to 1000 the number of persons involved in the event.

The exhibition
The stands were divided into 3 main categories: Learn, Apply and Explore (see program attached). Visitors could see microorganisms, touch, smell and taste products thereof, and listen and read about the importance of microorganisms in all aspects of our daily life: Health, Environment, Food, Biotechnology, Research, Education, etc.

Stands were distributed both outdoors
and indoors

Microorganism derived products to taste included bread and bear
The event was disseminated in the media, including a radio interview with Prof. Isabel Sá-Correia, the President of the Portuguese Microbiological Society (SPM), (available as podcast in the site of the Public TV channel RTP; https://www.rtp.pt/play/p383/e306925/os-dias-do-futuro), blogs, sites, social networks (facebook and twitter) and newspapers.

Faculdade de Ciências


Ordem dos Biólogos:

Jornal Expresso do Oriente


Blogue Culture All


Site do cE3c
Site of MARE Research Centre

http://www.mare-centre.pt/pt/node/396

Observatório Microbiano dos Açores

http://omic.centrosciencia.azores.gov.pt/content/dia-internacional-do-microrganismo

RTP – Os dias do Futuro

https://www.rtp.pt/play/p383/e306925/os-dias-do-futuro
Site of ITQB

http://www.itqb.unl.pt/events/with-society-international-microorganism-day

Site of iBB – IST

Announcement at the IST webpage


Announcement at the iBB Scoopit

Announcement at the DBE TV circuit
Site of Portuguese Microbiology Society (SPM)

http://www.spmicrobiologia.pt/