

EDITORIAL

Coming into focus

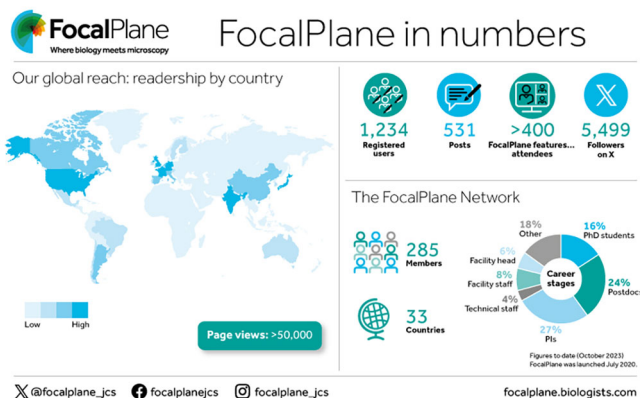
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2023 has been an exciting year for FocalPlane (<https://focalplane.biologists.com/>), our online microscopy community site. We've seen upgrades to the site, new contributors and fresh content from our regulars! The number of people using and contributing to the site is also growing, as we continue to reach out to the global community of imaging scientists, engineers, bioimage analysts and cell biologists.

We are implementing three main upgrades to the site: a new partnership with MicroscopyDB, a new look for the site thanks to our image competition finalists and a merger with Microlist, which we hope will be going live in the new year. As well as bringing additional features to the site, we are delighted that these three upgrades also strengthen our links within the microscopy community. The partnership with MicroscopyDB means that our events calendar and jobs board are now powered by MicroscopyDB, making the calendar and board essential viewing for planning your conference travel or finding for a new position. We invite you – the FocalPlane and JCS communities – to post your microscopy-related jobs and events on MicroscopyDB using their simple form. The listing will then appear on FocalPlane as well as on the other partner sites. Our merger with Microlist will boost our resource section, and we are delighted to have added Jennifer Waters, the founder of Microlist, to our Scientific Advisory Board. You can read our [interview with Jennifer in this issue](#). The Microlist resources will be displayed on FocalPlane as a card system, sorted by 'Tools', 'Education' and 'Community'. We have brought all the current resources across from Microlist, and we invite our users to continue adding their new tools and educational resources on FocalPlane. It is quick and easy to add a resource card, requiring only a short description and a link to a website. Please get in touch if you need any help adding your resource. Finally, we have released a series of banner images which, alongside our characteristic lens apertures, will appear at the top of the website. We thank Marie-Charlotte Domart and Chris Peddie, Nick Gatford, Oona Paavolainen, Rebecca Simkin and Till Stephan for sharing their images with us and allowing us to use them as banner images.

2023 was also a busy year for our FocalPlane correspondents, Mariana de Niz and Mai Rahmoon. Mariana continued her excellent 'Latin American Microscopists' series, while also starting a 'Towards Global Access' series with Constadina Arvanitis. Mai has been introducing us to imaging communities through interviews with their founders; we discovered how the communities and facilities started and heard about their future plans. Mai hopes that her series will help inspire others to develop their own local communities. We look forward to continuing to work with Mariana and Mai, alongside our new team of correspondents, which we'll be announcing soon.

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FocalPlane in numbers.

Alongside our correspondents, we have had popular blog posts from regular contributors Mara Lampert, Robert Haase and Andrey Andreev. We also launched two new series of our own: an 'Imaging with...' series, which focuses on the imaging scientists running core facilities around the world; and FocalPlane 'playlists', where we invite researchers to share the preprints and papers that they are excited about. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved in either of these series.

We've also been delighted to see that the **FocalPlane Network**, our global database of researchers with expertise in microscopy, has continued to grow. The database is fully searchable based on location, scientific field and area of expertise. We also invite our members to add diversity characteristics which can be used in searches. We encourage you to use the Network to identify collaborators, conference speakers, committee members and reviewers. The Network is fully inclusive, and we invite everyone that uses microscopy in their research to join!

Looking forward to 2024, we will be upgrading the filtering and searchability of our blog posts and resources on FocalPlane, making it easier for our readers to access our incredible back-catalogue. We'll also be running 'FocalPlane features' webinars in 2024, starting with a webinar from Professor Samrat Mukhopadhyay on studying intrinsically disordered proteins and liquid-liquid phase separation with single-molecule FRET, which we are co-hosting with PicoQuant on 11 January. We also have a few further new initiatives planned for 2024, so watch this space! The easiest way to stay up to date with the latest news from FocalPlane is by getting our weekly digest or our quarterly newsletter delivered straight to your inbox. Simply register with the site and select the appropriate box. You can also find us on social media.

Finally, we would like to thank all our readers, subscribers, and most of all, our contributors in 2023. We'd also like to thank our Scientific Advisory Board (Lucy Collinson, Ricardo Henriques, Florian Jug, Christophe Leterrier, Jennifer Li, Jennifer Lippincott-Schwartz, Kota Miura and Jennifer Waters) for their continued

support. Look out for interviews with them in JCS over the coming year. Remember, FocalPlane is *your* site. Once registered, you are free to post, and if you have suggestions or feedback, you can

contact the team at focalplane@biologists.com. We hope that many of you are already regular readers of FocalPlane, but if not, we encourage you to visit the site and get involved!