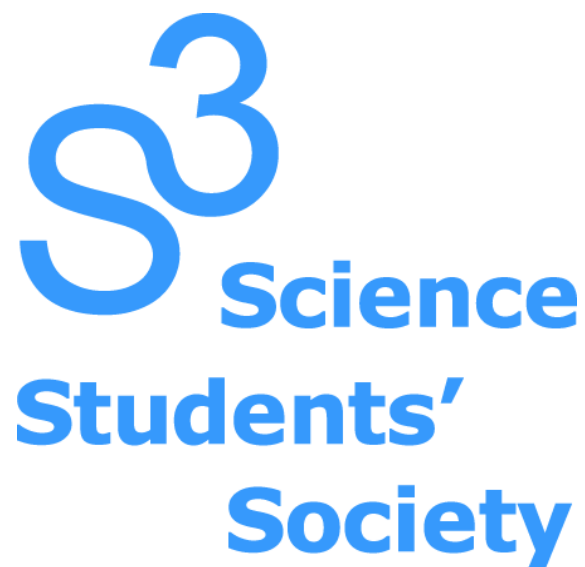


# THE S-CUBED ANNUAL REPORT 2011



*Strengthening  
your way  
forward...*

# Administration

---



## **PRESIDENT**

JONATHAN FALZON

done this year; work that is already familiar with most people as our activities have always been open for everyone to enjoy, with no gimmicks or hidden agendas.

I want to thank and dedicate this report to all those who support the work of this society, especially the students who regularly attend our activities throughout the year.

### **Leadership by example**

From the first day that I was elected as president in this term, I have showed that I am willing to guide this team through a journey of success. In the hectic November 2009, I showed the executive committee that I am willing to lead as president and all agreed unanimously. Throughout my leadership, I have strived to lead by example because I felt that it was the most effective way to show my aims and also because I already had experience to pass on to the newly elected representatives, most of which had no experience in any other student organisation.

### **Introduction**

For the past six years S<sup>3</sup> has been actively working for the benefit of all science students. Since the organisation's founding, work has always seemed to increase, this due to the good handover from one executive to another, allowing the organisation to continually improve year after year.

The past term has been a very positive one for our society and I can proudly say that it was one with more activities, new ideas and professional planning. Our goal has been to help students enjoy life on campus, help them in academic problems and organise social activities to increase the bond between the students. More than ever, S<sup>3</sup> this year has worked in linking together the students from different departments within our faculty: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths and Statistics. We feel that this is very important to achieve our goals and it is something that we shall continue to work for.

Transparency has always been an important attribute of our work and with pleasure we are presenting in this report of all the effort

Leading a team of intelligent, open minded, science students is challenging and there are always hard times which, ultimately, make you grow. However the executive committee had imminently showed that it was ready to work and the expectations were becoming a reality.

S<sup>3</sup> was already known as an active organisation mainly due to the hard work done during the terms before under the presidency of Karl Agius. We had a high reputation to keep up to, but within a few weeks, the executive committee had begun to over exceed the expectations of many. It was a great experience for me to keep on learning leadership skills through experience and to experience times of joy and satisfaction during and after all our events which were always very appreciated by those attending.

### **Chairing the committee meetings**

Chairing the committee meetings is not easy. Having been a president of the sixth form council at St. Aloysius' College had given me a small advantage because I already had a similar experience. However in a university organisation, the challenge is quite different and tougher. The responsibility is totally on the committee and as chairman I made sure that each meeting gave the requisite fruit. With such a workload, the executive committee couldn't waste its time in endless arguments and therefore I had to sometimes intervene to make sure that we keep moving in the right direction. In most cases, the discussions were done in a very cordial manner and I would like to personally apologize if I have ever hurt any executive member because of any comments said during any meeting.

### **Protecting the Society's assets**

Throughout the years, S<sup>3</sup> has invested some of its money in assets which aid in administrative work or help to reduce the students' expenses during our events. It was also my role as president to protect these assets by ensuring that they are kept in good condition. I have also proposed, with the committee's agreement, that these investments are continued as these facilitate the setting up of better events.

The two S<sup>3</sup> cabinets were equipped with new locks to increase security of sensitive data, expensive equipment and products bought in bulk for use during activities. The committee is also in possession of a kettle which is used to offer coffee breaks at our events. This year we have also commissioned the production of a large barbeque to cater for a large group of students. This is ideal for summer barbeques and for "On The Trail" – our unique outdoor treasure hunt adventure.

I have also liaised with the Chemistry Department to obtain an old metal cabinet, not needed by the department, to increase stationary storage.

### **The CONF report**

Any organisation which wanted to have an office in students' house, a notice board and take part in the "KSU Freshers' Week" had to produce a CONF (Classification board for Offices in Students' House, Notice boards in Students' House and Freshers' Week Stands) report in July 2010.

S<sup>3</sup> felt that it was indispensable for the organisation's optimal performance to compile this report and perform well in order to obtain an office, a notice board and a good stand during "Freshers' Week" to welcome the first year students. I have coordinated this report and every executive

member helped to produce a very good product which included all the work that S<sup>3</sup> has done from August 2009 to July 2010. We have managed to place the 10<sup>th</sup> organisation from all organisations on campus, which was a good result to obtain an office, a notice board and a main stand during Freshers' Week. I wish to point out that although I feel that the board responsible corrected all the reports in the best way possible, the distribution of points in the regulations were not fair enough in giving the credit deserved for the efforts and sacrifices required to produce high quality events, campaigns and other work throughout the year. I therefore suggest that the next executive committee should look well into the distribution of points in the CONF regulations before they are approved in the KPS meetings to come. I believe that the organisation should not only be judged by the amount of events it has created, but also by how effective and successful they have been and also by how much these were related to the organisation's aims and objectives.

## **Continuous contact with KSU**

Being a university organisation, S<sup>3</sup> needs to keep a good relationship with the University Students Council (KSU). KSU also represents the science students and direct contact is important especially when dealing with social policy, international opportunities and education.

This year, KSU offered an 'Organisations' Fund' to help student organisations financially. We applied for this fund to help us with the expenses to produce 'Biodiversity Week', a campaign that took place in December 2010. S<sup>3</sup> managed to obtain the maximum amount available, amounting to €150.

KSU is also important in some administrative aspects, such as the already mentioned office allocations. Other events directly linked with KSU were the participation in Freshers' Week, One World Week, Organisation Days and Environmental Week. We have also used the KSU common room on a number of occasions. I would like to thank Lucienne Caruana, the KSU secretary, for her great dedication and help throughout especially when booking the KSU common room.

I would also like to thank the two science students that were on the KSU executive for the past two years, Karl Agius and Roberta Rizzo, for their support throughout my term.

## **Collaboration with other organisations**

There is a very good number of student organisations on Campus, both faculty based, like the Science Students' Society, and non-faculty based, directed at a particular aim. S<sup>3</sup> has always understood the importance of collaboration with other organisations, especially to increase the unity amongst all university students. Collaboration was done in various events that will be mentioned later in this report and these do not only include various social events but also debates, clean ups and other campaigns.

Collaboration is not always easy because the running of organisations may differ hugely from one to another. I have to express my disappointment at organisations which show interest in helping out in an event but ultimately, not only do they not promote it with their members, but lack in their own executive's attendance. Having said this, we have always done our best to team up with organisations, even meeting at our own office, to ensure that the students we represent benefit directly from our collaborations.

## The revision of the statute

As president, I am the executive member responsible in seeing that the S<sup>3</sup> statute is observed. I have done this with great care since executive roles were not carried out because of our personal ideas, but to fulfil our duties, which are given in the aims and other sections of the statute itself. I have strived to ensure that the direction of S<sup>3</sup> was always in accordance with the statute, putting all science students at the central aim of the society.

Throughout the term, I have noticed that some areas in the statute needed revision, update or removal. It was hence my duty to ensure that I propose the necessary changes required to the AGM as I mostly found to be fit. I would like to thank Mark Farrugia for his support in this complicated procedure to revise the statute in detail and also for seconding my motion for the statute revision at this AGM.

## Talk at Junior College

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010, I was invited by the Junior College Students' Council (KSJC) to deliver a talk during their careers week. The aim of this talk was to introduce the students to what life at University is all about, the work done by our organisation and the courses offered at the Faculty of Science. The "In Touch" magazine was also distributed after this talk.

## Chemistry Symposium

The chemistry department asked S<sup>3</sup> to help with the promotion of the chemistry symposium. We felt that this event is of great benefit to our members and keeping a good relationship with a department within the Faculty of Science is indispensable. For this reason we promoted the symposium and we are happy to report that the chemistry symposium held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2010 was very well attended.

## IVF Campaign

The issue of IVF has been in the news for quite some time and as science students we felt that we should set up an informative campaign aimed at all university students. I had suggested collaborating with the Malta Medical Students' Association (MMSA), to help set up the campaign with us.

The main highlight of this campaign was 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 when we issued informative posters and bookmarks that were distributed around university. More information was also made available on both organisations' websites. S<sup>3</sup> is still following the IVF issue closely and more events for this campaign may be ideal in the future.

## Parking Report

From January to March 2011, S<sup>3</sup> carried out a major study on the situation of parking on campus with special reference to the areas near the Faculty of Science. Most of this study was carried out by John Gabarretta, Marie Claire Gatt and myself. The executive published a very detailed report in March 2011 and was presented to the pro-rector for student affairs Prof. Lauri, KSU President Carl Grech and the three main political organisations on campus: SDM, Pulse and *Moviment Liberali*. The report was also sent to every other student organisation on campus and is also available on our website.

While positive feedback was received for this report, little has been done so far by the responsible authorities to resolve this issue. We hope that a good review of the parking system is done as soon as possible.

## Science Gathering

This year S-cubed has embarked on a new project aimed at bringing students and lecturers closer together. This idea was brought up by a science student, Thomas Farrugia, who, together with John Gabarretta and myself, materialised the idea into a very successful and well-attended event. The event had the support of staff from the Biology, Chemistry and Physics departments and the Dean of the faculty of science Prof. Sammut. The faculty financially supported this event to ensure that students only needed to pay a minimal fee and lecturers attended for free. This event was held on 8th April 2011 and had the purpose of providing a different environment to that of the lecture room. During this event students were encouraged to talk to their lecturers in an informal manner over refreshments. This successful event saw the attendance of about 50 students and around 10 members of the University of Malta staff and is planned to be a yearly event in S<sup>3</sup> calendar.

## Major Challenges

Being an executive member in such an active organisation is not easy, especially when considering that all members of this executive were following a full time course in science subjects. Support from lecturers, staff and students have strengthened us in times of weakness and during difficult moments we have always teamed up together to help each other even more. Unfortunately we have to limit some of our work during the exam period although I assure you that some of the work also keeps going throughout the exams. We also understand that our members are very busy following their courses and we try to balance out the events so that we do not overload our members.

Unfortunately student apathy is a major challenge for all student organisations and S<sup>3</sup> is no exception. Some of the students take no interest whatsoever in any of the work done by our organisation and this has hurt us and has been a major factor to demotivate us from working. After all the voluntary work we do, our only expectation is that we receive appreciation from our members. This issue of student apathy has been widely discussed in our meetings and as one can note from the extensive work that we have done, we have tried to be as dynamic as possible as to reach the tastes of most students.

Being students ourselves, we understand that our members have a limited budget to spend in events. Our hard work was always focused in trying to combining quality events with the least possible expenses. We have also increased our income from sponsors to be able to subsidise and reduce the costs from events.

## Strengthening your way forward...

With great satisfaction, I can report that a bright future awaits S<sup>3</sup> if this society keeps moving in the same direction as the last couple of years. With new affiliations with MEUSAC (Malta – European Union Steering & Action Committee) and RSC (Royal Society of Chemistry), S<sup>3</sup> can exploit even more possibilities at European and international levels. Further collaborations with CNRS (The French National Centre for Scientific Research) which now has an office within our faculty and other

international organisations are encouraged to gain further opportunities in which science students can participate in.

S<sup>3</sup> publication “In Touch” has also grown in popularity and it is a very good tool which science students can use it to write about their ideas and show their work and interests to a wider audience. The set up of a new publications subcommittee was specifically done so that this publication can grow without hindering the other projects of S<sup>3</sup>.

I truly hope that I will keep seeing S<sup>3</sup> among the most active organisations on campus, always working hard for the benefit of science students and ensuring unity amongst them and providing them with wider opportunities that wouldn't have been possible without S<sup>3</sup>.



## VICE-PRESIDENT & EDUCATION OFFICER

JOHN GABARRETTA

forms of published material were produced, which include leaflets and *In Situ* magazine. The initiation of the *In Touch* series, however, brought about a plethora of improvements in both the presentation and contents of the organisation's main publication, and this has been getting better with every issue.

Last year, when *In Touch* issue 2 was published, with Jonathan Falzon being the editor, the magazine had already begun to show an increase in both quality and popularity. This year I continued to take care of magazine series as editor and S-Cubed released issue three during Freshers' Week in October 2010. This was aimed mostly at new science students on campus and included several introductory articles about University life and what to expect. The magazine was printed on recycled paper, a move towards being more environmentally-friendly as an organisation. The fourth issue was published in January 2011 and included a larger variety of informative articles encompassing news updates about situations on campus, student-life and also general knowledge.

A key development in the latest couple of issues of *In Touch* is the variety of content and their authors – issue 3 & 4 saw input from students and staff, as well as regular updates about what the Science Students' Society was organising. Digital copies of our magazines are always made available on our website: [www.scubed.info](http://www.scubed.info), allowing anyone who has access to the internet to view the

### Introduction

S-Cubed recognises the key importance of the academic aspects of each student following a Science course at University. It is for this reason that the executive decided to appoint an Education Officer to take care of such education-related matters. Throughout the year, the organisation has also invested a lot of resources into expanding its reach when it comes to science popularisation and also by making contact with international science organisations with similar aims.

### In Touch Magazine

One of the my main aims as Education officer has been to promote science and increase its prominence, both with the general student body both on Campus, and at earlier stages of education, as well as members of the general public.

*In Touch* is one of S-Cubed's unique initiatives aimed at promoting science, as well as the organisation and the work it does. The series has been released bi-annually for the past two academic years, but it is not the only publication S-Cubed has ever produced. Previously, several other

magazine. The fourth issue, which included a short article about the International Year of Chemistry and the Royal Society of Chemistry, was also uploaded on one of the RSC's pages allowing the magazine to reach even more individuals across the globe.

S-Cubed intends to continue the magazine series, improving it where necessary and also extending its audience and contributors. An updates section is envisaged which would give students an idea of the ongoing developments at the University of Malta. We also intend to increase the reputation and relevance of the magazine, such that individuals can relate more to the content, and realise to a greater extent how the publication is affiliated to the student organisation.

## **MCST Science & Technology Festivals**

S-Cubed has also continued its promotion of science by participating in the Science & Technology Festivals organised by the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) which were organised on Campus grounds. In both events S-Cubed set up a series of science demonstrations, mainly in physics and chemistry with the help of several science students, so as to promote science through visual media. The aim of the activities was mainly to portray science as being an interactive learning experience and emphasise its ubiquitous and essential presence in day-to-day life. Through the informal way in which the principles were explained to the hundreds of students who visited, S-Cubed managed to achieve the goal of the whole event – that Science is fun to learn and fun to do.

S-Cubed has taken up nearly every opportunity to participate in such science popularisation events and intends to continue doing so in the future. We aim to increase student participation in the organisation of any demonstrations as well as possibly involve the faculty of science to a greater extent in relaying the content to the masses.

## **NSTF Science Week**

On a similar note, S-Cubed also participated in the NSTF Science week which was organised at Villa Bighi in April. In this event, I gave a couple of talks about Science in general to groups of students from local Secondary Schools. The presentation gave a generic overview of the underlying principles of the scientific approach, and also a brief insight into what opportunities lie ahead for students who take up a science course. Again, the importance of such outreach initiatives cannot be undervalued – it is in the early stages along the academic path that students need to be informed about what opportunities are available. For this reason, S-Cubed will be more than willing to take part in such activities in the future, possibly taking an even more active role.

## **Site Visits**

S-Cubed also organised a number of site visits throughout the year. The visits to the Simar and Ghadira nature reserves were organised during Biodiversity week in December 2010, and offered students the opportunity to observe unique habitats and rare species of flora and fauna. The site visit to Malta Dairy Products, organised in March 2011 in conjunction with IAESTE Malta provided students with an insight into the applications of science at an industrial scale and also put the work being done in their coursework into perspective.

The clean-ups organised in conjunction with Greenhouse also contained an educational aspect and each site which was visited was given a brief overview to provide students attending the activities with information which is more relevant to their course of studies. Such visits are very important for

university students given that the next step for many will often be the workplace. Being given a better insight into what opportunities are available not only puts the material being studied more into perspective, but also begins to present potential options for employment.

## **RSC Maths Books**

One of S-Cubed's main aims as a student organisation is to promote and facilitate student education through several means. In an effort to keep in line with this central goal, S-Cubed took the initiative of providing sets of Maths books for students following BSc. courses in Biology and Chemistry. These books were provided at a discounted price through the RSC and were even made smart-card refundable.

## **Laboratory Gloves Provision**

Along these same lines, once the Chemistry Department introduced the requirement for students to bring their own gloves to laboratory sessions, S-Cubed took the initiative of providing students with such gloves at a highly discounted price from a local supplier: Orme Scientific Ltd. We envisage that this initiative will become more regular in the coming year in order to provide students with a more efficient, and financially-feasible option.

## **ChemSketch Tutorial**

Throughout the year, S-Cubed also provided a very basic online resource which helps students familiarise themselves with the main software used for Chemistry practical reports. We intend to upload more such resources to provide students with useful information which is easily accessible and relevant to their course of studies.

## **Affiliation with the Royal Society of Chemistry**

During the past year, S-Cubed has come into contact with several other organisations, both local and foreign. Probably one of the most notable of such contacts was made with the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC). This British-based organisation is one of the most renowned and prestigious Chemistry-related institutions which is recognised worldwide for its contributions to the field of science. For this reason, S-Cubed's affiliation with the RSC can be considered to be one of the most crucial contacts made along the way.

The affiliation allows undergraduate science students to become RSC members at a greatly reduced annual rate of £ 16 (which equates to roughly € 19.75). At this very affordable price, members, who are listed as undergraduate affiliate members, are not only entitled to a monthly copy of the main RSC publication *Chemistry World*, but also to numerous international benefits such as reduced prices on RSC textbooks and journals.

The S-Cubed magazine has always included two pages about the Royal Society of Chemistry and updates about what is going on in the organisation. The S-Cubed magazine has also been featured on one of the RSC's main pages about the IYC, reflecting the growing relationship between the two organisations. We intend to maintain the affiliation with the RSC and will also be exploring the possibilities for expanding relations with other similar international organisations concerned with other fields of science.

## **Looking Forward...**

In light of several of the initiatives S-Cubed has taken part in through this past year, it might be a good idea to engage in an expansion of the education activities it is involved in. What I propose is the initiation of a science education programme which would involve science students at university passing on their knowledge, both in terms of academics as well as acquired skills to other, younger students at earlier stages in their education, and also possibly to members of the general public. In so doing, S-Cubed will be achieving the aim of promoting unity among science students, while providing a healthy service to the community.

Furthermore, as mentioned previously, I believe that S-Cubed has the potential to take a more active role in contributing to the resources available for science students, which would not only be relevant to those at university but also possibly at earlier stages of their education. This could include information about available software for students, study skills, useful links and more.

In addition to this, I believe that although currently the health and safety standards promoted by the departments of the faculty of science are very high, many science students could benefit greatly by following a brief first aid course. I propose that in the coming year, such a possibility be explored and the options for providing science students with this opportunity be discussed.

Finally, as an extension of the affiliation with the RSC, I believe that it is essential to expand our horizons as an organisation and seek more contact with international science-related organisations, preferably in other fields of science. It would also be ideal to make more meaningful contacts with foreign universities so as to facilitate correspondence if trips to foreign countries would like to be planned again.



## Introduction

As a student society S-Cubed has always strived towards working hard to improve the life of the student - both on and off campus. With the number of students within the society on the increase S-Cubed felt that this year in particular there was a need for a number of subcommittees to be formed namely the UK 2011 subcommittee, the Cleanup subcommittee, and another one which organized the Science Gathering. Throughout the year the organization not only felt the need for these subcommittees but also added valuable members to the executive team to continue strengthening the core and the future.

## SECRETARY

JULIAN BONELLO

### Brief Summary of the Executive's Work for this Term

A total of 35 meetings took place during this term. In the first meeting the positions given out where:

Jonathan Falzon – President, he has kept this role till this day

Julian Bonello – Secretary, he has kept this role till this day

Mark Farrugia – P.R.O., he has also kept this role till this day

Graziella Orsini – Vice Secretary,

Melchior Cini – Treasurer

Nathan Adams - Activity Coordinator

The executive members have changed throughout this term, with 5 people resigning, namely Angeliqe Xerri who did not attend any meetings and later informed us that she changed course, Graziella Orsini attended the first meeting after which she did not attend any more, this is as she changed course. Melchior Cini served his term as treasurer up until Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February where he asked to stop due to work load of university. From this point on, Katrina Grech was appointed treasurer, John Gabarretta as Education Officer and Marie Claire Gatt as Social Policy Officer.

Nathan Adams and Chris Spiteri also resigned from the executive during Meeting 14, on the 11<sup>th</sup> May of 2010. Nathan was asked to hand in his resignation after he joined another student organization (Y4TE). In this situation the president of the Science Students' Society did not feel comfortable with the situation and hence asked for a vote on the matter. With the majority of votes going against Nathan Adams holding his post while still occupying the other post with Y4TE, Nathan was asked to resign and he did so. Regarding this resignation Chris Spiteri said that he felt that this was not fair on Nathan and as a result he too handed in his resignation.

In accordance with the statute the S-Cubed executive appointed another two members during Summer 2010 - Dawn Grech and Roderick Micallef. Roderick Micallef has taken the role of Activities coordinator as of meeting 16 on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2010 and Dawn Grech took on the role of Vice Treasurer and was appointed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October during meeting 17. In February 2011, John Gabarretta was also appointed Vice-President, while still keeping his role as Education Officer.

## **Subcommittees and their work**

### **UK 2011 sub-committee**

Members: Mark Farrugia, Julian Bonello, John Gabarretta, Katrina Grech

This sub-committee was made up of four executive members and it was set up at the end of the last scholastic year. In order to make sure that the trip to London would be a successful event, the necessary preparations had to be dealt with. This sub-committee did the ground work for London 2011. This sub-committee came up with a plan for the trip to the UK, they made the necessary contacts with colleges and museums, and also contacted a number of hotels to find the best deals.

### **Clean-Ups subcommittee**

Members: Marie Claire Gatt, John Gabarretta, Joseph Caruana (Greenhouse)

The members of the executive for this term felt that it was part of their duty to develop an inner responsibility for the environment within the students. It was for this reason that this year S-Cubed also created a sub-committee which has given its best towards organizing some top notch clean ups in Malta. Till now this sub-committee, along with Joseph Caruana from Greenhouse, have worked on two clean ups, one in Ahrax and another one at Tal-Ballut. In both of these cleanups a considerable amount of work was done and a good amount of garbage was collected. This sub-committee is still in action and is still working on cleanups to come.

### **Science Gathering**

Members: Jonathan Falzon, John Gabarretta and Thomas Farrugia

Another event which took place for the first time this year was that of the science gathering. To make sure that this event will be a success another sub-committee was organized. This sub-committee was made up of two S-Cubed executive members along with another science student. This sub-committee took the organization and logistics of the science gathering into its hands and made sure everything was well prepared for the day.

## **S-Cubed Parties**

Throughout the term the S-Cubed executive has also held several entertainment and social activities for the students who form part of its faculty.

### **Christmas Party**

During the two Christmas seasons in which S-Cubed was in office, two parties have been organised - both had the name of Angels go Wild. The first party took place inside QUBE vodka bar. This had a very good attendance and after this party's success the following year it was decided that something on the same lines of Angels go Wild will take place. In the second year the party was organized at Spin Club. The second party was also well attended and there was a good atmosphere that was present throughout both parties.

### **UESA Open Bar**

Another big event which S-Cubed supported was the party organized by UESA. The party was organised at Tigulio. This party had a high attendance and was also backed by a number of other student organizations.

On another note it was encouraging to see an increase in the amount of people from the department of Physics that were present in all the events that were organized by the science students' society.

### **Looking Forward...**

In light of the S-Cubed slogan this year which is "Strengthening your way forward" the executive hopes that the members of the next executive board will also be doing the same. In view of the increase in work that exists for the executive it was also planned that as from next year S-Cubed will have another 2 sub-committees. These subcommittees being: the publications subcommittee and also the social activities subcommittee.

# Finances

---



## TREASURER

KATRINA GRECH



## VICE-TREASURER

DAWN GRECH

Being a non-profit organisation S-Cubed relies greatly on the sponsorship of different corporate sponsors. Funds received from sponsors allow the organisation to reduce the price and also increase the quality of certain events. This, therefore decrease the financial burden on student and allows for a better turn out during events.

The majority of the funds received by sponsors greatly helped in increasing the standard and quality of the In Touch magazine. These funds allowed S-Cubed to publish two issues per year during the past two years.

In my opinion, the role of treasurer is essential in maintaining stability and independence within any student organisation. By keeping a record of all payments and items bought one can clearly see where the organisations' money is being spent while ensuring transparency. This thus allows for the rest of the executive to plan upcoming events in light of any profits or losses made in previous events.

Before the event was organised a reasonable budget was set up. This budget thus allowed the lowest possible prices for students, while still keeping a high standard in all S-cubed events. Preventing unnecessary losses would thus allow the money to be used for other events needing higher budgets, such as On the Trail.

Extra funds were used for a variety of site visits open to all students in the Faculty of Science. Such site visits included the Argotti Botanical Garden in the scholastic year 2009/2010, while visiting the Ghadira and Simar Nature reserve and the Benna Malta Dairy Products this year. Funds allowed the hiring of transport together with donations to the respective sites

Without the support of students, S-Cubed cannot organize these successful events and hence we encourage students to attend such activities. Students contribute to the bettering of events not only if they attend but also if they contribute some of their time to help S-cubed. Events organised by S-cubed are affordable to students because S-cubed has always organised events through voluntary work given by the S-cubed executive itself as well as student helpers. With this said S-cubed would like to encourage students to help out and take part in activities as well as thank those students who are loyal towards the organisation year after year.

# Public Relations



## PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

MARK FARRUGIA

'Public Relations' is a vast responsibility which does not simply include promotion of events. Being the PRO of a society means that one is responsible for how this society is portrayed to the rest of the people and also responsible for informing these people about what the society is doing and how it can help. The PRO is the bridge between the society and the rest of the people.

Throughout these two years I have been PRO of the Science Students' Society, my work involved the continuous sharing of information about the society's events and opportunities which were available to the rest of Science students and also non-Science students alike. The internet is a very useful tool to reach out to many people at once.

Together with the rest of the executive, the website of the society was improved and was constantly kept up to date with any promotional posters of events, application forms and also views issued by the Science Students' Society on certain issues which arose during the year, like for example S<sup>3</sup>'s view on censorship. Any person who wished

to get to know what S<sup>3</sup> was doing at the moment could do so by logging in to our website. On behalf of the entire S-Cubed executive, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Simon Cutajar for constantly helping us in keeping the website updated.

For a more continuous and effective manner to reach out to people, the social networking website *Facebook* was used. Apart from keeping the Society's page updated, any upcoming event was made online and also messages through *Facebook* were sent reminding everyone about S<sup>3</sup>'s events and opportunities. Apart from *Facebook*, mail-shots were also used to send material relevant to specific students.

Apart from keeping people updated with what is happening, another responsibility of a PRO is to issue Press Releases to inform the general public with what the Science Students' Society is really about and what it has been doing. Prior to and after every main event, a press release issued to all main media agencies of the country was sent in order to try and reach the general public as much as possible.

The work of a PRO does not only lie within what he or she writes or transmits to other people, but ultimately becomes a way of life. The best way to tell someone about your organisation is to actually tell it to him yourself and to show it first-hand. In these past two years I have learnt that in order to fulfil my duties as a better PRO, apart from doing all the things I already mentioned, I needed to transmit whatever I had to say in a personal manner to the people involved, and to be present with them on campus and elsewhere. Through personal communication and involvement one can truly reach out to other people and organisations.

Apart from the everyday responsibilities of a PRO I also had other duties as part of an executive team which worked hard throughout this past term to give students good quality events and opportunities. Some of these events have already been mentioned and others will be talked upon in more detail by other members of this executive, however I shall emphasize on those in which I had a more hands-on approach in their organisation.

## **Organisation Days**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2009, as part of Organisations' Week (which was held on campus from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of November), the Science Students' Society together with MKSU (Moviment Kattoliku Studenti Universitarji) and inTV (InSite's online TV channel) teamed up to uphold a debate named "Truth or Dare? Science and/or Faith?", which concerned the conflicts which usually arise between science and faith. This debate was a huge success and was also mentioned later in local newspapers.

Also as part of this same Organisations' Week, on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of November, members of the Science Students' Society performed some wacky and fun experiments directly at the heart of the University quadrangle. These experiments were quite amusing to watch, and you needn't have any scientific background to enjoy the show. They were made as a way to portray science as fun and enjoyable to all students on campus.

During this year's Organisations' Days, held between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2011, the Science Students' Society had a stand manned throughout on campus to inform students about what it was doing and also promote some of its events. Moreover, as part of Organisations' Days, the Science Students' Society (S-Cubed), together with ASA and Insite, organised a debate entitled 'Science vs. Art: Two Cultures or Two Perspectives?' Whether or not these fields should be separated, whether there are actual differences in the way people studying these fields think and the differences in the contributions of both fields to society were some of the topics debated.

## **UK2011**

The Science Students' Society once again planned an international site-visit to the United Kingdom for Science Students. This trip was held during the Easter recess from Tuesday 26th April till Saturday 30th April 2011.

Plans for the organisation of this event started early on in summer 2010, where the S<sup>3</sup> executive agreed that another site-visit to the United Kingdom was to be planned. It was also decided that a sub-committee of at least three members was to be set up to be in charge of the planning of this event. One must not forget that S<sup>3</sup> has many other activities to take care of and this work cannot stop due to a single event.

The Sub-Committee started meeting soon afterwards to discuss the logistics of such visit. After looking at all possible dates and comparing them both to the academic timetable and also the S<sup>3</sup> timetable of events, the sub-committee decided that the best dates for such a trip would actually be between Tuesday the 26th of April and Saturday the 30th of April 2011, as this would be during the Easter Recess, and therefore students would not miss any lectures. Moreover, it was not very near any examinations, and so any sudden workload of studying and work which might arise due to this visit would be avoided.

The reason the visit was spread through five days was that the sub-committee planned that instead of just visiting one British City, the trip would be distributed between London, Oxford and Cambridge. The main attraction of this visit would still remain the British capital, with its many famous museums and universities. However, visits to other renowned universities will serve to give a broader picture to students about the different methods and perspectives offered by such universities.

The S<sup>3</sup> sub-Committee responsible for this visit, with the help of the rest of the S<sup>3</sup> executive, was responsible for taking care of travel needed during this trip, both international (Malta to London and back) and also within London itself and between the different cities. It was also responsible for the accommodation during this visit and for the co-ordination of the planned events.

From the response received so far, we have no doubt that this trip was an experience which, as expected broadened the scientific knowledge of all participants, as well as being a memorable experience to all.

# Activities



## ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

RODERICK MICALLEF

welcome to our freshers. We also provided them with all the required material in what we call the *Freshers' pack*, in order to facilitate their acclimatisation at University. Such pack included data with the relevant required definitions of the lecture rooms around university, the organisation's details and contact numbers, and also some freebies.

Together with the pack, the freshers were also supplied with the organisation's publication: *In Touch* (issue 3) and the application form for the 6<sup>th</sup> *Annual Science Seminar*, being the first social event for the academic year. This was important so as to give an opportunity to the students to get to know each other more easily since it essential for them to meet other students with whom they have to relate during their stay at university.

During the whole week Scubed held a stand at the University Quadrangle where students were welcome to supply their details to the Science Students' Society in order to keep our database updated and hence update them with what we are doing. This was also an opportunity for them to ask for details regarding their course. The executive members of Scubed made sure to be present on the stand for most of the time and to be able to help students with their queries.

## Introduction

S-cubed, being a Faculty based student organisation, has to cater for the students by including various social activities that aid the students to get to know each other better. The main events organised by the Society are very time consuming in order to organise and they require input from all the executive board of S-cubed and sometimes even require helpers from outside the organisation. These also require large amount of resources and the organisation does its best in order to keep these events as minimally priced as possible and are usually smart card refundable for the students attending. Scubed also makes sure to organise them in adequate dates so that most students are able to attend. The main events organised by Scubed are discussed in further detail below.

## Freshers' Week

This is a key event for Scubed, since it is the first on our calendar of events. Scubed keeps in mind that it is important to give a warm

## Freshed-Up

This is the event that marked the end of the Freshers week. Freshed up was a free party organised at Stich Club on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2010 by various organisations, including Scubed. At this event, students, and especially freshers, were able to socialise in a non-academic environment.

## The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Science Seminar

This was the first seminar for the 2010-2011 academic year organised by Scubed. This year it was held between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2010 at the Baystreet Hotel, and had over 90 students attending. This half-board seminar was priced at 70€ and was smart card refundable. Coffee breaks and refreshments were available all throughout the event.

The seminar had a packed program with activities, talks and social events, which gave room for the participants to learn and get to know each other. The talks were very informative and the participants showed a great response. These talks were: *Welcome Keynote Presentation* by Mr. Jonathan Falzon (S-Cubed President), *Time Management* by Dr. Rose Anne Cuschieri, *The Maltese Biodiversity: Ways and means of protection* by Dr. Sandro Lanfranco, *Astrobiology: From Universe as we know it to the possibility of life on other planets* by Mr. Victor Farrugia (Astronomical Society of Malta) and *Studying abroad* by Dr. Emmanuel Sinagra.

The Friday night activity was characterized by a *Karaoke* session followed by a live performance from the band *Funk Initiative* with afterhours at Poison Ivy and Sugarshake. The climax of this seminar was reached with the Saturday's night themed party: *The Sweet Factory*, with afterhours at Qube: The Vodka bar. The fun activities that were organized aided the participants in getting to know each other whilst providing a relaxed atmosphere. All the participants were finally awarded a certificate of participation.

## On the Trail

This is a yearly event, organised by S-Cubed, open to all students with its main objective being that of increasing the environmental awareness through interactive and innovative ways. In fact this year it marked the end of the Biodiversity week, a campaign organised by the same Society. Held on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> and Monday 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2011 at the Scouts Zurrieq Camping Site for 15€ (Smart Card Refundable), a total of 63 students attended the event.

This event involved the fun of camping for a night in a rural area and the learning students derived by appreciating the biodiversity present in their surrounding environment. On the Trail included:

- Tent Pitching
- Educational activities
- Dinner (BBQ)
- Social Activities
- Jamming around the bonfire
- Overnight camping
- Breakfast
- A 4-hour Educational treasure hunt (related to the theme of biodiversity)

Zurrieq scout centre was chosen since it provided all the necessary resources including the camping area, open area for the activities, rest rooms and shelter in case of bad weather. Also the areas of

Zurrieq were ideal for the treasure hunt since there were checkpoints of ecological importance. Scubed also supplied the attendants with all the beverages, food and even a packed lunch for the treasure hunt.

## Scientastic

This seminar was the second one held in this academic year and it was held between Friday the 25<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2011. Taking place at the Qawra Palace Hotel in Qawra the cost was of 70€ and Scubed offered the Seminar at 65€ for those students that booked prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011. The seminar was on half-board basis and coffee breaks and refreshments were made available all throughout the event.

In order to cater for the hidden talents amongst the science students a Poster Competition was also set up and the one that won the competition by having the most likes on the event page on *Facebook* was granted free attendance for this event.

Having the attendance of around 30 students the seminar had a packed program. As for the first seminar the program involved talks delivered by professionals in the fields, social activities and a social event. The talks included: *Introductory talk* by Mr. Jonathan Falzon (Scubed President), *MCST talk regarding their work and projects* by Chairman Hon. D. Pullicino Orlando and Vice-Chairman & CEO Dr. Sammut, *Stress Management* by Dr. Rose Anne Cuschieri and *Genetic Algorithms* by Dr. John Abela.

For the first time we introduced the idea of *Workshops* were the main idea was to split students into groups were they were given a discussion theme. A discussion was held and members of the executive conducted it. A representative of the group was also chosen in order to deliver the main outcomes of the discussion to all the attendants of the seminar. This was done in order to promote the discussion, objectivity and presentation skills of the students.

*Ghetto* was the climax of the event and this theme party was held on Friday night, at the Qawra Palace Hotel Club. Some social activities were organised and Saturday night was left free for the students to plan.

## ETC Youth Days

Between Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October, ETC, with the help of the European Social fund, organised this event open for all youths in order for them to get aware of what are the possibilities around them. S-Cubed took part in this event by hosting a stand in the area dedicated to the voluntary organisations and by setting up some interactive experiments in the Workshop area.

# Social Policy



## **SOCIAL POLICY OFFICER**

MARIE CLAIRE GATT

### **Introduction**

The KPS (*Kummissjoni Politika Soċjali* - Social Policy Commission) is the body in which all student organisations on campus are brought together to discuss and develop social policies on University-related, national and international issues. This structure allows for a broader participation as a University since policies agreed upon by student organisations representing the student body as the KPS must be implemented by the KSU executive.

S-cubed, being a senate recognised organisation, is active in KPS through regular KPS meetings attended by myself within my role as Social Policy Officer. Apart from representing the views of an organisation, I stand to represent all S-cubed members, that is, students of the Faculty of Science. During my role as Social Policy Officer the subjects discussed during KPS meetings included the issue of censorship, sexual health awareness, pension consultation, reaction to the happenings in Belarus and divorce.

### **Environmental Fairs 2010 and 2011**

The environment and its conservation is an area in science which is currently being given high priority. This has been reflected in our participation in the KSU Environmental Fairs organised by the Social Policy Commission.

Last year we took part in a joint effort between several organisations to clean up Wied Ghollieqa, which runs close to our University, and in a tree-plantation project during which S-cubed donated and planted five trees. We also organised a site visit to the Argotti Botanical Gardens, which proved to be useful for our studies.

This year we also participated in the tree-plantation project in Wied Ghollieqa. Additionally, we invited Birdlife Malta to man a stand on quadrangle and held the second of our series of clean-ups, which will be described shortly.

## **One World Week**

Between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2010, KSU's International Office invited student organisations to participate in an intercultural activity titled One World Week. Being science students, we took the event into our perspective and produced a presentation titled '*6.3 billion people living in one world – can science really save it?*' This tackled modern day technologies that are being proposed to 'save the world' by reversing climate change or aiding in uplifting problems faced in third world countries. This presentation was also displayed during the Science and Technology Fest Festival organised by the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST). The activity was visited by the Parliamentary Secretary of Youth and Sport, Clyde Puli, who took interest in our stand.

## **Biodiversity Week – A Local Perspective**

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2010, S-cubed held a campaign titled Biodiversity Week –A Local Perspective in order to convey an atmosphere of casual education for both the organisation's members and non-members while providing better scientific understanding to non-biology students on campus regarding the Islands' species richness. Activities included talks on Urban Biodiversity and the Habitats and Birds Directives, site visits to nature reserves and a nature trail and the presence of NGOs Birdlife Malta and Nature Trust to promote their role in society with University students. The campaign ended with S-cubed's yearly outdoor event, On the Trail.

## **Science Cafe'**

In March the University of Malta opened its gates during an Open Week. In an attempt to promote scientific dialogue and informal learning, S-cubed organised a Science Cafe' for visitors of the University to converse about a particular science-related subject. This educational activity was aimed at delivering basic knowledge of scientific topics and clearing any misconceptions while discussing informally over refreshments and providing food for thought.

## **S-cubed & Greenhouse Clean-Ups**

This year, S-cubed embarked on a project together to organise a series of clean-ups. Environmental organisations on campus were invited to join S-cubed in a sub-committee responsible for the clean-ups and Greenhouse accepted our offer.

The scope of these events was to promote greater awareness towards the safeguarding of the natural environment and the ecology of areas around Malta and to engage with University students on a hands-on basis, in an effort to promote active citizenship. It can be argued that some students do not feel responsible for the state of the environment they live in, and this mentality can have a negative effect on our society. Therefore activities such as the clean-ups that we are organising are trying to present a way by which youths can have an active role in society.

Both locations chosen were sites of ecological importance and Natura2000 sites characterised by unique surroundings which could be threatened by negligent waste disposal. The first took place in the salt marsh of tal-Ballut at Delimara as the start of a rehabilitation project of the area and the second at l-Ahrax tal-Mellieha and Irdum tal-Madonna, together with Birdlife Malta, as part of a rat eradication project for the conservation of the Yelkouan Shearwater which breeds there. Both activities were very well attended and had effective results.



## S-Cubed Executive Team 2010-2011

Left to Right: Dawn Grech; Julian Bonello; Jonathan Falzon; John Gabarretta; Katrina Grech; Marie Claire Gatt; Mark Farrugia; Roderick Micallef

