

UNESCO Chemistry for Life Division in Paris has awarded 13 Associated Centres for research in chemical science and education. One of these is the UNESCO Associated Centre for Macromolecules & Materials which is part of the Chemistry Department of the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

As part of its activities, UNESCO encourages and sponsors UNESCO Schools and scientific conferences in collaboration with scientific associations such as the International Union for Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). The UNESCO School and Conference on Macromolecules & Materials Science is held annually in Stellenbosch, South Africa (website: <http://www.sun.ac.za/unesco>). World authorities in various fields of macromolecular science are invited to give tutorials at the UNESCO School and informative

plenary lectures at the conference. The exposure to new ideas and advanced concepts in macromolecular science is of great importance for South African students and senior staff alike coming from different universities and research institutions. It is particularly valuable that with the support of UNESCO generous concessions can be made for attendees from disadvantaged communities and from countries with emerging technologies.

The 9th UNESCO/IUPAC Conference focused on Macromolecules: Polymers for Advanced Applications. There was an emphasis on polymers for biomedical applications. Abridged versions of a number of papers are compiled to create the present volume of *Macromolecular Symposia*.

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