

Students from Plovdiv University visited CPSBB



On June 2, 2021, more than a hundred and twenty undergraduates from the Faculty of Biology from the Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” visited the Center of Plant Systems Biology and Biotechnology (CPSBB) under a Memorandum of understanding between the Center and the Plovdiv University. As a Center of Excellence, CPSBB emphasizes on promoting science among young people and strives to educate the next generation of researchers.

The Director of CPSBB - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsanko Gechev welcomed the students and delivered an overview presentation dedicated to the main objectives of the PlantaSYST project and the establishment of CPSBB. He gave a detailed review of the scientific departments of the Center, their function, structure, goals and main tasks. He stated that keeping the good scientists in Bulgaria via providing a competitive salary and good working environment is of great importance for the Center. Among the main goals of CPSBB is to be a bridge between science and business.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsanko Gechev delivered a lecture on molecular priming, RNA sequencing and “resurrection plants” with a focus on *Haberlea rhodopensis*. He gave a practical demonstration of plants electrolytic conductivity and presented the basics of working with PCR equipment. The Director of CPSBB answered many questions raised by the students and delivered a short presentation dedicated to the new CPSBB scientific campus and its socio-economic impact on Plovdiv and the region. Many undergraduates were interested in the new scientific projects and career development opportunities that CPSBB provides as a European hub of innovation and science.

The presentation was followed by a tour of CPSBB’s plant growing facilities and laboratories. Dr. Nikola Staykov from Molecular Stress Physiology Department demonstrated the laboratory equipment and answered questions raised by the students. He presented basic features of the

plant growing chambers of the Center and molecular biology equipment RT-qPCR, gel-visualization system and Laminar flow clean bench. The visit was followed by a brief tour of the experimental fields, located next to the Center, where a variety of pepper and tomato accessions with unique qualities are grown to study their phenotype and genotype under the PlantaSYST project.