



# Centre for Origin and Prevalence of Life

## Newsletter # 4

March 2024

Dear all,

The highlights of this newsletter are certainly the announcement of the 2024 Cohort of the NOMIS-ETH Fellows and the progress on the 'Origin and Prevalence of Life' related extension of the BSc Interdisciplinary Sciences. We are also opening calls for application to various Programmes.

If you have any feedback on this issue or any input for the next issue, please contact us via email to [copl.management@sympa.ethz.ch](mailto:copl.management@sympa.ethz.ch).

Best wishes,  
The COPL Managing Office - Corinna Marchand and Mathias Beck

## Membership updates

### NOMIS-ETH Fellowships

We are very pleased to announce the 2024 Cohort of the NOMIS-ETH Fellows.

Between July and September three postdoctoral fellows will join the COPL thanks to the generous support that the COPL receives from the NOMIS Foundation:



**Dr. David Schnettler**

David will be hosted by Prof. Sven Panke at D-BSSE

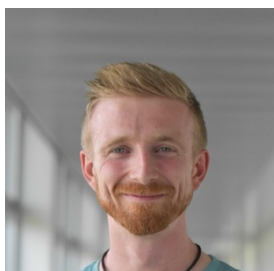
[More details on David](#)



Dr. Sean Jordan

Sean will be hosted by Prof. Sascha Quanz at D-PHYS

[More details on Sean](#)



Dr. Taylor Priest

Taylor will be hosted by Prof. Shinichi Sunagawa at D-BIOL

[More details on Taylor](#)

A special event to welcome the incoming fellows is planned to follow the COPL General Assembly on **03 October 2024 at 16:00 CEST**. Please save the date.

A very warm welcome to David, Sean and Taylor.

### **New COPL affiliated group leaders**

A warm welcome to the new members of the COPL community.



Prof. Ruth Signorell

Full Professor of Physical Chemistry  
ETH Zurich | D-CHAB

[Personal web page](#)



Prof. Marco Mazzotti

Full Professor at the Department of Mechanical and Process  
Engineering  
ETH Zurich | D-MAVT

[Personal web page](#)

### **Exiting Members**

Thank you for having been with us.

Prof. Domenico Giardini - Full Professor at the Department of Earth Sciences

Prof. Motohiko Murakami - Head of Institute of Geochemistry and Petrology

# Teaching

An 'Origin and Prevalence of Life' related extension of the existing Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Sciences is currently being prepared. We hope to be able to start the offering for the Autumn Semester 2024. Students interested to engage in studies related to the 'Origin and Prevalence of Life' may do so by enrolling to the 'BSc Interdisciplinary Science' offered by the Department of Chemistry and Applied Biosciences, D-CHAB.

After the formal decision around mid-April 2024, the full details of the extension of the existing so-called BSc N will soon be available on the [corresponding web-page](#).

# Opportunities

## Research Projects

As for 2023, we are offering support for Research Projects. Applications may be submitted until **Friday 24 May 2024** via the COPL website:

<https://copl.ethz.ch/opportunities/research-projects.html#apply>

Formally, the call will open on 26 April 2024. The [Application Form](#) and [Terms of Reference](#) are already available for information.

A total amount of CHF 450'000 is available for projects of a duration up to 2 years and a maximum funding requirement of CHF 150'000. Successful projects must start between 01 September and 31 December 2024.

## Networking Support

Applications to the new Programme for Networking Support are now open.

More details are available on the COPL website:

<https://copl.ethz.ch/opportunities/networking-support.html#apply>

Networking Support is a flexible resource open to all members aimed at supporting networking activities like conferences, colloquia, seminars, workshops, and the like. Networking Support opportunities are available through a permanent call. Networking Support applications are selected by the COPL Directorate once per month.

## Short-term Visitors

Applications for visits during the autumn semester 2024 can be submitted until 31 May 2024 via the COPL website:

<https://copl.ethz.ch/opportunities/short-term-visitors.html#apply>

Compared to the first call, small changes are applicable to the max. funding:

- Support to travel cost is limited to a max. amount of CHF 500.
- Support for accommodation and daily allowance is limited to max. 10 days at a combined limit of CHF 250 per day.

- All expenses need to be justified by invoices. Only the expenses for the visitor can be refunded. The cost for persons accompanying the visitor cannot be refunded.

## Upcoming events

### Short-term Visitors

Visitor: [Yoshinori Takano](#), Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology

Dates: 24 to 30 Mar. 2024

Host: [Tim Eglinton](#), [Thomas Blattmann](#)

Visitor: [Anjali Piette](#), Carnegie Institute for Science, Washington DC

Dates: 06 to 10 May 2024

Host: [Caroline Dorn](#)

### Conferences

2024 Origins Federation Conference – 10 to 13 September 2024

We are pleased to announce that registration is now open for the 2024 Origins Federation Conference in Cambridge UK, 10-13 September 2024. The registration deadline to complete the online form <https://forms.office.com/e/3h4vMgjf9E> is **12pm, 3 May 2024**. Because the registration form collects information required for organising accommodation, travel, and social events, we kindly ask that you complete the form as soon as possible, even if plans to attend are not definite at this stage.

Please note that all delegates may submit titles for poster presentations through the registration form. Selected speakers from across the Origins Federation (and beyond) will shortly be invited to deliver oral presentations. The Scientific Organising Committee will finalise the details of the scientific and social programme over the next few weeks, which will be posted on the Origins Federation Conference website [Origins Federation Conference 2024 | Leverhulme Centre for Life in the Universe \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

For any questions or problems accessing the registration form, please email [admin@lclu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@lclu.cam.ac.uk)

Looking forward to seeing you in September!

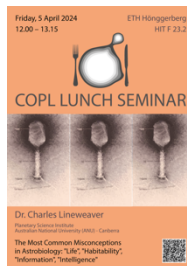
Nick Tosca  
(on behalf of the Scientific Organising Committee)

***Students and early career researchers are especially encouraged to participate in the conference. We are grateful if you spread the word in your research groups.***

***As for last year's OF conference financial support will be available for travel and accommodation.***

## Seminars

See also <https://copl.ethz.ch/seminars.html>



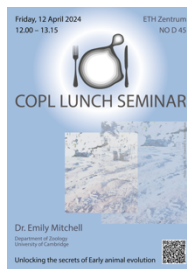
Speaker: [Charles Lineweaver, Planetary Science Institute, Australian National University](#)  
Title: The Most Common Misconceptions in Astrobiology: "Life", "Habitability", "Information", "Intelligence"

Date: **05 Apr. 2024**, 12:30 to 13:30 – light lunch from 12:00 to 12:30  
Location: HIT F 23.2

Speaker: [Robert Law, Department of Earth Science, University of Bergen, Norway](#)

Title: Terrestrial glaciological considerations on icy planet chemical exchange

Date: **09 Apr. 2024**, 15:00 to 16:00  
Location: HIT F 23.2



Speaker: [Emily Mitchell, Department of Zoology, University of Cambridge](#)

Title: Unlocking the secrets of early animal evolution

Date: **12 Apr. 2024**, 12:30 to 13:30 – light lunch from 12:00 to 12:30  
Location: NO D 45



Speaker: [Judit Szulágyi, ETH Zurich, D-PHYS, Institute for Particle Physics and Astrophysics](#)

Title: Where will we find habitable worlds?

Date: **19 Apr. 2024**, 10:00 to 11:00  
Location: HIT G 41.2

Speaker: [Johanna Marin Carbonne, Institute of Earth Sciences, University of Lausanne](#)

Title: TBA

Date: **26 Apr. 2024**, 12:30 to 13:30 – light lunch from 12:00 to 12:30

Location: HIT F 23.2

Speaker: [Nobel Laureat Jack Szostak, Department of Chemistry, University of Chicago](#)

Title: How might RNA Replication have emerged on the Early Earth?

Date: **03 May 2024**, TBD

Location: TBD

Speaker: [Anjali Piette, Carnegie Institute for Science, Washington DC](#)

Title: TBA

Date: **07 May 2024**, 12:30 to 13:30 – light lunch from 12:00 to 12:30

Location: HIT F 23.2

Speaker: [Alan Pacheco, ETH Zurich, D-BIOL, Institute of Microbiology](#)

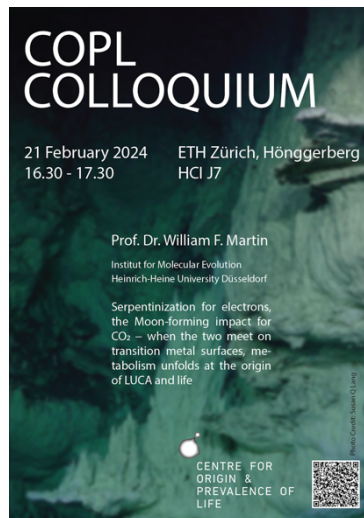
Title: The taming of the  $\mu$ : model-guided approaches for mapping and designing microbial ecosystems

Date: **17 May 2024**, 12:30 to 13:30 – light lunch from 12:00 to 12:30

Location: HIT F 23.2

## Past Activities

### First COPL Colloquium



On 21 February 2024 we had the pleasure to welcome [Prof. William F. Martin](#) from the University of Düsseldorf in Germany. Prof. Martin gave a very captivating presentation with the title 'Serpentinization for electrons, the Moon-forming impact for CO<sub>2</sub> - when the two meet on transition metal surfaces, metabolism unfolds at the origin of LUCA and life'. We were very pleased that more than 70 persons attended the presentation. Many stayed around to further exchange with the speaker during the apéro. The event was recorded and is published on the [ETH video portal](#) and is also accessible via the [COPL website](#).