European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform

OCP

Supported by UM6P University Mohammed VI Polytechnic



ESPC 6 Pre Conference: Young Phosphorus Day

Program and Participation Guide



Venue: Room Nairobi, Green center, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P)

Held ahead of the 6th European Sustainable Phosphorus Conference, Young Phosphorus Day brings together doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and early-career researchers to share their work, learn from senior experts and build research connections across disciplines and regions.

The day focuses on innovation, nutrient efficiency and sustainable phosphorus value chains. Participants will explore how research can respond to different soil conditions, strengthen agricultural productivity and food security, and advance practical circular solutions.

Best posters and phosphorus pitches will be rewarded by ESPP. Details for the selection and prizes are detailed below. The awarded work will be also presented in the SCOPE Newsletter conference summary (> 110 000 circulation worldwide).

Programme at a glance

09:30 – 09:45	Welcome address by UM6P and the organizers
09:45 – 10:30	**"Pitch your Phosphorus"**
10:30 – 11:00	**Coffee Break & Poster Marketplace**
11:00 – 11:30	**Phosphorus Memes :** Anonymous meme presentation
11:30 – 12:45	**Panel discussion with experts: "Increasing the impact of phosphorus research"** - Bruno Gérard, Dean, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P), Morocco. - Gerd Dercon**,** Head of Soil and Water Management and Crop Nutrition Laboratory, Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture, Austria. - Aniss Bouraqqadi, Head of Agronomy, OCP Nutricrops - Prof. Paulo Sérgio Pavinato, Associate Professor, Department of Soil Science, Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture (ESALQ), University of São Paulo, Brazil. - Malika M. Mezeli – Honorary Researcher, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, United Kingdom.
12:45 -14:00	**Lunch**
14:00 – 15:30	**"Phosphorus without borders": Thematic working groups** Emphasis on Africa–Europe perspectives and resource-constrained contexts
15:30 – 16:00	**Coffee break**
16:00 – 16:45	**Panel discussion: "Sustainable Phosphorus Perspectives: Bioeconomy, Circularity and Sustainable Value Chains"** - Henrique Rasera Raniro, Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences, University of Copenhagen, Denmark; EU Bioeconomy Youth Ambassador. - Olivier Horner, Head of Research, UM6P Global Hubs, France. - Zineb JABRI, Head of Strategic Regulatory Affairs, OCP Group
16:45 – 17:00	**Closing Remarks** – by Joann Karen Whalen, Professor of Soil Ecology, UM6P; James McGill Professor, Department of Natural Resource Sciences, McGill University.
17:30	**Networking & Cocktail Dinner** (exclusively for participants of the Young Phosphorus's Day)

Pitch your Phosphorus

Explain your research or an innovative solution to a phosphorus challenge in 180 seconds. Your pitch should help a diversified audience understand the problematic you are addressing, what is new in your approach and why the work matters.

Who can apply

Doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and early-career researchers working on phosphorus are invited to apply. Contributions from chemistry, agronomy, engineering, environmental science, economics and policy are welcome, including work that connects disciplines.

How to submit

Submit an abstract of no more than 200 words on the received online form. Include your name, institution, research stage and pitch title. The submission form will be provided with the call for pitches email.

Your abstract should describe the phosphorus challenge, your research question or proposed solution, the approach and available evidence, and the expected contribution. Clearly distinguish completed results from ongoing work and anticipated outcomes.

Presentation format

- Maximum three minutes, and one to three slides per presenter.
- Use clear language for a multidisciplinary audience. Explain essential technical terms and avoid unexplained jargon.
- Build the pitch around one main message, supported by a simple visual or a concise example.
- Show who could benefit, under which conditions the approach could work and what further research or validation is needed.

Selection of presenters

If more than 12 eligible submissions are received, a jury preselection is proposed. Applicants will be informed of the outcome and presentation arrangements before the event.

Preselection will consider relevance to phosphorus sustainability, clarity of the challenge, scientific or methodological soundness, originality and potential contribution. Across submissions of comparable quality, the organizers may seek a balanced mix of disciplines and research contexts.

Proposed jury criteria

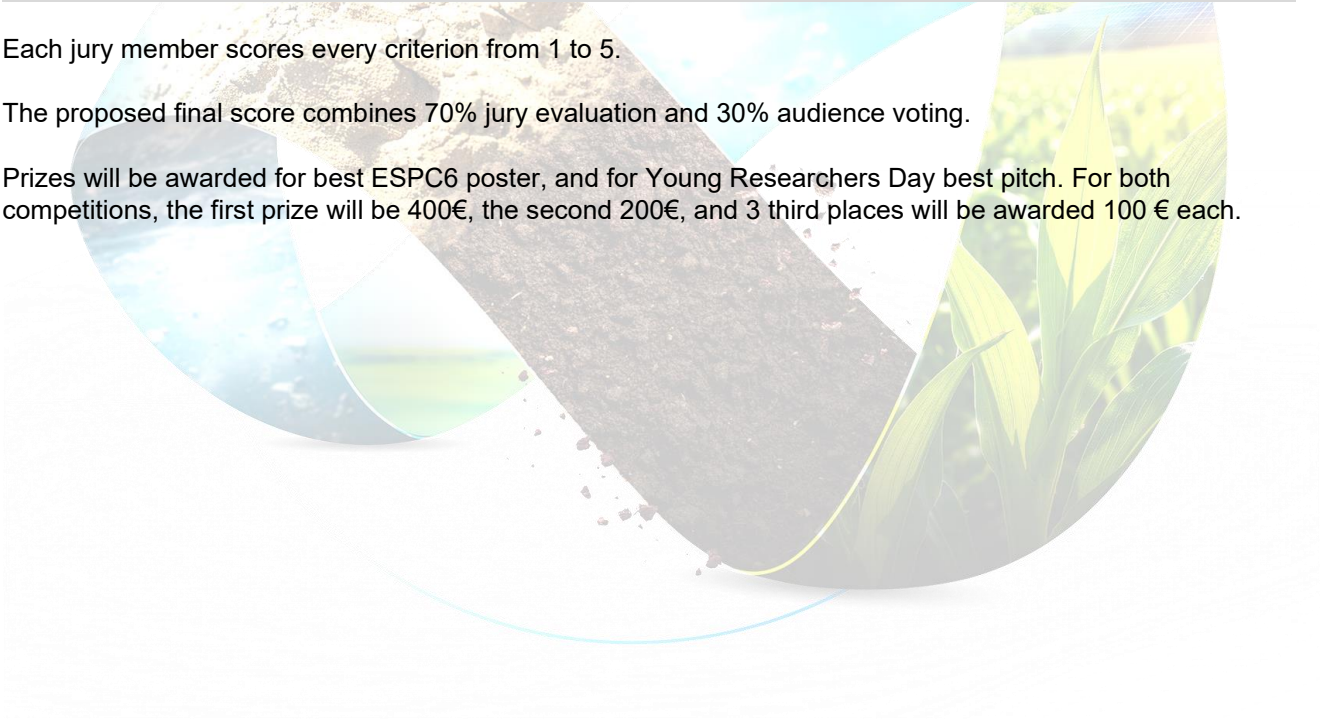
These criteria will be used to determine eligible pitches, evaluate them, and then select prizes.

Criterion	What the jury will assess
Clarity and accessibility	A clear research question and explanation that non-specialists can follow.
Relevance to phosphorus sustainability	A meaningful contribution to nutrient efficiency, food security, circularity or sustainable phosphorus value chains.
Scientific soundness	A credible approach, appropriate evidence and honest treatment of uncertainty and research maturity.
Originality	A fresh perspective, method or application, including promising early-stage ideas.
Potential real-world contribution	A convincing pathway to application, with attention to feasibility and the relevant soil, farming, industrial or policy context.

Each jury member scores every criterion from 1 to 5.

The proposed final score combines 70% jury evaluation and 30% audience voting.

Prizes will be awarded for best ESPC6 poster, and for Young Researchers Day best pitch. For both competitions, the first prize will be 400€, the second 200€, and 3 third places will be awarded 100 € each.



Working groups and collective outcomes

Phosphorus without borders will connect African and European perspectives while keeping the discussion open to other regions. Groups will identify research gaps and practical barriers, then propose achievable next steps for collaboration.

Proposed themes

Theme	Suggested focus
Food security and phosphorus access	Matching nutrient supply and crop requirements; affordability; soil diagnosis; pathways to improved productivity.
Sustainable mining and processing	Resource efficiency, processing innovation and productive use of co-products.
Climate resilience and nutrient efficiency	Soil-specific phosphorus availability, crop uptake, water constraints and resilient nutrient strategies.
Phosphorus and energy systems	The interactions between phosphorus processing, energy demand and emerging applications.
Phosphorus and One Health	Evidence needs at the interface of soil, plant, animal and human health.

Program:

14:30–14:45: Challenge mapping. Select a theme, appoint a rapporteur and identify one concrete challenge. Describe the context and the stakeholders concerned. Agree which research gaps or barriers deserve priority.
14:45–15:40: Research gaps and solution design. Use insights from the morning discussions to refine the challenge, review existing approaches and propose a research or collaboration roadmap. Identify the evidence, facilities, partnerships or funding required to advance it.

15:40–16:00: Group feedback within the working-group session. Each group has up to 5 minutes and one flipchart.

Questions every group should answer

- What is the specific challenge, and how does it vary between soils, regions or value chains?
- What do we already know, and which solutions or approaches already exist?
- What are the most important remaining gaps in phosphorus research?
- What barriers do young researchers face in addressing them?
- Who should collaborate, and what practical next step can be taken?

Expected group output

The intended collective outcome is a synthesis of current gaps in phosphorus research and the challenges faced by young researchers, for presentation during ESPC6. The supplied ESPC6 programme includes this synthesis on Wednesday 25 November. Representative speakers remain to be selected.

Phosphorus Memes,

A Little Humour, a Lot of P-Creativity!

Participants are invited to create a funny meme about phosphorus, research, or life as a young scientist. Memes will be displayed anonymously, and participants will vote for their favourite.

A playful opportunity to share experiences and connect through humour!

Please be advised that memes should not use copyright images/photos except with original author's authorization, or unless date of death of author is >70 years ago, including if images/photos are modified.

