

Environmental
Impact



Impact Story

71st International Congress and Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)

Unlocking Nature's Pharmacy for a
Sustainable Future



CONFERENCE DETAILS

WHEN
2-5 July 2023

DELEGATES
611

WHERE
Trinity College Dublin

ECONOMIC IMPACT
€989k

The 71st International Congress and Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA) 2023 was aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals including:



Society for Medicinal Plant and
Natural Product Research



The **Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA)** is an international scientific organisation that promotes research into medicinal plants and natural compounds, particularly their development and use in medicine and health. It supports collaboration and knowledge-sharing among researchers in pharmacognosy, phytochemistry, and related fields.

Unlocking Nature's Pharmacy for a Sustainable Future



Hosted by NatPro, the Trinity Centre for Natural Products Research at Trinity College Dublin, GA 2023 brought together the global natural products community for a congress built around the theme Unlocking Nature's Pharmacy for a Sustainable Future.

Led locally by Professor Helen Sheridan, with Dr Gaia Scalabrino playing a central leadership role in the bid, planning, and delivery, the event set out to do more than host an international scientific meeting. The vision of the local organising committee was to create a scientifically outstanding, globally connected, and sustainability-led congress that would position Ireland and Irish science on the world stage while delivering a memorable, inclusive experience for delegates.

The Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research exists to connect and advance the international community working across all aspects of natural product science. In Dublin, that mission was brought to life through a programme that fostered knowledge exchange across academia, industry, and regulation, while



also demonstrating how a major international congress can be delivered responsibly and with purpose.

GA 2023 delivered significant benefits for researchers, students, early-career scientists, academics, industry representatives, regulators, and wider communities. The event provided access to cutting-edge research, collaboration and funding opportunities, practical routes to real-world impact, and a platform for emerging and established voices through keynote sessions, presentations, sustainability and regulatory discussions, scholarships, and networking.

Key Highlights And Outcomes

- Shared evidence-based scientific research, sustainability insights and innovation under the theme "Unlocking Nature's Pharmacy for a Sustainable Future", including a dedicated session on sustainability and Ireland's transition to the bioeconomy.
- Enabled industry-academia collaboration, scientific knowledge exchange and talent development, attracting delegates from more than 50 countries.
- Facilitated regulatory dialogue across the natural products sector to support the commercialisation of herbal products.
- Demonstrated strong commitment to sustainability by promoting natural products research as a contributor to health, climate and circular bioeconomy solutions. Sustainability strategy centred on three key objectives: minimizing environmental impact, promoting eco-conscious behaviour, and fostering education on sustainability.
- Embedded sustainability throughout event delivery, including procurement, venue selection, catering and transport, working with partners Abbey Conferences, Trinity Business School and Trinity College catering teams, chosen for their environmental credentials.
- Enhanced the delegate experience through locally sourced, reusable and biodegradable conference materials, reducing waste while creating a strong sense of place and connection to Ireland.

AWARDS

Professor Helen Sheridan and Dr Gaia Scalabrino were recognised at Fáilte Ireland's Conference Ambassador Recognition Awards 2025.



(L-R) Paul Mockler, Head of Commercial Development Fáilte Ireland, Dr. Gaia Scalabrino, Trinity College Dublin, Professor Helen Sheridan, Trinity College Dublin, Ruth Andrews, Chair Fáilte Ireland

“GA 2023 demonstrated how Ireland can host a world-class scientific congress that delivers research excellence, meaningful international collaboration, and a lasting sustainability legacy, while showcasing Ireland's traditions combined with forward-thinking innovation.”

Dr. Gaia Scalabrino

