

Dear members of the EANA Executive Council,  
dear EANA members and colleagues interested in astrobiology:

The last year has brought several highlights for the astrobiology community in Europe:

Firstly, the new EANA web site (<http://www.astrobiologia.pl/eana/>) has been set-up and efficiently maintained by Ewa Szuszkiewicz and Franco Ferrari, at the University of Szczecin.

Secondly the Astrobiology Lecture Course Network (ABC-Net) has run for the second time in winter semester 2007/08 under the technical management of ESA's Erasmus Center, which also keeps the lectures under <http://streamiss.spaceflight.esa.int>.

Thirdly the French space mission COROT is now more than 2 years in orbit on its dedicated search for exoplanets ([http://www.esa.int/esaSC/120372\\_index\\_0\\_m.html](http://www.esa.int/esaSC/120372_index_0_m.html)).

Fourthly the successful launches of the exposure facilities EXPOSE-E in February 2008 and EXPOSE-R in November 2008 to the International Space Station ([http://www.esa.int/esaHS/SEMAVT9WYNF\\_index\\_0.html](http://www.esa.int/esaHS/SEMAVT9WYNF_index_0.html)). EXPOSE-E is now attached to the Columbus module of the ISS and will remain there for about 1.5 years (<http://www.go.dlr.de/musc/expose/>). EXPOSE-R is waiting inside the Zarya module of the ISS to be attached to the outside of the module by Extravehicular Activity on December 23, 2008 ([http://www.dlr.de/me/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1752/2384\\_read-14542/](http://www.dlr.de/me/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1752/2384_read-14542/)); ([http://www.sron.nl/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=2061&Itemid=588](http://www.sron.nl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2061&Itemid=588)); (<http://www.cnes.fr/web/CNES-fr/7015-amino-comprendre-l-apparition-de-la-vie.php>), (<http://spacefellowship.com/News/?p=7571>)

Fifthly, the ELIPS program of ESA, which takes care of the astrobiology experiments in Earth orbit, has received full support for 2008-2012 by the ESA Council meeting at Ministerial level in The Hague on 25 and 26 November 2008 ([http://www.esa.int/esaHS/SEMV5T3Z2OF\\_index\\_0.html](http://www.esa.int/esaHS/SEMV5T3Z2OF_index_0.html)).

Sixthly, the European astrobiology flagship ExoMars has found a new home within ESA's Directorate of Science and Robotic Exploration (D/SRE) and its launch has now been scheduled for 2016. A strong cooperation of the ExoMars team with that of Mars Express will be beneficial ([http://www.esa.int/SPECIALS/Mars\\_Express/SEMIB563R8F\\_0\\_ov.html](http://www.esa.int/SPECIALS/Mars_Express/SEMIB563R8F_0_ov.html)).

Seventhly and last not least, we had a very successful and stimulating 8<sup>th</sup> European Workshop on Astrobiology, September 1-3, 2008, in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, hosted by the Space Exploration Institute (<http://www.space-x.eu/EANA08/>). Thanks to the generous sponsorship of ESA 22 students and young scientists received travel grants.

We are grateful to all colleagues who made those achievements possible and look forward to a likewise successful year 2009.

I wish you relaxing and rewarding holidays

Merry Christmas and happy New Year



Gerda Horneck  
EANA President

15 December 2008