Foreword

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This issue of Microgravity Space and Technology, MgST, is a subset of the papers that were presented at the European Low Gravity Research Association, ELGRA, biennial symposium held in Bonn, Germany, on September 1–4, 2009, that were presented for peer review.

During the symposium, ELGRA prizes have been awarded to the winners of the student competition in life and physical sciences. Six selected teams were invited by ELGRA and ESA to attend the symposium, presenting oral communications and posters. The winners of this “student contest”, one team for life sciences and one team for physical sciences, were elected by the audience attending their presentations.

The ELGRA symposium is traditionally the opportunity to reward two of the most renowned and distinguished scientist and ELGRA members. In Bonn, the ELGRA medals were given to Prof. Dr. Alberto Passerone from the Institute for Energetics and Interphases, CNR, in Genoa, Italy, for his outstanding work in microgravity fluid dynamics and to Prof. Dr. Dag Linnarsson from the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden, for his long outstanding work on the adaptation of the human physiology to altered gravity conditions with specific emphasis on the pulmonary system.

In the frame of the symposium, a special event of interest was organized: a round table with represen-

tatives from ESA, chaired by the ELGRA President Dr. ing. Jack van Loon concerning the perspectives of low gravity research within Europe.

The ELGRA General Assembly is an important item during the biennial symposium. It is the organ for the election of the Management Committee. The Management Committee member Prof. Dr. Thodoris Karapantsios resigned from office in September 2009. His position was taken by Prof. Dr. Hans Fecht from the University Ulm. Prof. Dr. Hendrik Kuhlmann was elected as new vice-president. Dr. ing. Jack van Loon was re-elected for another 2 years as President of ELGRA.

In the name of the ELGRA Management Committee and as guest editors of this MgST volume, Daniel Beysens, Hendrik Kuhlmann, Monica Monici, Hans Fecht, Kurt Kemmerle, Javier Medina and Jack van Loon, who locally organized the symposium, express sincere thanks to:

- The European Space Agency for continuously supporting ELGRA activities and for the support to the student contest.
- The sponsors of the symposium: University Bonn, EADS Astrium, DLR, HE Space Operations, MUSC, Kaiser Threde, Nikon and VEGA.

But most of all we like to thank all the participants, who stimulated the symposium by presenting and discussing the results of their research and thereby contributing to the advancement of gravity and space flight related sciences.

Some of the presented results have already been published in various journals. Some others are still

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too preliminary to be published. This volume of MST, however, is a collection of the most significant contributions that have been presented at the symposium and submitted for peer review. The collected work provides an excellent overview on the wide range of subjects discussed and the quality of the research presented at the symposium.

Finally, we wish to mention all those who contributed to the preparation of this volume: the authors, the reviewers for the precious help in improving the quality of the papers and, last but not least, Microgravity Space and Technology which has made possible the dissemination of the current trends in microgravity research by giving us the opportunity of a special issue on the occasion of the ELGRA Biennial Symposium 2009.

We hope you will enjoy the reading of this volume and you will find in it cues and inspiration for your future research.

Guest editors:
Daniel Beysens
Hendrik Kuhlmann
Monica Monici
Hans Fecht
Kurt Kemmerle
Javier Medina
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