

Summer School on Influenza, 1-5 August, 2011, Siena, Italy

From 1-5 August 2011, some of the leading influenza experts from around the world visited the beautiful city of Siena to lecture at the Summer School on Influenza. The Summer School was a new initiative, which was co-chaired by Emanuele Montomoli from the University of Siena and Lars Haaheim from the University of Bergen, Norway. They were ably assisted by excellent organising and international scientific committees and by the support of isirv. Sadly Lars was not able to be present at the Summer School due to his untimely death a couple of months before ([link to obituary](#)). Lars was an enthusiastic advocate of the Summer School and had personally invited many of the speakers. Tributes to Lars' scientific achievements and personal qualities were paid during the Summer School.

The Summer School was designed for those who were newly started on their influenza careers, be it in basic or applied research, government or private sector activities and it was attended by 35 students from Australia, Europe, Egypt, India, Senegal, South America and the USA. The students were provided with an excellent introduction to many aspects of influenza ranging from theoretical concepts to basic techniques used in research and surveillance. The scientific programme was organised into eight different themes: societal impact; global influenza surveillance and prevention; human and animal influenza; pathogenesis; immunology; vaccines; antivirals; and finally regulatory issues. Two special seminars were focused on vaccination (Rino Rappuoli) and on the 2009 Pandemic (Angus Nicoll).

The students attending the Summer School appreciated the opportunity to learn more about influenza and to network with both young and "seasoned" influenza scientists. All agreed that Siena was a fantastic location and welcomed the two evening social events which showcased the city and its surrounds. Isirv was pleased to support this teaching initiative and thanks are due in particular to Francesca Marzari for organizing the Summer School.