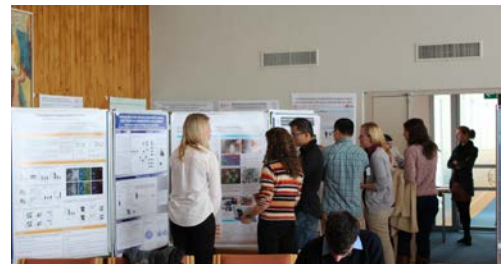


## 2<sup>nd</sup> DBM PhD SCIENTIFIC WINTER RETREAT 2014



Following the successful inaugural DBM PhD Winter Retreat in 2013 in Hasliberg, the second retreat was held this year at the same location. And all thanks to the excellent planning over several months by the PhD Club committee, the event was again very successful. With the view of Eiger and Brienersee and situated in the Bernese Alps, Hotel Viktoria in Hasliberg was once again the perfect venue. Beside its ability to accommodate 50 participants for 3 days, the hospitality made it an obvious choice for our PhD club committee. Also, for students who have not had the chance to experience the Swiss mountains, Hasliberg was a real treat to the natural beauty that Switzerland holds.

The retreat comprised scientific presentations and poster sessions, both delivered and chaired by the students. Over the first 2 days, 19 talks and 30 posters covered all four focal areas of the department. This year Prof. Thomas Klimkait and Prof. Verdon Taylor were invited as keynote speakers to share their current scientific research work. After the presentations, the students voted for Chanchal sur Chowdhury for the best presenter, while Erkan Ünal was honored with the best poster award.



During the retreat, the organizers have planned a range of activities other than presentations to promote causal discussions amongst students. This includes the candlelight fondue dinner, tea breaks in between presentation sessions and also an apéro to close off the retreat. Through these one-to-one interactions, the students are able to discuss their project and exchange their ideas and opinions. On the final day of the retreat, the ski lifts were unfortunately not operating due to strong Föhn winds. However, thanks to the organizers quick thinking, a short hike in the vicinity of the hotel was conducted to keep the participants occupied.



One of the greatest benefits of PhD retreat in the mountains is being able to take time off bench work and appreciate the research works of the other groups that are scattered over different areas of Basel. Events like this create a casual environment of the meeting of minds and in depth discussions. It encourages the fostering of scientific collaborations and innovative approaches to answer various aspects of scientific works. Leading from last year's retreat, the benefits have continued to cumulate to this year and hopefully yet more successful retreats in the following years to come.

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