



Second Meeting of the EBSA Executive Committee

Wednesday 28th July 2021. Location: Room 3.96, Vienna Congress Centre

Present: Elena Pohl (President); Jesus Perez-Gil (Past President); John Seddon (Secretary); Sarah Köster; Nuno Santos; Dejan Žikić; Helmut Grubmüller (co-opted: future Congresses); László Mátyus (co-opted: EBSA Webmaster); Pierre-Emmanuel Milhiet (co-opted: EBSA Workshops Coordinator).

Present via Zoom: Maria Sunnerhagen (Vice President); Tony Wilkinson (Treasurer); Rob Gilbert (EBJ); Ilpo Vattulainen (EBSA Newsgroup); Primoz Ziherl; Arwen Pearson.

Attending: André Matagne; Mauro dalla Serra.

The meeting was recorded on Zoom for the purpose of taking Minutes.

Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies (EP)

The new EBSA President Elena Pohl welcomed new EC members Arwen Pearson and Primoz Ziherl, and the rest of the Committee, and reported that Apologies were received from Jacqueline Cherfils (Bursaries) and from Anthony Watts (co-opted: International Societies). She reported that admission of the Hellenic Crystallographic Association (HeCrA) to Full Membership of EBSA has been approved at the EBSA GA.

2. Report on 13th EBSA Congress (EP)

Elena gave a brief update on the Congress. The final number of participants was 702, made up of 435 onsite, and 267 virtual. There were 541 downloads of the Congress App. There have been no reported Covid cases amongst the participants during the Congress. The Congress registrations were 121 (Austria), 164 (Germany), 55 (Italy) and 37 (UK-mainly virtual). In terms of the preliminary budget, the total expenses came to €354,500, against a total income of €348,753.

3. Encyclopedia of Biophysics, 2nd ed. (AW) - No report

4. EBSA Website (LM) and Newsgroup (IV)

Laszlo reported that there have been a number of changes recently to the EBSA website. There was no report on the Newsgroup.

5. Requests for EBSA support and reports (PEM)

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Pierre-Emanuel reported that there had been only two requests for meetings support, one from Peter Hildebrand for a Membranes meeting in May 2022 in Germany, and another from Emanuel Margeat for a Fluorescence School at Les Houches in June 2022. It was agreed to fund the May meeting to the sum of €1,600 for four Bursaries; funding of €2,400 for the June meeting had been already agreed.

Arwen asked whether previously-agreed meetings support would be carried forward and Jesus confirmed that this is the case, and that any carried-over funding would not count to disqualify any new bid from the same country.

6. Student Bursaries (AM)

Jacqueline has now taken over responsibility for Bursaries from André. He will be happy to advise her in her new role.

7. Future EBSA Schools / Biophysics Courses (EP)

Jesus reported on the current situation with regard to the postponed Membranes School in Bilbao. He informed the EC that Felix Goni will retire in September this year, which may complicate matters. He wondered whether it could be run next to the planned Iberian Congress in Summer 2022. Another option for the location could be El Escorial rather than Bilbao, in Autumn 2022 or Spring 2023. Further information is needed before a decision can be made. Tony Wilkinson reminded the EC that Schools are expensive, and that going forward we will only have approx. €13K per annum at our disposal.

Action: Jesus find out more information on the situation with regard to the Membranes School.

8. Next EBSA Congresses (EP)

Maria reported on the planning for the 14th EBSA Congress, Aula Magna, Stockholm. She confirmed the dates as 30 July - 4 August 2023. She reported that there will be a Summer School held in conjunction with the Congress. The Organizing Committee will be meeting in late October to finalize the planning by Jan 2022. André suggested they should ensure that Keynote Speakers commit to staying for the whole meeting. Nuno stated that National Societies should be asked to propose speakers. Maria confirmed that National Societies will be formally invited to suggest speakers in August. Nuno mentioned that the Congress dates are a problem for participants from various European countries, as they are late in the summer, and that this should be considered for future meetings. Maria stated that an alternative would be late June, but Arwen pointed out that all dates in the summer are problematic for one or more countries; for example in Germany holidays are usually in July. Maria mentioned that day-care for children will be provided in Stockholm to make it easier for families to attend.

Jesus mentioned that the Plenary Speakers should be invited as early as possible, and that this is important for obtaining sponsorship.

Following on from the presentation of the bids to host the 2025 EBSA Congress by the Italian and Serbian Societies at the General Assembly, a discussion was held to see whether a decision could be reached now. Mauro and Dejan left the room whilst this discussion took place. Elena mentioned that we could either decide now, or hold an Extraordinary meeting of the EC in the coming weeks to make the decision. Jesus felt it would be good to make the decision as soon as possible so the organizers can get the most favourable deals, and he pointed out that the decision on Madrid was taken four years in advance.

There is a strong Biophysics community in Italy, and a successful EBSA Congress was previously held in Genova in 2009.

It was felt that the EC still does not have enough information about the breadth and depth of the Serbian Biophysics community, and that it would be a risky choice. The fact that the bid was presented by a person from a PCO did not inspire confidence. The EC would be keen for the Congress to go to Belgrade or somewhere else in the Balkans at some point, and would like to reconsider a bid at a later date. In the meantime, it would be helpful to organize a future EC meeting in Belgrade so the EC can gauge the range of Biophysics activity in Serbia. Nuno commented that although Serbia has two Advantages, a region that the Congress has not yet visited, and that prices there are reasonably low, all other factors are in favour of Italy for 2025. Maria pointed out that there were 55 participants from Italy at the Vienna Congress, but only 2 from Serbia.

Given these factors, the EC was unanimously in favour of selecting Italy for the 2025 EBSA Congress, and felt that Rome would be an excellent venue.

Maria stressed that it will be important going forward to engage with the various Biophysics communities in Serbia and the Balkans. Arwen proposed that the Serbian Society could be invited to take responsibility for organizing a session in Rome.

9. Co-opted members of the EC (EP)

The following Co-opted members of the EC were proposed:

- Jacqueline Cherfils (Co-opted for Bursaries);
- Helmut Grubmüller (Co-opted for Future Congresses);
- László Mátyus (Co-opted for the EBSA Website);
- Pierre-Emmanuel Milhiet (Co-opted for Workshops)
- Tony Watts (Co-opted for International Societies).

The proposed Co-opted members were approved by the EC.

10. Any other business - none

11. Next EC meeting

It was agreed that the next EC meeting will be held on 22nd or 29th January, or 5th February 2022 (date to be confirmed by DoodlePoll), in Rome, hosted by Mauro Della Serra (location tbc).

Arwen stated she would be happy to host a future EC meeting in Hamburg.

It was agreed that the summer 2022 EC meeting will be held in Stockholm, hosted by Maria and the SFBBM, to allow the EC an advance view of the facilities for the 2023 Congress.

Elena thanked André and Mauro for all their hard work on behalf of EBSA, and wished good luck to the new President-Elect, Maria Sunnerhagen.