



## First Meeting of the EBSA Executive Committee, Stockholm

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. Location: Kungstenern, Floor 7, Aula Magna

**Present:** Elena Pohl (President); Maria Sunnerhagen (Vice President); Jesus Perez-Gil (Past President); John Seddon (Secretary); Tony Wilkinson (Treasurer); Rob Gilbert (EBJ); Nuno Santos (Bursaries); Dejan Žikić; Mauro Dalla Serra (co-opted: 2025 EBSA Congress; László Mátyus (co-opted: EBSA Webmaster); Helmut Grubmüller (co-opted: future congresses); Pierre Emmanuel Milhiet (co-opted: EBSA Workshops Coordinator); Anthony Watts (co-opted, IUPAB).

**Guests:** Roland Netz (*EBSA Co-Chair of IUPAB / EBSA 2027 Congress*)  
Manuel Prieto (*President of IUPAB*)  
Ron Clarke (*Secretary-General of IUPAB*)

## Draft Minutes

### 1. Welcome and Apologies (EP)

Elena welcomed the Committee and noted that Apologies were received from Sarah Köster, Jacqueline Cherfils, Primož Ziherl, Arwen Pearson, Ilpo Vattulainen (EBSA Newsgroup), and Klaus Gerwert (Chair of 2027 Congress). The Agenda of the meeting was Approved.

### 2. Update on 2023 EBSA Congress (MS)

Maria gave a brief update on the 2023 Congress. There are 1,038 registered participants, from 45 countries. There are 6 Plenary lectures, 8 Keynote lectures, and 51 Invited talks. There are 697 Posters and 113 Orals, and the latter are invited to also present Posters on their talks. There are approximately 300 students presenting work.

The EC expressed its congratulations to Maria and her team for this great achievement in attracting such a large number of participants and Abstracts submitted, and putting together a superb programme.

### 3. Update on plans for the 2027 Berlin joint meeting (RN and HG)

Roland Netz confirmed that the date of the 16<sup>th</sup> IUPAB/EBSA joint Congress in Berlin has been moved to 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2027. Helmut noted that the date was shifted by the Congress Centre. The Chair is Klaus Gerwert, and the co-Chair is Roland Netz (representing EBSA). They expect 2,000 participants, with a total cost of €1M. The Full Fee will be €400 (Early Bird) / €450, and the Student Fee will be €200 (Early Bird) / €250. The budget is based on 1,050 full-paying, plus 850 student participants.

Maria commented that they should check that they can still cover costs if the total number of participants is 1,500.

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Rob noted that the dates are right in the middle of University teaching terms, but Nuno stated that some people would prefer this to vacation time.

Ron asked if there will be a reduced fee for Society members.

Maria recommended that the organisers have a good look at how the planning was done for the EBSA 2023 Congress. She also commented that lunches need to be considered, and should be included.

Roland confirmed that the venue will be Hub27, which opened in 2019. It is fully-flexible space, but with high costs. He posed the question as to who carries the risk. They are thinking about using KUKM (based in Berlin) as an organizer. If they carry the risk, they would control the budget and take any profit. If the risk is shared, we can control the budget and keep any profit (shared between IUPAB / EBSA / German Society of Biophysics, DGfB e.V.).

Maria commented that for the 2023 Congress, the fee charged by MKON scaled with the number of participants. As the numbers went up above break-even, this allowed extras such as dinners and speaker support to be added in. The profits will be shared between EBSA and the Swedish Society. It was important that Stockholm University gave access to the facilities at a low cost (only €35K for the venue). It was possible to cancel up to 2 months before the Congress.

Tony Watts commented that no insurance was taken out for the 2023 Congress. The Edinburgh 2017 Congress was organized by the UK Institute of Physics Conference Organising group, at no cost. He also reminded the EC that we should not make a profit from the Congress, although a surplus is ok.

Helmut expressed the view that the German Physical Society (DPG) is not flexible enough to agree to organize the 2027 Congress, and Roland agreed with this view. Helmut stated that the main risk is that the organizing company might go bankrupt, so it will be important to keep little money with the company, and we should not hand the risk to the company.

Helmut thanked Roland for taking on the task of Co-Chairing the 2027 Congress, and these thanks were endorsed by the EC.

Manuel stated that we need a Memorandum of Understanding between the organizing bodies, and this can be based on the one used for the 2017 Joint Edinburgh Congress.

Ron presented a summary of discussions on the 2027 Congress which had been held by IUPAB the previous week:

- The 2017 Congress should be taken as a model;
- Bursaries should be provided both by IUPAB (50 for students outside Europe), and EBSA (50 for students within Europe);
- IUPAB will make a cash contribution of €20,000 in two instalments, with the second instalment only being paid if it is needed;
- There will be both IUPAB and EBSA Prizes awarded;
- There will be a number of named lectures;
- Support for travel and accommodation will be provided to IUPAB Council members;
- IUPAB Council members are happy to get involved with the Scientific Committee.

Helmut commented that it would be useful to send names of proposed members of the Scientific Committee to the Congress Chairs.

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Tony Watts remarked that IUPAB would like Germany to nominate a candidate for the IUPAB Council.

**Action:** Ron send suggestions of Scientific Committee members to the Congress Chairs

**Action:** Klaus / Roland / Helmut suggest a candidate for the IUPAB Council

**Action:** Ron send notes of the IUPAB meeting from last week to John

#### 4. **Minutes of the meeting of the EC on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 2023, Rome (JMS)**

The Minutes were Approved and can now be put on the EBSA website.

**Action:** John and Laszlo

#### 5. **Treasurer's report (TW)**

Tony Wilkinson gave a brief overview of the finances. He reminded the EC that we previously agreed to keep roughly €150K in reserve. The balance at the accountancy year end of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 was €194K, and at 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 was €221K, which is quite healthy. To the end of the financial year, income of €84K was received from Springer, of which €20K is for office expenses for EBJ, and €7K was received in subscriptions. €14K was spent on Meetings and Bursaries, and €7K on EC meetings in Stockholm, June 2022, and Rome, January 2023 (this figure is very low because significant costs were covered by the Congress Organizers).

In terms of subscriptions, 24 countries are up to date. Tony Watts mentioned that he is trying to get Moldova involved with EBSA.

Tony Wilkinson mentioned that there had been some issues with Barclays Bank wanting to close our accounts, but he believes this has been resolved for the time being.

The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously.

#### 6. **Report on European Biophysics Journal (RG)**

Rob gave an overview of his report on EBJ. He proposed emailing recent authors in Biophysical Journal, inviting them to publish articles in EBJ. As an incentive, an annual EBJ Prize for an outstanding paper has been instituted, with the Selection Panel consisting of Rob, Elena and Nuno. Two Prize winners were selected, and will be announced at the EBSA General Assembly, and at the end of the Congress in the Closing Ceremony. The winning articles were:

- J. Zemla et al. *Eur Biophys J* **49**, 485–495 (2020)
- S F Verbeek et al. *Eur Biophys J* **50**, 127–142 (2021)

The EBJ Impact factor has gone down slightly from 2.095 to 2.0, which may be an effect due to Covid 19.

Rob plans to investigate what action the journal Protein Science took to increase their Impact Factor.

He mentioned that he had been contacted by Frontiers, who were keen to engage with EBJ. He feels they would take a more hands-on approach than Springer-Nature.

Elena stated that the Editorial Board of EBJ is very strong. People have asked her whether they can have Gold access if publishing in EBJ; Rob confirmed that Springer

have their own version of Open Access. Elena asked about the time to publication, and Rob replied that it is fast for strong papers.

Elena proposed that these previous two points should be stressed on the journal website, and Rob agreed with this.

Elena also asked Rob to send the slide highlighting the Journal Outstanding Paper Prizes to the Congress to be displayed.

## **7. Agenda of the General Assembly (JMS/EP)**

It was agreed that we will propose to the General Assembly to make minor revisions to the EBSA Constitution and Rules of the Association, to suspend National Societies who are more than 3 years behind in their Subscriptions to EBSA.

Helmut asked whether we should be able to suspend Associate Members, for example for non-engagement at Congresses. John suggested it was best to postpone this until the General Assembly in Rome in 2025.

Laszlo reminded the EC that they should collect their voting slips from him at the start of the General Assembly.

## **8. Proposals for new officers and ordinary members of the EC (EP)**

It was noted that Jacqueline, Sarah, Ilpo, Primoz and Jesus are standing down from the EC, and the EC expressed its sincere thanks to them all for the hard work they have done on behalf of EBSA.

The proposals for new Officers and Ordinary Members of the EC are listed in the Agenda of the General Assembly.

## **9. Any other business relevant for the General Assembly (EP)**

A summary of IUPAB activity spanning the period Jan – July 2023 was presented by Tony Watts.

## **10. New Member Societies (EP)**

There was a discussion of the proposed motion for the General Assembly:

'The EBSA Executive Committee is keen to explore the possibility of ARBRE becoming a full voting member of EBSA, and would like to ask the General Assembly to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to provisionally approve such membership, which will then be formally ratified at the EBSA General Assembly in Rome in 2025.'

It was planned that Adriana Miele (ARBRE President) would attend the President's Lunchtime meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> August to answer any queries about ARBRE.

Tony asked how they will pay, and Rob explained that this would be on a per member basis.

## **11. Any other business**

Laszlo asked whether they should become an Associate Member, but Rob pointed out that this would seem to view them as second-rate, and also that they will be paying the full subscription. Pierre-Emmanuel stated that it is strange that a group which does not represent a country will have a vote; John pointed out that each EC member has a vote, on behalf of the EC rather than of a country. He also stated that the proposal needs further discussion, and in any event will not be formally ratified until the Rome 2025 General Assembly.

The meeting ended at 14.30.