



Minutes of the meeting of the EBSA Executive Committee

Hotel Tirol, Madrid, Saturday 25th June: 9.00 – 18.00

Lunchtime visit to Dentistry Faculty and to Medicine Faculty

Present: Helmut Grubmüller (President), Anthony Watts (Vice President), Manuel Prieto (past President), John Seddon (Secretary), Rob Gilbert (EBJ), José Carrascosa (ISE), André Matagne (Bursaries), Mauro Dalla Serra (IUPAB cross-representative), Jacqueline Cherfils, László Mátyus (co-opted: EBSA Webmaster), Jesus Perez-Gil (co-opted: organiser of the 2019 EBSA Congress, Pavol Miškovsky.

1. Welcome and Apologies (HG)

Helmut asked that the Agenda be approved, welcomed the Executive Committee, and reported that Apologies were received from Tony Wilkinson (Treasurer), Ilpo Vattulainen (co-opted: EBSA Newsgroup), and Pierre Emmanuel Milhiet (co-opted: EBSA Workshops Coordinator and Sponsorships).

It was noted that Michel Kochoyan, who played a key role in the Montpellier 2005 Biophysics Congress, died a few weeks ago. A link should be provided on the EBSA website to his obituary.

Action: Jacqueline.

Helmut proposed that EBSA should release a statement about Brexit. A draft statement was approved by the EC, then sent to Laszlo, Ilpo, and Pierre-Emmanuel, who also approved it. The EC agreed to meet with Rocío Perez Benavente (Jesus Perez-Gil's daughter), who plans to write an article on Brexit, at the end of the afternoon.

2. Minutes of the last meeting of the EC in Edinburgh (JMS)

The following actions were noted:

5. Tony Watts has contacted the Norwegian Society in connection with their subscription, but has received no response. He also noted the problem with Greece due to their ongoing financial difficulties. He suggested that the Czech Republic should be contacted to persuade them to join EBSA.

Action: Helmut.

6. The Dresden Congress Plenary lectures are now on YouTube. The Congress website has been sent to Laszlo, but there are problems with reconstructing the website. The Programme should be put up on the EBSA website.

Action: László to try to resolve the issues together with Petra Kellers.

10. Helmut wrote to Iva Tolić as she has not provided a paper to EBJ, but has received no reply.

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László has changed the rule on the EBSA website, such that in future we will only allow one nomination per National Society for the EBSA Young Investigator Medal.

11. Helmut will try to attend the next Turkish Society Congress in autumn 2016.

12. László will create a new tab for 'Reports' on the EBSA website, and upload the report on 'ISE Activities 2015' to it.

Action: László

13. Ilpo is still to prepare a letter about the EBSA Newsgroup and send to John, who will then forward it to the National Societies on behalf of Helmut.

Action: Ilpo

Helmut has arranged for the EBSA newsletter to be distributed via DGfB in Germany.

14b. Helmut wrote to Krzysztof Bry, agreeing to attend the Polish Biophysical Society Congress in Ryn, 28 June – 1 July 2016, funded by EBSA.

Tony Watts attended the Iberian Biophysics Congress in Oporto, June 15-17, and reported that it went well.

The Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. **EBSA Constitution (HG / JMS)**

An updated version, signed by the current President, Vice-President and Past-President should be produced for the EBSA website. Laszlo will investigate and draft a text for the next General Assembly, introducing Associate Membership. This will need to be sent to the National Societies 4 months before the GA.

4. **Treasurer's report (JMS on behalf of TW)**

The Trustee Indemnity insurance has been renewed. The balance of the EBSA accounts as of 20/5/16 was €209,587. The income for the financial year ending 31st March 2016 was €67,087, against an expenditure of €114,466. The EBSA accounts are healthy, but a decline in the income should be noted. Jacqueline asked: what is the ideal amount to keep in reserve? Helmut and Tony Watts considered that €300K would be a maximum. If an EBSA Congress goes bankrupt up to €100K would be at risk. Although the National Society would legally be responsible, there is a 'gentleman's agreement' that EBSA would need to help out in such a circumstance. Tony commented that for the 2017 Congress there is a formal contract between IUPAB, EBSA and the IOP. Jesus stated that for the 2019 Madrid Congress, there will be a contract between the organizing company and the Spanish Society. Tony remarked that it is good if the Congress makes a small profit, but not too much.

The current subscriptions of €5,316 corresponds to 2,658 paying members. There are a number of additional members who do not pay. Sweden is now paying, but Denmark stopped paying in 2013, and no payment has been received from Norway.

In reporting on the Subscription status (Table A1), it would be useful to also list the Affiliated Societies.

Action: Tony Wilkinson

Tony Watts commented that EBSA spends a lot in even years, but much less in odd years, when we do not support meetings other than EBSA ones.

Helmut note that we will get a maximum of €80K from Springer. He proposed that we set a maximum of €50K per annum on average for support of meetings.

Action: Pierre-Emmanuel to monitor and to flag up when the limit is reached.

Tony Watts suggested that we might consider raising the subscription from €2 to €3 per member.

László suggested that we could be more conservative in funding working visits.

The Treasurer's report was unanimously approved and thanks to Tony Wilkinson for producing the report were Minuted.

5. Report on European Biophysics Journal (RG)

A very good offer for renewal of the EBJ contract has been received from Springer, which will yield approximately €80K per annum in total to EBSA. Rob and Tony Watts will try to ensure that the EBJ reaches the incentive payment of €5K. Springer also cover the costs of the EBSA Congress Abstract book (this is worth some €7K). It was noted that the Abstracts enter into the IF calculation for EBJ, and pull it down. Rob will try to have the Abstracts removed from the IF calculation.

Action: Rob

There have been 124 article submissions to EBJ this year. There are plans to increase the journal's scope, eg, molecular dynamics simulations. Plans are underway to revise the Advisory Board. A number of journal reviewers were approached, but refused. Any suggestions, especially of younger people, should be sent to Rob. It may be desirable to increase the number of handling Editors. Springer is keen on Special Issues, and one is being put together on 'Channelopathies', and another on 'CD Spectroscopy', based on a retirement meeting for Bonnie Wallace. A number of other potential topics suggest themselves, such as 'XFELS', or 'DNA-based technologies'.

Rob reported that the number of issues per year will remain at 8, but there is no restriction on the number of papers per issue.

There was unanimous support for the EC to pursue the Springer renewal offer.

6. Encyclopedia of Biophysics, 2nd Edition (AW)

Tony Watts reported that the timetable has slipped to January 2017 for finding 25% of new material, and that this slow progress has been due in part to Gordon Robert's ongoing health issues.

7. 2017 EBSA /IUPAB Congress, Edinburgh (AW)

Tony reported that there had been a recent meeting with the IOP, and that the 7 Plenary Speakers are now confirmed. There will also be 2 EBSA Award Lectures. There will be 34 Parallel Sessions; 52 Invited Speakers have confirmed so far, out of 102 Speakers that are needed. The Invited Speakers are 33% female and 67% male. There will also be a public engagement lecture on the Sunday, and Chris Dobson (Cambridge) has been identified as a possible speaker. Laszlo pointed out that there are no Invited Speakers from Eastern Europe, and Tony replied that they will try to address this. Manuel is keen to engage scientists from Latin America, such as Rosangeli Itri. Jesus is keen to promote links with South America.

There are so far 3 Satellite meetings planned for Edinburgh:

- a) Tony Watt's Spectroscopy Workshop at Macdonald Houston Hotel. This is aimed at 50 young participants, the registration Fee will be €100 per person, and it will need €12K support from EBSA;
- b) Cris dos Remedios' meeting on 'eliminating animals from research';

c) John Sanderson's Satellite meeting on Membranes.

Helmut confirmed that he will Chair the National Societies' Presidents meeting during the Congress.

It was agreed that a 2017 Congress Bursary Panel will be set up, consisting of André Matagne (Chair), László, Jacqueline and Mauro.

8. EBSA 2017 Awards (EBSA Young Investigators Medal, Avanti/EBSA Award) (JMS)

John will write to the National Society Presidents in the autumn, informing them that the closing dates for both awards is 31st December 2016, and pointing out each Society can now only nominate one candidate for the Young Investigator Award. He will also remind them that the EBSA General Assembly will be held in Edinburgh, and that there will also be a President's meeting there, chaired by Helmut. They will be asked to sign up their members to the EBSA Newsgroup.

Selection Panels should be set up in January 2017. (For the 2015 Young Investigator Award, the Panel was: Ilpo Vattulainen (Chair), Pavol Miskovsky and Manuela Pereira; for the 2015 Avanti Award, the Panel was: Manuel Prieto (Chair), Helmut Grubmüller and László Mátyus).

9. Future EBSA Congresses (HG)

2019 Congress, Madrid: Jesus is in the process of setting up the Organizing Committee. A contract will be signed soon with a Conference organizing company. The proposed start date for the Congress is around 20th July 2019 (dates to be confirmed). The EBSA EC will visit the proposed venues today, and will meet with a representative from the company. Jesus has already received useful advice on Congress organization from Helmut and Manuel. He anticipates some 1,000 participants. Helmut proposes that budgets should be prepared assuming 3 levels of participation: 700, 850 and 1,000 participants.

2021 Congress: Ilpo has not yet produced a revised bid for Finland. It should include the outcomes of discussions with other Scandinavian countries seeking their involvement in the Congress.

10. Report of ISE activities (JC)

An ISE Expert Workshop on Science Advice in Europe was held at EMBL, Heidelberg from 19-20 January with 24 participants. A report is under preparation. The ISE General assembly was held in Koln on 9th march and a number of actions were decided:

- Approval of the new ISE statutes;
- ISE will move to Strasbourg (hosted for free) and is legally registered there;
- A new Secretary (50% position) will be appointed soon;
- The new budget was approved, with €1K, €3K, and €6K bands for members (EBSA is in the lowest band).

The Working Group on Collaborative Research has been active. A meeting was held on 7 April in Brussels on the theme: 'Is there a gap in funding for collaborative research?' A document will be presented in Manchester in July at the Euroscience Open Forum, in a specific session.

Tony Watts asked whether EBSA should stay involved with ISE, and whether we can measure the productivity / output from ISE? The costs to EBSA are €1K per annum plus José's travel. Is ISE still active? Are organizations such as EMBO removing their support?

José replied that the activities are interesting, allow interaction with Brussels with regard to H2020, and contributes to European-wide discussion. ISE has been effective in lobbying, for example on issues such as scientific visas. The different conferences have addressed important points and are producing useful results. However, he conceded that there has been no fundamental, landmark achievement. He confirmed that EMBO are continuing to support ISE, although at a reduced level. He considers that for the time being, it is worthwhile for EBSA to remain a member of ISE. László asked whether a volunteer could replace the (part-time) Secretary. José feels this is not feasible, as the person needs to be available to interact closely with Brussels.

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

László reported that the website is running well and there are no current plans to change it. He suggests that we invite Soltan Juhasz (who does the work on the website) to join the EC for dinner in Debrecen in January 2017.

The EBSA Newsgroup is very active and is working well, and is reaching some 1,200 members, or nearly 50% of the paying members of EBSA.

12. Student Bursaries and working visits (AM)

To reduce the level of email traffic, it was recommended that when responding to André, EC members do not copy their replies to all other EC members.

4 applications for support for working visits were received in 2016, listed in a Summary Table of working visit requests. Of these, 4 were agreed, but only 3 taken up, with a total of €6K provided.

There was discussion of our policy with regard to processing student bursaries for attendance at EBSA-sponsored meetings. André suggested that he should give out the bursaries. Pierre-Emmanuel should inform László which meetings will be eligible for Bursaries, and this should be stated on the Website.

Action: André to ask Pierre-Emmanuel to inform László which meetings will be eligible for Bursaries.

The EBSA EC will decide the level of direct financial support, eg, for EBSA lectures, and also what level of bursary support will be available. Helmut asked whether André could pre-screen the applications? André stated that his preferred method was to choose recipients on a first-come, first-served basis, €400 each, giving out a variable number of Bursaries for different meetings.

It was agreed that André should decide on the best process to follow, and present this at the January EC meeting. The website will need to be updated.

Action: André to decide on a process.

13. Requests for EBSA support and reports (JMS on behalf of PEM)

A summary of meetings support in 2014 was provided.

It was agreed that we will remove from the Website the statement: 'EBSA will not sponsor more than one meeting in any one member country in any given year'.

Pierre-Emmanuel should state with each application what the running total in that year is, so the EC can see if we are approaching the nominal limit of €50K (see the Action in Section 4).

The following new requests for support were agreed:

- a) Monica Florescu requested support for the 4th International Conference on Analytical and Nanoanalytical Methods for Biomedical and Environmental Sciences "IC-ANMBES 2016", to be held June 29th - July 1st, 2016 in Brasov, Romania, with the partnership of the Romanian Society of Pure and Applied Biophysics. Support of 1600 € for one European lecturer and 2 student bursaries was agreed by email in February 2016.
- b) Aitor Manteca Gonzalez, San Sebastian, Spain requested 2100 € support for a 10-week visit (25 May 2016 - 3 August 2016) to the laboratory of Prof. Wolfgang A. Linle, Bochum, Germany. Full support was agreed by email in February 2016.
- c) Enrico Ricardi, Trondheim, Norway requested 2000 € support for a 9-week visit (from 1 Feb 2017) to the lab of Dr Elena Papaleo, Copenhagen. Full support agreed by email.
- d) Hoe-Yin Kwan requested support for a conference organized by Andrew Turberfield to be held in Cambridge: Physics meets Biology 2016. Support of 1600 € for 4 student bursaries for deserving cases from Europe was agreed by email in February 2016.
- e) Mikko Karttunen requested support for the meeting "International Workshop on Biomembranes: The consequences of complexity". €2,400 for 4 student bursaries (€400 each) and to support the cost of one European invited speaker (800 €) was agreed by email in March 2016.

Tony Watts has set up an EBSA PayPal account for the 2016 Montpellier Workshop. All speakers are now in place. He noted that it almost clashes with Ilpo's Membranes meeting, and with the Croatian Biophysics School.

Pavol asked whether a School of Biophotonics he is organizing for PhD students could be endorsed by EBSA (no financial support sought). This was tentatively agreed.

Action: Pavol to send in a case to the EBSA EC, with details.

14. Member Societies (JMS)

The President of the Iran Society of Biophysical Chemistry (ISOBC) wrote to Manuel Prieto on 6th January 2015 asking to apply to join EBSA either as a member or as an observer. At the First EC meeting in Dresden in July 2015 the EC chose to defer making a decision until 2017, while it looked into changing the EBSA constitution to introduce affiliate membership. In the meantime ISOBC can apply for student grants from EBSA.

It was agreed that we would wait for them to contact Helmut, inviting someone to attend their National meeting, then Tony Watts will see whether he is able to attend.

Action: Helmut to remind the ISOBC President.

15. Any other business

None

16. Date and location of next EC meeting

Debrecen, Saturday 21st January 2017.

Future EC meetings: Edinburgh, July 2017; possibly Bratislava, January 2018.

Helmut thanked Jesus for all the hospitality, and the meeting closed at 17.00.