

Minutes of the meeting of the ESM General Assembly

Held at the Maastricht ESM-EVBO 2019 meeting (<http://esm-evbo2019.org/>) and (<http://www.esmicro.eu>)

Location: 2.1 Colorado, Maastricht Exhibition and Congress Centre (MECC)

Time: Tuesday 16th April 2019 18.30-19.30

1. Minutes of the Executive Committee (EC) and General Assembly (GA) meetings held in Geneva 2017, were approved.

2. ESM-EVBO 2019 Congress Organisation

President, Dr Boy Houben

Dr Houben presented a brief summary of the 2019 Congress. A111 Conference organisers had assisted in organisation of the meeting. 340 abstracts had been received and following a selection process by the Executive Committee (EC) 44 had been selected for oral presentation with a focus on early career investigators. The remainder had been invited for poster presentation. The abstracts were available in the Journal of Vascular Research (JVR) supplement and on-line. There had been 450 registrants from 42 countries, 37:63% Female:Male participants. Fundraising for the meeting had been challenging but 7 sponsors/12 partners/20 exhibitors/sponsors had been secured, with a full list available in the abstract booklet. The final budget will not be available until after the meeting, but there may be a small surplus, which will be credited to ESM and EVBO. During the Congress the first ESM working group (WG) was launched, called REtinal-SEARCH. This WG, chaired by Boy Houben (Maastricht) and Henner Hanssen (Basel), aims to establish an international network of experts in the field of retinal microvessels analysis working towards standardization of Standard Operating procedures (SOPs) for image analyses; generation of position papers and guidelines; joint research proposals; retinal vessel analysis academy etc. More information can be found on the ESM website (<http://www.esmicro.eu/index.php/retinal-working-group>).

3. ESM Finance and Membership Report

Treasurer, Professor Nicola Brown

The society accounts and the Treasurers report were summarised. The current two year financial period runs from 1st June 2017 to 31st May 2019 thus the 2018-2019 accounts are interim and adjustments will be made at the year end. The accounts had been audited by PKF Francis Clark, Exeter, UK. During this period, total receipts were £14,267 and total expenditure was £12,939. Total current assets were £53,395, a small increase from the previous period 2015-107 (£52,068) largely due to an increase in subscriptions, but also due to a welcome surplus from the Geneva meeting in 2017. However, the commitments for the remainder of the accounting period include; 10 Early Career Investigator Travel Awards (4,000€) and five Poster Awards (500€) for ESM-EVBO 2019, in addition to costs for on-line access to the Journal of Vascular Research 6,000€. The ESM general expenditure included administration, website, Malpighi Medals, committee and accountancy charges. Annual subscriptions have been received from the majority of the affiliated societies through dual membership. Total membership of the society currently stands at 536,

with 510 by dual membership. We also have approaching 30 honorary, emeritus and retired members. In summary the accounts of the society are stable, with no need to increase the membership fee for at least the next two years.

The membership and subscription lists both for individual members and for the ESM affiliated societies have now been updated. Due to the new GDPR, effective from May 2018, permissions were required to contact members with society information, directly via email. This has now been obtained from the majority of members/societies and an email distribution established for circulation of information and news.

The EC had discussed and unanimously agreed to support additional investment in our Early Career Researchers (ECR), including joint initiatives with MCS (symposia at MCS and ESM meetings with financial support from both societies) which would be funded from reserves. **The General Assembly also questioned whether it was necessary to maintain the current level of reserves and was therefore fully supportive of an increased investment in our ECR.**

4. ESM Awards Report

Professor Henning Morawietz

- **Malpighi Medal:** A number of excellent nominations had been received, making the final decision by the Awards Committee a difficult one. Candidates were ranked from 1-10 (high-low); the candidate with the most high rankings (1) and the best average rank of votes was chosen. The Malpighi medal will be presented on the final day of the conference to Professor Dr. Akos Koller, University of Physical Education and Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary, and New York Medical College, Valhalla New York, USA following his lecture entitled '**Going with the Flow in Microcirculation**'.
- **ESM-JVR Award:** This is awarded to an individual of international standing and great prominence in the field, who has contributed significant advances in vascular biology and microcirculation. The 2019 award will be presented on the final day of the conference to Professor Dr. Lydia Sorokin University of Muenster, Germany following her lecture entitled '**The role of endothelial laminins in vascular function**'.
- **Servier Award:** This award is offered in partnership with ESM for an outstanding publication on microcirculation/vascular biology in basic or clinical research. There were a large number of excellent submissions, making the decision difficult for the award committee. The 2019 awardee is Dr Tamara Girbl, Institute of Science and Technology, Austria (current position) for her publication **Girbl *et al.*, Distinct compartmentalization of the chemokines CXCL1 and CXCL2 and the atypical receptor ACKR1 determine discrete stages of neutrophil diapedesis. Immunity 2018 49: 1062-1076.** The award will be presented on the final day of the conference.
- **Early Career Investigator Travel Awards 400€:** Dr Stephanie Herkenne (Italy), Ms Marloes Sol (Netherlands), Ms Nicole A.M. Dekker (Netherlands), Dr Rio Juni (Netherlands), Ms Sarah McNeilly (UK)
- **International Early Career Investigator Travel Awards 400€:** Mr Sai Kiran Reddy Samawar (India), Ms Nathalie Obadia (Brazil), Miss Rui Ning Chia (Singapore), Ms. Marina Leardini-Tristão (Brazil)
- **Poster Awards 100€:** **ESM** - Sohni Ria Bhalla (UK), Wenjie Li (Netherlands), Mieke Karel (Netherlands), Sofia Morsing (Netherlands), Silvia Martin-Almedina (UK). **GfMVB** – Renee Tillie (Netherlands), Goekhan Pehlivan (Germany), Hanna Jonasson (Sweden). [*Post meeting note: the poster awards were decided at the conference following the poster sessions*].

The EC and GA approved all of the awardees.

5. Journal of Vascular Research

Editor: Professor Ulrich Pohl

The JVR Impact Factor for 2017 was 2.029 with total citations of 1613, predominantly due to the citation of original manuscripts rather than reviews. A continued aim for the society is to improve the impact of JVR. Professor Pohl reminded the GA that ESM had previously agreed to propose one special issue per year. An increased input in submitting and/or proposing reviews and special topics is expected from members of the society. One suggestion was that junior colleagues be invited to contribute reviews. Professor Pohl proposed introducing a 'journal club' where members could discuss interesting papers and the latest developments in the field. Karger, the publisher of JVR, has established a blog in the nephrology field which could be used as a model and can provide technical assistance and space on the JVR website for this to be initiated (<https://www.karger.com/blog/nephrology-viewpoints>). The JVR free on-line access for ESM members is now available and the 2019 login details had been circulated to the society members.

The issue of open access of the journal was raised by the GA. It was explained that there is an option to have open access articles published by JVR for an additional cost. Karger recognizes the importance of open access but contuse to watch developments closely and will be ready to respond as needed. However due to financial reasons open access for JVR is not a priority and the timeline for this is 3-5 years. In the first instance, individual University deals will be re-negotiated in order to include a number of free open access publications. Such a deal is already in place with some Dutch Universities.

6. Committee and Meeting reports

ESM Strategy Committee

Joint Chair: Professor Henning Morawietz

The 1st ESM/EVBO Summer School, Dresden 1-5 July 2018 was organized by Henning Morawietz from TU Dresden and Richard Siow from King's College London from July 1-5, 2018 in Dresden. The major aim of this Summer School was to support young scientists in the field of vascular research. 20 excellent international speakers from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Poland and Germany presented the 30 MD/PhD students from 12 European countries, with basic knowledge and cutting-edge novel results from experimental and clinical research, in the areas of vascular biology and microcirculation. The participants could actively take part in three method courses i) analysis of vascular cells under flow conditions, ii) contractility of blood vessels and iii) analysis of vascular function in the microcirculation of patients. Young scientists from across Europe, at the beginning of their PhD studies, some already with high-ranked first author publications, discussed their projects and results in two poster sessions together with the international experts. On the last day, there were sessions addressing how to successfully write and publish scientific research papers by the editors of renowned European journals (Cardiovascular Research, Journal of Vascular Research) and how to obtain research funding and future fellowships. From the first day, the participants shared the enthusiasm about their scientific work and all found the meeting inspiring and enriching. Joint novel projects, collaborations and friendships were initiated. The complete scientific programme can be found at: <https://www.uniklinikum-dresden.de/medmiz/ESM-EVBO-Summer-School>. Further information: Siow RC, Morawietz H (2019) Vascular networking for the young at heart: Joint European Summer School for microcirculation and vascular biology Cardiovasc. Res. 115:e49-e51.

11th World Congress on Microcirculation, Vancouver, CA, 2018: *Microcirculation in Health and Disease: Focus on Emerging Research and Technologies* defined the theme of the meeting. International investigators delivered key presentations in six main thematic areas, and the

symposium included basic science, translational and clinical presentations. This was an excellent, educational and vibrant meeting attended by 400 delegates. The meeting was cost neutral.

ESM Congress Aarhus, 2021: At the ESM-EVBO meeting in Geneva it was agreed by both societies that the 2021 meeting would again be a joint meeting with EVBO, to be hosted in Manchester UK and organized by Yvonne Alexander, President of EVBO. However, in late 2018, Yvonne communicated that she was no longer able to organise the meeting. Subsequently the Secretary-General corresponded with a number of individuals to encourage bids to host the 2021 meeting, with an email expression of interest received from Professors Christian Aalkjær, Jo de Mey and Cor de Wit to organize the next meeting. However communication recently received, indicated that EVBO no longer wished to host a joint meeting with ESM in 2021. [*Post-meeting note: discussions with EVBO and our EC are on-going*].

Professor Aalkjær had presented outline plans for the ESM 2021 meeting, with potential venues being either Aarhus or Copenhagen, to the EC. Potential dates were discussed and it is likely that the meeting will be held in May 2021. Following discussion and a unanimous vote, Professor Aalkjær was elected the next President of ESM 2019-2021, by the EC **and approved by the GA**.

World Congress on Microcirculation, in Beijing 2022: Professor Jing-Yan presented a meeting summary including outline scientific programme, international and local programme committees, venue, budget, sponsorship, registration costs, social programme, timeline. The meeting will be announced on the ESM website, with a link to the WCM website once available.

7. ESM-VAS Partnership Proposal

Dr Boy Houben

The Society had been approached by Mariella Catalano to establish a privileged partnership between ESM and VAS (a European Scientific Association for the development of Angiology/Vascular Medicine; www.vast-int.net). With this partnership both societies aim to collaborate in advancing microcirculatory research, education, dissemination, and clinical evaluation. **The EC had agreed this should be supported and there were no objections from the members at the GA.**

8. Election of new members of the Executive Committee

Professor Akos Koller

President: Professor Christian Aalkjær

Secretary General: Professor Henning Morawietz

Communication, Publication and International Liaison Representative: New position to liaise with JVR representative on journal business; liaison with international societies: Professor Akos Koller. Strategy Committee: Richard Siow and Boy Houben to lead on Translational Medicine initiatives. Additional strategy ECR members will be sought via expressions of interest from the membership.

German Society Representative: Cor de Wit (decided by the GfMVB).

Non-Professorial Representative(s): A nomination has been received from Eszter Farkas (Szeged, Hungary) but there will be a call to the ESM members for additional nominations. [*Post-meeting note: a call for nominations for the committee positions was made on 16th June 2019*].

There followed a discussion at the GA concerning how the ex officio members of the Executive Committee were elected (as outlined in the ESM Constitution available on the website (<http://www.esmicro.eu/>)) and the process by which new positions are created by the EC, based on the Society's current need. Concerns were raised regarding the equality and diversity balance of the Executive Committee and the speakers and chairs at the current meeting. The EC agreed to address this important issue.

9. AOB – there were no further items of business.