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62nd Council Meeting of the International Union of Immunological Societies – IUIS Nairobi, Kenya – November 30th, 2014

Activity Report of the European Federation of Immunological Societies - EFIS



This report covers the activities and initiatives undertaken by EFIS since the 60th IUIS Council Meeting held August 22nd, 2013 during the 15th International Congress of Immunology in Milan, Italy.

1. EFIS and its Members

At present, EFIS unites 31 national immunological societies, which collectively represent over 12,000 individual members from 35 countries. It should be recalled that EFIS does not exact dues from its affiliates, requiring for membership only that its societies are members in good standing with the IUIS. Nevertheless, EFIS societies and their individual members are fully eligible to benefit from EFIS support schemes, namely in the form of fellowships, travel bursaries, meeting support and awards and prizes.

The current Board of EFIS, elected during the General Assembly held September 6th, 2012 on occasion of the 3rd Congress of Immunology (ECI) in Glasgow, UK, and holding office until the next General Assembly to be held during the 4th ECI in Vienna, Austria, is composed of: Lorenzo Moretta (Italy), President; René van Lier (The Netherlands), President-elect; Catherine Fridman (France), Past President; Anna Erdei (Hungary), Secretary General; Hannes Stockinger (Austria), Treasurer. Arnd Hoeveler (European Commission) serves in an advisory, non-voting, capacity as EU Liaison. At present, Thomas Wiley acts as EFIS Coordinator.

The Board normally meets on four occasions throughout the year, alternating its venues throughout Europe to meet with its affiliates to enhance interactions or in the nation scheduled to host initiatives supported by the Federation. Since it last reported to IUIS at the above-mentioned 60th Council, the EFIS Board has convened five times: August 24th, 2013 – Milan, Italy; November 16th, 2013 – La Morra, Italy; March 22nd-23rd, 2014 – Paris, France; June 7th, 2014 – Stockholm, Sweden; November 15th, 2014, Istanbul, Turkey.

Detailed information on EFIS is available at www.efis.org

2. Major Undertakings and Decisions

2.1 Women in Immunology Database

To increase the visibility of female immunologists, in April 2014 EFIS launched a comprehensive and easily accessible database of female investigators in Europe with expertise in immunology:

<https://www.efis.org/the-federation/women-in-immunology/about/index.html?nav=true>. The database seeks to provide a tool to assist scientists, universities, research organizations, political institutions, conference organizers and journal editors to identify appropriately qualified female immunologists:

- as candidates for job openings;
- as speakers at conferences and scientific meetings;
- as members in advisory groups, on monitoring panels, committees and commissions;
- manuscript reviewers, commissioned authors, editorial board members.

EFIS member societies were invited to encourage their female members to register and create a profile in the database. Registered profiles, which at the time of writing of this report total upwards of 125, are classified according to sub-discipline and experience, in order to promote the visibility and involvement of young investigators as well as more senior scientists.

2.2 ACTERIA Prizes awarded by EFIS

Once again, EFIS launched the ACTERIA Prizes awarded by EFIS in immunology and allergology. Four prizes in all - two to the best doctoral theses defended in the last 3 years and two to the best early career research to investigators with 10 years postdoctoral experience - will be awarded. The ACTERIA Doctoral Thesis Prizes carry a cash award of €15,000, while the ACTERIA Early Career Research Prizes amount to €25,000 each. In addition, awardees will automatically become eligible for 3-year research grants of up to €50,000 annually. Full details on eligibility criteria and application guidelines are available on the dedicated website: www.acteriaprizes.net. Deadline for submission of applications: December 31st, 2014.

EFIS Member Societies were invited to circulate the availability of the awards through appropriate channels to their membership base and to encourage applications from aspiring candidates meeting eligibility requirements - which necessarily include membership in an EFIS Member National Society. Also, bearing in



mind that nominations can come exclusively from National Societies (4 at most, one for each prize), EFIS Affiliates were requested to make the internal arrangements deemed necessary for the evaluation of applications received from their members (for example, the set-up of ad-hoc review panels/committees). Evaluation procedures will be conducted January/February 2015, with formal nominations by EFIS Societies being made by March 15th, 2015. Formal announcement of the four selected ACTERIA Prize laureates, who will present their work at a special scientific session to be held on the opening day of ECI 2015, will be made in April 2015.

3. ECI 2015 and EEIG ECI-EFIS

3.1 ECI 2015

Planning for the [4th European Congress of Immunology](#) (ECI 2015), to be held in Vienna (AT from September 6th to the 9th, 2015, intensified since Autumn 2013. On behalf of the local organizing society, the Austrian Society for Allergology and Immunology (ÖGAI), Winfried Pickl, President of ECI 2015, and Barbara Bohle, Chair of the Scientific Committee, joined the EFIS Board at its Paris meeting to present the status (in March 2014) of preparations. Moreover, Representatives of EFIS (Lorenzo Moretta, René van Lier, Hannes Stockinger and Thomas Wiley) took part at the most recent meeting of the congress Steering Committee in September 2014.

The scientific program of the congress – based as usual on the four tracks of innate immunity, adaptive immunity, diseases and disease intervention - is shaping up appropriately: Keynote Lectures (4) and Symposia (24) are for the most part defined with invited speakers and chairs, and workshops (72) will be populated with selected abstracts submitted by participants. A number of time slots (90 min.) have also been reserved for joint society and industry-sponsored symposia. Indeed, EFIS and IUIS have committed to organizing one such joint society event.

Registration officially opened on October 31st, 2014 and important dates to bear in mind in the coming months are: February 7th, 2015 – opening of abstract submission; April 30th, 2015 – abstract submission deadline; June 30th, 2015 – early registration fee deadline. In terms of participation, the organizers anticipate a turnout of upwards of 5,000 attendees for the three-day event.

As far as commitment to ECI 2015 is concerned, EFIS has already allocated: € 120,000 for 200 travel grants; € 50,000 for various awards (Ita Askonas Prize, EFIS-IL Best-Cited Article and Best-Cited Review; Day of Immunology); € 12,000 for 12 “Bright Spark” awards; plus nearly € 35,000 for various promotional activities.

3.2 EEIG ECI-EFIS

The European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) European Congress of Immunology (ECI)-EFIS was established 2004 to provide a legal/financial instrument for its founding members – the Austrian, British, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Scandinavian, Spanish, and Societies for Immunology, together with EFIS – with which to organize and run an ECI every three years in a different European city under the aegis of EFIS.

The first three ECI (Paris, 2006; Berlin, 2009; Glasgow, 2012), were organized by a different professional conference organizer (PCO), selected by the respective local host society. The 4th ECI, to be held in Vienna in September 2015, will also be organized by a different PCO. In order to guarantee greater continuity and less duplication of efforts, the EEIG decided to engage a single PCO for the organization of future ECI (at least editions to be held in 2018 and 2021). To this end, tenders were invited from five candidate PCOs, and after extensive comparison and evaluation, the PCO Colloquium was selected.

Another major development within the EEIG ECI-EFIS saw the acceptance of the application for Associated Membership to the Grouping received from the Turkish Society of Immunology (local host Society of ECI 2018).

4. Public Outreach

4.1 Day of Immunology

The [Day of Immunology](#) (DoI), the initiative first launched by EFIS in 2005 and celebrated on April 29th of each year, continues to involve an increasing number of research groups throughout the world in



campaigns and events that seek raise public awareness on the importance of the immune system for health and well-being.

This past year, EFIS – building on ideas emerging at an informal meeting held during the 15th ICI in Milan with representatives from several of its Member Societies – encouraged the organization of DoI campaigns with a “Focus on Vaccinations”. The intent with this proposal was to address increasingly apparent misconceptions among the general public about the safety of vaccines.

Continuing the tradition begun in Glasgow in 2012, the most effective campaigns conducted over both 2014 and 2015 will be rewarded with prizes at a special session/ceremony at ECI 2015. It is the intention of EFIS to pursue the collaboration first initiated in 2013 with IUIS to conduct the competition jointly.

4.2 Developments with EFIS outreach tools

4.2.1 Your Amazing Immune system

Over the course of the past year, the textbook *Your Amazing Immune System – How it Protects Your Body*, was translated into Bosnian and Slovene, thereby bring the number of translations of the original Japanese version to 18. The translation into Arabic is ongoing.

Moreover, the .pdf versions of the above-mentioned translations are currently being integrated into the web version of the Your Amazing Immune System – at interactiveimmunity.net – where they may be downloaded free-of-charge.

In addition, the German Society of Immunology recently proposed the drafting of an additional chapter dedicated to “transplantation immunology”. Negotiations with the Japanese publisher, Yadosha, on authorship and graphics are currently ongoing.

4.2.2 Inside Immunity – www.inside-immunity.org

The web exhibition/slide show developed by EFIS is now available in Catalan, Croatian, Spanish and German, which join the English and French versions launched in 2012.

4.3 Website attack and recovery

In October 2013, the EFIS website was rendered inaccessible by a cyber attack. An operational site was up and running on January 1st, 2014, and in the following months all content was recovered, reviewed and updated. In addition, online application systems were designed and developed for EFIS support schemes (fellowships and meeting support – see below). EFIS is immensely grateful to the web developers engaged to restore the Federation’s Internet presence.

5. **Relations with its Official Journals**

5.1 Immunology Letters

Interaction with Elsevier, the publishers of *Immunology Letters* (IL), continued on a positive note, with EFIS welcoming the policy decision of Elsevier to adopt an open access publishing option for submitting authors. The mutually held goal is to raise the journal’s impact factor (IF), publishing, for example, a greater number of reviews. Agreement with the publisher was also reached on the publication of experimentally oriented proceedings of ECI 2015 in a special issue of IL.

A Special Issue of the proceedings and selected presentations of the EFIS-EJI sponsored IMPULSE meeting has also been published last year (Volume 160, Issue 2 (2014)).

5.2 European Journal of Immunology

EFIS met recently with representatives of the publisher of *European Journal of Immunology* (EJI), Wiley-Verlag, and the journal’s Editor-in-Chief. Both parties expressed their satisfaction with current collaborative arrangements, and looked forward to pursuing proposed initiatives in the future: an enhanced presence of EJI at events bearing the label of an EFIS/EJI sponsored meeting, with, for example, the organization of a meeting session on scientific paper writing and submission, for which EJI had recently prepared guidelines; an “EFIS statement for publication” (in preparation by the EJI Editor-in Chief), regarding issues such as plagiarism, the preference for original articles over reviews; continuing efforts to raise the journal’s IF; the



labeling of a limited number textbooks in immunology and immunology related fields as being “endorsed by EFIS”. Similarly to the agreement with IL, consensus was reached on the publication of clinically oriented proceedings of ECI 2015 as a special issue of EJI.

6. Relations with other organizations

6.1 EULAR

Since 2010, EFIS has pursued relations with the European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR), the main output of which is the organization of joint symposia addressing basic immunology for clinicians. Plans are already in place for the joint symposium entitled *Autoimmunity and inflammation: the price to pay for anti-check point antibody therapies of cancer?*, to be held at the 2015 Annual Congress of Rheumatology (EULAR 2015 – June 13th-16th, 2015, Rome). A similar initiative is being planned for ECI 2015 in Vienna.

6.2 Biomed Alliance

The Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe – BioMed Alliance – is a unique initiative representing 21 leading research-oriented medical societies representing more than 400,000 researchers across Europe. The BioMed Alliance is committed through its actions to promote excellence in European biomedical research and innovation with the goal of improving the health and well-being of all European citizens. EFIS has been a full member of the Alliance since 2010.

The BioMed Alliance was instrumental in lobbying the European Commission for the creation of the Scientific Panel for Health – a science-led stakeholder platform entrusted with elaborating scientific input concerning this societal challenge – within the recently launched Horizon 2020 program. In response to the invitation to nominate candidates to the panel, EFIS submitted the names of Catherine Sautès Fridman, Past President of EFIS, and Steffen Gay. At the time of drafting this report, the candidacy of Catherine Sautès Fridman was approved.

7. EFIS Support

The chief priorities of EFIS are to support education, training and research in immunology, and the enhancement of scientific interaction amongst its Member Societies. Special attention is given to supporting younger scientists, namely through fellowships and travel bursaries. EFIS is able to accomplish these goals thanks to special agreements with its official journals, *Immunology Letters* (IL) and the *European Journal of Immunology* (EJI), which enable the Federation to implement its funding mechanisms of [EFIS-IL Fellowships](#) and [EFIS-EJI Meeting sponsorship](#).

In particular for this latter scheme, EFIS/EJI-sponsored meetings and schools are recognized as repeated serial events of high scientific caliber, with a strong European dimension, attention to the participation of young scientists, and an appropriate gender balance among speakers. Only such meetings will be eligible to receive financial support for both bursaries and general management. These meetings must be titled “EFIS/EJI event/meeting/course on...”. Proposals for meeting support not responding to these criteria will still be eligible for EFIS support, but only in the form of bursaries for young participants. In either case, it will become mandatory for organizers of EFIS-sponsored events to announce on event websites and programs the number of bursaries actually awarded.

As for EFIS-IL Fellowships, it should be noted the World Fellowship scheme was launched this past year to accommodate requests to undertake research stays outside of Europe. While Short-term applications can be submitted year-round, World Fellowship applications are invited in only one call, with only three awards being granted. It should also be noted that the monthly allowance awarded to fellowship holders was raised starting in January 2014 from € 1,500 to € 1,750. The maximum refundable amount for travel expenses is € 500 for Short-term Fellowships and € 1,500 for World Fellowships.



7.1 EFIS-IL Fellowships awarded since August 2013

7.1.1 EFIS-IL Short-term Fellowships (max. 3 months; restricted to Europe)

APPLICANT	NATIONAL SOCIETY	ORIGIN	DESTINATION	GRANT
Coraline Chéneau	SFI	Nantes (FR)	Hannover (DE)	€ 1,500 + travel
Jan Remsik	CIS	Brno (CZ)	Bratislava (SK)	€ 4,500 + travel
Ana Entrena Martínez	SEI	Madrid (ES)	Heidelberg (DE)	€ 4,500 + travel
Miriam Rivka Brezis	IIS	Rehovot (IL)	Paris (FR)	€ 4,500 + travel
Maya Hadzhieva	BuSI	Sofia (BG)	Paris (FR)	€ 4,500 + travel
Alessandro Vacchini	SIICA	Milano (IT)	Montpellier (FR)	€ 4,500 + travel
Zoltan Szittner	MIT	Budapest (HU)	Amsterdam (NL)	€ 4,500 + travel
Lejla Alic	<i>None*</i>	Sarajevo (BA)	Hamburg (DE)	€ 4,500 + travel
Miguel Muñoz Ruiz	SEI	Madrid (ES)	Lisbon (PT)	€ 4,500 + travel
Giulia Camilla Varnier	SIICA	Genova (IT)	London (UK)	€ 5,250 + travel
Maria Elvira Bernabeu	SEI	Madrid (ES)	Budapest (HU)	€ 5,250 + travel
Rosita Rigoni	SIICA	Milano (IT)	Belinzona (CH)	€ 5,250 + travel
Francesca Graziano	SIICA	Milano (IT)	Paris (FR)	€ 3,500 + travel
Branka Popovic	HID	Rijeka (HR)	Freiburg (DE)	€ 3,500 + travel
Ibrahim Hatipoglu	TSI	Kocaeli (TR)	Nijmegen (NL)	€ 5,250 + travel
Ola Grimsholm	SSI	Göteborg (SV)	Roma (IT)	€ 5,250 + travel
Esin Alpdundar	TSI	Ankara (TR)	Dublin (EI)	€ 5,250 + travel
Béla Kovacs	SRI	Târgu Mureş (RO)	Pecs (HU)	€ 5,250 + travel
Andrea Acebes Huerta	SEI	Oviedo (ES)	Messina (IT)	€ 5,250 + travel
Anna Magdalena Gram	NVVI	Utrecht (NL)	Aarhus (DK)	€ 5,250 + travel
Dániel Szili	MIT	Budapest (HU)	Sheffield (UK)	€ 5,250 + travel
Helena Izquierdo	SEI	Madrid (ES)	Paris (FR)	€ 5,250 + travel
Javier Rodriguez-Carrio	SEI	Oviedo (ES)	Amsterdam (NL)	€ 5,250 + travel
Lenka Hromádková	CIS	Prague (CZ)	Stockholm (SV)	€ 5,250 + travel
María Teresa Ciudad	SEI	Barcelona (ES)	Amsterdam (NL)	€ 5,250 + travel
Stanleyson Hato	NVVI	Nijmegen (NL)	Cambridge (UK)	€ 5,250 + travel

* Applicant from country without a National Society (Bosnia-Herzegovina)

7.1.2 EFIS-IL World Fellowships (max. 6 months – not restricted to Europe)

APPLICANT	NATIONAL SOCIETY	ORIGIN	DESTINATION	GRANT
Arianne Michèle Brandsma	NVVI	Utrecht (NL)	Albuquerque (US)	€ 3,500 + travel
Cheng Chih Hsiao	NVVI	Taiwan (ROC)	Amsterdam (NL)	€ 7,000 + travel
Alessandra Tamaro	NVVI	Amsterdam (NL)	St. Louis (USA)	€ 10,500 + travel
Elisabeth Gadermeier	OGAI	Vienna (AT)	New York (USA)	€ 10,500 + travel



7.2 Meeting Support (bursaries and general organizational support) granted since August 2013

EVENT	VENUE	DATES	TOTAL GRANT
1st Training for Trainers of International Network University for Molecular Allergology and	Vienna (AT)	3-5/12/2013	€ 5,000
Quantitative Immunology	Grenoble (FR)	9-14/03/2014	€ 2,000
EFIS/EJI-ENII Summer School in Advanced Immunology	Sardegna (IT)	5-12/05/2014	€ 20,000
EMBO Conference Lymphocyte Signaling	Bertinoro (IT)	17-21/05/20104	€ 7,000
11 th EFIS-EJI Tatra Conference	Štrbské Pleso (SK)	6-10/09/2014	€ 21,100
Natural Killer Cell Symposium	Hannover (DE)	10-12/09/2014	€ 4,000
Mucosal Immunology, Crossing borders	Lunteren (NL)	3-4/04/2014	€ 5,000
The 2nd International Molecular Immunology & Immunogenetics Congress (MIMIC-II)	Antalya (TR)	27-30/04/2014	€ 10,000
Cytokine and Chemokine Conference of the French Society for Immunology	Le Croisic (FR)	19-21/05/2014	€ 3,000
European Phagocyte Workshop	Utrecht (NL)	30/04-3/05/2014	€ 10,000
14th international conference "Progress in Vaccination against Cancer" (PIVAC-14)	Roma (IT)	24-26/09/2014	€ 1,500
6th South East European Immunology School	Timisoara (RO)	26-29/09/2014	€ 18,000
3rd Conference of Translational Medicine on the Pathogenesis and Therapy of Immune-Mediated	Milano (IT)	29/09-01/10/2014	€ 5,000
The 3rd Belgrade Symposium on Immunoregulation	Belgrade, RS	25-29/05/2015	€ 15,000
Black Sea Immunology School 2014	Varna (BG)	2/10/2014	€ 9,000
Fifth International Workshop on CMV & Immunosenescence	Amsterdam (NL)	20-21/11/2014	€ 5,000
Be There or Die? The Role Of The Microenvironment In B Cell Behaviour In Health	San Feliu de Guixols (ES)	16-21/05/2015	€ 5,000
The Maternal Immune System in Pregnancy	Castellammare di Stabia (IT)	7-9/12/2014	€ 10,000
ENII Summer School on Advanced Immunology	Alghero, Sardegna (IT)	11-18/05/2015	€ 15,000
2nd Meeting of the BSI Leukocyte Migration Affinity Group Leukocyte Migration in Health &	Birmingham (UK)	10-11/02/2015	€ 1,260

7.3 Other forms of support include EFIS awards

7.3.1 Day of Immunology Awards

To acknowledge the best public awareness campaigns submitted by: a European Society (€ 2,000); an International Society (€ 2,000); a society participating in the DoI competition for the first time (the "Newcomer" award; € 1,000); one last prize (€ 1,000) goes to the most original campaign.

7.3.2 Ita Askonas Award

Established by EFIS and the EJI to recognize female group leaders in immunology who have run an independent laboratory for a minimum of four and no more than eight years; this prize consists of a € 20,000 cash award plus travel support to attend the ECI;

7.3.3 the EFIS/IL Prizes for the Most-cited Article and Most-cited Review

Awarded to works published in IL within the 3-year period leading up to the triennial ECI; the prizes include a € 5,000 cash award plus travel support of the key author to attend the ECI.



7.3.4 EFIS-IL Lecture Award

Awarded an EFIS member society that invites an outstanding European scientist to speak at its national meeting (award value: € 1,000 to the Society; € 700 honorarium to the laureate). The most recent Awardees are:

- Hergen Spits, nominated by the Italian Society for Immunology, Clinical Immunology and Allergology (SIICA);
- Peter Openshaw, nominated by the Irish Society for Immunology (ISI);
- Luke O'Neill, nominated by the German Society for Immunology (DGfI);
- Fritz Melchers, nominated by the Hungarian Society for Immunology (MIT);
- Marcel van den Brink, nominated by the Dutch Society for Immunology (NVVI).