



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022 - ISSUE 99

.....FROM THE EFI PRESIDENT

DEAR EFI FRIENDS



October was a busy time for the EFI committees. We had our first face to face committee meetings in Leiden since 2019. It was a very full and useful long weekend. The Executive Committee met firstly with the chairs of the various EFI committees. This was a productive interaction as it gave everyone a clear oversight of the activities that have been taking place and of the plans for future developments. You can read the full updates from the individual EFI committees elsewhere in this newsletter.

Briefly, I will comment on some of the work that is ongoing. The Education Committee, with Deb Sage as chair, has progressed the European Technical Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics Qualification (ETHIQ) which will open very soon. This training scheme, which was successfully piloted in France with four candidates, is aimed at all technologists working in our field particularly those that do not have their own national training scheme. The members of the Education Committee (present and past) have put much effort into the development of this qualification, so I hope to see technologists register and benefit from the training that will soon be available for applicants. As described during our General Assembly in Amsterdam earlier this year, the Accreditation Committee, with chair Blanka Vidan-Jeras, is pursuing recognition as an ISO recognised certification body. This is a huge task, but the team are extremely focused and have already made progress in this endeavour. The EPT committee, under chair Helle Bruunsgaard, continues to improve the standards for EPT providers and will soon publish the most recent update of these standards. Eric Spierings, chair of

the IT and Bioinformatics committee, presented us with their exciting challenge for facilitating conformity of HLA data to enable data sharing without loss of information. This development will impact on the work of the Standards Committee and hopefully we will see 'data standards' in the next full EFI Standards revision. In the meantime the Standards Committee has finalised version 8.1 which will be available to review shortly. Unfortunately Luca Vega, chair of the Scientific Committee was unable to make the meeting due to a professional commitment. This committee has been seeking new members and having received nominations, will soon be back to full quorum.

The Executive Committee had their own meeting where we made progress with our activities including the ongoing review of our statutes (in response to legal advice received several years ago). We finally think we have finished this task and the minor amendments to be made will be published online and in this newsletter prior to the next meeting of the General Assembly in Nantes. As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, I was pleased to learn that we have received nominations for the vacancies that will arise on the Executive Committee at the next General Assembly and I encourage all members to participate in the elections.

An area that required much discussion at our Executive Committee meeting is the EFI budget. As expected our expenditure is currently exceeding income due to the absence of profitable conferences during the pandemic. However, we were all delighted to hear that the excellent conference held in Amsterdam made an overall profit despite being more costly to prepare due to the hybrid format. So congratulations to Eric and Sebastiaan and their local teams for this successful outcome. As the EFI bank accounts have savings, we can at present continue to meet our financial commitments, but we also need to have very careful forward planning in place due to the uncertain financial times ahead.

Overall, the Executive Committee members are making progress with the various ongoing projects. Our new members have really picked up the baton from the departing members and have made an immediate contribution. I am grateful to all the officers and councillors for their contributions.

Following a review of the workload undertaken by the EFI Central and Accreditation Offices in Leiden, the Executive Committee approved expenditure to cover an extra day of

.....FROM THE EFI PRESIDENT (CONTINUED)

administrative duties. It is my pleasure to welcome Ingrid Abelman back to the EFI office. Ingrid worked with EFI several years ago supporting the secretariat. She is now predominantly supporting the work of the Education Committee.

Last month, I attended the American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI) conference. This was my first ASHI conference in many years and it was wonderful to meet and chat with ASHI members that I had not seen for a long time and to meet new members. I had a lunch meeting with the ASHI President, Annette Jackson, the ASHI President Elect (now President) Rob Liwski, and the APHIA President, Heather Dunckley. Unfortunately Dada Ashraf, President of ARSHI, could not make the meeting but hopefully we will see him in Nantes. We had a very informative discussion and all agreed to remain committed to supporting each other's activities, particularly the "International Summerschool", which this year is hosted by ARSHI in Egypt. I look forward to reading the reports from the attendees of the Summerschool in a future edition of this newsletter. The EFI faculty for this meeting will be David Turner and Luca Vago – thank you both for committing your time to this meeting.

During the ASHI conference, it was fantastic to see presentations being made by several EFI members including Sandra Tafalo, from Porto, Portugal whose abstract "Identification of a Novel 43Q Eplet by Studying Sera from a Highly Sensitized Patient with a Pan-HLA-A Reactive Antibody" was selected for

presentation in the International Scholar session. Congratulations to Sandra.

So now our focus is on our next conference in Nantes, France, April 26-29 2023. The website is open (efi-conference.org) and the abstract submission deadline is imminent, and will probably have passed by the time you are reading this letter. Don't miss the early registration deadline date of 25th February 2023. Pierre-Antoine Gourraud and colleagues have put together an interesting programme with the theme: "Big Data In Immunogenetics At The Crossroad Of Care, Tools, And Research". We wish them well with their final arrangements.

As we approach the end of 2022, we can look back and reflect on the previous year. I am thankful to all the EFI members that have supported to our successful conference in Amsterdam, to all the committee chairs and their teams for their continued contributions, and to Sonja and Sandra for the running of the EFI accreditation and central office. We have benefited from the hugely successful SARs-Cov-2 vaccination programmes allowing us to enjoy the "back to normal" professional interactions. However, I am acutely aware that this year has not been joyous for all; my thoughts are with everyone as I wish you, your families and friends a healthy, successful and especially a peaceful 2023.

Ann-Margaret Little



REMINDER
2022 membership fee payment

www.efi-web.org/account

Please login to your personal Dashboard and pay your 2022 membership online.
For questions and/or assistance please contact the EFI Office.