

Board Meeting of IFAO

San Francisco, Friday June 17, 2016

Minutes v4

The meeting was held during the ASAIO Meeting in San Francisco, from 7 to 9 PM at the Market One restaurant. Attendees from the ASAIO were: Profs. Ash, Malchesky, Fissell, and Holman. From ESAO: Profs. Stegmayr, Vienken and Schima. From JSAO: Profs. Masuzawa, Matsuda, Nishimura, Taenaka, Toda and Sawa.

Prof. Stegmayr opened the meeting by summarizing a discussion about the relationship of IFAO to the member societies. A lunch-time meeting was held on Friday between Peter Wearden and Mark Slaughter (former ASAIO presidents), Heinrich Schima (the Congress President of the next IFAO meeting) and Bernd Stegmayr (chairman of IFAO). This meeting confirmed interest in the continued cooperation of IFAO and member societies. Prof. Stegmayr also introduced William Fissell, who assumed the Presidency of ASAIO at their board meeting on Friday.

The following Agenda points were discussed at our meeting:

1) **Concept and activities of IFAO**:   
The members agreed that the mission stated in our Constitution is still accurate: “to increase and encourage knowledge and research on artificial organs, apheresis, tissue engineering, regenerative medicine and other related topics, to facilitate the international exchange of knowledge, and to provide education related to the improvement and optimal utilization of organ assist devices.”

The IFAO presentations held during the intermediate yearly congresses of ASAIO, JSAO and ESAO were suggested to be condensed into a 30 minute session with two speakers. The presentations should focus on international practices and differences in application of artificial organs. This shortened IFAO presentation should enable it to be included in a plenary session, without competing sessions, during the congress. For the IFAO joint congress meetings (held every second year in conjunction with ASAIO, JSAO or ESAO) a half day program might be created by IFAO, or separate sessions could be created that contain invited speakers from each joint society of IFAO.

The Policies for Operation of IFAO states that each joint Congress of IFAO and a member society will be supported by a grant of $25,000 USDfrom IFAO (equaling the $15,000 USD that the society has paid to IFAO during the period between congresses and an additional $10,000 USD from finances of IFAO). The member society hosting an IFAO Congress can use the grant from IFAO any way that they wish to increase the international focus of the Congress. However traditionally much of the grant has been used to support travel by young investigators from outside the locale of hosting society. These young scientists (below 35 years of age) have submitted abstracts to the Congress, and have applied for a travel scholarship. Usually 10 such travel scholarships have been approved for each IFAO Congress, at $1000 USD each. Prof. Schima stated that for the 2017 Congress IFAO funds will be used for approximately 50% for intercontinental keynote speakers and 50% for young investigator support (including those from developing countries, see further discussion below). It was suggested that the joint congress might include a specific Abstract Session for these sponsored young investigators.

**Action taken:** The plan for use of IFAO funds funding young investigators at the IFAO-ESAO Congress was met with approval by the group. It is recommended that each congress president give a written report to IFAO on the use of the money, within one year after the termination of the joint Congress.

2) **IFAO presentations at the ESAO meeting in 2016**:

It has been helpful to have a short report on activities of IFAO at each of the annual conferences of our members. Regarding the ESAO meeting in Warsaw in September, Prof. Stegmayr will be at this meeting to provide an overview of IFAO activities. There are several Board Members from Japan who are also planning to attend. Drs. Ash, Fissell and Holman also said they might attend. Presentations that would be appropriate were suggested, such as: A) Development of various autologous bioprosthetic grafts with a unique in-body tissue engineering: Prof. Yoshiaki Takewa at National Cerebral and Cardiovascular Center, Osaka, and B) Hemodialysis in Japan. Kenichi Matsuda, MD, PhD, Univ Yamanshi School of Medicine, Yamanshi, Japan

**3) IFAO presentations at the JSAO meeting in 2016:**

Regarding the JSAO congress in Yonago in November, our Japanese IFAO Board members will be able to provide an overview of IFAO activities. From ESAO, Prof. Stegmayr will attend and possibly Prof. Vienken. Other attendees are not determined yet.

**Action taken**: Prof. Stegmayr will contact ASAIO and ESAO to see who might be interested in giving a short presentation on IFAO activities.

**4)** **Short financial report**:  
Prof. Ash gave a brief report on society finances. Current investment portfolio value plus cash is approximately $229,000. This amount has been essentially constant for the past several years. There has only been one check written in the past year, that of $17,500 to ASAIO to support the 2015 IFAO-ASAIO meeting of 2015. Merrill Lynch continues to manage investments of IFAO.

**5) How to proceed with the yearly payment of dues by societies, since there were a few missed years due to invoicing problems:**    
There were no dues paid by JSAO and ASAIO societies during the years of 2012 to 2015, because they did not receive timely invoices for these dues. ESAO paid for 2012, 2013, 2014 (but not 2015). ASAIO held the joint congress ASAIO-IFAO in Chicago June 2015. Rather than to require payment for past dues, the IFAO Board agreed in 2015 to pay ASAIO $7500 less than the usual $25,000 support for the IFAO-ASAIO meeting ($17,500). A similar payment adjustment will be made for support of the 2019 JSAO-IFAO meeting.

**Action taken**: Upon a suggestion of Prof. Ash the membership fee for 2015 should be waived for all three societies based on the saving of IFAO. This was approved.

**Action understood:** With exception of the adjustment for payment of dues from 2012-2014, IFAO will continue to provide $25,000 support for each joint IFAO Congress in the future.

**Action taken**: The Board agreed that our Treasurer (Karen Burke) should send dues invoices to all three member societies as soon as possible for the year 2016. Dues invoices in the future should be sent to member societies in the first quarter of each year.

**6) Draft program of the IFAO congresses in Vienna 2017 and in Osaka in 2019, and travel award scholarships:**

Regarding the 2017 IFAO-ESAO meeting in Vienna, Prof. Schima presented the plans for the IFAO program in Vienna, Austria, September 6-9. The theme is “Artificial Organs in the Orchestra of Life.” Organizing Local Institutions include the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Cardiovascular Research and the Medical University of Vienna. The venue will be at the University hospital campus, in part to diminish costs and to provide a collegial atmosphere. The scientific and social programs are now being created.

IFAO funds for this Congress will be used for approximately 50% for intercontinental keynote speakers and 50% for young investigator support (including those from developing countries). Twelve $1000 USD travel scholarships will be awarded to young investigators submitting abstracts. It is planned that 4 scholarships will be apportioned to young investigators from areas served by JSAO, 4 from areas served by ASAIO and 4 from other international locations. In the future, investigators submitting abstracts will be encouraged to fill in blanks on the abstract forms indicating their age whether they are a member of one of our continental societies, and their willingness to be considered for a travel scholarship.

**Action:** Prof. Schima proposed that the member societies decide which investigators from their area of the world receive scholarships. The score of the abstract submitted will be one criterion for this decision. The Board agreed with this plan. ESAO will choose the scholarship winners from other International locations.

Prof. Schima has printed posters and cards available with information on this Congress meeting, and distributed some to the Board.

There was some discussion about the timing of the IFAO presentation at this meeting. Prof. Schima plans to integrate IFAO presentations within various topics discussed at the meeting.   
  
Regarding the 2019 IFAO-JSAO meeting in Osaka, Prof. Sawa proceeded with a short description of planning for the 2019 IFAO-JSAO meeting in Osaka. It will be held November 28-30, 2019. Venue will be the Osaka International Convention Center. Prof. Sawa will be President of the IFAO section and Prof. Toda President for the JSAO section. English presentations will be held during two days of the meeting.

**7) Structure of grants from IFAO to meetings of national societies that are not members of IFAO:**   
For several years IFAO offered to provide a $1000 travel scholarship to national societies of artificial organs (who are not members of IFAO). The purpose is to assist them in bringing members of OUR societies (or a highly recognized expert from one of OUR member countries) to their meeting to give presentations. Payment is directly to the society planning the meeting. This scholarship has been awarded infrequently, less than once per year, and by prior board action is limited to two per year.

**Action taken**: The Board did not make any decision about whether this travel scholarship program for national societies should be continued, or not.

**8) Current status of Asia-Pacific Society for Artificial Organs:** A short discussion was held on the APSAO and its relationship to the JSAO. JSAO helped to found this society and gives monetary support for its meetings. The Korean Society for Artificial Organs was founded in 2015, with support and guidance from APSAO. Currently, JSAO represents the interests of APSAO at the IFAO Board and APSAO has input to the Board of JSAO.

**Action:** The Board will continue to rely on JSAO for reports on further progress of APSAO and related societies.

**9) Relationship between IFAO and national and regional artificial organ societies that are not members of IFAO:**   
It was suggested that the model of JSAO and APSAO could be extended to ASAIO and ESAO. If this were the case, the Latin American Society on Biomaterials, Artificial Organs (LASBOA) would have input and representation at the ASAIO Board, and ASAIO would represent the interests of LASBOA at IFAO. ESAO might represent interests of other societies also. The discussion of eventual fees from additional societies was discussed but no decision taken.

**Action:** IFAO waits for more information and eventual requests from these regional and national societies.

**10) IFAO Official Journal report (Artificial Organs):**

Prof. Malchesky reported that the Artificial Organs journal is doing well. Manuscript submissions continue to increase, and now are over 400 per year. Rejection rates are up also, although quality articles are always published. Prof. Malchesky said he would appreciate it if Board Members would promote our "Pioneer Editorial" series in Artificial Organs and feel welcomed to reach out to those you think should be included. He also stated that he would like to include more information on the activities of IFAO, in the journal. He requested that IFAO periodically send the journal an update on activities of IFAO and member societies.

**Action taken**: Prof. Malchesky invited Board Members to submit manuscripts in the "Pioneer Editorial" series in Artificial Organs and promote others to write some also. Prof. Ash will update Prof. Malchesky on IFAO activities.   
  
**11) Rejuvenation of INFA:**   
There was a short discussion by Prof. Vienken, indicating that INFA is now being resurrected, principally through efforts of the Russian investigators.

**Action decided**: Prof. Vienken will summarize the structure and mission of INFA in relation to the IFAO and distribute information by email to IFAO governors.

**12) Website improvement (ifao.org):**

There was a short discussion about the website, ifao.org. Particularly, it should include more information about the activities of the member society. It would be helpful if one page could be devoted to activities of each member society, and that this page be made lively and attractive. There was agreement that perhaps each society could create their own content to fill this page, in the form of a one-page document containing descriptions and photographs. Prof. Ash will check to see if a website manager could transfer information from one page documents into the WordPress program that creates our website. Another suggestion was to include more historical information about each member society. Prof. Ash suggested that if each society website has a page related to history, then the ifao.org website could be linked to these specific pages. Prof. Masuzawa stated that the IFAO website should post a future schedule of conferences for all member societies, not only for the next year but also that for several years later if possible.  
**Action decided**: Prof. Ash will determine costs of having a website manager support the more complete and detailed presentations relating to activities of the society. He stated that he will immediately post all information about societies and meetings that he receives.

**Post-meeting note by Dr. Ash:** Our website designer states that we will soon have a blank page format to distribute to the member societies. On this page they can put any type of information desired to describe their activities (text, pictures, etc.), or update prior information. Also, our website originator Ms. Kloepfer recently upgraded the ifao.org website to be compatible with mobile, hand-held computer devices. Our Board members should evaluate its function on these devices.

The dinner was completed at 9 PM. All agreed it was a valuable meeting, and there was much enthusiasm about the future of IFAO.

Stephen R. Ash, MD, FACP

Bernd Stegmayr, MD