

General Assembly of the ISBT

Draft Minutes of the General Assembly of the ISBT

Date: Wednesday June 2, 2021

Location (On-line): Juno (ISBT In Focus) Platform

Time: 14:00 CEST

1. Welcome – ISBT President

Attendees were welcomed to the on-line General Assembly 2021. Erica Wood thanked everyone for attending it and noted that the purpose of this session is to summarize the fiscal year from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. The quorum of the meeting had been reached with 196 attendees, and members were encouraged to vote when requested.

2. Draft Minutes of the General Assembly 2020, June 8 – virtual meeting

The minutes from the 2020 General Assembly which was held on-line, have been made available to members with the invitation to this General Assembly. Erica mentioned that there are a few sentences duplicated in the minutes and these will be corrected. The recommendation of the Board is for the membership to accept these minutes. The motion was proposed by John Semple and seconded by Silvano Wendel. Therefore, the motion to accept the 2020 minutes was passed.

3. Report of ISBT President

Erica thanked Martin Olsson, ISBT Past President, and all the board members who retired after they completed their term. The new full board was announced on the last General Assembly and Erica presented a slide with their names, positions and headshots, thanking them for working under difficult circumstances created by the pandemic with meeting being online instead of meeting face-to-face (f2f) meetings during congresses. Erica also thanked Jenny White (ISBT Executive Director) for doing a great job in her first year especially under the current difficult circumstances.

As part of the strategic plan for 2019-2024, ISBT is committed to sharing knowledge and experiences through educational activities, digital resources, and working party activities. The ISBT WPs have been very active this year despite the pandemic. ISBT has also been busy re-imagining our congresses to online events with a range of new ideas including themed days in ISBT In Focus, but we are all looking forward to having f2f congresses in the near future.

The ISBT publications are continuing to be successful. Erica thanked Miquel Lozano the Editor in Chief (E-i-C) for Vox Sanguinis (Vox), and Pieter van der Meer E-i-C for the ISBT Science Series (SS) for their leadership, and all the editorial boards of Vox and SS.

ISBT continues to strengthen governance and operational aspects despite challenging working arrangements and the international outreach and advocacy through our own means and through partners such as WHO.

Erica shared a summary of the year 2020-2021 and mentioned that on the COVID front, ISBT has made resource pages open to all, held open access webinars, and has had a very rapid response in publishing COVID-19 papers. ISBT has supported six Academy events in five countries, with other events approved but postponed due to the pandemic. The ISBT Academy applications policy has been reviewed and updated. The Society worked with a Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with different societies such

as AABB, ABHH, ICTMG and EBA. ISBT has also maintained official relations with WHO since 1955 with activities including the World Blood Donor Day 2020, and currently working on the World Blood Donor Day 2021. ISBT has supported WHO through other various activities such as updating WHO Clinical Use of Blood manual, contributing to the development of haemovigilance tools, and participating in meetings on COVID-19 convalescent plasma (CCP). ISBT also joined the AUDA NEPAD partnership platform to support African Blood Regulators Forum (ABRF) with Academy funding and ISBT WP input to WHO haemovigilance workshops in Africa during 2020. The 36th International congress of the ISBT, planned in Barcelona for June 2020 was postponed to December 2020 which in the end, was transformed into ISBT2020, our first virtual congress. We are hoping to reschedule an ISBT congress in Barcelona as soon as possible! In the past year, the board has met on-line six times and the Executive committee, four times. Other Standing Committees (SC) such as the Academy SC, Vox SC, ISAC and others, have also met on-line in the past year. Erica thanked the 11 Corporate Partners (CP) we had last year for not only their financial support, but also for their technical and scientific contributions to the Society and mentioned that this year we have two new CP in bronze level: Glycorex and Sysmex.

4. Report of the Secretary General

Gwen Clarke showed a graph where a slight drop on membership is noticed. Nevertheless, she mentioned that ISBT has maintained the breadth of membership across the WHO regions, and gained some members in South East Asia and the Americas. ISBT offered 18 webinars in total: 7 related to COVID-19, 6 on other topics, and 5 in collaboration with ISBT CPs. Also, nine Live Journal Clubs were held in a range of topics including COVID-19. ISBT also revised and published Beryl Armstrong's book that was first published by ISBT in 2008, "Introduction to Blood Transfusion: from donor to recipient". The 2020 version is now freely accessible on the ISBT website and the Wiley library. Based on this e-book, an e-learning project based on its content is being developed. A Transfusion Reactions Interactive e-learning module was developed by the Clinical Transfusion WP. It was launched on March 25, 2021 and includes 2 introductory modules and 7 case studies; 8 EBAH CME points are awarded on completion. In July 2020, ISBT organized a live virtual event: "ISBT Summer highlights". There were 9 expert speakers over 3 days with a topic per day. All the content is now available on ISBT Education. The virtual congress (ISBT2020) took place in December 2020 and had over 1800 delegates from 97 countries, 40 scientific sessions, 252 presentations, 550 e-posters, a Young Professionals Council (YPC) breakfast, 31 exhibiting companies and 7 sponsored sessions. The ISBT Award winners from 2020 were Judith Chapman (ISBT Executive Director for over 10 years), Dana Devine (former Editor in Chief for Vox Sanguinis) and Susan Stramer. The Jean Julliard Award winner for 2020 was Angelo D'Alessandro and the Presidential Award winner, Anneke Brand, received the award in a ceremony at the ISBT Central Office in Amsterdam. The Developing Country Award was given to the Life Blood Centre in India and the Best Paper Prize 2019 was awarded to Carl McDonald *et al* for the paper "Extending the 30-minute rule for red cell units – investigation of the bacterial risk of 60-minute exposures to ambient temperature".

ISBT has 14 working parties, all of which have been active during 2019-20. Applications for ISBT Academy support has been increasing over the years, but there was a drop off in 2020 as some events were

postponed due to COVID-19. ISBT financially supported 6 events, one endorsement of educational course and one application for the use of logo.

5. Announcement of Honorary Members

Gwen welcomed Ravi Reddy, ISBT President from 2016 to 2018, as an Honorary Member. Ravi is still involved in the Society as the Chair of the ISBT Foundation.

6. Retiring Working Party Chairpersons

Gwen mentioned that Mike Busch, former chair of the Transfusion Transmitted Infectious Diseases WP, and current ISBT President Elect, as well as Michael Bread, former chair of the Information Technology WP, had stepped down as WP Chairs. The new Chairs

7. Financial report 2020-21

Eric Jansen presented the finance report outlining the financial highlights of 2019/20. He mentioned that the impact of COVID-19 has been significant on many levels, including financially. Instead of the Barcelona congress we had a virtual congress in December, ISBT2020 which was very popular and financially successful. Thanks to the insurance for the meeting in Barcelona, €187.000 was recuperated. Therefore, the total income is on the same level as 2019-2020 which is exceptional in a year where only one congress is held. Also, the total expenses were much lower, mainly because there wasn't much travelling due to COVID-19. The total financial result was quite positive and will be donated, as the rules state, to the ISBT Foundation.

With the decrease in membership and corresponding income, costs for membership benefits such as *Vox Sanguinis* also decreased during 2020-21. The income from Corporate Partners (CP) is €40.000 thanks to some new CPs which gave us some extra income. We also received about €20.000 from advertising in *Transfusion Today* and €17.000 from the ICCBA donation. The total income for this year is 1.1 million compared to 1.2 million from last year.

Due to the lack of F2F congresses (ISBT and others) there was a significant decrease in travel costs, but digital costs were increased. The staff costs also increased because of the new Education Project Officer hired to implement the strategic plan to offer e-learning. Also, a pension plan for the ISBT staff (excluding the ED) was put into place which resulted in a small increase in fixed staff costs. Promotion expenses were not as high as normal due to the lack of a F2F congress.

The accumulated surplus is still at a high level which is very good. Nevertheless, this coming year it might go down because of the lack of insurance for our congress and the fact that we only have one virtual congress instead of 2 face-to-face regional congresses, so a lost is expected. No questions were asked regarding the treasurer's report. The motion to accept the financial statement was proposed by Silvano Wendel and seconded by John Semple. A poll appeared on the screen for ISBT members to vote: do you accept the financial statement for 2020-2021? 96% of the membership accepted it. The financial statement was accepted.

8. Membership fees 2022/23

The board made a recommendation to not change the membership fees for this year. No questions were asked regarding membership fees. The motion was proposed by Silvano Wendel and seconded by John Semple. A poll appeared on the screen for ISBT members to vote: accept the proposal for no change in membership fees? 97% of the membership accepted it. The motion was passed.

9. Any other business

No questions nor comments arose.

10. Announcement of the date of the next General Assembly

The next General Assembly is planned to take place in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday June 7, 2022.

11. Close of meeting

Erica Wood thanked all the people involved in organizing this online General Assembly and thanked the members present for attending, proposing, seconding and voting.