

**Minutes of the ESM General Assembly
32nd European Society for Microcirculation Meeting Aarhus 2023**

Time:

Tuesday 25th April 2023 17.30-18.30

Location:

Auditorium A ("Lille Sal"), Concert Hall Conference Centre, Aarhus, Denmark

Participants: 30 ESM members

Welcome:

Henning Morawietz thanked all for attending and welcomed the guests to the meeting.

Agenda

1. Apologies

2. Matters Arising and Approval of the minutes 2021

All

3. ESM- Aarhus 2023

Prof. Christian Aalkjær

Meeting update

4. ESM Finance, Membership and Website Report

Prof. Nicola Brown

5. Awards

Prof. Henning Morawietz

Malpighi Award

ESM-JVR Prize Award

Early Career Investigator Travel and Posters Awards

6. ESM 2025

TBA

7. Journal of Vascular Research

Prof. Brant Isakson

8. Committee and Meeting Reports

ESM Strategy Committee - Update on activities and members

Prof. B Houben/Dr R Siow

ILCM/WCM Beijing 2023

Prof. Gerry Meininger

Other Meetings 2021-2023

Prof. Henning Morawietz

9. ESM/MCS – Joint Initiative

Prof. Henning Morawietz

10. Election of ESM Executive Committee Members

Prof. Henning Morawietz

President - TBD

Treasurer - Professor Nicola Brown

11. Free Discussion/AOB

1. Apologies

Richard Siow (Co-Chairman Strategy Committee).

2. Matters Arising and Approval of the Minutes 2021

All

Prof. Boy Houben suggested the inclusion of a discussion about the ESM Working groups (*Free Discussion/AOB) which was agreed by all present. The members approved the Minutes of the General Assembly held at the ESM Online Meeting 2021.

3. ESM- Aarhus 2023

Prof. Christian Aalkjær

Meeting update

Prof. Christian Aalkjær presented a brief summary of the 2023 Congress. The ESM Congress 2023 is held from April 24-27. The main venue is the Concert Hall Conference Centre in Aarhus. It provides excellent meeting facilities, lecture halls, meeting rooms and poster areas. The members of the scientific committee Prof. Christian Aalkjær (Aarhus, Denmark), Prof. Ana Briones (Madrid, Spain), Prof. Nicola Brown (Sheffield, UK), Prof. Cor de Wit (Lübeck, Germany), Prof. Ylva Hellsten (Copenhagen, Denmark), Prof. Daniel Henrion (Angers, France) and Prof. Ulf Simonsen (Aarhus, Denmark) have organized the program for the ESM congress 2023. There are 260 registrants from 24 countries. We

have 6 plenary lectures, 66 session lectures and 115 posters. Following a selection process by the Scientific Committee and the Executive Committee of the ESM 36 abstracts have been selected for oral presentation with a focus on early career investigators. We have poster prizes in each of 11 poster sessions, a prize for the best oral presentation in the Young Investigator Session and the two most prestigious awards of our society – the Malpighi Award lecture (presented by Prof. Britta Engelhardt, Bern, Switzerland) and the JVR/ESM Award lecture (presented by Prof. James S. Bell, Cardiff, UK). The scientific program (speakers, chairs) and the scientific committees have an almost equal number of Female: Male participants. In order to especially support our early-career scientists, a Young investigator course embracing the conference has been organized by Prof. Christian Aalkjær and Prof. Tom Jepps. We have 65 young cardiovascular researchers from 10 countries in a course discussing the arterial wall. It includes lectures by leading experts, a cycle exercise with measurements of cardiac output and blood pressure, a lecture on publication of data and after the conference group discussions of subjects presented at the conference. The course is concluded by a network dinner and supported by the Danish Cardiovascular Academy.

Fundraising for the meeting had been challenging but 7 sponsors/4 funding agencies/8 exhibitors had been secured, with a full list available in the abstract booklet. In addition, the German, Swiss, and British Microcirculation Societies have supported the meeting. The final accounting will not be available until after the meeting, but the budget suggests a small surplus, which will be credited to ESM. Prof. Christian Aalkjær is looking forward to the program of an inspiring and excellent ESM 2023 Congress in Aarhus which is probably the best microcirculatory meeting in the world.

Finally, he highlighted the excellent teamwork in the ESM Executive Committee, especially with Prof. Nicola Brown and Prof. Henning Morawietz, in the last years of the COVID-19 pandemic. The members of the General Assembly expressed their gratitude to him for the excellent collaboration in the last 4 years and the outstanding organization of the ESM Conference in Aarhus 2023.

4. ESM Finance, Membership and Website Report

Prof. Nicola Brown

Prof. Nicola Brown presented the Treasurers report including financial details and a membership update for 2021-2023. The Society accounts for the period 1st June 2021 – 28th February 2023 were presented. There will be an adjustment prior to the year end on 31st May 2023. The accounts have been audited by PKF Francis Clark.

During this period, total receipts are £13,560 and total payments £5,759, hence a surplus of £7,801, with income exceeding expenditure. Total current assets are £60,124, an increase from the previous similar period 2019-2021 (£52,324). Our usual expenditure decreased over this period due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic; more on-line meetings with a reduced need for Travel Awards, and no expenditure associated with the Malpighi Medal or ESM/JVR Prize in 2021/2022 due to the postponement of ESM2021 Aarhus, with the ESM meeting being held on-line instead to maintain continuity. However, there will be significant expenditure in the next two months for awards and costs associated with ESM2023.

During this audit period, membership subscriptions and a small contribution from interest-bearing accounts (£185) represent the total income receipts. ESM general expenditure includes website, administration, and accountancy charges. We continue the philosophy of supporting our early career investigators (ECR) by funding travel awards to attend European and International microcirculation meetings and awarding oral and poster presentation prizes; this includes the GfMVB/Netherlands Vascular Biology Organization Joint meeting in Gottingen 2021, ESM2021 (on-line), Vascular Biology Summer School 2022 (on-line), the Joint British/German (BMVBS/GfMVB) Societies meeting Berlin 2022 and the ESM-MCS joint Travel Awards.

For the next accounting period (2023-2025) we will continue our commitment to supporting ECR and ESM affiliated societies, in addition to the joint ESM-MCS initiative (2023-2025) whereby two ESM Early Career Investigators present at MCS meetings and two MCS Early Career Investigators present at ESM/WCM meetings. The General Assembly approved the support of this joint ESM/MCS initiative by €5000/pa. We have also committed to support an ESM Symposium at WCM2023 Beijing China and a number of ECR travel awards.

The Society has continued to operate dual membership during the period. The British, German and Swiss Microcirculation Societies have paid subscriptions through 30th September 2022. We are awaiting funds from the Hungarian and Italian Societies.

Total membership of the Society currently stands at 500 (excluding the Italian Society) with 450 by dual membership (ordinary/students) through the ESM affiliated Societies and 50 individual members (ordinary/students). We also have approaching 30 honorary, emeritus and retired members.

The General Assembly of the ESM approved the accounts, the Treasurers report and the re-appointments of the auditors PKF Francis Clark. The General Assembly would like to thank Prof. Nicola Brown for the excellent work for our society. In addition, we are grateful to József Tolnai for the excellent support and maintenance of our ESM website.

5. Awards

Prof. Henning Morawietz

Malpighi Award

This is the most prestigious award of the European Society for Microcirculation (ESM). It is awarded to an individual with an internationally outstanding reputation in a field of microcirculation and microvascular research. All ESM members and its national societies were invited to nominate candidates. The Malpighi Prize Committee received 3 excellent nominations and following peer review, selected Prof. Britta Engelhardt, University of Bern, Switzerland as the winner of the Malpighi Award 2023. She will receive the award for her outstanding contributions to our field. The Malpighi medal will be presented on the final day (April 27, 2023) of the ESM conference followed by her award lecture "The role of the blood-brain barrier in maintaining CNS immunity".

ESM-JVR Prize Award

The ESM and the Journal of Vascular Research (JVR) continue their close relationship by co-sponsoring the "ESM/JVR Award Lecture" which has been awarded to Prof. James S. Bell from the University of Cardiff, UK, for the manuscript "Microstructural characterization of resistance artery remodeling in diabetes mellitus" *J. Vasc. Res.*, 59(1); 50-60, 2022. This manuscript is an excellent example of JVRs ongoing commitment to publish top quality work. Prof. Bell will present the ESM/JVR Award lecture at the conference in Aarhus on April 27th.

Early Career Investigator Travel and Posters Awards

We continue the philosophy of supporting our early career investigators (ECR) by funding travel awards to attend European and International microcirculation meetings and awarding oral and poster presentation prizes. This included the GfMVB/Netherlands Vascular Biology Organisation Joint meeting in Gottingen 2021, ESM2021 (on-line), Vascular Biology Summer School 2022 (on-line), the Joint British/German (BMVBS/GfMVB) Societies meeting Berlin 2022 and the ESM-MCS joint Travel Awards. The ESM Executive Committee received 25 full applications for an Early Career Investigator Travel Award. After peer-review of all applications, 8 awardees were selected (Sophie Moller, Copenhagen, Denmark; Juma El-Awaisi, Birmingham, UK; Monica Gamez, Bristol, UK; Lou Wackerbarth, Munich, Germany; Lukas Streese, Basel/Düsseldorf, Switzerland/Germany; Manisha Patil, Heart Research Institute, Australia; Patrick Diaba-Nuhoho, Ghana/Münster, Germany; Emily Attrill, University of Tasmania, Australia). Furthermore, poster prizes in each poster session will be awarded by the organizers of the ESM meeting 2023 in Aarhus. The ESM will support a prize for the best oral presentation in the Young Investigator Session of the ESM conference.

The winners of the Travel, Oral and Poster Awards will be presented with their certificates in the final session of the ESM conference in Aarhus. Awards funds are being organized by The Treasurer.

6. ESM 2025

TBA

After sending the invitation to our membership, the Executive Committee received 2 excellent expressions of interest to organize the ESM Conference 2025. After excellent presentations by representatives from both candidate cities, the Executive Committee discussed the applications and selected Szeged as host of the next ESM Conference 2025. Prague was invited to host the ESM Conference 2027 and/or an ESM Summer School 2024.

Prof. Eszter Farkas as Chair of the Organizing Committee presented the plans for the ESM Conference 2025 in Szeged, Hungary. The meeting will be hosted by the Hungarian Society for Microcirculation and Vascular Biology and the University of Szeged and supported by the Croatian Physiological Society, the Slovenian Physiological Society, and the Hungarian Physiological Society. The city of Szeged has excellent universities and institutes, and is a perfect venue for the congress with meeting facilities, lecture halls, meeting rooms and poster areas and has very good travel connections to Budapest (train/mini-bus). The scientific program will cover hot topics of microcirculation and vascular biology and medicine with the title "Microcirculation: Connecting Molecules to Humans". Prof. Eszter Farkas and the Hungarian team are looking forward to the meeting and invites all members and colleagues to the ESM Conference 2025 in Szeged.

7. Journal of Vascular Research

Prof. Brant Isakson

Journal of Vascular Research is now a Transformative Journal, committed to increasing the number of Open Access articles and converting to the Open Access model at the latest when 75% of papers are published Open Access. The Transformative Journal model supports authors by fulfilling all Open Access mandates and drives forward the Open Access transition while maintaining publishing choices for authors. Please visit the journal's guidelines for more information.

The Journal of Vascular Research (JVR) continues the close relationship with the ESM by co-sponsoring the "ESM/JVR Award Lecture", this year awarded to Prof. James S. Bell from the University of Cardiff, UK, for the manuscript "Microstructural characterization of resistance artery remodeling in diabetes mellitus", *J. Vasc. Res.*, 59(1); 50-60, 2022. This manuscript is an excellent example of JVRs ongoing commitment to publish top quality work. Professor James Bell will present his lecture at the ESM congress in Aarhus on April 27th. JVR has continued a strong commitment over the last three years to publish high quality, rigorously performed work. The commitment to transparency and reproducibility has garnered outstanding publication that is reflected by year-over-year increases in impact factor. The time for authors to receive a decision on submitted manuscripts also continues to decrease. You can contact Brant Isakson by mail or at ESM 2023 about any suggestions for continuing the progress with JVR. We must make every effort to encourage our members to submit their manuscripts to JVR which will in turn increase the impact factor of the Journal.

8. Committee and Meeting Reports

ESM Strategy Committee - Update on activities and members Prof. Boy Houben/Dr Richard Siow

In a recent on-line meeting, Prof. Boy Houben, Dr Richard Siow and Prof. Henning Morawietz discussed actions of the strategy committee of the ESM in preparation for the Executive Board meeting and the General Assembly at the ESM meeting in Aarhus.

The following points should be addressed in the strategy committee in the coming years:

- More support for early career scientists (to keep them as members of our society)
- Increase memberships (make clear what the added value is)
- Early career workshops
- Engage industry in ESM (e.g. for private/public partnerships for grant applications)
- ESM Summer School in 2024
- Webinars (every 2 months, except in summer) (1 hour, online, with a senior and a junior presenter. Also engage industry)
- Ask members for ideas to promote involvement/engagement
- Increase visibility on social media (linked-in, twitter)

We invite you to give feedback on the ideas and provide any further suggestions.

The ESM has established in the last years accounts on Twitter and LinkedIn. Elena Osto invited the members to send the information about their Twitter or LinkedIn accounts to her or Henning Morawietz to invigorate our ESM network. We appointed Cynthia To from the University of Exeter as our Social Media Ambassador for ESM. Lukas Streese (Basel/Düsseldorf) is organizing the social media activities of our retinal microcirculation working group. We are looking forward to receive further contributions from the members of our society to our social media accounts.

ILCM/WCM Beijing 2023

Prof. Gerry Meininger

The chair of the ILCM, Prof. Gerry Meininger, presented the current status of the upcoming 12th World Congress of Microcirculation (WCM) in Beijing. The congress will now take place in the Guoce International Convention and Exhibition Center in Beijing from September 20-24, 2023. On behalf of the president of the congress, Prof. Jing-Yan Han from Peking University, he invites all members of the ESM to register and participate in the 12th WCM. The congress allows participation onsite and online. The previous travel restrictions and changes in travel costs to China during the COVID-19 pandemic have now been normalized. Currently, a recent negative antigen self-test is sufficient to travel to China. Visa applications are regularly possible using the invitation letter receiving on-line after registration. Excellent Key Note Speakers have been confirmed (Stefanie Dimmeler, Frankfurt; Britta Engelhardt, Bern; Kesheng Dai, Jiangsu Institute of Hematology; Sarah Yuan, University of South Florida; Michael Hickey, Monash University). Many symposia organized by the international partner societies have been included in the program. The Executive Committee of the ESM has selected the symposium: "Atherosclerosis, sex and microcirculation: the influence of hemodynamics", Chair: Elena Osto, for ESM travel grant support. The ESM has also committed to support a number of ECR travel awards. In each symposium, additional speakers will be invited from the submitted abstracts. The 12th WCM will select 15 Young Investigator Awards from onsite young speakers and 15 Travel Awards from onsite poster presenters (500 USD each). In addition, we agreed to organize and support a joint symposium with early career scientists from the ESM, the US Microcirculatory Society (MCS) and the Australian and New Zealand Microcirculation Society (ANZMS) at the WCM 2023 in Beijing. This will be supported by the ESM with 2000€. Everybody is invited to submit abstracts, which are planned to be published as a supplement of Microcirculation or J. Vasc. Res., and to participate in the 12th WCM in Beijing in September 2023. Further information about registration, abstract submission and special meeting rates in the congress hotel can be found at: <https://12thwcm.tri-think.cn>.

Other Meetings 2021-2023

Prof. Henning Morawietz

Joint Meeting of the GfMVB and the BMVBS 2022 in Berlin

The annual meeting of the German Society for Microcirculation and Vascular Biology (GfMVB) was held jointly with the British Microcirculation and Vascular Biology Society (BMVBS) in June 2022 at the Kaiserin-Friedrich-Foundation in the heart of Berlin. The meeting was organized by Prof. Wolfgang M. Kübler, President GfMVB (Berlin, Germany); Dr. Anna Elisabeth Bierögel (Berlin, Germany); Prof. David Bates, President BMVBS (Nottingham, UK); Prof. Paola Campagnolo (Surrey, UK); Prof. Sarah De Val (Oxford, UK); Prof. Rabea Hinkel (Göttingen, Germany); and Prof. Ferdinand le Noble (Karlsruhe, Germany). After two years of virtual meetings, the more than 140 participants from nine different nations tremendously enjoyed the personal interaction. For many younger participants, this was the first in-person meeting they ever attended. Thus, the lectures and poster presentations stimulated lively discussions, which often extended into the breaks and evening events. The organizers received extremely positive feedback from numerous participants regarding the high scientific quality of the event, the excellent framework conditions (venue, catering, evening program), and the open-minded and constructive atmosphere, which stimulated numerous new project ideas and collaborations. Accordingly, the event was considered as an extraordinary scientific success by the participants. This was particularly evident in the high number of high-quality contributions in the form of submitted abstracts and the resulting oral and poster presentations. The ESM supported the GfMVB and BMVBS by sponsoring young scientists in the Travel and Poster Awards.

ESM/EVBO Online Vascular Biology Summer Schools 2021 and 2022

After the very successful ESM/EVBO Online Vascular Biology Summer School 2021 with more than 100 participants, the next ESM/EVBO Online Vascular Biology Summer School was also very successfully organised in June 13-15, 2022. We were excited to welcome 91 participants from 16 different European countries, Australia, China and the United States at our ESM/EVBO Online Vascular Biology Summer School. The participants were PhD/MD students and junior postdocs. The Organizers were from the ESM: Prof. Elena Osto (Zurich, Switzerland; Graz, Austria), Prof. Eszter Farkas (Szeged, Hungary) and Prof. Henning Morawietz (Dresden, Germany) and from the EVBO: Prof. Johanna

Laakkonen (Kuopio, Finland), Prof. Lars Mägdefessel (Munich, Germany; Stockholm, Sweden), Dr. Mauro Siragusa (Frankfurt, Germany) and Prof. Lena Claesson-Welsh (Uppsala, Sweden). We selected 22 abstracts for oral presentations from the 37 submitted abstracts. The participants had the opportunity to gain insight into the key questions and cutting-edge methodologies of vascular biology, to discuss with peers and experts in the field, and to train in the presentation and discussion of their data. Short presentations by experts in the field were followed by a Q&A session. We are grateful to the 45 leading international experts in our field who gave lectures and participated in the interactive sessions. All participants really enjoyed the excellent presentations and discussions. The talks included topics such as the endothelial-perivascular cell crosstalk, vascular heterogeneity, mechano-transduction, emerging fields and technologies in vascular biology, vascular diseases and translational vascular research from basic science to clinical trials. Four awards for the best oral presentations of 200€ each were jointly supported by the ESM and the EVBO. Many thanks to Dean Kavanagh, University of Birmingham, for the excellent organisation of our ESM/EVBO Summer School via Zoom.

9. ESM/MCS – Joint Initiative

Prof. Henning Morawietz

We are committed to support a joint ESM-MCS initiative 2020-2022 (delayed for one year by the pandemic) whereby two ESM Early Career Investigators present at MCS meetings and two MCS Early Career Investigators present at ESM/WCM meetings (4000€ per annum). The ESM-MCS Travel Awardees from the MCS presenting in Aarhus are Miranda Good, Tufts Medical Center, Boston, MA, and Mina Lee, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, Roanoke, VA. The MCS wish to continue this fruitful collaboration with ESM, and have proposed at an increased level of funding, 5000€ per annum, to reflect elevated costs of transatlantic travel and accommodation. The ESM General Assembly supported both the continued joint agreement and the increased level of funding. A new joint agreement will be established from 2024.

10. Election of ESM Executive Committee Members

Prof. Henning Morawietz

President - TBD

The Executive Committee has nominated Prof. Eszter Farkas (Szeged, Hungary) as the new president of the ESM. She is a very active member of our ESM Strategy Committee and will chair the organizing committee of the next ESM Conference 2025 in Szeged. The General Assembly elected unanimously Prof. Eszter Farkas as the new president of the ESM. She will be the first female president of our society.

Treasurer - Professor Nicola Brown

The Executive Committee of the ESM would like to thank Prof. Nicola Brown for the excellent work for our society in the last years. She has been nominated by the Executive Committee to be elected as treasurer in the General Assembly. The General Assembly elected unanimously Prof. Nicola Brown as treasurer of the ESM.

The General Assembly congratulated Prof. Eszter Farkas and Prof. Nicola Brown for their election. We are looking forward to our collaboration in the ESM in the next years.

11. Free Discussion/AOB

Prof. Boy Houben invites all members to actively participate in the first ESM Working Group on Retinal Microvascular Research. We would like to invite our members to initiate additional working groups of the ESM. If you are interested, please contact the Executive Committee.

With best wishes

Henning Morawietz
ESM Secretary General

Christian Aalkjær
ESM President

Nicola J. Brown
ESM Treasurer