

There will be an electronic business meeting of the EFB Executive Board at **10.00 CET (9.00 UK) on Monday 7th February 2022**. It is suggested that this should be a two-hour meeting and be followed by a further two-hour strategy meeting in the afternoon at **14.00 CET (13.00 UK)**. Institutional Members will be invited to join the afternoon meeting.

## Agenda

### PART ONE – BUSINESS MEETING

1. **Apologies for absence, introductions and welcome to new members of the Board**  
Marjan De Mey has replaced Louise, who is on maternity leave. We welcome Agnes Borg as the EuropaBio representative.
2. **Minutes of the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 meeting of the Executive Board**  
Draft minutes are appended below
3. **Matters arising from the Minutes not covered below**
  - (i) Update on EU Commission questionnaire on gene editing *CH to report*
4. **President's report** **ATTACHMENT 2022A..... 6**
5. **Report from the Congress Organizing Committee** *Caroline Windsor to report*
  - (i) Postponement of ECB2022 until June 2024
  - (ii) Knock-on consequences for future Congresses
  - (iii) Thoughts on planning for ECB2024 and updating the Congress scientific programme.
6. **Financial Report** **ATTACHMENT 2022B..... 8**
  - (i) Preliminary summary of income and expenditure for 2021 compared with the budget *KZ*
  - (ii) Accounts payable and list of liabilities *KZ*
  - (iii) Draft budget for 2022 *WM*
  - (iv) Report from the Finance Strategy Group *WM*
7. **Report from the Central Office**
  - (i) Staffing
  - (ii) Relocation of the Central Office
8. **Report from the EFB Journal *New Biotechnology*** *Mike Taussig and Dan Cheng to report*
  - (i) Journal statistics
  - (ii) Switch from subscriptions to Gold Open Access
  - (iii) Call for proposals for thematic issues
  - (iv) Revised 5-year contract between Elsevier and the EFB. Journal promotion during the May and October on-line meetings.
9. **Progress in establishing the new *Bioeconomy Journal*** *Steve Euston and Lynn Sherrer to report*
  - (i) Report from the Editorial Board *SE*
  - (ii) Key journal statistics *LS*
  - (iii) Call for proposals for thematic issues
10. **Reports from Regional Branch Offices**
  - (i) Czech RBO **ATTACHMENT 2022C..... 11**
  - (ii) French RBO **ATTACHMENT 2022D..... 12**

## **11. Division Board reports**

(i) Biobased Materials	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022E..... 14</b>
(ii) Biocatalysis	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022F..... 15</b>
(iii) Bioprocessing and Bioengineering	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022G..... 16</b>
(iv) Biopharmaceutical and Medical Biotechnology	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022H..... 21</b>
(v) Environmental Biotechnology	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022I..... 22</b>
(vi) Microbial Biotechnology	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022J..... 23</b>
(vii) Plant, Agriculture and Food	<b>ATTACHMENT 2022K..... 24</b>

## **12. Any other business**

## **13. Date of the next Executive Board meeting and General Assembly**

Members are invited to suggest the time and days of the week that are most convenient for on-line board meetings

## **PART TWO – STRATEGY MEETING**

1. Welcome by the President
2. Strengthening links between academia and industry
3. Improving benefits for our Institutional Members
4. Issues in 2022 for which EFB needs to be a voice for Biotechnology in Europe
5. The strategy to meet the financial challenges due to the further postponement of ECB2022

W J Mitchell  
(Hon Secretary)

## EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY (EFB)

### DRAFT MINUTES of the Executive Board Meeting held as a Video Conference at 15.00 CET on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**In attendance:** Paola Branduardi, Dan Cheng, Steve Euston, Ivo Frébort, Francesc Gòdia, Nick Goodhew, Georg Gübitz, Maria José Hernáiz, Carsten Hjort, Michaela Holecová, Louise Horsfall, Joachim Klein, Diethard Mattanovich, Wilf Mitchell, Karl Rix, Ulrich Schwaneberg, Lynn Sherrer, Jean-Luc Simon, Tomasz Twardowski, Mathias Uhlen, Sebastian Wendeborn, Karsten Zimny, Manfred Zinn.  
President Jeff Cole was in the Chair.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Philippe Corvini, Heleen de Wever, Jan Marienhagen, Cecilia Roque, Mike Taussig.
- The President welcomed Dan Cheng, attending her first Board meeting as the new publisher for *New Biotechnology*.

#### 2. Minutes of the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Executive Board

Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere

##### (i) *Item 4.5: Division website management fees*

- Karsten confirmed that invoices for the €1,500 fee will be issued to Divisions towards the end of May. In the case of Divisions which have funds held by the Central Office, the fee will be taken directly from these funds.

#### 4. Financial Report

##### (i) *Report from the Finance Strategy Group*

- Thanks were expressed to colleagues who contributed to discussions aimed at generating additional income to help move towards a balanced budget.
- The best prospect of maximising income lies with the online EFB2021 meeting. The original target of €50K has been reached, so all additional registration and sponsorship income from now on is a surplus. All members of the Board are asked to do what they can to maximise this income.
- A Biocatalysis Division AcES meeting is scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> September this year, and it is hoped that small increases in income can also be generated from a few other sources.
- Looking ahead to next year, a successful ECB2022 is key to finances. All Board members are asked to work towards maximising registrations and sponsorship.
- Help from Board members is also requested in recruiting Institutional Members, and ideally an additional Patron.

##### (ii) *Current financial situation*

- All accounts payable from 2020 have been settled, and outstanding sponsor payments for meetings held last November are expected soon. The accounts will be audited next month.
- Minimum targeted income of €50K for EFB2021 has been achieved, so any additional income will go straight towards helping to minimise the budget deficit.
- Cash flow is solid, with a current bank balance of around €70K.
- The President thanked all colleagues who have contributed to income generation, in particular in working to ensure that EFB2021 will be a successful meeting.

#### 5. Online meeting EFB2021

##### (i) *Scientific programme*

- An excellent programme has been assembled, and is now visible online. The final programme with the few missing talk titles would be loaded onto the website immediately before the meeting.

##### (ii) *Current status of sponsorship and registrations*

- The amount of sponsorship raised is excellent, with particular thanks to *Novozymes* and *Elsevier* for their considerable support as Platinum Sponsors.
- The number of registrations is disappointing, currently 377 including 22 free registrations for keynote speakers. Thanks were expressed to all Divisions and other sources who have provided financial support to registrants, with special thanks to the Czech RBO for registering more than 40 participants paying the full €90 fee.

## 6. Division meetings

### (i) *Biocatalysis Division AcES meeting*

- A task force has been assembled and is currently working on the programme. There is considerable potential for financial support for future meetings, including from local and national government.

## 7. Report from the Congress Organising Committee

### (i) *ECB2022 in Maastricht*

- The Congress is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022. New Local Organising and Congress Organising Committees are in place. A video showcasing the venue will be shown during EFB2021.
- The budget presents a serious challenge, reflecting increases in costs since the original planning for ECB2020. This will have to be addressed by increased registration fees, decreased expenditure or a combination of both. Noted that the Finance Strategy Group viewed any increase in registration fees as counterproductive in terms of attracting registrants.
- A number of factors are difficult to predict; for example, how pent up demand for live, onsite meetings might lead to acceptance of increased registration fees, but be counterbalanced by increased travel costs, travel restrictions and general safety concerns. Agreed that these are significant issues to consider, and also that identifying reasonably priced accommodation will be essential.
- A hybrid meeting may have to be considered. *TFI* feel that this can work if the balance is right, and would look to any online element principally as a revenue stream. Once again a number of difficult decisions will have to be made. Agreed to gather experience of hybrid meetings in the coming months, with a view to making an informed decision later in the year. Irrespective of the model, agreed that getting things right technically is of the utmost importance.
- Agreed that re-engaging plenary speakers, and identifying replacements if necessary, should be a priority. Where keynote speakers have not re-confirmed, the current relevance of the corresponding symposia should be assessed before proceeding.
- Agreed that, assuming a successful “trial” at EFB2021, one 15 minute presentation in each session should be replaced by flash posters which are increasing in popularity. Feedback on the flash posters at EFB2021 is welcome.

### (ii) *ECB2024*

- A commitment to ECB2024 in Toulouse cannot be made until arrangements for ECB2022 have been resolved.
- A site visit will take place later this year, and a budget will then be prepared.
- Agreed that there will be an equal representation of EFB Divisions and local/French organisers on the Scientific Programme Committee.

## 8. Report from the Central Office

- A considerable amount of time has been spent on organization of EFB2021.
- Following the last Board meeting, it was agreed to recruit an additional, part-time member of staff to help alleviate pressure. Two candidates have been interviewed, but the position has not been filled. This will be a priority after EFB2021.
- Karsten’s paternity leave has now ended.

## 9. Report from EFB Journals

### (i) *New Biotechnology*

- The highest number of submissions are received from China and India. Manuscript rejection rate remains high, and has increased slightly in 2021.
- Ideas for special issues are required. Special issues help increase the overall quality of manuscripts.
- Handling times throughout the editorial process do not compare well to other journals. The time from submission to acceptance must somehow be reduced, with particular emphasis on the process of identifying reviewers and the expectations placed on Editorial Board members with respect to reviewing manuscripts. Changes to the structure and operation of the Editorial Board are under consideration.

### (ii) *Bioeconomy Journal*

- Progress has been good, with 19 submissions so far and four papers accepted.
- Lucia Gardossi has been recruited as a senior editor to cover the health area.
- Finding reviewers is already subject to the same difficulties as for *New Biotechnology*. A larger Editorial Board is needed, with members being required both to review and edit an agreed number of submissions in their respective areas each year. Every Executive Board member was asked to help identify potential Editorial Board members both to increase geographical spread and especially to cover non-scientific aspects of the bioeconomy such as regulation, safety, legal aspects etc.

## **10. President's Report**

- The President thanked all colleagues, both members of the Executive Board and others, who have made considerable contributions towards organising and supporting EFB2021 and helping to establish the *Bioeconomy Journal*.
- Thanks were also expressed to Ulrich Schwaneberg and Sebastian Wendeborn for bringing in the Biocatalysis AcES meeting, which has the potential to earn €10K for EFB. The importance of working with the Executive Board, rather than totally independently, was noted.
- Gender balance across the Federation is poor, a particularly extreme example being the Finance Strategy Group. Co-option of senior female biotechnologists with financial acumen would be desirable, and any suggestions of suitable candidates are welcome. A longer term aim is to achieve an improved gender balance in general, and a strategy to achieve this will be presented to the Executive Board early in 2022.

## **11. Any other business**

- Noted that new Divisions were assembling strong Boards and beginning to work on meetings and other activities. Divisions will be asked to provide reports for the next Executive Board meeting, including their plans for working with the Central Office.
- The Plant, Agriculture and Food Division is enlarging its Board to improve gender balance and increase scope for new initiatives. Any suggestions for a representative with experience in the food area would be welcome.

## **12. Date of the next online Executive Board meeting**

- A financial audit will be carried out soon, and accounts must then be approved by the General Assembly. An online meeting will be arranged at an appropriate time if necessary.
- Agreed that there is no urgency for the next meeting of the Executive Board. The meeting will probably be scheduled for early October, by which time plans for ECB2022 should have been further developed. It is hoped that a physical meeting in Barcelona may be possible early in 2022.

Wilf Mitchell  
(Honorary Secretary)

7<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## President's report

### Our achievements in 2021

Despite the many difficulties inflicted on us all by the pandemic, many members of the Executive Board have responded to appeals for help to keep the Federation on our upward trajectory. No names will be mentioned because of the inevitable offense that failure to mention someone will cause. So this report must begin with a sincere thanks to everyone who has helped us survive a series of setbacks against the odds. Later in the agenda we will note many recent successes that include the following.

1. Four Division are fully active, two new Divisions have meetings planned and our seventh Division is currently being rejuvenated.
2. The Bioeconomy Journal was successfully launched and is on schedule.
3. Our position paper on European gene / genome editing regulations made significant impact with indications that changes will be made based upon sound science.
4. Financial deficits in both 2020 and 2021 were minimized only because so many Executive and Division Board members worked with us to replace live meetings with on-line events.
5. Outstanding science was presented during the EFB2021 and AcES meetings. Sponsors appreciated the extra efforts made by our Office staff to provide value for their financial support.
6. The financial reports for 2021 reveal that for the first time ever, EFB assets exceed liabilities. Despite losses in each of the last two years, we are at last in positive equity, made possible by debts being forgiven.

### Challenges ahead of us in 2022 and 2023

1. After 14 years of loyal service and incredible contributions to our financial survival, Karsten will leave EFB employment on 31<sup>st</sup> of March. No-one should underestimate the task ahead of us to replace him.
2. The third postponement of the Maastricht Congress will leave further massive gaps in our income for each of the next two years. On-line and “live” meetings are being organised at short notice to fill the gaps in our scientific activities. See the next item for a list of events being planned.
3. We cannot again ask Ewa and Fernando to double their administrative loads to bring all of the planned events to fruition. Consequently, we are advertising a part-time position for a 4<sup>th</sup> staff member whose primary role will be to help with meeting organisation.
4. A larger office is essential to accommodate 4 staff safely. As a suitable office was available in our current building, the Finance Strategy Group authorised a move on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January. This will add just under €6,000 annually to the cost of office rent.

## Events planned for the rest of 2022

Dates	Event	Divisions participating
10-12 May	On-line Division sessions	Biopharmaceutical and Biomedical Plant Agriculture and Food Biobased Materials Microbial Biotechnology ??Elsevier / Bioeconomy Journal
26-28 June	Live @ Koln Marriott Hotel	Biobased Materials and Biocatalysis
12-15 Sept.	Live @ Catrin; Olomouc: G-4-G-6	Plant Agriculture & Food
4-6 October	ECB2022 on-line	??Elsevier / New Biotechnology Environmental Biotechnology event Circular Bioeconomy event Bioprocessing event (TWO) ??Biocatalysis event
2-4 Nov.	Live @Edinburgh: ASBE-VI	Bioprocessing and Bioengineering Microbial Biotechnology

### Financial consequences of the postponement of the Maastricht Congress.

Superficial inspection of the draft budget for 2022 reveals that by magic income will balance expenditure. The sting in the tail is income line 11, which shows that we please need everyone to help us close a €24,300 gap. How to achieve this must be a key discussion point during the afternoon strategy meeting.

### Annual election of our Vice-Presidents.

For the last 10 years we have ignored a requirement in our statutes that Vice-Presidents should be elected by the Executive Board at our first meeting each year. I propose that we re-elect the current 4 Vice-Presidents for 2022, but give notice that at least one of them should stand down each year subsequently. That will not prevent the person concerned playing a full role on the Board in another capacity.

\*\*A formal decision is requested on this point.

## European Federation of Biotechnology

## Provisional Income &amp; Expenditure 2021

	Actual 2021 12 months	Budget 2021 12 months	Actual 2020 12 months
<b>INCOME</b>			
Institutional Membership Fees ECO	39.575,00	40.000,00	40.625,00
EFB Patronage	15.000,00	15.000,00	25.000,00
Journal	26.124,59	26.000,00	26.218,22
Web Advertising			
Bank Interest / Other			
Miscellaneous Revenues required to balance I&E		43.300,00	
ECB Contributions	1.441,17		
Website Management	8.200,00	4.500,00	3.750,00
Conference Management	71.990,24	50.000,00	50.010,63
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>162.331,00</b>	<b>178.800,00</b>	<b>145.603,85</b>

	Actual 2021 12 months	Budget 2021 12 months	Actual 2020 12 months
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
<b>Total Travel &amp; Meetings</b>	<b>384,13</b>	<b>1.000,00</b>	<b>2.756,68</b>
Travel Expenses EMC/ExBo			
Travel General			
EFB Meetings	384,13	1.000,00	2.756,68
<b>Total Office Related Expenses</b>	<b>26.936,38</b>	<b>27.800,00</b>	<b>26.334,34</b>
Bank Fees	1.092,67	800,00	619,16
Post & Courier	35,90	500,00	47,70
Marketing & Promotional Materials	1.224,99	1.000,00	331,50
Web services	6.585,23	6.500,00	5.381,59
Miscellaneous Expenditure		500,00	
IT Material	1.153,14	1.000,00	419,64
IT Support	290,40	500,00	387,20
Telephone & Internet			136,61
Office Supplies	559,34	750,00	721,90
Office Furniture			
Parking		50,00	325,55
Utilities			193,24
Office Rent	15.994,71	16.200,00	17.770,25
<b>Total Salary &amp; Consulting</b>	<b>143.470,95</b>	<b>150.000,00</b>	<b>135.748,67</b>
Salary & Payroll	135.899,84	140.000,00	124.130,75
Internship			
Training / Staff Benefits	814,86		805,92
Performance Based Bonuses			
Taxes / VAT			1.250,00
Legal, HR & Other Consulting	3.198,85	5.000,00	6.004,60
Accounting Services	3.557,40	5.000,00	3.557,40
<b>Total Sections &amp; Other</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0,00</b>
Sections			
Contingency & Debt Repayment			
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>170.791,46</b>	<b>178.800,00</b>	<b>164.839,69</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>170.791,46</b>	<b>178.800,00</b>	<b>164.839,69</b>
<b>Total operating surplus / - shortfall</b>	<b>-8460,46</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>-19235,84</b>
<b>Total surplus / - shortfall</b>	<b>-8460,46</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>-19235,84</b>

## EFB Balance Sheet 2021

EFB Balance Sheet - 31/12/2021

<b>ASSETS</b>		<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
<b>Cash</b>	<b>65.956,06</b>	<b>Accounts Payable</b>	<b>69.554,72</b>
La Caixa	4.250,17	EFB 2021	8.809,71
La Caixa - Congress Account	61.705,89	Microbial Biotechnology Division	38.019,91
PayPal Account	-	EBBS Division	7.705,64
		Biocatalysis Division	2.133,00
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>25.041,17</b>	Conference Management Contingency	2.953,30
Membership Fees 2021	12.600,00	Loans to pay EC Settlement	-
Website Management	3.000,00	Event Management	9.933,16
Event Management	9.441,17		
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>90.997,23</b>	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>69.554,72</b>
<b>Total Owner's Equity</b>			<b>21.442,51</b>

## EFB Draft Budget 2022

INCOME	Budget 2022 EFB	Actual 2021 EFB	Budget 2021 EFB
Institutional Membership Fees ECO	40.000,00	39.575,00	40.000,00
EFB Patronage	25.000,00	15.000,00	15.000,00
Journal	25.000,00	26.124,59	26.000,00
Web Advertising			
Bank Interest / Other			
Miscellaneous Revenues required to balance I&E	24.300,00		43.300,00
ECB Contributions			
Website Management	10.500,00	8.200,00	4.500,00
Conference Management	70.000,00	71.990,24	50.000,00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>194.800,00</b>	<b>160.889,83</b>	<b>178.800,00</b>

EXPENDITURES	Budget 2022 EFB	Actual 2021 EFB	Budget 2021 EFB
<b>Total Travel &amp; Meetings</b>	<b>1.000,00</b>	<b>384,13</b>	<b>1.000,00</b>
Travel Expenses EMC/ExBo			
Travel General			
EFB Meetings	1.000,00	384,13	1.000,00
<b>Total Office Related Expenses</b>	<b>32.800,00</b>	<b>26.936,38</b>	<b>27.800,00</b>
Bank Fees	1.000,00	1.092,67	800,00
Post & Courier	200,00	35,90	500,00
Marketing & Promotional Materials	1.000,00	1.224,99	1.000,00
Web services	7.000,00	6.585,23	6.500,00
Miscellaneous Expenditure	500,00		500,00
IT Material	1.000,00	1.153,14	1.000,00
IT Support	1.000,00	290,40	500,00
Telephone & Internet			
Office Supplies	750,00	559,34	750,00
Office Furniture			
Parking	50,00		50,00
Utilities			
Office Rent	20.300,00	15.994,71	16.200,00
<b>Total Salary &amp; Consulting</b>	<b>161.000,00</b>	<b>143.470,95</b>	<b>150.000,00</b>
Salary & Payroll	151.000,00	135.899,84	140.000,00
Training / Staff Benefits		814,86	
Performance Based Bonuses			
Taxes / VAT			
Legal, HR & Other Consulting	5.000,00	3.198,85	5.000,00
Accounting Services	5.000,00	3.557,40	5.000,00
<b>Total Sections &amp; Other</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Sections			
Contingency & Debt Repayment			
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>194.800,00</b>	<b>170.791,46</b>	<b>178.800,00</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>194.800,00</b>	<b>170.791,46</b>	<b>178.800,00</b>

<b>Total operating surplus / - shortfall</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>-9901,63</b>	<b>0,00</b>
<b>Total surplus / - shortfall</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>-9901,63</b>	<b>0,00</b>

**European Federation of Biotechnology – Czech Regional Branch Office, Olomouc**

RBO activities in 2021:

- **Signature od MoU with the Bioeconomy Platform of the Czech Republic**

The RBO started cooperating with the Bioeconomy Platform of the Czech Republic, which was established in 2019 to deepen knowledge in the respective fields of bioeconomy by means of research and education and to promote their use in practice at the level of enterprises and public administration while respecting principles of sustainable development. For these purposes, the Platform coordinates activities related to bioeconomy, organizes professional discussions, workshops and seminars for various target groups and asserts the latest knowledge into practical life in collaboration with industries. The Platform members include universities, public as well as private research institutions, agricultural unions and clusters.

In February, the RBO signed the MoU and in September, it organized a meeting in Olomouc to introduce the RBO activities and facilities to the other Platform members. We see the purpose of joining the Platform in future perspectives of collaboration and joint project activities.

- **Organization change concerning the RBO**

Centre of the Region Haná for Biotechnological and Agricultural Research (the Czech RBO) became on 1 April, 2021, part of the newly established Czech Advanced Technology and Research Institute (CATRIN) by the Palacký University, Olomouc, which is, since then, the successive RBO. The CATRIN institute includes, among others, departments dealing with advanced materials, environmental nanotechnologies, nanomaterials in biomedicine, bioorganic chemistry, experimental medicine and many others, so the RBO newly covers much broader research field than before.



## France's Research Branch Office Report

SBCN (Society for Biochromatography and Nanoseparations) 'bioseparation.free.fr' :

- *The 15th International Symposium on Biochromatography and Nanoseparations*  
*May 17-20, 2021. Virtual*

ADEBIOTECH (Think tank in Biotechnology) 'asso.adebiotech.org' :

- *Resistance to antibiotics*  
*September 16, 2021. Evry, France*
- *Tissue engineering for industry*  
*December 9, 2021. Romainville, France*
- *Cell factoreries for industrial bio production*  
*March, 2022*

SFGP (French Society for Chemical Engineering) 'sfgp.asso.fr' :

- *Circular engineering*  
*November 16-17, 2021. Paris*
- *Scientific and technological solutions for the economic transition*  
*November 7-10, 2022. Toulouse, France*

**SFBBM (French Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology) 'sfbbm.fr' :**

- *2th French congress on integrative structural biology*

*November 29 to December 3, 2021. Paris Saclay*

- *Annual congress*

*July 4-5, 2022. Paris*

**SCT (french Medicinal Chemistry Society) 'sct-asso.fr' :**

- *On the hunt for next generation antimicrobial agents*

*December 9-10, web symposium*

- *27th EMC International Symposium on Medicinal Chemistry*

*September 4-8, 2022. Nice, France*

**SFM (French Society for Microbiology) 'sfm-microbiologie.org' :**

- *Weblactic*

*April 1, 2021. Virtual*

- *Microbes*

*September 22-24, 2021. Nantes, France*

- *Covid 19 : Epidemiology and Environnement*

*October 15, 2021. Webinar*

- *17th SFM National Congress Microbes*

*October 3-5, 2022. Montpellier, France*

**SICOS (Biochemistry Union) 'sicos.fr' :**

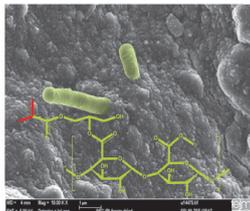
- *Flow Chemistry, Biocatalysis, Synthetic Biology*

*January 21, 2021. Virtual*

**AFBV (French Association for Plant Biotechnology) 'biotechnologies-vegetales.com' :**

- *Plant Biotechnology between Science and Society*

*June 28, 2021. Paris*



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federation of  
biotechnology



## Update on past and current division activities

In early 2021 the Biobased Materials Division board was elected with the following composition: Chair: Georg Gubitz, Austria; Vice-Chair: Manfred Zinn, Switzerland; Executive board member: Auxil Prieto, Spain; Executive board member: Lucia Gardossi, Italy. In addition, our division established an active advisory board, which will be further extended in 2022.

After two successful meetings in Vienna and Newcastle, the online Designer Biology'21 conference, organized by the Bioengineering and Bioprocessing and Biobased Materials division of EFB, was held in September. 80 participants joined from 20 countries from all over the world. The focus of the meeting "From proteins and cells to scaffolds & materials" was very well reflected in 27 oral presentations and 20 lightning talks. The conference had 50% female speakers and featured talks by early career researchers as well as established scientists, leaders in their respective fields. The meeting was bookended with inspiring talks from invited keynote speakers and covered topics from enzyme engineering, to the effect of spatial organization on the function of synthetic biological circuits. All in all, the conference was well received, and small financial benefit could be transferred to EFB for the maintenance of the Division's homepage. Several meetings of the organising committees were held to guarantee the continuation of the this top-notch meeting. Thus, we are happy to report that the next event will take place in Freiburg, Germany, in 2023.

The 17th International Symposium on Biopolymers (ISBP) was originally planned for September 2020, then had to be postponed to September 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2021 it was decided that ISBP could not be carried out as originally planned. In order to keep the community together, ISBP was finally transformed into a series of 10 webinars between May 6 and July 8 with an average attendance of 80 participants from 37 countries <https://www.hevs.ch/fr/rad-instituts/institut-technologies-du-vivant/events-past/isbp-2021-international-webinars-on-biopolymers-25864>. All webinars were recorded and made available online. For 2022 it is planned to organize the in person ISBP2022 on the new campus of HES-SO Valais-Wallis, Switzerland, between September 13 and 16 with the option of having a hybrid event.

As part of the EFB Virtual Conference, our division organized a special session "Biomaterials and Plastics" on 12.5.2021. Three keynote lectures (W. Zimmerman, Auxil Prieto, Lucia Gardossi) and 2 invited speakers (Anindya Mukherjee and Alain Marti) presented their work as well as 22 young scientists gave inspiring flash poster presentations. The session was finished with a high-level Q&A session and attended by more than 80 participants.

The highlights for 2022 include the organization of two joint EFB meetings planned with the EFB Division Biocatalysis in June and with the EFB Division Microbial Biotechnology in May, both running via the EFB central office. The International Fibre & Polymer Biotechnology Conference (IFPB) is still in the planning phase and depends on the development of the pandemic. In September, the ISBP2022 will take place in Sion, Switzerland.

### Contacts:

Dr. Georg M. Guebitz (Chair), Head of Department of Agrobiotechnology, BOKU University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, [guebitz@boku.ac.at](mailto:guebitz@boku.ac.at)

Dr. Manfred Zinn (Vice-Chair), Head of Biotechnology and Sustainable Chemistry, Institute of Life Technologies, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland, Sion,

## 2021 EFB Division Report – Biocatalysis

### 1. Activities 2021

- **efb2021** (10 – 14 May; online event)

Organization of two sessions:

- May 13<sup>th</sup>, joint session with the Asian Federation of Biotechnology (AFOB); 5 talks, 21 posters
- May 14<sup>th</sup>, Biohybrid processes-session; 5 talks, 22 posters



- **AcES2021** (3. Aachener Protein Engineering Symposium, 1 – 3 Sept.; online event)

Overview on state-of-the-art methodologies in protein engineering covering also enzyme discovery, diversity generation and high-throughput screening. Strong focus on industrially applied enzymes and emerging applications in biomaterials

- 148 participants
- 27 invited speakers; > 30 short talks; 30 poster presentations



- **Social media**

- Twitter account **#efbiocatalysis** started (Dec. 2021)

- **Division Board Meetings** held on

- 9 February (20 attendees)
- 31 May (18 attendees)

### 2. Upcoming activities

- **Joint meeting with the EFB Biomaterials Division**

- “Biological transformation of materials” (tentative title)
- 27 – 29 June 2022
- Currently planned as in-person event
- Organizing committee: Zinn, Guebitz, Marienhagen, Sözer, Jansen, Schwaneberg

- **Special Issue “Biocatalysis – Key to a Circular Bioeconomy” for the EFB Bioeconomy Journal**

- focus on valorization of renewable resources through biocatalysis for (i) the production of proteins and enzymes (as well as their immobilization) and (ii) the enzymatic bioconversion to bio-based products within a circular bioeconomy concept.
- 10 – 15 articles
- envisioned submission deadline: October 2022; editorial acceptance deadline December 2022
- Guest editors: Hernáiz, Kara, Marienhagen, Remaud-Simeon, Romero

- **Make-over of the EFB Biocatalysis Homepage**

**EBB Division –Bioengineering & Bioprocessing EFB Division****EBB Division in 2021**

The Bioengineering & Bioprocessing EFB Division has been involved in the following activities during 2021:

1. ECB 2021 meeting (9-12 May 2021, Maastricht, the Netherlands) - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this event has been postponed to 2022.
2. EFB2021 meeting (10-14 May 2021, virtual format) - The EFB2021 online meeting was run to fill in the gap between ECB congresses. A session was organised by each EFB division to reflect the research areas covered by EFB as a whole. EBBD organised the Bioengineering and Bioprocessing session with three invited speakers across a range of topics: Chase Beisel (Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research) described CRISPR research, Stefanie Frank (University College London) explored bacterial nanocompartments, and Birgitta Ebert (University of Queensland) covered chemical synthesis in metabolically engineered *Pseudomonas*. There were also three talks selected from submitted abstracts and several poster flash presentations. A live Q&A session prompted some good discussion. We ensured good gender balance and talks from a variety of countries and across the breadth of the scientific scope of EBBD. We also recruited three sponsors for the event (Genscript, IKA and NEB).
3. Designer Biology (8-10 September 2021; online format). This event is co-organized with the BioBased Materials Division. The report on this conference can be found as an annex to this document.
4. Interuniversity workshop on Synthetic Biology (September 2021, Ghent, Belgium) - Due to the COVID-19 measures in Belgium this workshop is again postponed until real live events are allowed. We hope to organise it in Q2 2022.

**Other Board activities**

We have held one online board meetings (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021), and implemented the internal organization of the new Division through the assignment of specific roles to all board members. Cecília Roque and Neil Dixon met with the Biopharmaceutical & Medical Biotechnology Division and the Biocatalysis Division, respectively, to find common points of interest for joint events in the future.

The EBBD co-chair Cecília Roque was also involved in the organization of PEPPERSchool (15-19 March 2021; online format; [https://eventos.fct.unl.pt/pepper\\_school/pages/sponsors](https://eventos.fct.unl.pt/pepper_school/pages/sponsors)) during which the EBB Division and EFB were presented to the participants, mostly young researchers.

## **EBB Division in 2022**

The Bioengineering & Bioprocessing EFB Division will be involved in the following activities in 2022:

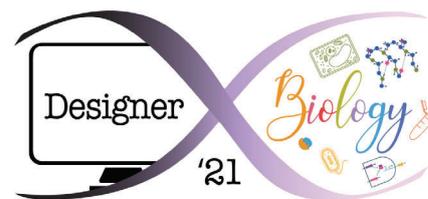
1. ASBE-VI

ASBE-VI is organised by the EFB divisions Bioengineering & Bioprocessing and Microbial Biotechnology with support of EFB central office. ASBE-VI will take place from 2-4 November 2022 in Edinburgh, UK. The scientific committee is confirmed and includes members of both divisions.

Following the success of previous meetings in the series, ASBE VI will explore the wealth of applied Synthetic Biology research and how it is contributing to progress in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We will emphasise the commonalities, overlaps and links between different approaches and the use of different biological systems. The meeting will bring together key partners from academia, industry and the third sector interested in the implementation of synthetic biology, engineering biology and applied microbiology to overcome global challenges. The format is designed to mix international guest lectures by prestigious scientists with shorter early career researcher presentations (and is supported by synthetic biology student societies in the UK, SynBioUK, and Europe, EUSynBioS). The program strongly considers ED&I while featuring invited lectures and presentations selected from submitted abstracts, in order to showcase not only the diversity of this interdisciplinary area but also the diversity of the community that drives the research visions. ASBE VI will offer an opportunity to academic and industrial researchers from all levels (masters students to professors and industry/NGO leaders), to share advances in the field and discuss routes to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

*Louise Horsfall and Cecilia Roque (EBB division co-chairs), Marjan de Mey (EBB division secretary)*

*20th December 2021*



## **Scope of the symposium**

Building on the success of Designer Biology 2017 held in Vienna and Designer Biology 2019 held in Newcastle, this meeting aimed to bring together young and established scientists working in the fields of bioengineering and synthetic biology. The meeting should have been held in Freiburg, but, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was held virtually using the Zoom platform. The scope was to discuss their different applications, ranging from the engineering of organisms, proteins, and the engineering of functionalised bio-based and bio-inspired materials. While the specific aspects and scientific questions in these fields are different, the larger umbrella of methods used is similar. By bringing the different disciplines together in one meeting, we helped building the bioengineering community at large, giving hopefully rise to synergies and opportunities for new collaborations.

## **Scientific sessions**

We had five sessions spread across three working days. We decided to run the meeting only for half a day, because virtual meetings tend to be tiring. We wanted to leave to the participants the opportunity to attend to other personal duties, all the while enjoying the DBio'21 meeting. The main topics were four: control of biological systems, biomaterials, biohybrid systems and sustainable production.

### ***Day 1***

#### **Session 1 – Control of biological systems**

The first keynote lecture was given by Alon Bar, a PhD student in the lab of Uri Alon, who is a leading expert in the field of systems biology. Uri Alon had agreed to talk at the meeting, but, unfortunately, for personal reasons, had to withdraw his participation on a short notice. We decided to nonetheless hear a presentation from the same group. Allowing younger scientists to present their results is one of the major features of the Designer Biology series. Therefore, we thought this was a good choice. The session went on with talks by PhD candidates and postdocs on various topics, ranging from in silico platforms to identity D-peptide ligands to novel optogenetic systems to record activated neurons.

The second keynote lecture of this session was given by Pamela Silver, one of the most renowned synthetic biologists world-wide. The session continued with other contributions from early-career scientists. The first session was concluded with 10 lightening talks: 1-2 minutes poster pitches to attract the attendees to the poster session, which was held in the Wonder.me platform.

### ***Day 2***

#### **Session 2 – Biomaterials**

The keynote lecture was given by Manfred Zinn, vice-chair of the EFB Biobased Materials Division. His talk was followed once again by three presentations from early-career researchers.

#### **Session 3 – Biohybrid systems I**

The keynote lecture was given by Per Olof Syren, who is a prominent researcher in the field of enzyme engineering and enzyme-mediated catalysis, having being selected to represent the Alexander von Humboldt foundation at the Nobel Laureate meeting in Chemistry 2013 in competition with thousands of other young scientists globally. His talk was followed by two presentations from early-career researchers and one presentation from the chair of the EFB

Bioengineering and Bioprocessing Division, Cecilia Roque. The day was concluded by 10 lightening talks, followed by poster presentations in Wonder.me.

### **Day 3**

#### **Session 4 – Sustainable Production**

The keynote lecture was given by Charlotte Williams, principal research scientist within the Biomedical Manufacturing Program at CSIRO (Australia's national science agency) and team leader for bioconjugation chemistry. Charlotte replaced on a very short notice Claudia Vickers, founding President of Synthetic Biology Australia, a very renowned Australian synthetic biologist, who had to withdraw from the meeting on extremely short notice due to illness. In this session there were other contributions from Australian researchers, demonstrating the positive aspects of virtual meetings that allow people around the globe to discuss science and make connections without the hassle of long travels.

#### **Session 5 – Biohybrid systems II**

The keynote lecture was given by Naomi Nakayama, *senior lecturer at the Faculty of Engineering*, in the Department of Bioengineering, Imperial College London. Naomi actually concluded the conference, with an extremely inspiring talk about bioinspired design. Before her talk, there were other contributions from selected talks by early-career researchers.

### **Committee's reflection on the meeting**

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Despite the virtual format, the meeting was a success. We received positive feedback from the participants as well as speakers; they all appreciated the selection of topics which is relatively vast, combining researchers that likely would not otherwise meet under the same roof. This is what makes this conference series special. The poster sessions were, all in all, well attended. We would have liked to have even more attendees; on the other hand, in the same period, there were many other synthetic biology and biomaterial meetings, some of which even in person, which of course were more attractive.

### **Conference organisation**

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#### **Execution**

The Designer Biology Symposium was organized by two EFB members of the Bioengineering and Bioprocessing Division (**Jon Marles-Wright**, Newcastle University, UK; and **Barbara Di Ventura**, University of Freiburg, Germany) and one member of the Biobased Materials Division (**Georg Guebitz**, BOKU Vienna, Austria). **The website was created and managed by** Christine Ehler, CIBSS, University of Freiburg. The Zoom license was provided by BOKU Vienna. The organizers decided to hire a company to manage the registration fees (AUSTROPA INTERCONVENTION, Jakov-Lind-Strasse 15, 1020 Wien, Austria). The social get-together and poster sessions were held via the Wonder.me platform, which was available for free. For the selection of talks from submitted abstracts, the organizers received help from other EFB members: Louse Horsfall, University of Edinburgh; Cecilia Roque, Universidade Nova de Lisboa; Pablo Nickel, Technical University of Denmark and Tim Overton, University of Birmingham.

#### **Budgets**

##### **Income**

##### **Registrations**

- Academic (early bird): 40 €
- Companies (early bird): 80 €
- Academic (normal prize): 60 €
- Companies (normal prize): 100 €

	Number	Unit price €	Income €
Academic	25	60	1.500,00
Academic-reduced fee	1	30	30,00
Did not pay	3	0	0
Early Bird – Academic (Complimentary)	1	0	0
Early Bird – Academic	46	40	1.840,00
Early Bird – Companies	1	80	80,00

**Total income: € 4.334,55**

### *Sponsorship*

Frontiers in Bioengineering and Biotechnology

**TOT. 1.000,00 USD**

**€ 884,55 (Exchange rate 16.12.21 Wiener Börse. Not yet paid)**

### **Expenditure**

AUSTROPA INTERCONVENTIONS (company to handle registrations): -1.460,42 €

**Total expenditure: €-1.460,42**

**Balance: € 2.874,13**

### **Participants**

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Actual attendees: 77

Invited speakers: 4

Submitted abstracts: 44, of which 20 were selected for short talk

Posters: 20

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

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Since the meeting was virtual, it was more difficult to grasp how inclusive the meeting was. We can surely say that we had attendees from several continents, of different backgrounds and career stage.

#### *Gender balance*

The meeting achieved **perfect balance**, with 50% of the allocated slots being for female scientists and 50% for male ones. Specifically:

10 selected talk male scientists: 10 selected talk female scientists

3 invited talk male scientists: 3 invited talk female scientists



## European Federation of Biotechnology

### Biopharmaceutical and Medical Biotechnology Division

#### Report to the Executive Board, 10-1-2022

2021 has been the year to start the Biopharmaceutical and Medical Biotechnology Division. An initial short list of individuals, was approached and those accepting to be part of the Division are listed below. A first Division meeting (teleconference) was organized by 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and a first Board for the Division was formed after it. The Board is formed by:

Mathias Uhlen (KTH, Stockholm, Sweden), co-Chair  
 Francesc Gòdia (UAB, Barcelona, Spain), co-Chair  
 Cecilia Roque (UNL, Lisbon, Portugal)  
 Veronique Choteau (KTH, Stockholm, Sweden)  
 Sylvain Huille (Sanofi, France)  
 Lise Marie Grav (DTU, Copenhagen, Denmark)  
 Roisin O’Flaherty (Maynooth University, Ireland)  
 Mark Smales (University of Kent, England, UK)

The Board met for the first time (teleconference) on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and agreed on the organization of two first scientific activities. In the one hand, a one day session on “Production of Biopharmaceuticals in Plants” within the next virtual ECB in May 2022. This will be a collaboration with the Plants Biotechnology Division. This was considered the best format in order to explore if there is a big enough community in such a topic. The initial preparation of the activity will be done by F Gòdia and Anna Caño from the Plant, Agriculture and Food Division of EFB. If successful, it will be spined off as a stand-alone workshop. On the other hand a full workshop on “Big Data in Biopharmaceutical Production”, to be scheduled wither in the second half of 2022 or in 2023. This would be a workshop with a lot of industry focus, including dedicated simulation sessions. It will also be organized in collaboration with ESACT as part of the MOU between ESACT and EFB. The initial preparation of the activity will be done by V. Chotteau and R. O’Flaherty.

#### Achievements in 2021

- Founding of the Division
- Establishing the Division Board
- Contribution on a session to ECB 2021 in virtual mode

#### Actions for 2022

- Set-up the web page of the Division, with the Central Office (F Gòdia)
- Enlarge the list of members (all)
- Workshop on “Production of Biopharmaceutical in Plants” in collaboration with the Plant Agriculture and Food Division (F Gòdia and A Caño)
- Workshop on “Big Data in Biopharmaceutical Production” (V. Chotteau and R. O’Flaherty)

## REPORT ENVIRONMENTAL BIOTECHNOLOGY DIVISION

### Activities in 2021

#### Organization of the “EFB2021 Session Environmental Biotechnology- Contribution to a circular bioeconomy”

- Organization of a session dedicated to the circular bioeconomy held on 11 May 2021, in the frame of the “EFB 2021- Virtual Conference” (10-14 May 2021). The session was focused on the following themes: Sustainability, Feedstock, Processing, and Emerging Technology. The session chair was Manfred Kircher, chair of the EFB specialists’ group on “Environmental biotechnology to valorize organic resources”, who introduced the 4 keynote lectures. These were followed by about 20 flash poster presentations and a conclusive “question and answer” session with the participation of all the keynote speakers.

Herein, the details of the keynote lectures:

- *Sustainability: quantifying sustainability performance of biotechnologies* (by Mikolaj Owsianiak- Technical University of Denmark)
- *Feedstock; the role of residues, waste and CO<sub>2</sub>* (by Liselotte Schebek - Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany; and Vanessa Zeller – Institute IWAR, Germany)
- *Processing: managing the resource diversity of biomass* (by Patrick KH Lee – City University of Hong Kong, China)
- *Emerging Technologies: a view in the future* (by Sebastià Puig – University of Girona, Spain)
- Evaluation of abstracts

#### Newsletters and promotion via social media (twitter, ResearchGate and Facebook)

- Each newsletter presented the main activities from partners of the EB division, including the participation to research projects on relevant topics, as well as the organization of a summer school on “Management of micropollutants in the urban water cycle”.

#### Preparation of a position paper

- Work is in progress on the preparation of a position paper dealing with “Valorization of biogenic organic residuals and waste” to be published in an EFB Journal (e.g. New Biotechnology or EFB Bioeconomy Journal). The paper’s preparation involves the participation of most of the regional experts of the EB division.

#### Major changes to the Division Board and future activities

The Division acknowledges that the failure to organize meetings in partnership with the EFB Central Office is largely due to many of the current board members no longer being available to work on a voluntary basis on EFB activities. Following consultation with the Finance Strategy Group and other members of the Executive Board, the President agreed to work with the Division Chair to restructure the Board, bringing in new, younger people who are keen to help. Initial invitations have been issued to people identified as suitable for specific tasks. A Board meeting will be organized before Easter: the Division website will then be fully updated.

PC and JAC. 24 January 2022

## MICROBIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY DIVISION

Report to the EFB Executive Board on major activities in 2021

### 1) Establishment of the full Division Board

The fully functional Division Board was established. The operative positions are filled by Diethard Mattanovich as Chair, Paola Branduardi as Vice-Chair, Stéphanie Heux as Secretary and Pau Ferrer as Treasurer. For the full board see <http://www.efbiotechnology.org/microbialbiotechnology/C61>).

### 2) Identification of members of the board or affiliates to establish connections with partner organisations

- a. ESFRI IBISBA 2.0: Jean Marie Francois
- b. FEMS: Michael Sauer (co-opted to the board)
- c. Microbial Society: John Morrissey
- d. AFOB: Diethard Mattanovich
- e. EBBS Division: Pablo Nikel

### 3) Contribution to the organization of EFB2021 (May 2021)

The Division organised an afternoon session of about 2h on Mastering heterogeneity in microbial biotechnology, with Eriko Takano and Diana Z. Sousa as invited speakers, three selected speakers, flash poster presentations and a poster session.

### 4) Organization of future meetings

- a. "From CO<sub>2</sub> to Materials" online meeting on May 11-12, 2022, together with the Biobased Materials Division (and maybe EBBS). The topics will focus on microbial single carbon utilization for production of biobased chemicals and materials.
- b. Contribution to the organization of ASBE 2022 (Edinburgh, Nov. 2-4, 2022).
- c. Organization of the next Microbial Stress Conference, April 2023, Vienna, Chair Matthias Steiger
- d. Organization of PYFF8, June 5-8, 2023, Cork, Chair John Morrissey
- e. Organization of RPP11 – details to be defined

### 5) Opinion / position paper on the *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization* and its practical impact on biotechnology

The Division Board suggested to evaluate the experience of EFB members and representatives from industries in handling the Nagoya Protocol. This could eventually become a position paper by EFB.

January 22, 2022

Paola Branduardi and Diethard Mattanovich

**EFB Plant, Agriculture and Food Division**

PAF activities in 2021:

- **Holding two Division Board online meetings**

The points discussed included mainly planning possible future activities and meetings and identification of their perspective topics reflecting the division focus (soil, plants based bioeconomy, sustainable food production, plants based biopharmaceuticals, gene drive used to eliminate pests, molecular farming, recombinant protein production etc.).

Three new members: Ana Caño Delgado (Centre for Research in Agricultural Genomics, Barcelona), Wolfram Brück (University of Applied Sciences, Western Switzerland) and Daniel Gibbs (University of Birmingham) joined the Division Board.

- **Preparation of the Green for Good VI. meeting**

The meeting will be held physically as a division event in Olomouc (Czech Republic), on 12 – 15 September, 2022. In 2021, the website including the registration platform was launched and the division board prepared the preliminary programme. Addressing perspective speakers will start at the beginning of 2022.