

Letter from the President

Dear colleagues,

it is early fall of 2020, in approximately one month the elections for the new Board of the Society will be held, and in three months the old Board members will make place for the newly elected ones. It is an appropriate time for a critical appraisal of what has been done over the past three years and how things appear on the horizon.

I believe that it can be safely stated that the new Board will start from a much improved general situation with respect to what we old Board inherited. Thanks mainly to a very successful Lisbon ECMTB2018 the Society's finances are in good shape, even after supporting 20 or so local meetings and schools throughout 2018-2019-2020. After many years of interruption we successfully restored the legal address of the Society, thanks mainly to the selfless help of the colleagues from CHURG/SIIM at the Université de Grenoble, Angélique Stephanou first of all who labored through the lengthy French bureaucratic process. Together with the resolution of the administrative situation, we managed to open the Bank account for the Society in Grenoble, finally achieving the long, long-due transition of the financial management from the tender, loving care of Andreas Deutsch, who had sustained it from Dresden for more than 12 years: under the present arrangement, the account is finally in the name of the Society itself, and will not need to be changed as the Society Administrators change, thereby obviating the problems that did plague such switches in the past. We (Bob Planqué) switched to the Wild Apricot membership management system, actuating a change already advocated by the past ESMTB Board. In the process, we also transferred from Dresden the webpage, rebuilding it entirely, changed the logo (we hope most of you like it), and maintained the possibility of accepting payments by credit card. We conducted one campaign for new memberships, with some success: unfortunately, Covid-19 interfered with the effort of registering new members by forcing Anna Marciniak and her

organizer team to postpone our flagship conference, ECMTB 2020 Heidelberg to 2021, the conference being the most evident aggregation moment, being attended typically by more than 700 participants. In order to strengthen the relationship between our European Society and the rest of the world, and in order to emphasize our investment in the new generations, a new "Ovide Arino Outreach Award" has been created in collaboration with the Société Francophone de Biologie Théorique. For it and for our long-standing Reinhart Heinrich Award, streamlined procedures have been put in place, including mechanisms for the renewal of the respective Award Committees. We have participated in one H2020 COST project proposal and regularly taken our place in the EMS and ICIAM meetings, giving our small contribution to the discussion and promotion of sensitive societal issues impacting mathematical biology across the Continent and the world. The negotiations with Springer Verlag, about the new agreement regulating the relationship between the Society and the Journal of Mathematical Biology, are well under way and seem to be arriving to a mutually satisfactory arrangement: barring unforeseen occurrences, we ought to be able to finalize the Agreement before December, leaving to the new Board one less problem to be solved.

Much remains to be done in the future: intensifying the relationships between ESMTB and national societies, improving and synchronizing the offer of Summer Schools and other educational initiatives, achieving ESMTB-organized EU-funded projects (particularly in collaboration with European societies in other domains such as medicine), recognizing and supporting special-interest groups within our constituency (e.g. cancer modeling), establishing closer ties and fruitful interchange between theoretical biology and more computational side-fields (such as computational genomics, bioinformatics, quantitative pharmacology), giving more space and attention in our initiatives to somewhat neglected sub-domains (such as mathematical statistics) and to biological applications of traditionally "pure" mathematical disciplines

(for example differential geometry or fractional differential equations). For all of this and more, best luck to the new Board!

It has been an honor serving the Society for these three years and it has been a real pleasure collaborating with the colleagues of the Board over these years.

Very affectionate regards,

Andrea De Gaetano
President of ESMTB



ESMTB Board Elections

The board of ESMTB consists of 10 members. Each member is elected for 6 years, and board elections are taking place every 3 years, where half the board is being replaced. The next elections will take place in **October 2020**.

The European Society for Mathematical and Theoretical Biology (ESMTB) supports and promotes excellence activities on theoretical approaches and mathematical tools in biology and medicine in a European and wider context. This goal is pursued by encouraging community networking and scientific collaboration, as well as the organization of summer schools and conferences, in particular of the bi-annual European Conference in Mathematical and Theoretical Biology (ECMTB). Applications for travel grants and prizes such as the Reinhart Heinrich Doctoral Thesis Award and the Ovide Arino Outreach Award are granted every year and published on the ESMTB Communications, available for download on our website www.esmtb.org.

The activities of the Society are mainly conducted by the elected Society Board: Board members run for six years; half of the board is

replaced every three years to ensure an overlap of new and experienced board members. The Board conducts its actions through one-day meetings (held approximately twice a year): a local workshop is usually organized concomitantly with the Board meetings. Board meetings are also held during the General Assembly (G.A.) held on the course of the European Conference in Mathematical and Theoretical Biology. A substantial part of the work and decisions are done, of course, by e-mail.

In 2020 the ESMTB members will elect (via electronic ballots managed by the current Board) five new Board members, whose period of office will run from January 2021 through December 2026. The candidates are now known. Read the statements from all ten: <https://esmtb.org/ESMTB-2020-Election-Candidates>.

The election will take place between 1 and 31 October, 2020, where active members will express a preference for up to 5 candidates via their personal area within the ESMTB website. All active members will receive an email with a link to the elections page.

Results will be announced by October 31st, 2020 and a joint Board meeting will be scheduled for December 2020, in order to effect the transition between the old and new Board members.

Current (2018-2020) board members:

- Andrea De Gaetano (president)
- Maíra Aguiar (vice president)
- Ellen Baake (secretary)
- Bob Planqué (treasurer)
- Luděk Berec
- Sílvia Cuadrado
- Susanne Ditlevsen
- Torbjörn Lundh
- Anna Marciniak-Czochra

Andrea, Susanne, Torbjörn and Anna will end their term on the board by December 31, 2020.

Maíra, Ellen, Bob, Luděk and Sílvia will stay on until December 31, 2023.
