

**Letter to Members of the International Neuroendocrine Federation (INF)
from the President of the INF, Robert (Bob) P Millar
Director of the Centre for Neuroendocrinology, University of Pretoria and Senior Fellow,
University of Cape Town; Research Fellow, Centre for Integrative Physiology, University of
Edinburgh; and Professor Emeritus, University of St Andrews.**

It is a great honour and privilege to serve as the president of the INF and preside over the International Congress of Neuroendocrinology to be held in Toronto in 2018. During my four-year tenure (2016-2019) it is my mission to diligently promote the objectives of the INF which sets out to:

- promote the development of research and education in basic and clinical neuroendocrinology
- disseminate scientific information in this and related fields
- arrange for publication of information aimed at the advancement of the field
- facilitate the exchange of ideas among scientists of all nations
- attract enthusiastic and talented young scientists to the field

To achieve these objectives the INF:

- A) organises an International Congress of Neuroendocrinology (ICN) every 4 years. The Congress provides a forum for the presentation and discussion of cutting-edge research among scientists from all countries
- B) facilitates the exchange of scientific information by sponsoring meetings and discussions in coordination with national neuroendocrine groups and societies
- C) facilitates exchanges between endocrinologists and neuroscientists by participating in meetings and discussions of societies or organisations with related interests, including academic and private foundations
- D) holds and arranges teaching courses
- E) promotes the dissemination of new technologies in neuroendocrine research
- F) offers travel grants to encourage participation at meetings

In addition to these overall objectives, I should like to put the INF on a secure financial footing and promote clinical neuroendocrinology research in the activities of the INF and include this area in our International Congress of Neuroendocrinology (ICN). Basic neuroendocrinology has spawned major new therapeutics such as GnRH and somatostatin analogs which constitute billion dollar markets. Many more neuroendocrine peptide and non-peptide analogs are emerging, such as kisspeptin and neurokinin B agonists and antagonists, which promise to become widely utilised therapeutics for the treatment of cancers and women's health conditions. We need to actively engage with pharmaceutical companies in advising and promoting their development.

Office Bearers of the INF

President: Robert (Bob) P Millar (Pretoria, South Africa)

Secretary: Yoichi Ueta (Kitakyushu, Japan)

Treasurer: William (Bill) Armstrong (Memphis, USA)

Strategic Action Committee (SAC)

The SAC serves by advising the INF Executive on ways to accomplish the following aims:

- To raise sponsorship for INF objectives
- To promote public understanding of neuroendocrinology through internet activities, the media, and publications
- To establish rapport with industry and government/ international bodies
- To identify new objectives and broaden the scope of the INF
- Influence policy development of funding and health agencies

Committee membership

John A Russell (Edinburgh, UK); Chair

Iain J Clarke (Melbourne, Australia); Vice-chair

Publications Committee

The aims of the Publications Committee are as follows:

- To develop the INF website as a platform for information and communication in the neuroendocrinology community, including teaching and public relations resources
- To negotiate and promote special subscription rates for INF members to relevant journals

Committee membership

William E. Armstrong (Memphis, USA); Chair

Jean-Louis Nahon (Valbonne, France)

Jon E. Levine (Evanston, USA)

INF 9th International Congress of Neuroendocrinology: Toronto July 15-18, 2018.

A major responsibility during my tenure as president of the INF is to preside over the ICN meeting. The meeting takes place every four years and is the premier event of the INF. I am confident it will be a superb meeting with an exciting scientific programme, and I strongly encourage you and your fellows and students to attend. There will be funds available from the INF for student attendance support and the British Society for Neuroendocrinology generously supports student members wishing to attend.

See <http://www.nacos.com/jns/j/pdf/icn2018.pdf>

Local Organising Committee Chair

Denise D Belsham

Scientific Programme Committee Chair

Valerie Simonneaux (Strasbourg) simonneaux@inci-cnrs.unistra.fr

ICN Operation and Activities

Many of you may not know precisely how the INF supports the field internationally. At the Sydney ICN meeting in 2015 orchestrated by Dave Grattan and his team—and a great success—the INF Council agreed to spend half of its income in supporting the International Congress of Neuroendocrinology over a 4-year period. One-quarter is allocated to other activities between congresses such as workshops and training courses, and one-quarter to cover necessary administrative expenses including the website and Council meeting costs. Under my stewardship, I wish to enshrine this notional guideline and ensure that the administrative costs continue to be kept at a minimum.

The main sources of income for the INF are the profits that may be made at the ICN (although no profit was returned to the INF from the Rouen and Sydney meetings). Contributions also come from the official neuroendocrinology journals of the INF, and from the Masterclass series of neuroendocrinology books initiated through the insightful and tireless endeavours of John Russell, and Bill Armstrong. There have been five books published: Neurophysiology of Neuroendocrine Neurons, Neuroendocrinology of Stress, Molecular Neuroendocrinology, Computational Neuroendocrinology, and Neuroendocrinology of Appetite.

<http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-351119.html>

Two more are in preparation, with further volumes planned. I strongly encourage you to purchase these excellent volumes.

As an additional revenue stream, I also aim to formalise the income from the official INF neuroendocrine journals by establishing an annual membership fee in addition to their contributions to the ICN for the publication of articles arising from the presentations.

So how is the INF income spent?

The INF contributes an advance of funding to the ICN as a loan to cover specified upfront needs such as deposits, printing costs and organisational costs which are specified in the congress budget. The congress budget should be developed in a way that the break-even level is one that repays the loan in full so that we retain funds for future congresses and activities.

The INF contribution to the ICN includes the costs of the Geoffrey Harris lecture to cover economy travel, accommodation, and registration. Any other contribution INF makes is at the discretion of the Executive. For the Sydney and Rouen ICN, INF resolved that the most effective way to support the congress was by travel grants to young researchers and primarily directed at broadening geographic representation. These travel grants are to complement those already generously made by the British Society for Neuroendocrinology for members from any country attending the congress.

The INF holds funds in the Glenn Hatton Student Memorial Fund which are specifically to support excellent young researchers attending the World Congress on Neurohypophysial Hormones. For the Toronto congress, we have asked the trustees to sponsor a young,

outstanding scientist, to present a plenary lecture in the field of neurohypophysial hormones.

The International Membership of the INF

Our current membership includes neuroendocrinology societies and groups from over 30 nations around the world. These include societies and groups from Australasia, Britain, China, France, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Turkey, USA and the European Region (not represented by national societies), Canada Region, India Region, Latin America Region, Nordic Neuroendocrine Group, South Mediterranean Region, and the Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, as well as communicating societies including the European Neuroendocrine Association, the International Society for Psychoneuroendocrinology and the Pituitary Society. The INF aims to particularly support neuroendocrinology in less advantaged economic regions and especially targeted at trainee programmes and events.

We are particularly delighted that the Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology chooses to hold a joint meeting on the occasion of the ICN meeting.

Benefits for Members

As a member, you are entitled to:

- Reduced registration fee to attend the International Congress of Neuroendocrinology (held every four years).
- Students have the opportunity to apply for a travel grant to attend this meeting.
- Reduced subscription rate to the journals Neuroendocrinology, Journal of Neuroendocrinology, Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology, and Stress.
- Option to advertise training or faculty positions available in your laboratory, or to request a position for yourself.

Website

I have pursued the development of a new INF website in partnership with NeuroEndoNow (NEN) (www.neuroendonow.com) which is a forum for discussion between neuroendocrinologists and the promotion of events and the field in general. The aim of the site is to allow researchers to:

- present and discuss their latest research
- provide seminars, tutorials, and information for the community

Also, researchers can promote their latest publications by podcast, and we also have a series of interviews on the “Doyens of Neuroendocrinology” which provides a fascinating insight into the major contributors to neuroendocrinology research. We hope you will play a part in making this project a success by contributing your work to the neuroendocrine community.

The Joint Korea/Japan Neuroendocrinology Societies’ Meeting (Jeju 2-4 Dec 2016)

I had the singular honour to be invited as President of the INF to attend the 5th Annual Meeting of the Korea Neuroendocrine Society, the Pituitary Expert Meeting in Asia, the INF-Korea Branch and the INF-Asian branch. I brought greetings from the INF to the President of

the Japan Neuroendocrine Society, Dr. Akira Shimatsu, to the President of the Korean Neuroendocrine Study Group, Dr. Sun-Woon Kim, and all attendees. It was gratifying for the INF to find that these two societies are flourishing and together with other Asian neuroendocrinologists have arranged such a diverse and interesting scientific programme.

The Japan Society was established 50 years ago and has held annual meetings ever since. It has a large membership of about 600 and is a major force in international neuroendocrine research having made far-reaching contributions to discoveries in the field. The Korean society is a much younger organisation which is vibrantly growing. The Neuroendocrine Study Group of the Korean Society of Endocrinology was established in 2005 and subsequently held a joint symposium with the Growth Hormone Study Group in 2006 to become integrated into the current Korean Neuroendocrine Study Group. This includes the registration of diseases associated with the neuroendocrine system.

The study group has recently broadened their scope to include clinical and basic research of neuroendocrine internal medicine, neurosurgery, radiology, and pathology. The study group also provides members with an opportunity for academic exchanges with clinicians and scientists from the nearby Asian countries, Japan, China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and has led to the establishment of the INF-Korea Branch and the INF-Asian branch.

It is most encouraging that the two societies are coming together to create something which, as Aristotle stated produces “A whole which is greater than the sum of the parts.” It is particularly pertinent that the meeting combines both basic/fundamental research and translational clinical research as in my capacity as President of the INF I would very much like to see the incorporation of clinical neuroendocrinology in our activities, and our International Congress of Neuroendocrinology held every four years. It was also a pleasure to attend the meeting in a personal capacity as I have had many fruitful and enjoyable collaborations with Japanese and Korean colleagues.

In Conclusion

With your support, I hope to enhance the activities and financial sustainability of the INF during my tenure. Any suggestions to achieve this will be warmly welcomed. I would especially like to wish Denise Belsham, as chair of the ICN LOC and her team, as well as Valerie Simonneaux as chair of the ICN POC and her team, a very successful congress in Toronto. I trust that the member societies will encourage their members to participate in what promises to be a highly productive and enjoyable INF meeting.

Bob Millar, INF President, Pretoria, November 2016.