

January 2022

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It is with great sadness that the Executive Committee of IUPAB announces that the Secretary-General, Prof. Juan Carmelo Gómez-Fernandez, has requested to withdraw from his position, owing to health conditions.

Prof. Juan Carmelo, who is a well-known expert in membrane structure and dynamics and lipid-protein interactions, is Emeritus Professor of the University of Murcia (Spain), where he spent most of his career after the PhD at University of Navarra (Spain), following postdoctoral Fellowships at the Universities of Oxford and London.

He has been very actively engaged in Spanish and European Biophysics, holding several offices in the Spanish Biophysical Society. Within IUPAB, he served terms as a Councillor, and then was elected Secretary-General at the 2017 Edinburgh Congress.

Juan Carmelo has tirelessly, enthusiastically and very efficiently carried out the duties of Secretary-General during these four years, giving IUPAB a clear guidance in difficult and complex times. Also, we saw him recently leading the on-line General Assembly during the IUPAB 2021 Congress last October,



where he presented a comprehensive report of Secretary-General's activities. Juan Carmelo will be hard to replace, but according to the Statutes, the Executive Committee will now seek to appoint a successor. We wish to Juan Carmelo all the best, and look forward to maintaining our friendly contacts.

From the (current, and former) Executive Committee of IUPAB.

IUPAB Congress, 2021

The 3-year IUPAB congress, a major event of our organization, was held in October 2021 and organized online together with the annual meetings of both the Brazilian Biophysical Society (SBBf, in its 45th edition) and the Brazilian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (SBBq, in its 50th edition). With over 1000 registered participants, with an excellent gender balance. The congress attracted a good number of participants from outside of Latin America.

A full report is at the end of this Newsletter, and the next congress will be in Kyoto in 2024.

IUPAB Supported Events – 2022/3

IUPAB executive Committee has agreed to support some events postponed to 2022 from previous years as a result of the Covid pandemic: IUPAB Focused Meeting (“[The biophysics of neurotransmitter-gated ion channels](#)”) with the Annual Canadian BPS (Ottawa, May 25-27th) supported with a plenary lecture + prizes/travel bursaries. As of January 2022, IUPAB will also support the [Biophysical Society](#) (February 18 – 23rd); [Indian BPS](#) (March 30 – April 1st); [Argentinian BPS](#) (November 18 – 22nd). Applications for support from IUPAB can be made at [IUPAB.ORG](#) and sent to the Treasurer: christina.sizun@cns.fr

IUPAB Task Forces

Task Force for Structural Biology

Chaired by Matt Baker (Australia), they have identified meetings and events to support in 2022/3, including the Taiwan meeting of the Asian BPS (May 2022), and the Krasnodar meeting of the Russian BPS (May 2023) (travel bursaries available US\$500).

Task Force for Big Data

Kandala Chary and Gabriela Viero are exploring ways of engaging with CODATA (codata.org) for activities relevant to biophysics.

Task Force for Education and Capacity Building

An MoU has been signed with IAPS (Intl. Assn. of Physics Students), and the student groups of IUPAC and IUBMB are enthusiastic about joint activities with IUPAB to introduce them to biophysics. Additionally, pre-congress workshops are planned ([Argentina](#), November 2022) for young scientists.

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The International Science Council - the umbrella organization of IUPAB

The International Science Council (ISC, formally ICSU and ISSC until 2018) is a non-governmental organization with a unique global membership that brings together 40 international scientific Unions and Associations and over 140 national and regional scientific organizations including Academies and Research Councils. It is the only international non-governmental organization bringing together the natural and social sciences and the largest global science organization of its type.

With an annual budget of €6.3M (dues and grants contribute ~ 50% each) and based in Paris in premises provided by the French Government, ISC has a truly international and diverse Governing Board of 18 members, and a declared mission to:

- Act as the global voice for science;
- Speak for the value of all science and evidence-informed decision-making;
- Stimulate and support international scientific research and scholarship on major issues of global concern;
- Articulate scientific knowledge on such issues in the public domain;

- Promote the continued and equal advancement of scientific rigour, creativity and relevance in all parts of the world; and,
- Defend the free and responsible practice of science.

IUPAB contributes ~€3,500 to ISC and is a relatively small Union, although many issues addressed by the ISC are in common with, and of concern to all scientific communities. The lead taken by the ISC in advising Governments and worldwide organizations on behalf of its members is therefore of direct interest to IUPAB members, most recently around gender and diversity in science, science funding, and environmental responsibility.

At the triennial General Assembly in October 2021, issues that had been addressed by the ISC by its various committees over the previous 3 years, were reported on and included *“Eight principles for reform of scientific publishing”*, *“Freedom and responsibility in the 21st century: a contemporary perspective on the free and responsible practice of science”* and *“ISC COVID-19 Scenarios Outcome project”*.



Sir Peter Gluckman (New Zealand), paediatrician, biomedical scientist and science-policy expert, becomes President of the International Science Council.

An ISC 2022 – 2024 Action Plan *“Science and Society in Transition”* position paper, *“Science as a Global Public Good”*, was also presented. All the reports and actions can be accessed [here](#), as well as the addresses by the outgoing President, Daya Reddy, SA and incoming President, Peter Gluckman, NZ.

If you would like to have direct news from the ISC, you can join the mailing list and follow them on social media: <https://council.science/newsletter/>.

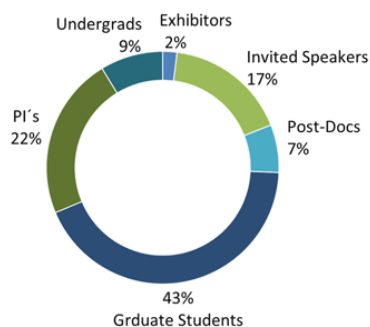
The IUPAB representative at the ISC is Gabriela Viero.

Anthony Watts, IUPAB President-elect (2021-2024)

IUPAB 2021 Congress

The 3-year IUPAB congress, a major event of our organization, was held in October 2021 and organized online together with the annual meetings of both the Brazilian Biophysical Society (SBBf, in its 45th edition) and the Brazilian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (SBBq, in its 50th edition).

The known restrictions also imposed alterations in the pre-event *Young Scientist Program (YSP)*. The successful solution turned out to be a series of fortnightly thematic webinars including a talk from a recognized authority in the field followed by three or four short presentations from the participants themselves. The standard was extremely high and the YSP ended up being a highly effective warm-up to the congress itself. Furthermore, there was excellent geographical diversity among the participants with Europe, Africa, Asia, The Middle East, North and South America represented.



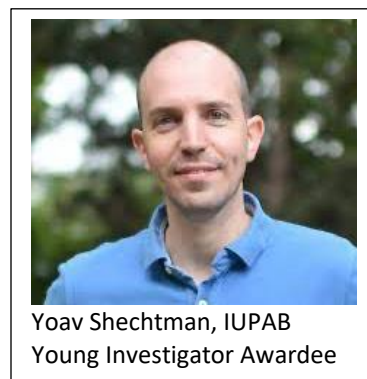
The main event attracted over 1000 participants, with an excellent gender balance. Although the Americas dominated, there were also significant numbers of participants from Europe, Asia and Africa. A wide variety of specific subjects were covered during the five days of the congress itself, as to be expected, since biophysics naturally interfaces with biochemistry, molecular biology, cell biology, chemistry (including medicinal chemistry), physics, engineering, in addition to the more traditional subjects such as lipids, membranes, their assembly and dynamics, bioimaging at all levels, drug targets and drug development/delivery and molecular recognition including membrane/protein interactions.

All the Keynote lectures were very well attended. Nobel laureate Richard

Henderson set the ball rolling with a beautifully clear historical overview of how cryo-EM got to be where it is now and what we might expect for the near future. Anthony Watts (the new President-Elect of IUPAB) closed the event with the Avanti/IUPAB award lecture. Midweek, a second Nobel prize winner, Michael Levitt, gave his take on the COVID-19 pandemic by applying his talent for mathematical modeling in much the same way as he so successfully applied it to macromolecular systems in the past, and Yoav Shechtman, the IUPAB Young Investigator awardee also presented his work.

Overall, the sessions were very well attended with typically over 200 participants, as well as the two poster sessions. Approximately 10% of all poster presenters were awarded prizes during the closing ceremony and five special prizes were generously provided by the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Several special activities were held throughout the week. These included technical seminars by some of the sponsors, as well as sessions devoted to Brazil-German exchange programs and one on "Gender in Science". The latter was particularly motivational for the congress participants, whose demographic was heavily biased towards early career scientists, post-docs and students (inset figure). *Biophysical Reviews*, the IUPAB journal, organized two early-morning sessions, one of which was an editorial board meeting whilst the other was open to all interested parties and represented an opportunity to promote the journal within the community.



IUPAB is grateful to the main organizers (Rosangela Itri and Mauricio Baptista) as well also to the other collaborators. From the extremely high standard of the presentations and the overall satisfaction of the participants, this congress was a great success.

Manuel Prieto, IUPAB President (2021-2024)

Officers and Members of the Council

Following the on-line elections, with voting from delegates from all Adhering Bodies (>90% responses), the Officers and Members of Council will be the following (they took office at the end of the General Assembly that will take place on October 6th, 2021).

Executive Committee:

President: Manuel Prieto, Portugal

President Elect: Anthony Watts, UK

Treasurer: Christina Sizun, France

Councillors:

Gabriela Amodeo, Argentina

Anastasia A. Anashkina, Russia

John Baenziger, Canada

Matthew Baker, Australia

Kandala V. R. Chary, India

David Crossman, New Zealand

Ana Denicola, Uruguay

Hans-Joachim Galla, Germany

Angela M. Gronenborn, USA

Takayuki Nishizaka, Japan

Peter Pohl, Austria

Gabriella Viero, Italy