

A word from the ISPNE President

Carmine M. Pariante

President, International Society for Psychoneuroendocrinology

Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London

carmine.pariante@kcl.ac.uk

Dear friends and colleagues

We are approaching the end of 2020, and we are now almost four months into my ISPNE Presidency. I thought this was a good moment to look at the future and to share with you some of the plans that I, as President, and we all, as Executive Committee, have for the next few months, with a view to projecting the society into the future while also consolidating the enormous work that my predecessors have completed over the last few years.

But first, I would like to start by acknowledging that this has been a really tragic couple of years, for the Society, and for all of us at large.

We lost two of our most loved and respected friends, Dirk Hellhammer, at the end of 2018, and then Bruce McEwen, one year after that. Both were honoured by two dedicated, touching obituaries published in our journal (Kirschbaum, 2018; Lupien & de Kloet, 2020), and by the unanimous decision taken at the 2020 Summer Meeting by the Executive Committee to dedicate our flagship society awards to these two scientific giants. So, already from this year, and from now on, the Curt P Richter Award, dedicated to young investigators, has been renamed the Dirk Hellhammer Award, while the Lifetime Achievement Award has been renamed the Bruce McEwen Lifetime Achievement Award.

And, of course, this year we have all been touched by the chaos and the challenges of living with COVID and dealing with a pandemic, in our daily life, our research, our mentorship of junior colleagues. I am forever grateful to President Elect, Emma Adam, who has managed to organise an outstanding online conference – indeed, we were one of the few societies that did not cancel their meeting completely this year. I am even more grateful that Emma has also decided to organise the 2021 meeting.

In the background of these tragic times, I want to reassure you that the Executive remains fully committed to the success of the society, and especially to the wellbeing and the personal development of the new and future members. Our priority for the next few months will be to work on aspects of our current governance and financial organisation that could help the society reflect even better the diverse, inclusive, and multidisciplinary membership it represents, while remaining financially solid and ready for future challenges.

We are proposing three main changes.

First, we propose to expand the Executive Committee from the current 6 members (4 elected and two ex officio) to a total of 10 (6 elected and two ex officio), including one elected post for a representative of the early career scholars (students and

postdocs), one elected post for an Education and Meeting Officer, one elected post for an Officer for Diversity and Inclusion, and two elected posts with no specific roles. These new posts will also feed separately in dedicated committees, where we hope that interested members will start experiencing the responsibility of contributing to society's life, before moving on to an elected officer post.

Second, we propose to consolidate novel membership types, including the "early career scholar", the "emeritus membership" for retired colleagues, and the "membership for low and middle income countries" who will benefit from a reduction in their registration fees based on their country of origin.

Third, we propose to explore the possibility to involve a professional company in the day-to-day management of some of the society's financial governance and organisation, to align our structure to what is required from a scientific society, including its fiscal responsibility as an American organisation.

We want to stress that, at this stage, these are directions of travel rather than established plans, and for the changes in the Bylaws we will be seeking membership's approval: please keep your eyes open for an email with the request for your vote, sometime in the new year!

There will be ample opportunity for people to express their opinion, by personal communication to me, or through the vote mechanism. I hope that most of the transformation can be completed by the time we will meet, hopefully in person in Chicago, for the 2021 meeting.

In the meantime, one small change that we have the authority to implement immediately is the creation of a post for a Social Media Editor, jointly funded by the Society and by Elsevier, to support the social media presence of the society and of our journals, *Psychoneuroendocrinology* and *Comprehensive Psychoneuroendocrinology*. A separate email seeking expressions of interest has been circulated.

I hope that you will all be part of this journey, and that August 2021 will bring a sunnier opportunity to celebrate these changes together in person.

With my warmest wishes for a serene 2021

On behalf of all the Executive Committee

References

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