

News from the Underground

Junior spring activities: 12th ERS Lung Science Conference and much more

The 12th European Respiratory Society (ERS) Lung Science Conference (LSC) was once again held in the beautiful city of Estoril, Portugal and the city once again extended a warm welcome to all 181 participants, including the 95 junior delegates (under 35s). The LSC has traditionally been the hub for junior member researchers.

As always at the LSC great emphasis was given to discussion, debate and interaction between young scientists and established investigators. There were several events dedicated to junior members' activities including the ERS Junior Members Committee (JMC) meeting, mentors–mentees session and LSC awards. In line with the commitment by the ERS to encourage and support future generations of respiratory professionals, a special mentoring session was held to facilitate the mentoring of younger delegates by established investigators. This year a young investigator award and awards for the best oral and poster presentations were offered. It is of note that 80 out of the 98 abstracts were presented by authors aged under 35!

During this year's LSC, there was the first JMC round table discussion that brought together all junior delegates. The discussion included feedback on JMC activities and ways for junior members to become actively involved in the society. This session provided a valuable platform for discussion and networking between young researchers who wished to interact with the JMC and experienced ERS officers, who generously shared their insight and experiences with young fellows. The JMC discussed the opportunities

for proactive involvement of junior members in the ERS, world class expert scientists and professionals presented career opportunities in academia and industry, and an overview of ERS fellowships was provided. A constructive discussion highlighted the importance of these meetings to ERS junior members.

We wish to thank the LSC organising committee for the invitation and its contribution to junior members' work.

We are pleased to report that there is now JMC representation (Anders Bjerg) on the ERS Science Council (formerly known as the Scientific Committee) [1, 2]. The aim is to provide input from junior members and increase their future involvement in ERS scientific activities. The ERS Science Council has been very positive about this general goal, and to having the JMC as a partner in this endeavour. Consequently junior members are to be encouraged to chair sessions at the ERS International Congress and LSC, to review fellowship applications and congress abstracts, and to participate actively in guidelines working groups. The JMC will endeavour to invite interested junior members within each assembly who will be allocated to these tasks according to their experience and areas of interest.

The number of ERS fellowships is to be increased and ERS meetings will cover more topics of relevance to early stage junior members careers. Topics of interest are already being covered by the "Doing Science" series in *Breathe*.

This year's ERS International Congress in Munich will feature a junior members

Authors: Georgia Hardavella, Indre Butiene, Anders Bjerg, Tiago Jacinto, Andras Bikov, Szymon Skoczynski



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postgraduate course, a junior fellows get together meeting, a junior members networking event, a lunchtime “How to do science” session and a HERMES knowledge contest. Please feel free to contact us about participation or with questions, feedback and suggestions. Your input would be most welcome!

The JMC has launched a new collaboration with the European Lung Foundation (ELF). As part of this collaboration the junior members networking event held during this year’s ERS International Congress will, for the first time, also be attended by junior patients (under 35s). Junior members who are patients themselves are also strongly encouraged to participate and get involved. This event will help provide the first links towards joint collaborations between junior member healthcare professionals/scientists and patients who are the final recipients of research/clinical practice. We are seeking to recruit German speaking junior members (but not exclusively!) to participate and deliver a short talk to members of the public during this initiative. The JMC–ELF collaboration aims to set up long-term

plans for the promotion of patient and public involvement in research by educating junior members and patients towards this goal. Should you wish to be a part of this initiative please contact Georgia Hardavella (see table for contact details).

The ERS and the JMC aim to set up a Junior National Delegates Group (JNDG). This is part of the ERS strategy to involve more junior members in the society, and make them proactive and assertive as future leaders in respiratory medicine. A junior national delegate from each country will be appointed into the JNDG and will closely collaborate with the ERS National Delegate from their country to provide closer links between the National Societies and the ERS. The junior delegates will also represent their country’s junior members in the ERS and actively promote their involvement and interests in the society. This project is still under development. Should you wish to express your interest or provide suggestions please do not hesitate to contact Georgia Hardavella.

Table 1 JMC tasks and contact details

JMC representative	Responsibility/task	Contact details
Indre Butiene	JMC chair, Education Council representative	indre.butiene@gmail.com
Anders Bjerg	ERS Science Council, “Doing Science...” <i>Breathe</i>	anders.bjerg@gu.se
Szymon Skoczynski	Juniors in HERMES initiative, JMC– <i>Breathe</i> collaboration	simon.mds@poczta.fm
Georgia Hardavella	Junior National Delegates Group coordinator, Collaboration with ELF	georgiahardavella@hotmail.com, g.hardavella@ucl.ac.uk
Tiago Jacinto	Juniors’ website coordinator	tjacinto@gmail.com
Agnes Boots	Fellowships, ERS International Congress	a.boots@maastrichtuniversity.nl
James Chalmers	“Hot topics from the assemblies” <i>Breathe</i>	j.chalmers@dundee.ac.uk
Hanneke van Helvoort	Mass mailings, surveys for junior members, Facebook, Twitter	hanneke.vanhelvoort@radboudumc.nl
Andras Bikov	List of junior members (for chairing sessions, scientific background, <i>etc.</i>)	andras.bikov@gmail.com
Daan Caudri	Representative on guidelines committee	d.caudri@erasmusmc.nl
Anne Olland	External ERS meetings	brendanne@free.fr

The JMC is delighted to announce that junior members have provided input into HERMES projects. The Thoracic Oncology Assembly was the first to include its junior member representative in decisions regarding formation of the HERMES diploma in thoracic oncology curriculum. The JMC representative from Assembly 2 has been included in the assessment working group and preparation for the HERMES exam in respiratory critical care.

The ERS and JMC are keen to involve more juniors in ERS activities.

Your feedback and input would be much appreciated. To facilitate this, all junior members will shortly receive an email from

the junior member representative of their Assembly requesting their input and availability to actively participate in the ERS activities stated above.

Don't forget about <http://juniors.ersnet.org>! Our goal is to provide a modern platform for junior members to contact each other and share information and experiences. We encourage you to visit the website, and contact us should you wish to share information relevant to junior members. All information is published by the JMC, and don't forget that you can use your "myERS" login to further improve your experience and access more features!

References

1. Science Council <http://ersnet.org/about-us/leadership/science-council.html>
2. ERS Scientific Activities. Overview for Assembly and Group Officers http://ersnet.org/images/stories/scientific/2014_Brochure_scientific_activities_-_Feb.pdf