

International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS)

ANNUAL AND PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2022 - 2023



IFBLS Board of Directors
Communications@ifbls.org

Contents

Governance	2
Mission Statement and Objectives	4
Strategic Plan.....	5
Management Committee	6
Membership Committee.....	8
Scientific Committee	9
Development Committee	11
Awards Committee.....	12
WHO Collaboration	13
Finances	15
Britta Karlsson Legacy.....	16
International BLS Day.....	17
Scientific Network of Experts, IJBLS Journal	18
Website, Social Media, and Newsletter.....	19
IFBLS World Congress.....	20
Alba Marzo Obituary	21
Collaborations	22
Acknowledgments.....	24

Board of Directors

IFBLS is governed by a Board of Directors, comprising of the President, President-Elect and Past-President (Management Committee) and five Board Members, elected by IFBLS members at the biennial General Assembly of Delegates (GAD).

IFBLS Board of Directors 2022 - 2024 were elected at the virtual meeting of the General Assembly of Delegates in October 2022.

Marie Culliton, Ireland

Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson, Sweden

Alan Wainwright, United Kingdom

Hassan Aziz, United States

Maria Klement, Canada

Godswill Okara

Ki Jong Rhee, Korea

David Wells, United Kingdom

President

President-Elect

Past-President

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

IFBLS Board of Directors 2022-2024



Executive Administrator

Ms. Janie Hames is the Executive Administrator for IFBLS and provides excellent support to the Management Committee, Board members, IFBLS Chief Delegates and the member associations.

The IFBLS office organization, including bookkeeping, banking and financial reporting continues to be further developed by Janie, as well as the office and Webinar use of digital communication platform Zoom. The organizational development that Janie has implemented and supported as well as the competencies, administrative and social, are essential to the smooth and efficient operation of the organisation. The Management Committee are particularly appreciative of Janie's work.

IFBLS wishes to extend our gratitude to CSMLS for hosting the office and for including Janie.



IFBLS Mission Statement

*To increase recognition and contributions
of Biomedical Laboratory Science to
improve global health.*

IFBLS Objectives

- To support, advance and promote good scientific laboratory practice through the development and adherence to high quality standards in diverse environments throughout the world;
- To support and promote education and advancement of science and technology in the professional development of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists;
- To support, advance and promote ethical and professional values in Biomedical Laboratory Science;
- To facilitate the exchange of ideas through development of partnerships within the global healthcare community.

IFBLS Mission Statement and Objectives were revised and approved by the Board of Directors in March 2019.

IFBLS Board of Directors are guided by the IFBLS By-Laws and Procedure Manual. As a registered non-profit organization in Canada, IFBLS is also mandated by *Canada's Not-for-Profit Corporation Act (CNCA)* to maintain our legal status.

In 2018, the Strategic Plan, outlining main goals and tasks was set up for 2018 - 2022. The plan is reviewed and revised in each spring following (see Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026 on website for details).

The Strategic Plan is linked closely with the Mission and Objectives. Tasks are set up for each goal in the plan.

In addition to the tasks mentioned in the Strategic Plan, IFBLS also follow up tasks outlined in our By-laws and as required by our members.

Topic

- Promote the profession
- IFBLS World Congress
- WHO Collaboration
- Promote professional standards
- Education and professional development

Goal

- IFBLS is the global voice of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists
- The IFBLS Congress promotes excellence in Biomedical Laboratory Science
- IFBLS influences global health policies by providing expert opinion relating to Biomedical Laboratory Science
- IFBLS provides guidelines and information support to Biomedical Laboratory Scientists and the community
- IFBLS provides opportunity for Continuous Professional Development of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists

Management Committee

The Management Committee is comprised of the three officers of the Corporation. The Management Committee makes day-to-day decisions regarding the management and administration of IFBLS.

The Management Committee is led by the President Marie Culliton, with President-Elect Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson and Past-President Alan Wainwright.

Report

The Management Committee conducts most of the business of IFBLS by regular e-mail communication and Zoom digital meetings, on a weekly basis to keep up with day-to-day issues and other business.

Key areas of work since October 2022 have included:

- Revision of the Congress Hosting Guidelines
- Review and reconfiguration of financial investment portfolio to ensure financial viability of the IFBLS and support services to members.
- Seeking to identify a host for the 2024 Congress
- Working with the Editorial Team of the International Journal of Biomedical Science to ensure sustainability.
- Considering options for optimizing the delivery of the Britta Karlsson Webinar series and receiving a return on the investment.
- With the Board, setting the theme for Biomedical Laboratory Science Day and engaging with an artist for the artwork to promote it.
- Reviewing and revising the Strategic and Operational Plans.

Members of IFBLS are invited to submit a Chief Delegates Report annually. Reports are thoroughly analyzed in order for their contributions to inform the future work of IFBLS. Many of these provide input for the discussions and workshops held during CD meetings and Open Forums. In addition, they inform the strategic and operational plans.

President's Activities

The President is the public face of the IFBLS and its Board. Presidential activities promoting the IFBLS and the profession of Biomedical Laboratory Science included

Virtual Presentations

Global Forum on Access to Safe Blood Products for Patients in Need of Regular Transfusion

IFBLS Past Present and Future, Coimbra, Portugal

Recorded message for Biomedical Laboratory Science Day

Editorial Guardians of Quality and Safety IJBL

Greetings and messages of support to member's conferences

Attended NML Congress in Oslo and presented outstanding awards to Past Presidents Marie Nora Roald and Anne Lindgren, and the Elisabeth Pletscher Award to Gry Andersen.

Met with the Presidents of aspirant members to discuss pathways to membership.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Culliton

President

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is led by Past-President Alan Wainwright, with Board Members Godswill Okara and David Wells.

Report

Membership renewals 2023

As of 1st July 2023 IFBLS, has 37 paid member associations, in 34 countries, representing more than 229,000 members worldwide. Please refer to the website for a list of current members.

Recruitment of new members

The Committee has identified and met virtually with a number of potential member associations in Africa and Europe that meet the criteria for IFBLS membership. The Committee will continue its efforts to bring new membership to IFBLS in 2024.

As we know the personal touch with colleagues from other countries appears to be the best way to increase membership, we encourage all IFBLS members to use the opportunity to profile IFBLS membership when meeting with non-member associations who are eligible for membership

Respectfully submitted,
Alan Wainwright
Chair, Membership Committee

Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee is led by President-Elect Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson, with Board Members Hassan Aziz and Ki Jong Rhee.

Report

Scientific Network of Experts and IFBLS Advisory Groups:

The Scientific Committee has reviewed the use of the Network of Experts and the Advisory Groups. A presentation will be held at the Chief Delegates meeting in Dublin in October.

Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series:

The successful webinar series continued, with four webinars held and a fourth scheduled for November.

- November 11, 2022: Principles and Applications of Next Generation Sequencing
- April 28, 2023: Laboratory Diagnostics, Antibiotic Resistance and Frontline Research in Neisseria Gonorrhoeae - International Perspective
- June 13, 2023: Catch Me If You Can: Role of Diagnostic Genetics in Public Health Microbiology
- September 25, 2023: Enhancing Diagnostic Accuracy: Using Integrative Diagnostics in a Diagnostic Center

IFBLS and international collaboration were close to Britta's heart, and we are pleased to honour her legacy and deep connection to education through this webinar series.

IJBLS Development:

Under the leadership of Editor-in-Chief Dr. Patricia Tille and the IJBLS Editorial Advisory Board, the first issue of two issues in 2023 was published in April, and a second issue will be published in October.

Respectfully submitted,
Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson
Chair, Scientific Committee

Development Committee

The Development Committee is led by Board Member Maria Klement, with Board Members Godswill Okara and Ki Jong Rhee.

Report

International Directory of Biomedical Laboratory Science Education (IDBLSE)

An online IDBLSE was launched in 2022 with an aim of building an international database of Biomedical Laboratory Science education by country. Members of IFBLS are invited to visit the website (<http://idblse.editme.com>) and submit updates for their country.

Communication between members-CD reports

Chief Delegates Reports from 2022 have been collected from member countries. A summarized spreadsheet of issues for discussion at future IFBLS meetings and suggestions for future IFBLS activities was developed. Of the issues and topics identified, one theme brought forward is promoting the profession. Social media was discussed as an option. A presentation on social media will be held at the Chief Delegates meeting in Dublin in October.

Britta Karlsson Advancement Program

There were no applications for this year. The committee reviewed the program criteria and suggestions were made. The BKAP will be a topic of discussion at the Chief Delegates meeting in Dublin.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Klement
Chair, Development Committee

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee is led by Hassan Aziz, with Board Members Maria Klement and David Wells.

Report

35th IFBLS World Congress 2022 - Suwon, South Korea

The purpose of the Awards Program is to help BLS members and students from around the world to attend the IFBLS World Congress; and to recognize the “contribution to the professional development” of Biomedical Laboratory Science.

The following Awards were presented at the Congress:

1. JAMT Award - awarded to two recipients
2. ASCLS Good Poster Award - awarded to three recipients
3. KAMT Young Scientist Award - awarded to three recipients
4. JSHT Award - awarded to two recipients

TMER Award 2023

Tsukuba Medical Laboratory of Education and Research (TMER) in cooperation with IFBLS, selected through an application process, one international Biomedical Laboratory Scientist to attend an 8-day practical training program in Japan in November.

The Committee continues to look at ways to recognize extraordinary achievements in the BLS field, and further discussions with Members at the Chief Delegates meeting in Dublin in October.

Respectfully submitted,
Hassan Aziz
Chair, Awards Committee

WHO Collaboration

IFBLS is a Non-State Actor (NSA) in official relations with WHO. We fully support the ongoing work of WHO in this area and the huge challenges that are being faced. In our own areas of Biomedical Laboratory Science, the impact on clinical service laboratories and staff have been monumental and we have highlighted the importance of having sufficient numbers of trained, qualified staff to carry out Covid-19 testing to appropriate standards that ensure accuracy of the results. As the world readjusts post the pandemic and the 'New Normal' becomes established the importance of our profession in diagnosis, prognosis and monitoring disease along with contribution to public health must not be ignored.



We have a Designated Technical Officer and to maintain our status we have a three-year workplan that includes provision of:

- technical input to inform WHO's work towards the development of the forthcoming versions of WHO Essential in vitro diagnostics list (EDL), promoting its implementation among members
- technical input to inform WHO's work on priority medical devices for diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cerebrovascular stroke diagnosis and management.
- technical input on cervical cancer screening, clinical laboratory and pathology tests, and procedures, in order to inform WHO's work on these areas.
- webinars and make available other e-learning tools accessible to low-income countries in order to complement WHO's efforts to improve access to professional development of essential staff delivering of

diagnostic laboratory testing for infectious disease, anaemia, pre-eclampsia and ascending infection

- disseminate and promote WHO's approach to combat infectious disease, to reduce maternal morbidity and its contributions to support the diagnosis, treatment and control of pregnancy-related disease and its contributions to support biomedical laboratory science, and ultimately global healthcare, through agreed communication channels in accordance with WHO's rules and policies
- a resource document describing the laboratory scientist and technician activities for clinical laboratories, so as to inform WHO's work on health workforce planning for Universal Health Coverage.

Attendance at WHO meetings is key and whilst this has not been possible in person, we have accessed the special sessions of the Executive Board and the World Health Assembly, and sessions specific to developing relations with Non-State Actors. We very much appreciate the opportunities to engage with these activities, recognizing there are technical challenges and differences in time zones that must be overcome. Over the past year we have engaged in the development of standards for rapid readers, Streptococcus A, Influenza A&B and Hepatitis B&C.

Finances

The annual membership fees and biennial World Congress fee fund IFBLS's activities. The financial situation is stable, but even though restrictions for traveling due to the pandemic during 2021 and 2022 have reduced expenditures, increasing costs are anticipated for coming years. The Board of Directors will continue to monitor this. In order to minimise expenses there was one 'in person' meeting of the management committee. This year the AltGAD will be held 'in person' with attendant additional costs.

During 2023 the investment portfolios were consolidated and this work will continue over the next financial period ensuring IFBLS gets best returns on investment to fund activities.

A proposal to gradually increase the membership fees by small amounts biennially remains under consideration but will not be put forward for voting in 2023.

Britta Karlsson Legacy

In 2017, IFBLS received a donation from the estate of Britta Karlsson, a former IFBLS member. Ms. Karlsson was a long-time supporter of IFBLS, education and internationalization for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. The donation has been invested as the Britta Karlsson Legacy.

Britta Karlsson Advancement Program

The annual profit from the Britta Karlsson Legacy will finance the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program.

The program is aimed for IFBLS member associations, primarily from Low- and Middle-Income Economy Countries (LMICs), to sponsor an international lecturer to travel and share their knowledge in a local workshop, or lead a similar event such as an online webinar.

The purpose is to promote the education and professional advancement of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists (BLS), and to provide updated information for BLS in specialized fields (e.g. clinical chemistry, clinical microbiology, clinical hematology, clinical immunology, etc.).

Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series

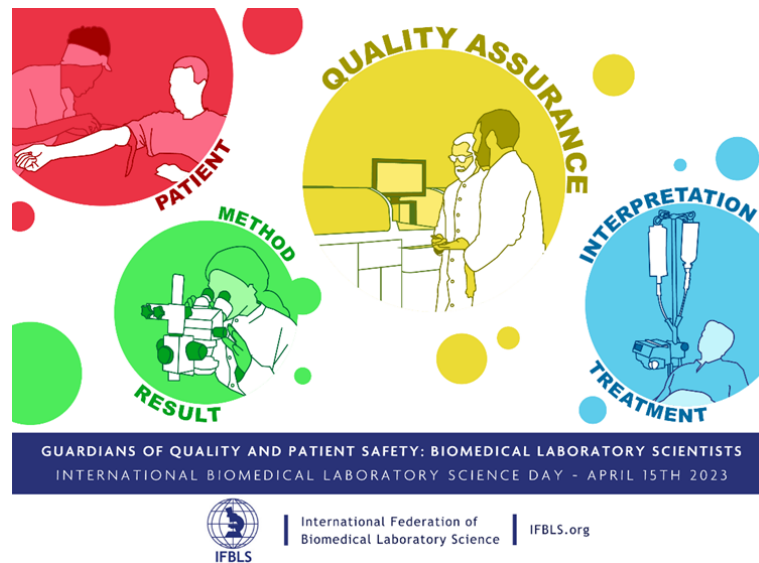
The successful webinar series, first launched in 2022 and continued in 2023, has now held 7 webinars. These webinars are a great opportunity for members from around the world to learn from our international colleagues. IFBLS is deeply grateful to our speakers for sharing their knowledge and expertise. The next webinar is planned for November 2023.

BLS Day 2023 - 2024

International BLS Day celebrated on the 15th of April each year provides an opportunity for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists across the globe to contribute to the mission and objectives of IFBLS.

This year the IFBLS Board chose the theme *Guardians of Quality and Patient Safety: Biomedical Laboratory Scientists*.

This theme is central to everything we do in our work



We are committed to having Biomedical Laboratory Scientists who are highly educated and trained to deliver a clinical laboratory diagnostic service for our people. Each of us knows that behind every sample we analyse is a person who must be cherished.

Our poster celebrates Biomedical Laboratory Science Day. It encompasses the entire spectrum of a sample journey from the patient through the laboratory where it is the Biomedical Laboratory.

Scientific Network of Experts

The Scientific Network of Experts was set up in 2018. Approximately 45 experts are currently registered in the Network, covering a wide variety of specialties from 9 different countries and member associations.

The Network will be used for a variety of tasks, primarily providing input to IFBLS work related to the WHO, IJBLs and providing experts for the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program and Webinar Series.

IJBLs Journal

The International Journal of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IJBLs) is an on-line peer-reviewed journal published bi-annually by International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Sciences (IFBLS).

The journal is intended to disseminate information and knowledge to the international laboratory community by accepting a variety of manuscripts for publication. Those manuscripts should be original research articles, literature or mini-reviews, case studies, brief communications and letters to the editor describing original investigations in all fields of biomedical laboratory sciences.

The journal covers several major disciplines: clinical chemistry, molecular diagnostics, clinical serology and immunology, hematology, transfusion medicine, clinical virology, clinical bacteriology and mycology, clinical microscopy, histopathology, cytology, quality control and quality management, laboratory management, education and ethics, laboratory safety and any important topics or issue related to the biomedical laboratory science.

IFBLS looks forward to receiving continuous scientific contributions from Biomedical Laboratory Scientists of the world.

Website

The IFBLS website is updated regularly in order to provide relevant information and news, supported by a newsletter to member associations four times per year.

Social Media

The IFBLS Facebook page keeps increasing its number of followers, being the communication channel that reaches the largest number of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. The Facebook page is IFBLS's platform for interactions of both formal and informal aspects, sharing information but also creating interest in IFBLS and the profession we represent, as well as inspiration to become involved in the associations, globally or nationally.

Newsletter

The web page and the regular member emails are supported by a newsletter to member associations four times per year. This is short information on news and upcoming events in a format that can be shared.

The IFBLS World Congress is the biennial event where Biomedical Laboratory Scientists worldwide meet, present our scientific work and learn more about Biomedical Laboratory Science globally. This is an opportunity to find out about our cultural differences and professional contexts and realize that our similarities are stronger than differences

The World Congresses are organized by IFBLS member associations. This contributes to the variations between the congresses, which are also part of the charm. All input from congress participants is taken to heart, documented and discussed by the Board of Directors. Important issues and aspects are forwarded to the organizer of the upcoming congress, in order to assure continuous improvements. The Congress Guidelines will be revised if experiences from the Congress demonstrate a need to make clarifications.

Bids for future congresses are welcomed at any time. It takes member association support for the congresses to continue being the global meeting point for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists where scientific work is shared, networking done and inspiration for the future is generated.

It is with deep sadness that we record the death of our former Board Member, colleague and friend from Italy, Dr Alba Marzo.

Alba was an enthusiastic proponent of the profession of Biomedical Laboratory Science both in Italy, where she lectured in the University of Florence, and within the International Federation.

Few who knew her will ever forget her keen intellect, radiant smile, sense of humour and love of fashion.

We shall hold close our memories of her at our Congress in her home city of Florence.

To her family, colleagues and friends IFBLS offers sincerest condolences.



IFBLS collaborates with numerous organizations for mutual benefits.



World Health Organization

World Health Organization (WHO). The World Health Organization (WHO) is the global guardian of public health. The goal at the World Health Organization (WHO) is to build a better, healthier future for people all over the world. Working through offices in more than 150 countries, WHO Secretariat staff work side by side with governments and other partners to ensure the highest attainable level of health for all people. IFBLS is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in official relations with the WHO.



Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI). IFBLS has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CLSI for many years. This agreement is used to build collaborative endeavors

based on mutual interests. The main goal is to use each other's strengths to further promote the development and dissemination of globally applicable consensus standards and guidelines to further education of Biomedical Science and healthcare professionals.

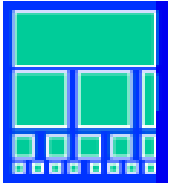


EPBS

European Association for Professions in Biomedical Science (EPBS). IFBLS has had a MOU with EPBS since 2012. We recognize that IFBLS has a global focus, while EPBS has a European focus. Both organizations prepare various policy documents; this is an area we will work together, when appropriate. Both organizations promote each other.



International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA). IFBLS has had a MOU with IFBA since 2014. Each organization will promote the activities of the other when appropriate. Policy documents can be shared, when applicable. At conferences, we could utilize the expertise from each organization for educational purposes. We may collaborate on projects of mutual interest.



International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) is an international classification for which the International Labour Organization (ILO) is responsible. ISCO is a tool for organizing jobs into a clearly defined set of groups according to the tasks and duties undertaken in the job. IFBLS has established a task force with the aim to achieve correct classification for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists, in ISCO Group 2 professionals.



International Organization for Standardization (ISO). ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 162 national standards bodies. Through its members, ISO brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges. IFBLS is a Category A liaison to ISO/TC 212 - Clinical laboratory testing and in vitro diagnostic test systems.

IFBLS wishes to extend our gratitude to

- Korean Association of Medical Technologists (KAMT) for hosting the IFBLS 35th World Congress in Suwon City, South Korea.
- The speakers for our Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series
- The IJBLs Editorial Board
- All IFBLS member associations and Chief Delegates for your trust and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Culliton
IFBLS President 2022 - 2023



The International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS) is an independent non-governmental association of national societies in 34 countries, representing more than 229,000 Biomedical