

# International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS)

## ANNUAL AND PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2021 - 2022



IFBLS Board of Directors  
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## 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 2020 - 2022 were elected at the virtual meeting of the General Assembly of Delegates in September 2020.

Alan Wainwright, United Kingdom  
Marie Culliton, Ireland  
Anne Lindgren, Sweden  
Bert Asbild, Denmark  
Leila Florento, Philippines  
Hironori Katayama, Japan  
Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson, Sweden  
Cathy Otto, USA

President  
President-Elect  
Past-President  
Board Member  
Board Member  
Board member  
Board Member  
Board Member

## IFBLS Board of Directors 2020-2022



## Executive Administrator

Ms. Janie Hames is the Executive Administrator for IFBLS and provides excellent support to the Management Committee, Board members and IFBLS Chief Delegates and the member associations. Due to the pandemic face to face meetings with the Board and Management Committee have not been possible. Janie has adapted to the changing situation and has supported the work of IFBLS, in all its facets using the virtual environment, culminating in long distance management of the virtual Alternate GAD & CD Meetings in August 2021, and the GAD & CD Meetings to be held virtually during in October 2022. A key development facilitated by Janie has been the Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series that commenced in January 2022 and have been accessed by 1200 individuals.

The IFBLS office organization, including bookkeeping, banking and financial reporting has been further developed by Janie, as well as the office use of digital communication platform Zoom. The organizational development that Janie has implemented and supported as well as the competencies, administrative and social, contributes 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 has been revised in each spring following (see Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025 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 is prestigious; to host, to contribute and to attend
- IFBLS influence global health policies
- IFBLS provides support to the Biomedical Laboratory Scientist community
- IFBLS advances Biomedical Laboratory Science professionals

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, Alan Wainwright. Members are President-Elect Marie Culliton and Past-President Anne Lindgren.

## Report

The Management Committee conducts most of the tasks 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 September 2021 have included supporting KAMT in preparation for the World Congress 2022 in Suwon City, South Korea in October 2022; extensive collaboration with the WHO renewing our Triennial Workplan for 2022-2024 and status as a Non-State Actor in Official Relations for 3 more years; preparing for our annual International BLS Day celebration on 15 April; and supporting the work of the new IJBLs Editorial Board.

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.

The Membership Committee is led by Past-President Anne Lindgren, with Board Members Bert Asbild and Hironori Katayama.

## Report

### **New member applications for approval**

There were no new applications in 2022, however in July 2022 the Board was pleased to reinstate membership for the Association of Medical Technologist of Thailand (AMTT).

### **Membership renewals 2022**

As of 1 July, 2022 IFBLS has 35 paid member associations, in 33 countries, representing more than 200,000 members worldwide. Please refer to the website for a list of current members.

### **Implementation of suspension**

Members who fail to pay their membership fee are placed under suspension until the time they reinstate their membership. Suspension means they lose their rights to nominations, voting, apply for awards, to host meetings, to have members in the Scientific Network of Experts, or claim a reduced IFBLS member congress fee.

### **Recruitment of new members**

Our Executive Administrator has had inquiries from interested associations. These are followed up with membership applications forms and more information. At this time there are no membership applications pending.

Additionally, IFBLS has had many inquiries from individuals inquiring about student membership, or volunteer opportunities, or IFBLS award information. These inquiries are generally referred back to their national association for more information on their student membership or volunteer opportunities.

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,  
Anne Lindgren  
Chair, Membership Committee

The Scientific Committee is led by Board Member, Cathy Otto, with Board Members Leila Florento and Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson.

## Report

### **Advisory Groups:**

The Advisory Groups in Microbiology, Laboratory Management, and Hematology, continue to meet regularly (virtually) and have been instrumental in identifying topics for the Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series as well as articles for the IJBLs.

### **Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series:**

The inaugural webinar series was launched in 2022, with three webinars held and a fourth scheduled for November.

- January 21, 2022: Lessons Learned from the Pandemic
- March 11, 2022: Future Trends in Medical Laboratories
- June 17, 2022: Expanding the Practice of Biomedical Laboratory Science
- November 11, 2022: Principles of Genetic Sequencing

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.

### **Position Paper: *Role of the Biomedical Laboratory Scientists in the Delivery of Quality Healthcare***

Chief Delegates were invited to share their associations' position papers on this topic. A draft position paper has been written and will be presented to Chief Delegates at the CD Meeting in October. The aim is to have the position paper considered for adoption by members at the GAD 2022.

## **IJBLS Development:**

Under the leadership of Editor-in-Chief Dr. Patricia Tille, 6 new individuals joined the IJBLS Editorial Advisory Board. The first issue of two issues in 2022, was published in April titled *SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Continues Challenge Health Care, Workforce and Families Across the Globe*. This issue featured the editorial “Laboratory Spotlight’ *Medi3 Healthcare - Managing SARS-CoV-2 in Norway*.”

The second issue for 2022 will be published in October.

## **Scientific Network of Experts:**

Members of the Scientific Network of Experts participated in a survey to identify topics for virtual continuing professional education, topics for future articles in the International Journal of Biomedical Laboratory Science and ideas for position papers.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Otto  
Chair, Scientific Committee

The Development Committee is led by Board Member Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson, with President-Elect Marie Culliton and Board Member Bert Asbild

## Report

### **Developing an International Directory of Biomedical Laboratory Science Educations database (IDBLSE)**

Marie Nora Roald, Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson and Janie Hames have started this work and identified relevant documents to be included in a potential database. We are currently exploring an on-line tool to potentially have a webpage where the information can be present and updated in an easy way.

### **Communication between members-CD reports**

Chief Delegates Reports from 2021 have been collected from member countries. The reports have been discussed in with the Board and activities have been prioritized such as the review of the Core Competencies and Core Curriculum Guidelines and the start of virtual IFBLS Britta Karlsson webinars. During 2022 we have so far successfully operated seminars on COVID-19, professional development, and expanding the practice of Biomedical Laboratory Science. The series is ongoing with 1 more planned in November.

### **Review of the Core Competencies and Core Curriculum Guidelines**

The existing document on Core Competencies and Core Curriculum Guidelines is up for review and a new suggested version of the Core Competencies will be sent to CD delegates for revision and managed at the GAD in October.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson  
Chair, Development Committee

The Awards Committee is led by Leila Florento, with Board Members Cathy Otto and Hironori Katayama.

## Report

The purpose of the IFBLS Awards Program is:

1. To help our BLS member representatives and students from around the world to attend the IFBLS World Congress.
2. To recognize the “contribution to the professional development” of a BLS in the world who is in good standing with the local Association member.

The following Awards will be presented at the 35th IFBLS World Congress to be held 5-9 October, 2022 in Suwon, South Korea:

1. Nordic Group Award - The prize consists of 15,000 Swedish Crown.
2. JAMT Award - The prize consists of 200 000 JPY, may be given up to two recipients (100 000 JPY each).
3. ASCLS Good Poster Award - The prize will be awarded for the best three (3) posters and normally consists of a gift.
4. KAMT Young Scientist Award - The prize consists of \$2,000 USD. One (1) Young Scientist winner will receive \$1,000 USD with a medal, and two (2) \$500 USD each, for those who scientifically contributes to the successful congress with his/her outstanding presentation.
5. JSHT Award - The award consists of \$300 USD including the fee of an article for magazine of JSHT.
6. Elisabeth Pletscher Award - IFBLS Board to choose the awardee. Prize consists of a plaque and certificate.
7. Past-Presidents Award - IFBLS Past-Presidents have chosen 2 winners, one for 2020 and one for 2022. Prizes consists of a work of art or plaque.

Applications were not received for the following award in 2022:

IFBLS Student Award - The prize consists of \$1,500.00 USD and is intended to facilitate attendance and participation at the IFBLS World Congress.

Respectfully submitted,  
Leila Florento  
Chair, Awards Committee

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.



We have a Designated Technical Officer and to maintain our status we have a three-year workplan that includes provision of: an article in HR Journal about medical laboratory staffing; input for revision of WHO Guidelines related to laboratory medicine; support for WHO Call for experts; input to WHO documents; side events at the World Health Assembly.

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 (January 2022) and the World Health Assembly (May 2022), 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 of syphilis testing and for glucose meters along with contributions to the next edition of the Essential Diagnostics List

## Triennial Review and Workplan

In our Triennial Review with WHO the plan for collaboration between WHO and IFBLS aims at supporting WHO's efforts with Member States towards achieving the WHO Strategic Priorities as set in its Thirteen General Programme of Work (GPW13), with special attention on issues related to laboratory medicine. In particular, this plan for collaboration will support WHO's work in the following areas:

- Provision of technical inputs to inform WHO's continuous review of the Essential in vitro diagnostics list (EDL);
- Improved information to support WHO's efforts towards continued education and development of the clinical laboratory workforce;
- Support the dissemination of best practice in line with WHO policies and guidance documents in the international medical laboratory community;
- Provision of technical inputs to inform the development of WHO policies and guidance documents, as appropriate, pertaining to pathology and laboratory medicine.

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.

A proposal to gradually increase the membership fees by small amounts biennially remains under consideration but will not be put forward for voting in 2022.

## **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**

Due to travel restrictions necessitated by Covid the focus of this advancement programme has moved to the provision of quarterly webinars which have been very informative and well attended by our members.

## BLS Day 2021 - 2022

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

The topic for BLS Day 2021 and 2022 was *Testing Times: Biomedical Laboratory Scientists Role in the COVID-19 Pandemic*.



On behalf of IFBLS members around the world celebrating BLS Day, President Alan Wainwright posted video greetings to all Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. IFBLS members were additionally honoured to receive greetings from Dr. Michael Ryan, Executive Director WHO Health Emergencies Programme. Videos can be viewed on the IFBLS website.

The theme for BLS Day 2023 - 2024 will be announced by the newly elected Board of Directors.

## 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

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.

## E-learning

IFBLS e-Learning modules are produced for IFBLS by the Japanese Association of Medical Technologists (JAMT). Two new topics were presented in 2018: Risk Management and Infection Control.

All e-Learning modules can be accessed from our website [www.ifbls.org](http://www.ifbls.org).

## 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.

## IFBLS World Congress 2022

The Korean Association of Medical Technologists (KAMT) will host the IFBLS 35<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Suwon City, South Korea October 5-9, 2022.

For more information on this year's Congress, we invite you to visit the Congress 2022 website at <https://ifbls2022.org/>.

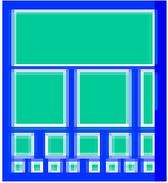
IFBLS collaborates with numerous organizations for mutual benefits.

  
**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.

  
**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.



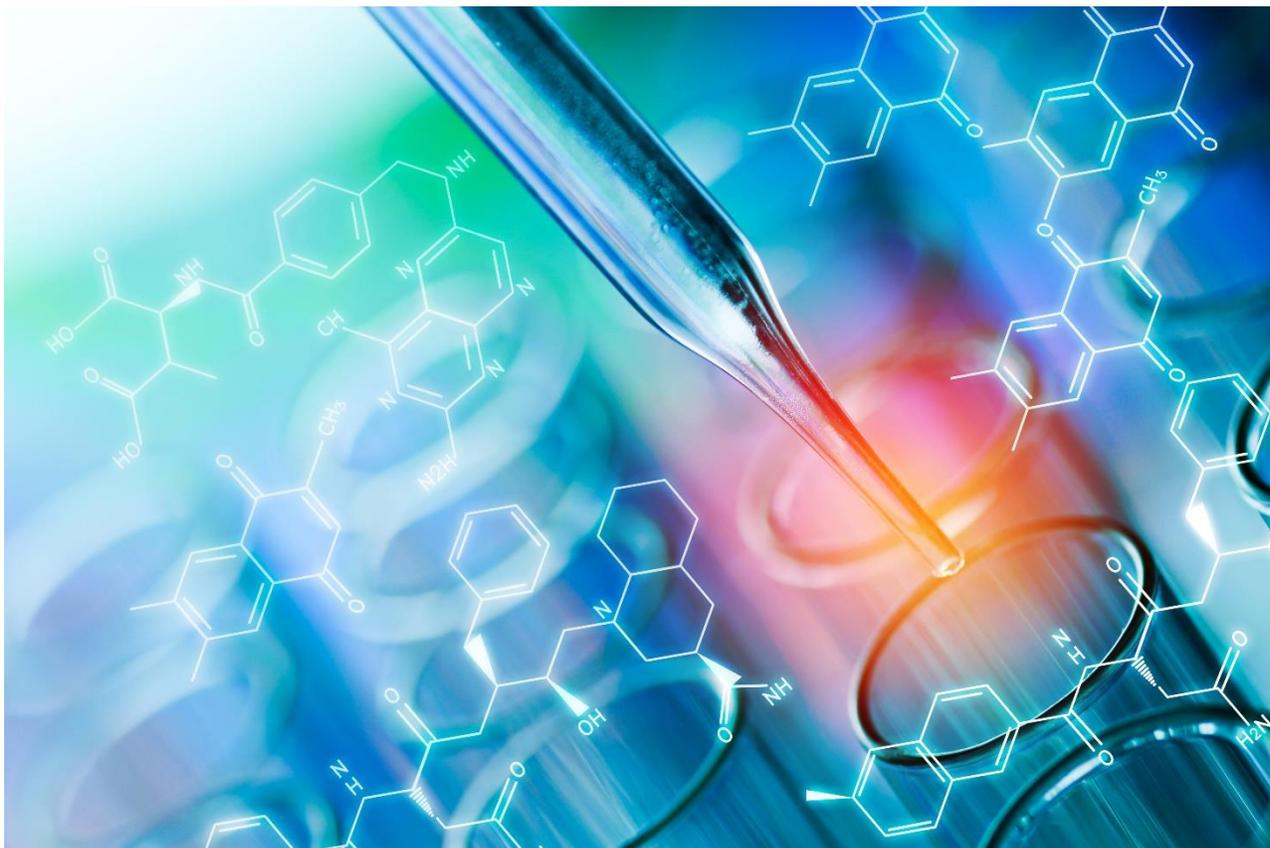
**International Organization for Standardization (ISO).** ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 162 national standards bodies. Through its members, ISO brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant 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 35<sup>th</sup> 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.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the IFBLS Board of Directors and Janie for their hard work, dedication and support during my presidency.

Respectfully submitted,  
Alan Wainwright  
IFBLS President 2021 - 2022



**The International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS) is an independent non-governmental association of national societies in 33 countries, representing more than 256,000 Biomedical**