

MICROBIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY DIVISION

Minutes Division Board Meeting December 12 2022, online via Zoom

Present: Stephanie Heux, Diethard Mattanovich, Kjeld Olesen, Antonius Van Maris, Pau Ferrer, Karen Polizzi, Paola Branduardi, Verena Siewers, John Morrissey, Jan Maarten van Dijk, Pascale Daran-Lapujade, Jean Marie Francois, Ralf Takors.

1. Welcome, and adoption of the agenda

To Agenda item 5, Next Conferences, the item Joint Conference EFB/AFOB was added.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Jussi Jantti & Pablo Ivan Nikel

3. Report by the Division Chair

Very successful ASBE VI meeting in Nov. 2022 in Edinburgh. The next one will take place in 2024 in Brno (Czech Republic) and co-organised by Tim Overton and Pavel Dvorák.

The next European Congress on Biotechnology is fixed 30 June-4 July 2024 in Maastricht.

4. Report by the Treasurer

The account balance of our division is positive and allows to support current expenses and future planning. Expenses during 2022 were 295 € to support the online platform (Gathertown) for the *CO₂ to Materials* meeting. A surplus of about 6.000 € from the Microbial Stress meeting 2020 has not been claimed to the EFB central office. The exact surplus will be claimed as soon as possible in 2023. Nevertheless, this surplus will be taken into account in the Division's income/expenditures balance statement of 2020. In addition, the Division holds a surplus from past activities in the books of the EFB central office.

The agreement with UAB (Autonomous University of Barcelona) to handle the account of the Division reserves was extended by further 3 years with no additional expenses.

5. Next Conferences:

Physiology of Yeasts and Filamentous Fungi (John Morrissey): 5-8 June 2023.

Location: Cork Ireland.

PYFF8 website is live and open for abstract submissions and registrations
<https://www.efbiotechnology.org/PYFF8>

Microbial Stress (Paola Branduardi and Diethard Mattanovich, in lieu of Matthias Steiger): Planned in September 2023.

Location: Vienna, Austria.

Web site will be soon open and scientific committee will gather soon (Monday Dec. 19).

Recombinant Protein Production (Pau Ferrer, Jan Maarten van Dijk): Planned in October 2023.

Location: University of Girona on Campus and in the old part of Girona and as a plan B: in Barcelona in the campus of downtown Barcelona. PF will go there to visit the place and see how it would fit to the needs of an RPP meeting.

The conferences need to be announced soon early in January.

Expected Numbers of participants between 200 and 250. Budget planning will be conservative at a lower number. Around January: PF and JMvD will come back to the board with more information (quotations, venue ...).

Joint meeting EFB/ AFOB (Diethard Mattanovich): March 28 to 29, 2023

Location: On line meeting

Keynote lecture from both organizations plus selected talks.

Looking for people to be part of the organization: Suggested speaker and selected speakers from abstract. 2 half days. SH proposes her help but more people are welcomed to join. As several members of the Division Board have been contacted by the central office, PB offers to send a joint reply, reaffirming the support by the Division.

6. Future Division conferences and contribution to ECB 2024

ASBE VII in 2024 in Brno (Czech Republic) and co-organised by Tim Overton and Pavel Dvorák

ECB 2024: Looking for people to be part of the organization: Jean Marie Francois would like to be part because Toulouse is supposed to organize the ECB in 2026. Think about topics related to Microbial biotechnology.

7. Joint session at Microbiology Society conference (John Morrissey, Ralf Takors & Karen Polizzi): Wed April 19th 2023

Location: Birmingham, UK

Context: Members of the EFB Microbial Biotechnology Division joined the organizing committee for one of the symposia that will take place at the conference and help design the programme

Organisers: Martin Welch (University of Cambridge, UK); Christopher Cooper (CHARM Therapeutics, UK); Jerry Reen University College Cork, Ireland), Karen Polizzi (Imperial College London, UK), Ralf Takors (University of Stuttgart, Germany), Nicholas Tucker (University of Strathclyde, UK)

A greener future: sustainable and scalable solutions in industrial microbiology and green pharma. Organised with the European Federation of Biotechnology & Microbiology Society

Industrial microbiology, biotechnology and green pharma have transformed the landscape of goods and medicinal manufacture. Developments across the life, physical, and engineering sciences have converged to present new opportunities for the eco-friendly synthesis and production of bio-based materials, commodities, chemicals, and active pharmaceutical ingredients. Realising the full potential of these technologies will require further developments in key areas such as scale-up of industrial production and optimisation of the biocatalytic pipeline currently available to industry, including the development of new prokaryotic and eukaryotic production systems, such as microalgae. This **cross-divisional session, organised with the European Federation of Biotechnology**, will bring together experts from industry and academia with a broad range of expertise to offer insights into the future of sustainable and scalable industrial microbiology. Offered papers and abstracts on scale up of industrial biotransformation, industrial biotechnology, novel production systems and biocatalysis for drug development, fine chemicals or industrial application, will underpin the collective potential from this cross-disciplinary session.

Abstracts for oral/poster presentation:

Special [EFB Abstract submission](#) until January 6th

[Registration](#) for the Conference is possible until February 28th. To be noted that post-graduates will need to [join the Microbiology Society](#) to get the member rate (if they are not already members) – but then they can also apply for a grant that will cover much of their costs.

Agreed speakers: Christine Santos, Manus Bio; Nick Turner, University of Manchester; Dawn Maskell, Heriot-Watt University; Payam Mehrshahi, University of Cambridge; Marcella Fernandes de Souza from Ghent University; Alan Dobson, University College Cork; Harald Ruijsenaars, Corbion.

Please promote this to our own group (students/post-docs) and networks.

We all agree that this event should be announced on the EFB newsletter. PB will take care of this.

8. Joint event with other societies (Microbiology Society, ev. FEMS, AFOB): high level discussion on future of Microbial Biotechnology, by invitation only (John Morrissey)

Proposal to hold an inter-society workshop on directions for industrial biotechnology

Time-frame: Spring 2024

Location: UK (most likely) at a location convenient to get to

Duration: 1 – 1.5-day meeting (lunchtime – lunchtime or lunchtime – afternoon)

Purpose: The “working aim” of the workshop could be to produce “A white paper on the future research and training needs, and directions of the industrial biotechnology / biomanufacturing sector to support the transition to a sustainable future”

Lead: Microbiology Society, to organise the venue and serve as the workshop secretariat and host

Organisations: Microbiology Society, European Federation of Biotechnology, IBISBA, possibly SIMB, Asia

Size: The workshop would be for invited attendees only and we should be looking at 40-50 max. The invited attendees would be from academic, industry and policy sectors and would be identified by a steering committee made up of nominees from the organisations supporting this event

9. Microbial Biotechnology Lectures (at conferences, by application, sponsored by the Division (John Morrissey, Diethard Mattanovich)

DM: Based on a proposal by JM, the division could sponsor keynote lectures in our field during conferences. This could be based on the concept of EMBO lectures.

A small group will constitute as working unit to evaluate the idea and develop a proposal to the next meeting of the Board: Pau Ferrer, Antonius Van Maris, Pascale Daran-Lapujade, Diethard Mattanovich.

Next step: Pau Ferrer will calculate income/expenditures over the past years, then a meeting will be organised with the group.

10. Any other business

KO: be careful when planning meetings towards the end of the year, because some companies decide not to travel at the end of the year when CO₂ budgets has been reached! Keep that in mind for future conferences.