



**Report on the  
1st FEBS “AMBASSADORS ON EDUCATION” MEETING  
Karolinum, Ovocny trh 3, Prague 1, Czech Republic, 8-9 APRIL 2016**

**Organised by FEBS Education Committee**

**Background and Aim:**

This meeting was the first of its kind, organised by FEBS Education Committee, and kindly hosted by Tomáš Zima, President of Charles University and past member of FEBS Education Committee. The aim of this meeting was to promote molecular life sciences education throughout Europe. The objectives were: to share information on FEBS educational issues, strengthen the communication between Constituent Societies, build efficient networks, define skills and knowledge in molecular life sciences education, and address standards. The meeting took place with 28 participants including FEBS Education Committee members and the Ambassadors on Education, at the fascinating Rectorate Building- Karolinum, Patriotic Hall. Altogether there were 22 FEBS Constituent Societies represented: Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, UK, and Ukraine.

**Programme:**

After a warm welcome from Tomáš Zima and a short talk from Gül Güner introducing the mission, vision and objectives of FEBS Education Committee, the first part of the programme involved short presentations from the Education Committee members and from the Ambassadors of the Constituent Societies to share their educational activities. The entire programme was very well structured with interactive lectures and small and large group discussions, making possible an efficient sharing of information and experiences and contributions of proposals for the future. Enthusiating topics were discussed in small groups: “Key knowledge and skills expected from a molecular life sciences graduate”, “Innovative education methods and new technologies”, “Training the trainers”, “FEBS research and education portal”.

**Ambassadors' Meeting Part 1 (April 8 2016 ; 13:00-18:00) (Patriotic Hall, Karolinum):**

13.00-13:15 Opening

**13.15-14:00 Introductions-Expectations from the Meeting/revision of the Agenda**

14:00-14:30 Aim and Objectives of the Meeting

Mission, vision and activities of FEBS Education Committee (Gül Güner)

14:30-14:45 FEBS Education Platform (Angel Herráez)

14.45-15:00 Discussion

15:00-15:30 Coffee break (The Foyer)

**15:30- 16:30 Reports from Ambassadors on what involvement their Constituent Societies have with education activities**

15:30-15:40 Prof. Rolf Heumann, Germany (Activities of the GBM Working group on Study Course in Molecular Life Science)

15:40-15.50 Prof. Aylin Sepici Dincel, Turkey (Educational Activities of the Turkish Society of Biochemistry)

15:50-16:00 Discussion on the Proposal of the Polish Delegate-Discussion on the status of Journals on Biochemistry

16:00-16:30 Open Floor for other contributions and Discussion

**16:30-17:00 Panel Discussion What do Constituent Societies expect from FEBS on educational issues? What could be the role of the Ambassadors-on-Education network? (+ 5-6 areas to discuss on the following day)**

**17:00-18:00 Key Knowledge and Skills for Molecular Life Sciences Graduates:** Results from FEBS Workshops (Cambridge, Paris, Debrecen, Belgrade, Tbilisi, etc) (Frank Michelangeli)

**18:00-18:30 General Discussion**

18.30-20:30 Dinner (Karolinum, Reception Rooms)

**Ambassadors' Meeting Part 2 (April 9 2016; 08:00-12:00) (Patriotic Hall, Karolinum)**

08:00-08:15 Organisation of the Small Groups to discuss Role of the "Ambassadors-on-Education" Network

**08:15-09.15 Small group sessions to develop a strategy for the role of the "Ambassadors on Education" network in the future**

**09:15-10:00 Reports to the Whole Group and General Discussion**

10:00-10:30 Coffee break

**10:30-11:30 Planning for An Erasmus + project to form a European network on education (Aims and Objectives-Project Team-Activities- Organisation and Management-Output)**

11.30-12:00 Conclusions of the Ambassadors' Meeting. Date and Lieu of the next Meeting.

12:00-13:00 Lunch (Cafe U retlovu)

## Outcome of Meeting

The main outcome of this meeting was the foundation of a platform at the European level to collaborate on educational issues across Europe, encompassing the FEBS Education Committee and the Ambassadors-on-Education of FEBS Constituent Societies, to promote education across Europe.

## Feedback

The feedback obtained from the participants was both encouraging and helpful for future directions. The majority of the participants were “very satisfied” with the meeting programme, organisation, and Venue. Some of the answers to the question: “What was particularly HELPFUL in this meeting?”

- *“It has been my first approach to FEBS education activity and it was extremely interesting and stimulating”*
- *“Getting to direct contacts with Education Ambassadors from other BS (FEBS Constituent Societies), sharing experience and roles”*
- *“The presence of participants from many European countries that enabled to form connections with other scientists who are interested in education”*
- *“Setting the blueprint of an integrated workflow for harmonizing (?)/improving biochemical education*
- *“Discussion in small groups and discuss after all together our conclusions”*

The feedback result in detail is presented in the attachment.

All of the participants expressed their willingness to participate at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ambassadors on Education Meeting, to take place in Paris in 2017, hosted by the Université Paris Descartes.

## Conclusions

The main conclusions from this fruitful meeting, on which the participants agreed, were:

1. To communicate and work with each other through an e.mail network, FEBS education platform and through FEBS research and education portal. For the development of **an active Ambassadors on Education network**, delegates from all Constituent Societies would be included (call would be made to those not able to join this meeting).
2. To co-operate on composing **an inventory for “Key Knowledge and Skills Expected from a Molecular Life Sciences Graduate”** for facilitating build a molecular life sciences curriculum which will help progress the career of a young graduate. An EU project would facilitate the co-operation and dissemination, but may not be realistic to achieve. The FEBS Ambassadors-on-Education network could be used for developing the inventory. The skills should include, beside the practical skills, the “transferable skills” as well. The inventory would firstly cover the BSc degree and later may be extended to the high-school, MSc , and PhD degrees, as well.
3. To structure a **“toolkit” for an education workshop** that can be run by the Ambassadors to enhance education activities in their respective societies. A model workshop would be structured which could help.
4. To compose a **“Good Practices on Education”** document. This document should cover, among others, “Teaching and learning skills”, “Curriculum Planning”, “Ethical considerations”, and “Evaluation and Assessment Procedures”.
5. To promote sharing of **“learning resources”** and upload them on FEBS Education Platform, taking care of the copyright issues.
6. The Ambassadors-on-Education would enhance educational activities in their respective countries and share the outcome using FEBS Education platform- and FEBS Research and Education portal. **The “homework” would be to organise an education session (either within the framework of Society’s scientific meeting or as a separate event).**
7. The Ambassadors-on-Education would collaborate with each other to promote **“Erasmus exchange” and “joint degrees”** between their respective institutions.
8. **“Training the Trainers”** deserve special attention and Ambassadors agreed to promote this activity in their countries, through their Societies.
9. **The FEBS Constituent Societies are invited to provide funding for education events and also to promote staff exchange for training purposes.** The fellow would visit another institution for participating in a “Training Block”- with all aspects of the curriculum, including examination practices, quality assessment, etc.
10. Both FEBS and the Constituent Societies are asked **to communicate with the Ministries on Education** to provide support to promote education.
11. The Ambassadors ask for more **“concrete” solutions**, endorsed by FEBS Education Committee, on how to carry-out a particular education task.
12. **The Ambassadors are asked to provide a report of what they will have done before the next Ambassadors Meeting.**



# Education Ambassadors

FEBS Education Committee

April 8-9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Prague, Czech Republic

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM

FEBS Education Committee will appreciate your comments and suggestions about its 1<sup>st</sup> Ambassadors on Education Meeting in its continuing effort to improve the event.

### PROGRAMME

#### 1) April 8<sup>th</sup> Sessions

	Not useful	Useful	Very useful
○ Introductions	1	11	8
○ Aims and Objectives (Gül Güner)		10	10
○ FEBS Education Platform (Angel Herraez) & Discussion		7	13
○ Reports from the Ambassadors & Discussions		12	7
○ Key Knowledge and Skills for molecular Life Sciences Graduates: Results from the FEBS WS's (Frank Michalengeli)	1	4	13
○ Small Group Discussions & General Discussion		6	14

#### 2) April 9<sup>th</sup> Sessions

	Not useful	Useful	Very useful
○ Overview of the Possible Aims of the Ambassadors on Education Network & Possible EU Funding (Frank Michalengeli)		7	13
○ Small Group Discussions & General Discussion		1	19
○ Reports and Suggestions from the Small Group Discussions		3	14
○ General Discussion of the Meeting and Future of the Meetings (Gül Güner)		2	13

### SOCIAL EVENTS

	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
○ Coffee Breaks		4	13
○ Dinner (Karolinum)		8	11
○ Lunch (Cafe U Retlovu)		2	7

### OVERALL ORGANIZATION

	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
○ Communication before the meeting		6	13

○ Accessibility of obtaining conference information (hotel, program, etc.)		6	13
○ Meeting packages		7	12
○ Conference venue and facilities		3	15

### LAST but not LEAST...

- What was particularly HELPFUL in this meeting?
  - I learned where is our educational system
  - To meet and discuss with an excellent panel of ambassadors on good practices
  - To learn the experience of other colleagues involved in educational activities
  - To be in contact with other ambassadors
  - To be introduced w,th other ambassadors, their view on educational etc.
  - It has been my first approach to FEBS education activity and it was extremely interesting and stimulating
  - Experience, idea and challenges from different countries
  - Getting to direct contacts with Education Ambassadors from other BS, sharing experience and roles
  - The presence of participants from many European countries that enabled to form connections with other scientist that are interested in education
  - Setting the blueprint of an integrated workflow for harmonizing (?)/improving biochemical education
  - Discussions in small groups in particular about forms of feedback & assessment
  - Realization of differences in science education systems in Europe
  - Overview of small group discussions
  - To understand the situation and education system in other countries
  - Discussion in small groups and talk after all together about conclusions
  - The discussions in small groups
  
- Within this meeting, was there something you learned that was particularly SURPRISING or IMPORTANT to you?
  - Suprising: so much differences between countries, important: the role that national society can do; we have to work on it!
  - Degree of difference
  - FEBS educational platform
  - Awareness of the quality of teaching at the FEBS
  - I saw what was the differences of our educational system and the others
  - Verified the significant differentiation of teaching policies among the various nations
  - There was comfort finding out that we all have problems no matter it the country is well developed or poorly developed
  - Yes, the suprising point for me was to find differences among countries in education of biochemistry
  - To learn that other not english speaking countries have problem with making national science language and therminology? leave this fort he national level or are there any ways to find common solutions?
  - That biochemistry professors are deeply interested in improving and promoting education at large and their teaching in particular
  - Not suprising but most the topics we talked were important
  - Effort put across Europe (especially UK) to evaluate teaching
  - The build-on of FEBS educational portal might be very valuable resource for teachers & students; but a lot more of things have to be added - as far as I understood the only solid thing useful in teaching is that DNA presentation
  - The differences between biochem curricula between countries
  - The Educational Platform
  
- What did you like BEST about this meeting?
  - Small groups discussion
  - Informal discussions in small groups and among ambassadors

- The opportunity to contact with a lot of different experiences on education
- I liked the discussions in small groups
- The opportunity to meet with colleagues interested in the teaching topics
- Group work
- Small group discussions
- Small group sessions
- To meet people, to discuss problems
- Atmosphere, personal communication
- The group discussions
- To meet with other ambassadors
- Reports and suggestions from the small group discussions
- It looks that something really useful may appear
- Round tables on specific topics
- The possibility of interact with a number of representatives of various nations
- What did you like LEAST about this meeting?
  - The introduction-day 1 'reports from ambassadors'
  - The session from the ambassador report was not well focused in some cases, and of little interest in others. Only one exception.
  - This is the first meeting so my comment is not applicable, but in general we should be more concrete
  - Could be microphones for better hearing & sounds of repair from the next room
  - The reporting from the various countries
  - I have no complaints
- What could be done to make the meeting MORE VALUABLE?
  - To organize group around thematic and really define the things and conclusions
  - Publish the outcomes of the meeting
  - Examples of good practice, sharing experience
  - More focused on themes
  - I think that the discussions have to be more
  - To provide the slide presentation in advance of after the meeting
  - To focus thematic topics
  - Meeting should be more specific, more focused on one particular goal
  - To have more specific topics
  - More focused and as of have more pragmatic
  - If suggestions for core curriculum can be sent in advance and put on the table for group discussions
  - Extend the meeting duration
  - Transfer of conclusions to FEBS and EU institutions making decisions
  - Provide more documentation on the items to discuss in order to improve the effectiveness of the meeting
- Are you likely to attend Ambassadors on Education Meeting again?      Yes(20)       No

### **Other Comments and Topics for the upcoming meetings**

- Just continue
- How to recruit professors to the training workshops we plan to have? We are all interested in improving education but I wonder how many professors will be interested to change the way they teach
- Development of a guide with good practices + development and application of quality assurance + development of minimum core curriculum & standards in all levels of education (Graduate, MSc, PhD)
- Set some milestones with respect to the concluding remark made (i.e. objectives)
- At least somebody from our society will

**THANK YOU**