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For further information about FEBS visit the FEBS Web-site. <http://www.febs.org/>

From the Secretary-General

Following a proposal by the Finnish Constituent Society, FEBS has created a NewsLetter to keep you informed on a regular basis (every second month) of current developments relevant to the wide variety of activities carried out by the organisation (<http://www.febs.org/>). When implemented in full, the NewsLetter will provide information on issues related to scientific activities in individual countries, about fellowships, exchange programmes, education, jobs, science and society, the career of young scientists, women in science, networking activities, collaborations with other organisations, as well as highlights from our Annual Meeting. The NewsLetter will also serve as a forum for current discussions as to whether there is a need for a Research Council of Europe in our area of involvement.

The creation of the European Research Area by Philippe Busquin, Commissioner of Research of the European Union, is expected to have a major impact on the quality and competitiveness of research in Europe and accordingly, this first NewsLetter provides you with information concerning the launching of Framework Programme 6 (FP6). It is important to respond to the call for Expression of Interest (EoI) for the two main Instruments (i. e. Networks of Excellence and Integrated projects) as future calls will be based on the input they will receive.

In addition, this NewsLetter includes information about the European Life Science Forum, messages from the editors of our two journals, EJB and FEBS Letters, as well as a warm invitation from the Israeli organisers to participate in the 28th FEBS meeting that will take place in Istanbul, October 20-25, 2002.

Finally, I encourage you to register in the FEBS Web site (http://febs.org/e-mail_registration.asp), as this will ensure that you receive the NewsLetter regularly. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are interested in contributing to the NewsLetter (e-mail to: FEBSNEWS@cancer.dk).

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jes Forchhammer for preparing the first issue of the NewsLetter. Jes has worked for FEBS for a few months, but he is now ready to retire. We are grateful for his services and we wish him all the best in the years to come.

Julio E. Celis
Secretary-General

ELSF: A Voice for European Life Sciences Organisations

The European Life Sciences Forum (ELSF) is an umbrella organisation recently established to give a public voice to the European life scientist community. It is a coalition of independent organisations representative or supportive of the life sciences, biotechnology and biomedical research communities in Europe with a

mission to increase their visibility and impact in the public and policy-making arenas; and to advance research and to promote the contribution of scientists to European society.

1. The *raison d'être* of ELSF

Level of funding of the life sciences and of basic research, ethical issues, public acceptance of science and technology, deficit of research infrastructures, definition of research priorities and programmes tending to prescribe science output, lack of career perspectives for young scientists, disinterest for scientific careers etc... these issues are major challenges for European research, and often directly affect scientists in their daily activities. Science policy should not be based exclusively on the demands of scientists; however, it cannot be undertaken seriously without their input. In Europe this input is often minimal. On the other hand, scientists are increasingly asked to provide expert information and advice, as well as to justify their research, notably because of increasing societal awareness of the potential of research in the area of life sciences to influence their lives and environment.

Whilst there is thus both a need and an obligation to get involved in science policy and in public debate, the life sciences research community, which is extremely fragmented at both geographical and disciplinary level without a well-established conduit through which to express their concerns, often remains silent in these debates. It is this observation that is at the origin of ELSF. The initiative came from four individual scientists: Julio Celis, Secretary General of the Federation of European Biochemical Societies (FEBS) and Director of the Institute of Cancer Biology (Danish Cancer Society); Frank Gannon, Executive Director of the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO); Fotis Kafatos, Director General of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL); and, Kai Simons, President of the European Life Scientist Organisation (ELSO). In September 1999 they convened a meeting of a group of leading individual scientists from different European countries to discuss these topics and new initiatives that could be taken in order to ensure a relevant and coherent input from the scientific community. The meeting resulted in the establishment of ELSF, giving scientists an opportunity to coordinate their efforts throughout Europe and intending to improve the flow of

information between the decision-makers, society, and those who have to carry out the research.

2. ELSF membership and organisational structure

ELSF was envisaged as a mechanism bringing together individual scientists and scientific organisations representative of the various facets of the life sciences. As the Forum however is meant to reflect the interests of the life sciences and not of individuals, it was later decided that ELSF membership would only be granted to organisations, and that priority should be given to European-wide structures, *i.e.* European Societies or Federations, to facilitate the consultation of scientists across Europe through their representative organisations. At present, other than the four founding members, nine further scientific organisations have joined, or are in the process of joining, ELSF (Table 1).

ELSF membership is not open solely to scientific organisations, but also to other major stakeholders like industry, patients' and consumers' organisations. The support of these influential players could be very beneficial for ELSF, provided that the mission statement of ELSF remains the agenda of the scientific community: with citizens' organisations and industry aboard, the Forum would have more political weight and thus would be more influential. Patients' and consumers' organisations in turn would have a clear interest in seeing research at the top of political agendas. Similarly, industry can have much to gain in supporting the objectives of ELSF, *i.e.* more and better-trained scientists, and the development of the knowledge base that is essential for their R&D. It is noted in this context that in its position paper on European science, the Animal Cell Technology Industry Platform (ACTIP) lists concerns that are similar to those of ELSF ¹. Furthermore, the Forum can be a convenient way for industry to talk to the scientific community. In order to preserve the independence of the Forum, it was however decided that ELSF membership would be granted to industry platforms, and not to individual companies.

To achieve the objectives of the Forum, it was deemed necessary to be professionally organised. Accordingly, a manager was recruited, whose task is to scrutinise and monitor research policies and programmes, liaise with member

organisation as well as policy makers and funding bodies, prepare ELSF documents, and conduct the daily business of the Forum. In order to ensure the development of the Forum during its gestation period, EMBO, EMBL and FEBS committed themselves to guarantee the budget of ELSF until end of 2003. Other organisations can become members through the payment of a voluntary contribution. Following this transitory period ELSF will be self-financing, with income generated mostly through membership fees.

3. The mandate of ELSF

The tasks of ELSF as outlined in the Statutes of the Forum are presented in Table 2. An essential element of the strategy of ELSF is that its activities should not interfere or overlap with the activities of its constituent members. Instead, ELSF membership must deliver added value for the participating entities, in particular through the strong political impact expected from an organisation representing several thousands of researchers and covering the whole spectrum of the life sciences. Therefore, the Forum primarily aims at intervening in science policy making and public debate through the provision of information, recommendations, the generation of position papers, and lobbying policy makers and funding bodies on issues that are relevant for the entire life sciences research community. In addition, the Forum may endorse initiatives of its members, thereby demonstrating the support of the community and contributing to the amplification of their message. Simultaneously, the ELSF will develop electronic infrastructures ('one-stop shop') to provide support service to its constituent members and, through its website, to the life science research community at large.

4. The EC and the scientific community: Tales of a misunderstanding?

The consolidation of the European unification process, resulting from its greater integration of planning at all levels, includes science. In this respect, the Framework Programmes (FP) of the European Commission (EC), though representing only about 5 % of the total public research funding in the EU, have a major impact on the organisation of research in Europe, not only *via* some very successful programmes like the Marie Curie Fellowships, but also because many national funding agencies

increasingly design their programmes to facilitate access to EC funds for their scientists.

FPs are designed by the EC following consultation with the European Parliament (EP) and the European Research Council (ERC, Council of the ministers in charge of research in the EU member states), and are adopted by the EP and the ERC on the basis of a co-decision process. FP6, the next Framework Programme that will cover the years 2003-2006 and which is currently being drafted ², is considered a major instrument to establish a European Research Area (ERA), an essential element of the EU strategy to reach its goal to become the most competitive, knowledge-based economy in the world ³. An early task of ELSF was therefore to enter into communications with the European Institutions, primarily with the EC and the Members of the EP (MEPs). The Forum presented them with recommendations addressing some of the major concerns of the scientific community, chiefly a career development scheme allowing young, promising scientists to establish their first, independent research group, increased support for open-ended research, and new procedures for the evaluation of proposals.

In September 2001 the EC published a Consultation Paper 'Towards a Strategic Vision of Life Sciences and Biotechnology in Europe' addressed at the Stakeholders, which should result in an EU policy document ⁴. ELSF acknowledged the importance of this EC consultation initiative, and prepared a comprehensive response, which is available on the Forum's website. During the preparation of its response, ELSF was confronted with many scientists who proved to be disillusioned by the EC and its programmes - notably because of their lack of continuity and of genuine perspectives for basic research - and were therefore reluctant to get involved in any EC consultations. The reason for this misunderstanding between the EC and the scientific community deserves some attention.

The EC is not insensitive to the needs and recommendations of the scientific community and its proposal for the FP6 indeed contains some interesting novelties in this respect. For instance, it includes provisions for a career development scheme and mechanisms to facilitate the trans-national access to research

infrastructures to palliate deficits. However, on the other hand scientists may have been mistaken to consider that the EC is a source of science funding similar to national research agencies. The EC has political objectives: on one hand, to integrate and to strengthen European research; on the other hand, to support research establishing the science base of EU policies, for instance on food safety and quality, environment... Its programmes are designed to meet these goals. Therefore, in FP6 the EC does not seek to sponsor basic research *per se*, but aims at integrating it at a European level: basic research is seen as one of the components of European research. For instance, mechanisms like the Networks of Excellence will provide funds - 'topping-up money' - to encourage networking and integration of research capacities at a European level ². Even though this particular strategy may be questioned, other mechanisms included in the FP6 proposal, like the financial support for the mutual opening-up national programmes, seem to be steps in the right direction ^{2, 5}.

5. Towards a European Life Sciences Research Council

Given these considerations, it may be appropriate to consider the establishment of a European Life Sciences Research Council. Such a Council would not replace national agencies, which have a crucial role in maintaining national strengths and priorities, but should be seen as an opportunity to provide funding for excellent trans-European research through a flexible scheme, free from constraints. Participating countries could contribute a percentage of their research funds to the budget of this Council. Preliminary discussions on this topic have been initiated at the level of the European Molecular Biology Conference (EMBC; an inter-governmental body gathering representatives from 24 European countries, which financially supports EMBO and established EMBL), and the European Science Foundation (an association of 67 organisations - research councils, academies and funding agencies - devoted to scientific research in 24 European countries which co-ordinates a wide range of pan-European scientific initiatives). ELSF could be instrumental in supporting and lobbying national bodies for the establishment of a European Life Sciences Research Council, in addition to its efforts to strengthen the dialogue with the EC on issues where the input of the scientific community is

essential - public understanding and acceptance of the life sciences, ethical issues, training and education, technology transfer policies etc...

5. Concluding remarks

Almost a year after its implementation, ELSF is about to reach its cruise speed. Missions and Statutes have been clearly defined, and communication lines have been established with the European Commission and Parliament. The ELSF website will be fully operational by the end of February 2002. A ELSF Task Group has been set up to determine the positions of ELSF. This Task Group was deemed necessary, considering the short deadlines of EC consultations and to secure scientists' contributions, but also to carry out perspective work seeing that the agenda of ELSF should not be exclusively dictated by the EC.

The wide adhesion from scientific organisations to ELSF indicates that the Forum responds to a so-far unmet need. Equally important, the EC calls for an initiative aiming at a wide, trans-disciplinary organisation of the life sciences research community in Europe, and MEPs welcome a new source of information, which complements – or counter-balances – the efforts of other lobbying organisations from industry or of activists groups. It is now up to ELSF, with the support of its constituents and of the European life scientists, to deliver on its promises, and to make it a success story.

For further information on ELSF please access <http://www.elsf.org/> or directly contact ELSF.

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References

1. <http://www.actip.org/manuals/PosPapAug00.html>
2. EC documents concerning the FP6 can be accessed at <http://www.cordis.lu/rtd2002/fp-debate/cec.htm#proposal>

3. <http://www.cordis.lu/rtd2002/era/era.htm>
4. http://europa.eu.int/comm/biotechnology/introduction_en.html
5. Van Dyck (2001) Research in the EU: better times to come? *The Lancet* 357, 1465-1466.

EUROPEAN ARTERIOSCLEROSIS SOCIETY-EAS
EUROPEAN CYSTIC FIBROSIS SOCIETY-ECFS
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY-EFB
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PHARMACOLOGICAL SOCIETIES-EPHAR
EUROPEAN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY LABORATORY-EMBL
EUROPEAN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY ORGANISATION-EMBO
EUROPEAN LIFE SCIENTIST ORGANISATION-ELSO
EUROPEAN PLANT SCIENCE ORGANISATION-EPSO
EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF GENE THERAPY-ESGT
FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN BIOCHEMICAL SOCIETIES-FEBS
FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN MICROBIOLOGICAL SOCIETIES-FEMS
FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN NEUROSCIENCE SOCIETIES-FENS

Table 1. List of scientific organisations members of, or in the process of joining, the European Life Sciences Forum. The European Science Foundation (ESF), an association of 67 organisations (research councils, academies and funding agencies) in 24 European countries has a status of observer within ELSF.

To achieve its mission related to science policy issues ELSF shall:

- **Provide expert information on the importance of funding research in the life sciences and of long-term, open-ended research, and campaign to expand funding provisions**
- **Campaign for front-line issues related to the organisation and planning of research, including the development of research infrastructures, and the career structure of young scientists**
- **Monitor and contribute to public policies and research programmes at the European level through recommendations and consensus positions**
- **Work to improve public engagement with and public understanding of the life sciences, and contribute to the Science & Society debate, including its ethical aspects**

To achieve its service mission ELSF shall, notably by means of electronic infrastructures,

- **Collect and disseminate information on research policies and programmes at a European, national and regional level as well as outside Europe, and assist its members when appropriate**
- **Collect and disseminate information on the activities of the member organisations**
- **Promote communication with the media, policy-makers, public interest organisations and other stakeholders, at national and European levels**
- **Help member organisations in their communication with policy makers**
- **Provide information and advice to the European Commission, European and national Parliaments, and national governmental bodies**

Table 2. Tasks of ELSF as outlined in the Statutes of the Forum.

The EU 6th Framework Programme: Call for Expression of Interest

For your information, a Call for Expression of Interest (Eoi) for Networks of Excellence and Integrated Projects has been launched. This call is an opportunity for the scientific community to contribute to the preparation of the first calls of FP6. As stated by the Commission, respondents may optimise their chances of having a particular topic included in an early call by submitting an Eoi.

The response should take the form of an administrative information plus a 5-page description of the proposal indicating Need and relevance; Excellence, Critical mass and expertise engaged; and Integration and structuring effect. It should not be a detailed proposal. No feedback on individual Eois will be published or sent to the submitters: it is not a pre-selection but an exercise to identify the scope of the first calls, i.e. what is the scientific community prepared to do and with whom!!! No consortium must be pre-established.

Indicative timetable:

- 7 June 2002: deadline for submission
- June-July: assessment of the submissions, which will be posted on the Commission's Web- site in September
- Autumn: First calls for proposals

New FP6 instruments:

1. **Networks of Excellence:** The objective of the networks is to structure European research potential by integrating existing capacities through joint research activities, integrating new activities, spreading of excellence and training, and common management. This instrument does not aim to sponsor research activities! Commission Officials have had a hard time trying to make us understand what these networks will be, for the simple reason that they do not really know what to expect (hence the call for expression of interests).

The document: "Two new instruments for the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006): Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence" <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/nfp/networks-ip.html> gives an idea of the concept, however, it is only a provisional document. Notably, it is not yet defined how the integration of the participants will be evaluated. Furthermore, the grant calculation method (number of researchers to be considered in the network) is not yet established. The duration will be five years or more if required. Participants will have the autonomy to distribute the grant between them, and use the money as they want. With regard to management, the consortium will be expected to establish a management group comprising the research leaders, and a governing council composed of representatives from the partners, the funding bodies, and the Commission.

2. **Integrated Projects:** IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR MONEY TO DO (BASIC) RESEARCH, THIS IS WHAT YOU HAVE TO GO FOR. The objective of the IPs is to

strengthen EU competitiveness and to address societal needs. The working document of the Commission <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/nfp/networks-ip.html> gives a good idea of what an IP will be like, especially in terms of autonomy and flexibility of management and implementation, and expected outcome. Participants will have the autonomy to distribute the grant between them, and use the money as they want.

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A Visit to INTAS in Brussels

INTAS is short for “International Association for the promotion of co-operation with scientists from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union”. In summary, it is an independent association that promotes international scientific co-operation between scientists of its Member states and of the New Independent States (NIS). INTAS comprises 30 member States and 12 partners in the NIS.

Under the Scientific Apparatus Recycling Scheme (SARS) I have been co-operating with INTAS over many years for we have had very similar objectives. On many occasions INTAS paid for half the cost of transport of loads to countries of the NIS, like Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia and Georgia. INTAS has also often covered my expenses for visits to some of these countries. INTAS was established in 1993 and from 1996 to March 2001 the Secretariat was headed by Dr David Gould with whom I worked. His successor is Dr Jaak Sinnaeve. Having settled all outstanding arrangements in autumn 2001, he wrote to me to say that INTAS would not in future support SARS but that he would be happy to meet me in Brussels to see if there were opportunities for co-operation. A meeting was arranged for the morning of 19th March. I met not only Dr Sinnaeve but also Dr Antoinette Gyll-Murray, Scientific Officer for Chemistry and Dr Ingmar Schmidt in charge of Life Sciences. I was also told about Hazel Jeffery, Program Logistics Manager. There are two people in charge of Physics whom I did not meet.

I asked about the relationship of INTAS and the ISTC (International Science and Technology Centre) since it seemed that their roles overlapped. It was explained that ISTC was set up to encourage scientists in the NIS who were previously engaged in weapons activities to change to peaceful pursuits. The EU, USA and Japan financially support the ISTC. It was then suggested that the EU should also be helping those scientists in the NIS who had been engaged on peaceful research and hence INTAS was set up. To day ISTC also seems to be supporting such scientists as I have experienced and hence the roles of the two organisations to some extent overlap. In the case of ISTC I was approached to suggest partners in the UK who are prepared to act as Collaborators.

I cannot be sure but I think INTAS has a budget of about 20M Euro per year. Of its budget about 90% comes from the EU Framework budget and hence they are very concerned about the new plans for the EU's Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development for the period 2002-2006. It may be helpful to FEBS if I briefly indicate the main activities of INTAS for there may be opportunities for collaboration.

INTAS will lend its support to conferences like the NATO Advanced Study Institute in Spetsai and those organised by the ESF. The proviso is that the young participants must come from the NIS. INTAS will also help with Conference Grants provided that not less than 5 current or recently completed INTAS projects are being presented. The conference must be held in the NIS or a member State.

Dr Sinnaeve said that a major effort had gone into removing all problems of access to electronic information from the scientific journals required in the NIS. I mentioned the WHO agreement with the 6 largest publishers but he rightly said that they wished to cover journals of no interest to WHO. They would be prepared to help in a small way with computer equipment for librarians. I said that FEBS was interested in helping with the access to the internet and it is possible that there could be co-operation here. This support comes under the heading "Support for Infrastructure actions". It also includes contributions to repair, update of apparatus.

Most of the income of INTAS goes on project grants, the success rate being about 20%. The largest number of applications for collaborations comes from Germany and the UK with the UK getting most grants. INTAS provides the host with about 20% of the grant but this will probably go up to 30%. They pay some addition to the salaries of the scientists in the NIS. For the current year, 2002, they are not calling for any new projects (except for Young Scientists and Conferences) but they hope to invite new applications for project grants in 2003. They have negotiated agreements whereby the countries of the NIS free of duty receive all goods. Salaries are paid free of tax and they have agreements with the banks to pay the grants direct to the grantees. They plan to extend their activities to countries of the NIS east of Georgia but they get increasing problems. They do have requests from the university library in Bisket, which they will transmit to me.

INTAS has a fellowship programme for young NIS scientists. This even cover those not engaged in INTAS funded projects. (1) As mentioned before they can apply for a conference grant. (2) Those approaching the 2nd year of a PhD can apply for support for years 2 and 3. (3) NIS Post Doctorals within 3 years of the award of the PhD can apply for an award to continue their research. (4) More advanced Post Docs who have a min. of 3 publications in decent journals can apply. All applicants must be less than 35 and must be citizens of a NIS country. The number of eligible applications, about 168 last year, is much less than expected. The success rate is high with 125 funded. They have also started "Young Scientist Summer Schools". Details on the Web-site [intas.be/Funding Opportunities](http://intas.be/Funding%20Opportunities). E-mail ys@intas.be

In summary I found them a lively organisation and it is good to make contact. I was a bit surprised by the rather modest income but I could have got the wrong

impression. I have lots of good literature if anyone is interested for they are aware that their activities should be better known.

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Message from the Editorial Office Team of FEBS Letters

Dear fellow scientists,

We would like to announce a few novelties and alterations concerning the publication of *FEBS Letters* in 2002.

A prize will be awarded for the most outstanding Research Letter that we publish within a calendar year, provided the manuscript was submitted by a corresponding author aged 40 years or younger. The prize consists of a monetary award of Euro 10,000 and will be presented at the annual international FEBS meeting. A committee consisting of *FEBS Letters*' editors will select the paper to be awarded. We hope that the prize will be one of the factors convincing younger investigators to consider *FEBS Letters* for publication of their exciting achievements. Of course, such a prize should not be the only reason for you to submit your high quality work to *FEBS Letters*.

As of January 1st, 2002, *FEBS Letters* is published in 26 regular issues per year, plus four to six additional special issues. Thus, we will now appear in print fortnightly rather than weekly. Preprints will still appear on the Web within five working days of receipt at the publisher.

The technological advances in electronic submission and handling of manuscripts have made possible to meet the increasing requests for proofs, without compromising our rapid publication schedule. Thus, we will now provide electronic proofreading to all authors of accepted manuscripts, which must be returned within 48 hours. In the meantime, after one year of existence our electronic submission system is now used by over 60% of the authors submitting manuscripts to *FEBS Letters*. Although encouraging, this number is still quite low and obviously we would have preferred it to be closer to 80 or 90% so a complete electronic system could soon be implemented. Hopefully with Elsubmit, a new and improved submission system that our publisher Elsevier will introduce soon, we will achieve this goal within the next two years.

In addition, we would like to cordially welcome our newest editors Ulrike Kutay, Irmisinning, Robert Russell, Beat Imhof and Stuart Ferguson. These editors add further depth to our editorial board in the areas of cell biology, structural biology,

bioinformatics, immunology, biochemistry and bioenergetics. We look forward to working with them closely in the next few years.

With our wishes for a most successful year 2002 and kindest regards,

Your *FEBS Letters* Editorial Office Team

Felix Wieland, Managing Editor
Connie M. Lee, Assistant Managing Editor
Eva-Maria Emig, Assistant Editor
Anne Mueller, Secretary

New Paper Tracking Service from Elsevier

Elsevier Science's paper tracking service (formerly known as OASIS) has now been improved and incorporated into the Author Gateway (<http://authors.elsevier.com>), a new online service for authors.

How the Elsevier Science tracking service works:

Each accepted paper that arrives at Elsevier Science is registered in our tracking system (formerly known as OASIS) and available for you to check within 24 hours. Each step in the production process is then automatically updated in the Author Gateway.

If you are a registered user of the Author Gateway you can track the status of your paper from your homepage. All you need to do is add your paper's details to your list of accepted papers. These details include the corresponding author's surname and our reference number, which are shown on the acknowledgement letter or e-mail we sent to you.

You can also set up e-mail alerts that show you the change in status of your paper as it moves through the production process. Alternatively, you can track your paper without registering; however, if you do not register, you will not be able to view the status of your paper through your Author Gateway homepage, or set up e-mail alerts.

Authors with accepted papers in production at Elsevier Science have access to the following tracking information:

- General production status (that is: in preparation or in proof)
- Date of publication and the reprints despatch date
- Citation information (volume, issue and page numbers)

Please note that tracking information in the Author Gateway only shows details about papers that have been accepted for publication (excluding online submission)

and forwarded to Elsevier for production. If your paper is still under review you should contact the journal Editor directly for an update on the status of your paper.

Elsevier Science is committed to providing authors with better services, so we hope the tracking facility provided by the Author Gateway continues to meet your needs.

More information is available at:

<http://authors.elsevier.com>

Message from the Editorial Office Team of the European Journal of Biochemistry

Dear fellow scientists,

The past year has seen substantial changes to the *European Journal of Biochemistry* and this brief report will give you some idea of what has been happening and the further developments being planned.

First, on 1 March 2002 we introduced a complete electronic online manuscript submission/review process. This provides a new and effective means of submitting papers for publication that we hope will be speedily adopted by all our authors. By allowing us to conduct all the refereeing and editorial processes electronically too, it is enabling us to shorten publication times even more - below the 3-4 months that we had often been achieving already for papers that do not require much revision.

For the time being, those authors who find themselves unable to take advantage of this new electronic system can still use our existing hard-copy submission system or (which we much prefer) can submit their papers by email as attachments. Submission by anything other than the online system will be phased out and advance notice will be posted on the EJB website when we judge that it has become possible to terminate it altogether.

Secondly, EJB is now publishing all articles online within one week of receipt of corrected page proofs from authors and before the print copy is compiled. Individual articles can be found under OnlineEarly at <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com>, and can be cited by quoting the DOI number ('digital object identifier') that appears on the first page of each article. The online version of the article will be the final version of that article, apart from the bibliographic details (volume, page no., etc.), which are added when the issue is compiled for the print version of the journal, approximately 8-10 days after its first appearance online. We believe that this further advance in the speed of publication will be widely welcomed by our authors and readers alike.

The Editorial Board of EJB changed significantly during 2001, beginning with the retirement from the Board of Professor Hugo Fasold (Frankfurt, Germany) on 31 December 2000 and of Professor Jean Girard (Meudon, France) on 30 April 2001. We thank them for the long and dedicated service they have given. Dr Alan Wolffe (chromatin and gene expression: Richmond, California, USA), Dr Carmen Birchmeier

(developmental biology: Berlin, Germany), Professor André Ménez (protein structure and function: Gif-Sur-Yvette, France), Professor Harald Stenmark (lipids and cell signalling: Oslo, Norway) and Dr Nicholas Tonks (phosphatases and cell signalling: Cold Spring Harbor, New York, USA) joined the Board in 2001, and Dr Hidde Ploegh (cell biology and immunology: Cambridge, MA, USA) has joined in March 2002. Dr Wolffe was tragically killed in a traffic accident at the end of May 2001 and a minireview series on chromatin will be published in his memory in a forthcoming issue of the journal.

EJB is a journal for the rapid publication of important new results, and we are encouraging authors to submit Priority Papers on 'hot' topics, which are essentially full length papers but which undergo an accelerated two-week reviewing process. If a Priority Paper fails to achieve the necessary criteria, it can be considered as a Regular Paper. We also publish a wide range of Reviews and linked Minireview Series, by distinguished authors, aimed at providing coverage of both mature and emerging topics. As a service to the scientific community, the Reviews and Minireview Series are available online free of charge on the Synergy site as and when they are published; in accordance with FEBS policy, the original scientific papers in EJB, both Regular and Priority, are also now available online free of charge one year after publication. We continue to offer the benefits of no page charges and 50 free reprints. Free colour is available for essential images in the print version and for all images online.

Full details of these and other matters to do with EJB may be found in the web-pages of the journal (<http://www.ejbiochem.com>). The online version of the journal is available on the Blackwell Science service *Synergy* (<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/>) and on the *HighWire* platform (<http://highwire.stanford.edu/>).

With our best wishes for a most successful year 2002 and kindest regards,

Your *EJB* Editorial Office Team

Richard Perham, Chair of the Editorial Board
Louise Sanders, Editorial Office Manager
Vanessa Wilkinson, Deputy Editorial Office Manager
Karen Richardson, Editorial Secretary
Jane Bartolozzi, Editorial Secretary
Ilana Wooster, Editorial Secretary

[EJB – Now you can submit manuscripts online!](#)

The Federation of European Biochemical Societies, the Editorial Board of the European Journal of Biochemistry and Blackwell Publishing are delighted to announce the launch of online manuscript submission and peer review for EJB at:

<http://ejb.manuscriptcentral.com/>

These developments should further reduce the time from submission to publication in EJB!

You may already have registered at the site - in which case, please accept our apologies for troubling you, and we hope you find the service easy to use. If you have not registered, please follow the link above and click the "Create a New Account" icon to register

EJB would welcome your next manuscript. Entry into EJB's online submission site gives you access to the Author Centre, where you will find instructions for submitting your manuscript and any associated files online. Instructions for preparing your manuscript for submission to accord with the Journal's requirements are provided on the EJB homepage (www.ejbiochem.com), which is also linked from the 'Instructions and Forms' icon on the online submission site. Manuscripts should be prepared using a word processing program and saved as a .doc, .rtf, .ps or .pdf file. These files will be automatically converted to PDF upon upload. Figures saved as .tif, .gif, .eps or .jpg file should be embedded in the word processor file whenever possible, so that Referees access a single file during review.

EJB's online submission and review system is simple and intuitive, but if you should need assistance help is always at hand (online, by email and by telephone) using the 'Get Help Now' button located throughout the site. You can also obtain help from the EJB Editorial Office (ejb@camfebs.co.uk).

Online manuscript submission and review will bring many benefits, including:

- * Manuscripts and associated material available to referees for viewing online or downloading
- * All communication by email
- * Savings in time and mailing costs for authors

Sent on behalf of the Chairman and Editors of the European Journal of Biochemistry by
Anna Van Opstal
Journal Promotions Manager
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HHMI Awards 2 million USD to the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO).

March 20, 2002 – The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) has awarded 2 millions USD to the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO) to help launch careers of young scientists in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.

The four-year grant will support six scientists a year early in their careers. It links HHMI's International Research Scholars in the three countries with EMBO's Young

Investigator Programme. The HHMI/EMBO Scientists will receive 30.000 Euro (approximately 26,450 USD) a year for three years and will be mentored by their more established HHMI-supported colleagues. Applications for the first year are due April 1, 2002.

The EMBO Young Investigator Programme, created in 2000, identifies promising molecular biologists in their first three years of heading independent laboratories. Currently, there are 78 EMBO Young Investigators in 17 out of the 24 EMBC member countries.

HHMI launched its International Programme in 1991 to recognise the international scope of modern biomedical research and the contributions of scientists outside the United States. The programme supports international research scholars work, scientific meetings of scholars and educational activities.

For programme information and applications, see www.embo.org/projects/yip/index.html.

Meetings

· Invitation to the 28th Meeting of the Federation of European Biochemical Societies Turkey, Istanbul October 20 – 25, 2002

This year's FEBS meeting will take place at the Hilton Istanbul Convention Center. A rich scientific program is planned, including lectures by some outstanding figures in the field. To date J. Pouyssegur (France), A. Yonath (Israel) and T. Pozzan (Italy) have agreed to give plenary lectures.

The Meeting venue is located within walking distance from the modern city center and a short ride from the old city. We look forward to welcoming you in Istanbul in October and to a full and varied program.

On behalf of the Organising and Local Scientific Committees

Israel Pecht
Chair, Organising Committee

Hermona Soreq
Chair, Programme Committee

The full scientific programme will be available at the Meeting Web-site:
<http://www.kenes.com/febs>

• First Annual HUPO Congress, Versailles 21-24 October, 2002
http://www.hupo.org/new/First_Annual_HUPO_Congress.html

• Conference to Launch the EU 6th Framework Programme
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/conferences/2002/index_en.html

- **56th Annual Meeting and Symposium of the Society of General Physiologists on "Trafficking of Transporters" September 4-8, 2002, Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Abstract submission deadline is April 15, 2002. Advanced registration deadline is August 15, 2002. For further information visit the Web-site www.sgpweb.org**