

# *FEBS NewsLetter*



March 2003 (2/2003)

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## FEBS — FOR YOUR INFORMATION

By Camilla Krogh Lauritzen,  
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As you might be aware of, FEBS' involvement in the debate on the European Research Area (ERA), and a possible European Research Council (ERC), most recently resulted in a major joint meeting in Paris — ref. FEBS Newsletter issue 1, 2003.

Based on the feedback received from people, who attended, I believe it is safe to say that this meeting indeed managed to serve the intended purpose; having both scientists, officials and politicians among the speakers and audience, it provided a forum for a balanced and constructive debate on ERA and a possible ERC. The ERC debate demonstrated that the questions are: 'How? Who? Where? When?' rather than: 'should/should not?'. As such, it is now relevant to discuss the perspectives and prospects of an ERC from an operational point of view. Or said in another way: The next step for the scientific community is to formulate and communicate actual proposal(s) for an ERC infrastructure and mandate. In order to facilitate this process, FEBS together with ELSF and EMBO are currently planning a follow up meeting to take place around June 2003. Further information on this will be communicated, e.g. via FEBS' website, once available.

Staying along the lines of ERA, the ERC and science policy: FEBS now has a new Science Policy page/a debate forum at our website, and we encourage you to share your ideas and views e.g. on the ERC initiative. Let yourself be heard by sending your contribution via e-mail to [newsletter@febs.org](mailto:newsletter@febs.org). All contributions will be placed in their full length on the news pages at <http://www.febs.org>.



Rolf Zinkernagel presenting a proposal for an ERC at the ERA meeting in Paris on February 19, 2003. J.E. Celis and F. Gannon are seen in front of the presentation.



## STRONG SUPPORT FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY TO THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL WITHIN THE LIFE SCIENCES

By Prof. J.E. Celis, Secretary General of FEBS  
 FEBS Secretariat,  
 Institute of Cancer Biology and Danish Centre for Human Genome Research  
 Danish Cancer Society

In October 2002, the Danish presidency of the EC organised a meeting in Copenhagen to discuss the perspectives in establishing a European research council (ERC), complementary to the European Commission (EC) Framework Programmes and National Research Council programmes. As the ERC will focus on supporting high quality basic research, it is considered to be an important instrument for strengthening the European Research Area (ERA).

The Summary Report of the Copenhagen meeting was sent to the EU ministers for research, who at their November 26 meeting agreed to explore options for its creation, in co-operation with relevant national and European Research Organisations. As a result, Helge Sander, the Danish Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation appointed Federico Mayor, ex Director General of UNESCO and member of the Executive Committee of FEBS, to chair an expert group that will present various options on how to create an ERC by the end of 2003.



*John Sulston*

Recently, leaders of the scientific community, including Nobel Laureates, met in UNESCO, Paris, for a meeting organised by the European Life Sciences Forum on behalf of several organisations, to discuss the prospects of creating such an ERC. Various stakeholders (EC,

Research Councils, foundations, and international organisations) attended the meeting. There was an overall support for the establishment of an ERC, and in particular, Commissioner Busquin's full support of the idea was greatly appreciated by the participants. Many obstacles related to funding and structure were identified, but there was a clear willingness to join forces to make a reality of this now mature idea. A summary of the conclusions will be circulated shortly, and a

follow-up meeting to discuss concrete initiatives is being planned for the summer.

Needless to say, this initiative will have a major impact on basic research, as it is expected to help Europe realize its full scientific potential, and the ultimate dream of becoming a knowledge-based society. You are encouraged to contribute to the success of establishing an ERC by making national authorities aware of your support, and by letting your ideas be known through relevant channels (e.g. via the FEBS or ELSO website, [www.febs.org](http://www.febs.org) and [www.the-else-gazette.org](http://www.the-else-gazette.org), respectively).



*Overview: Panel and audience at Paris Meeting, February 19, 2003*

As far as FEBS is concerned, we are committed to work for the realization of an ERC, and we have recently established a working group on ERA that will focus on that. In addition to members of the Executive Committee, this working group includes P. Chambon, A. Finazzi Agro, J. M. Gago, F. Kafatos, M. Lazdunski, C. Martinez-A, D. McConnell, W. Neupert, M. Osborn, V. Paces and P Van der Vliet. The group will start its activities shortly.

## PRESENTATION OF THE FEBS ADVANCED LECTURE COURSE 03-07: "NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN MEMBRANE BIOLOGY: RAFTS, PROTEIN SORTING AND SIGNAL TRANSDUCTION"



Cell membranes envelop all living cells. They consist of a double layer of membrane lipids that is highly important as a scaffold for the organization of both membrane proteins (30% of the cellular proteins!) and cytosolic proteins. Intracellular membranes with specific protein and lipid compositions regulate the specific conditions in the various cellular compartments. The lateral organization of proteins is the basis for the sorting of proteins and lipids in the vesicular traffic between , membrane proteins is a hotly debated issue.

The present course will highlight the newest insights in the structure and function of membrane proteins and lipids. It then moves on to a physical description of the lateral (im)mobility of membrane components in so-called lipid rafts. After discussions of the molecular basis of membrane traffic and sorting, the emphasis will shift to signal transduction.

Finally, the course will evaluate the relevance of these topics for understanding and curing a number of infectious and inherited diseases.

**Course Organizer:** *Prof. Dr. Gerrit van Meer, E-mail: g.vanmeer@chem.uu.nl.*

For further information, please see the 'WWW on up-coming events' section in this issue of the FEBS NewsLetter.

## REPORTS FROM FEBS ADVANCED LECTURES



### **NATO/FEBS Advanced Course: Chemical probes in Biology:**

This NATO/FEBS ASI was designed to summarize and disseminate recent expert knowledge regarding a deeper understanding of biological phenomena on a molecular level. On this occasion experts from both the disciplines of Chemistry and Biology was brought together in order to amalgamate their diverse yet common interests in this area. Ultimate goal was an increase of future interactions between the two different scientific cultures and to communicate the exciting possibilities of interdisciplinary research to the young scientists present. For this 27 speakers from the disciplines of Chemistry and Biology were invited to give oral presentations of their individual fields of research. The speakers presented a total of 37 lectures during 10 working days of the school. The lectures were covering a broad range of topics relevant for the advancement of science at the interface of Biology, Chemistry and Medicine.

*(Excerpt of the report).*

### **FEBS Advanced Course: The Immune System: Genes. Receptors and Regulation.**

During this meeting, several interesting topics on basic aspects of immunology were discussed including: (i) stem cell development, (ii) immunoglobulin genes, B-cell differentiation and activation, (iii) major histocompatibility complex genes, T-cell receptors and T-cell differentiation and activation, (iv) antigen processing and presentation, (v) antigen interaction with class II molecules and recognition by T cells, (vi) immune regulation, self-reactivity and repertoire selection, (vii) molecular and biochemical basis of autoimmunity and cancer.

*(Excerpt of the report).*

**Both reports are available in full length at <http://www.febs.org>**



### **Contact data for the Tunisian and French Societies**

In the January issue of FEBS NewsLetter the URL to **Société Française de Biochimie et de Biologie Moléculaire** was mistakenly not mentioned in the list of FEBS member societies. The URL to this society is <http://botrytis.polytechnique.fr/sfbbm/>. Also, the data on the Tunisian Society, **Tunisian Association of Biological Sciences**, was left out from the list. Full data on this as well as all other FEBS member societies, is available at [http://www.febs.org/Organization/rganization\\_of\\_febs.htm](http://www.febs.org/Organization/rganization_of_febs.htm).



## **FEBS Volunteer Aid Programme launched - Call for volunteers**

At a round table discussion within FEBS Working Group for Exploring Ways to Assist Central and Eastern European Countries, WOGA, (Istanbul October 2002), delegates from several Eastern European countries pointed out that many papers from Eastern European scientists are rejected by publishers, due to language related problems.

The fact that several colleagues from the Central and Eastern countries have problems writing in English was discussed in depth. It constitutes a major obstacle, as it also prevents many from applying for e.g. grants, fellowships or European funds.

The discussion resulted in a decision that FEBS is to provide help to these colleagues by establishing a panel of volunteers, who will help with language related problems e.g. by doing reviews of scientific papers. This initiative has been named FEBS Volunteer Aid Program (VAP).

The Program now starts recruiting FEBS members, who — apart from being fluent in written English — are willing to help out colleagues from Central and Eastern European Countries by reviewing 3-6 papers or scientific applications (grants, fellowships etc.) pr. year.

Should you wish to volunteer, please contact the VAP coordinator and WOGA Committee Chairman Prof. Guy Dirheimer.

**Guy Dirheimer**  
**34, Sentier de l'aubépine,**  
**F-67000 Strasbourg, France**  
**E-mail: [guy.dirheimer.febs@wanadoo.fr](mailto:guy.dirheimer.febs@wanadoo.fr)**

### **A Biochemical Foreign Correspondent — new book by Prof. Peter Campbell**



Peter Campbell, professor in Biochemistry and coordinator of FEBS' Scientific Apparatus Recycling Scheme (SARS) program, has travelled all over the world in the line of duty. In his most recent book, *A Biochemical Foreign Correspondent — Stories and Impressions from Around the World*, he takes the reader along for a journey through time, cultures and continents. For information on how to purchase the book, please contact Prof. Campbell directly via e-mail ([p.campbell@biochemistry.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:p.campbell@biochemistry.ucl.ac.uk)) or telephone (+44 (0) 20 7679 2169).





*FEBS Letters* March 2003

Dear colleagues,

This January, the *FEBS Letters* Editorial Office become united under one roof, with the Editorial Office staff joining our Managing Editor, Felix Wieland, at the Biochemie-Zentrum at the Ruprecht-Karls University in Heidelberg. Our new office is newly equipped and we are pleased to be a part of a truly centralized office once again. Our new contact information is:

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Im Neuenheimer Feld 328  
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The location of our office isn't the only change we are implementing. *FEBS Letters* is awarding our first annual "Award for Young Scientists" this summer at the FEBS Congress in Brussels. A prize committee consisting of Amy McGough (Purdue University), Veli Lehto (University of Helsinki), Judit Ovadi (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), Gunnar von Heijne (Stockholm University) and Felix Wieland will meet this April to select the best research letter, with a corresponding author forty years or younger, from the several strong papers we published last year.

The composition of the Editorial Board is also undergoing some changes. Gunnar von Heijne is resigning this month from the *FEBS Letters* Editorial Board after eight years of outstanding service. Gunnar worked tirelessly for *FEBS Letters*, editing more than 1200 articles as well as three of our FEBS Congress Special Issues. We'd like to express our gratitude for his years of dedicated service and wish him much success in his

future scientific endeavors. Gunnar has highly recommended Peter Brzezinski (Stockholm University) to fill the vacancy on our Editorial Board. Our thirty-four editors welcomed Peter's nomination because his expertise in bioenergetics and molecular biophysics will complement our already diverse team.

We are currently implementing our new submission system, which will go live in two months. This new system will provide our authors, editors, and referees with an even faster, more efficient service. This new system will drastically reduce our editors' administrative load and will enable us more time to bring you intriguing Special Issues, up-to-date Review Series, and other compelling features. These are just some of the interesting and timely topics we are featuring this spring:

"Viral Ion Channels" – Special Issue edited by Maurice Montal (University of California, San Diego) and Gerhard Thiel (guest editor, University of Kassel).

"Proteomics meets Cell Biology" – Review Series coordinated by guest editor Angus Lamond (University of Dundee).

"Protonmotive Mechanisms of Energy Transducing Enzymes" – Special Issue edited by Bernard Trumpower (guest editor, Dartmouth University).

Also, look for our regular feature, "Jeff's View", where Gottfried Schatz (President, Swiss Science and Technology Council, Bern) craftily blends his unique humor with an insightful look into issues concerning the scientific community.

With kind regards,

The *FEBS Letters* Editorial Office

Felix Wieland, Managing Editor  
Kara Bortone, Assistant Managing Editor  
Eva-Maria Emig, Assistant Editor  
Anne Mueller, Editorial Assistant



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EJB, March 2003

Dear Fellow Scientists

What is new about EJB since the start of 2003?

First, we are pleased to report the changes to our Editorial Board and Editorial Advisory Board. A new member of the Editorial Board has been appointed in the area of molecular cell biology, transcription factors and the control of gene expression; we welcome Andrew Sharrocks (University of Manchester, UK), a recent winner of the Colworth Medal of the (British) Biochemical Society. Our Editorial Advisory Board has been strengthened by the appointment of new members covering a wide range of topics: Karin Åkerfeldt (Haverford College, USA; structural biology, protein chemistry, physical biochemistry), Ralf Erdmann (Ruhr University Bochum, Germany; molecular cell biology, organelle biogenesis, lipids), Otto Holst (Research Center Borstel, Germany; glycobiology, lipids, membranes), Wolf Lehmann (German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ), Heidelberg, Germany; proteomics, protein phosphorylation, mass spectrometry), Christine Orengo (University College London, UK; bioinformatics, classification of protein structure, genome annotation), Stefan Stamm (University of Erlangen, Germany; molecular cell biology, alternative splicing, pre-mRNA processing), Margaret Sunde (University of Sydney, Australia; amyloid proteins, protein misfolding and disease) and Mathias Ziegler (Free University Berlin, Germany; ADP-ribosylation, signaling, molecular cell biology, nucleic acids). We gratefully acknowledge the excellent work done by Kenneth Clemetson (University of Bern, Switzerland), Lubbert van Golde (University of Utrecht, The Netherlands) and Gert Vriend (University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands), all of whom came to the end of their periods of service on the Editorial Advisory Board on 31 December 2002.

Second, for those of you who are interested in mathematical modelling, the website mentioned in the previous FEBS Newsletter (Newsletter 1/2003) is up and running. You will soon be able to access and try out the mathematical models associated with papers published in EJB, free of charge. Full details can be found in our Instructions to Authors (at <http://www.ejbiochem.com>) and at the rele-

vant website <http://jjj.biochem.sun.ac.za/ejb/>.

Alternatively you may contact the Editorial Office by email via [ejb@camfebs.co.uk](mailto:ejb@camfebs.co.uk). Authors wishing their model to be mounted on the mathematical modelling website should indicate this in the covering letter when submitting their manuscript; they should also submit an ASCII text file containing the relevant details of the model to the website at <http://jjj.biochem.sun.ac.za/ejb/>, citing the EJB reference number of their manuscript. The model will be converted to a replica that can be run only by the reviewers of the manuscript submitted to the Journal; if the manuscript is accepted for publication, the model will be subsequently made freely accessible online. We believe this new facility will be of great value to scientists working in this area.

We also draw your attention to the review articles published in the Journal in the past two months. These deal with 'telomere length and stability', 'calmodulin target recognition', and 'mass spectrometry and strategies in proteomics'. Remember, all review articles published in EJB can be read and downloaded free of charge on the Blackwell Science service *Synergy* (<http://blackwell-synergy.com/>) and on the *Highwire* platform (<http://www.ejbiochem.org/>) and (<http://highwire.stanford.edu/>). They will keep you abreast of recent developments and they make great teaching aids. More review articles are on their way; they include coverage of the ribosome, hypoxia and transcription factors, the multidrug exporter superfamily, the regulation of 2-oxo acid dehydrogenase complexes, surface polysaccharides involvement in establishing the rhizobium-legume symbiosis, 'antifreeze' proteins from polar fish, the progenitor of the mitochondrion and the alpha-oxidation of 3-methyl-substituted fatty acids. We would also like to alert you to forthcoming Priority Papers on the plasminogen activator inhibitor and insulin signalling, and a novel thioredoxin in a malaria parasite. Watch this space!

With our best wishes,

Richard Perham, Chairman of the Editorial Board  
 Louise Sanders, Editorial Office Manager  
 Vanessa Wilkinson, Deputy Editorial Office Manager  
 Jane Bartolozzi, Editorial Secretary  
 Laraine Kerr, Editorial Secretary  
 Ilana Wooster, Editorial Secretary



## INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL ON "MOLECULAR MECHANISMS IN HOMEOSTASIS AND DISEASE"

**Island of Spetses, Greece  
August 29 to September 8, 2003  
sponsored by FEBS and EMBO**



### Organizers:

Peter Herrlich (Jena), Herbert Jäckle (Göttingen), Horst Feldmann (München), Martin Blum (Stuttgart-Hohenheim), Peter Angel (Heidelberg), Statis Gonos (Athens).

### Scope:

The summer school will include lectures, discussions, tutorials and posters on the following topics:

- Sources of dysfunction of cellular and organismic processes
- Embryonic development and tissue remodelling
- Molecular mechanisms of disease (myeloid and bone diseases;
- Reperfusion syndrome
- Parasitic diseases
- Human retrovirus-induced diseases
- Neurodegenerative diseases
- Prion diseases
- Cancer including immunoevasion, metastatic mechanisms, early dissemination, drug resistance.

Among the lecturers will be: Adriano Aguzzi (Zürich), Piet Borst (Amsterdam), Gerhard Christofori (Basel), Hans Clevers (Utrecht), Robert Gallo (Baltimore), Susan Gasser (Genève), Christian Haass (München), Ernst Hafen (Zürich), Wolfram Hörz (München), Michael Karin (La Jolla), Hans-Gustav Klobeck (München), Hans-Georg Kräusslich (Heidelberg), Reinhard Lührmann (Göttingen), Christoph Niehrs (Heidelberg), Gert Riethmüller (München), Ueli Schibler (Genève), Kai Simons (Dresden), Axel Ullrich (München), Inder Verma (La Jolla), Erwin Wagner (Wien), Robert A Weinberg (Cambridge USA), Charles Weissmann (London), Zena Werb (San Francisco), and the organizers.

### Application procedure:

This summer school is intended for advanced predoctoral (PhD) students and postdoctoral scientists. Applications should be sent to:

**Peter Herrlich, M.D. Ph.D.,  
IMB Jena, POBox 100813,  
D-07708 Jena, Germany**

Applications should include CV, a brief summary of current interest, publications if available and two brief letters of recommendation. The applicants will be informed in the second half of May whether they can be accepted. A participation fee of 440 EURO will be charged to cover the costs for accommodation, breakfast and lunch. Participants will have to pay for their travel. A limited number of fellowships covering part of the costs will be available. Applicants should indicate whether they wish to compete for a fellowship.

**Application deadline: April 30, 2003.**

Further information is available at <http://biochemie.web.med.uni-muenchen.de/feldmann/Spetsai.html>.





## **HUMAN FRONTIER SCIENCE PROGRAM (HFSP) OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIVE GRANTS**

The Human Frontier Science Program has announced the call for applications for research grants. HFSP supports international collaborative projects in the life sciences with a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary collaborations involving scientists from biology with colleagues from other disciplines such as physics, chemistry, computer science, nanoscience, mathematics and engineering.

Two types of grants are available, one for Young Investigators and the other for scientists at any stage of their careers.

The next deadline for submitting letters of intent for the research grants is April 2nd 2003. Further information can be obtained at <http://www.hfsp.org>.

**Closing date: April 2nd 2003.**

## **CEINGE BIOTECNOLOGIE AVANZATE POST-GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS**

CEINGE Biotecnologie Avanzate, a consortium with University of Naples Federico II, committed to advanced research in medical biotechnology, has ten openings for post-graduate training fellowships:



- A) Junior level: 8 fellowships. Salary: Euro 17,878.00 gross per year, renewable for other two years.
- B) Expert level: 2 fellowship. Salary: Euro 24,920.00 per year, renewable for other two years.

Full details of the terms and conditions of these positions are posted on the CEINGE website <http://www.ceinge.unina.it>, or can be obtained from:

**CEINGE Biotecnologie Avanzate S.C.a.r.l.,  
Via S. Pansini 5, Ed. 19, 80131, Naples,  
Italy.  
Tel.: +39 081 746 3132; Fax +39 081 746 3650.**

**Application dead line: 15 March 2003**



**What:** **China- Europe Colloquium on Functional Genomics and Technology Transfer**  
(joint EFB, CNCBD, BioVision event)

**When:** Monday 7 April 2003

**Where:** Hilton, Lyon, France

For detailed information please see:

<http://www.efbinternational.org>  
or  
<http://www.biovision.org>

**What:** **FEBS Advanced Course 03-07:  
"New Developments in Membrane  
Biology: Rafts, protein sorting and  
signal transduction".**

**When:** June 28 - July 3, 2003

**Where:** Tbilisi, Georgia (Republic)

For detailed information please see:

[www.cble.chem.uu.nl/febs/](http://www.cble.chem.uu.nl/febs/)

**What:** **Workshop on Weak Protein-Protein  
Interactions**

**When:** July 9 - 13, 2003

**Where:** Sevilla, Spain

For detailed information please see:  
<http://transientprot.ibvf.csic.es/pag.htm>

**What:** **FEBS Advanced Course (03-24):  
Biology of Molecular Chaperones  
Mechanisms and Regulation of  
Chaperones**

**When:** August 30 - September 4, 2003

**Where:** Tomar, Portugal

For detailed information please see:  
<http://www.esf.org/euresco/03/lc03015>

**What:** **"International Meeting on Phloem  
Transport 2003".**

**When:** August 31 - September 5, 2003

**Where:** Bayreuth, Germany

For detailed information please see:

<http://www.phloem2003.de>

**What:** **28th European and 3rd International  
Peptide Symposium**

**When:** September 5 - 10, 2004

**Where:** Prague, Czech Republic

For detailed information please see:

<http://www.kenes.com/28eps>



**What:** **56th Harden Conference - Biological Electron and Proton Transfer**

For detailed information please see:

**When:** August 26-30, 2003

<http://www.biochemistry.org/meetings/>

**Where:** University of Plymouth, UK

**What:** **57th Harden Conference - Proteinase Structure and Function**

For detailed information please see:

**When:** 9-13 September 2003

<http://www.biochemistry.org/meetings/>

**Where:** Oriel College, Oxford, UK

**What:** **28th European and 3rd International Peptide Symposium**






For detailed information please see:

**When:** September 5 - 10, 2004

<http://www.kenes.com/28eps>

**Where:** Prague, Czech Republic

## About FEBS NewsLetter

-  FEBS NewsLetter is published every second Monday in every second month (starting January). All former issues of FEBS NewsLetter, are available at FEBS' website, <http://www.febs.org>.
-  Free e-subscription is offered at [http://www.febs.org/e-mail\\_registration.asp](http://www.febs.org/e-mail_registration.asp). Subscribers will receive a notification when a new issue is out, including the URL to the newsletter (PDF file). Members of FEBS automatically receives this notification.
-  Should you wish to announce a job or a course? Or something else? FEBS NewsLetter welcomes all types of announcements that applies to the stated objectives of the Federation (ref. FEBS Statutes and Guidelines, section 1). This service is offered free of charge to all members of FEBS. Contact person: Camilla Krogh Lauritzen.
-  Any comments or suggestions to the FEBS NewsLetter or the website? Feel free to send an e-mail to [newsletter@febs.org](mailto:newsletter@febs.org).
-  Deadline for all types of entries to the next issue of the FEBS NewsLetter is **May 2, 2003**.