



## 34th IFBLS World Congress 2021

Plans are well under way for the 34th IFBLS World Congress to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark 24-28 August 2021. We invite you to share details for this exciting Congress with your members via website, Facebook and Twitter. Deadline for early [registration](#) is 30 April 2021.

### ABSTRACTS

As new sessions with a focus on Covid-19 and the effect of the pandemic on the biomedical laboratory science profession have been added to the scientific program, abstracts with a focus on Covid-19 are being welcomed. Please download and use the [abstract template](#) located on the Congress website.

The organisers would like to thank all abstract submitters for their valuable contributions to the scientific program. Abstracts submitted and accepted in 2020 have been transferred to 2021. Submitters who would like to update their current abstract may do so online through the [submission link](#) using your abstract number. **Deadline for new submissions is 31 January 2021.**

### AWARDS

The IFBLS 2021 Awards programme is now open. Please visit the [IFBLS website](#) for more details and share with your members today! Deadline for applications is 1 May 2021.

### CONGRESS UPDATES

For continuing updates, please visit the Congress website regularly at [IFBLS2021.org](#), and by joining the Facebook group at [IFBLS 2021 - join the lab race](#).

## Newsletter Spotlight

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## Christmas Greeting



On behalf of the IFBLS Board of Directors I wish to extend our gratitude for all of the hard work and dedication you, your colleagues and professional association networks have shown this year in dealing with the Covid pandemic.

Together you have demonstrated the key nature of our work as biomedical laboratory scientists to deliver testing regimes across the world and share best practice for our patients, to demonstrate ingenuity, inventiveness and collaboration to develop vaccines and the prospect of a safer future.

Whatever our beliefs, Christmas is a time of celebration so let us celebrate all that our profession has achieved this last year, celebrate the opportunities that raising our profile have provided, and most of all celebrate that through our work lives have been saved.

Christmas is also a time of hope, hope for a better future and a world that is safer. Across the world, the biomedical laboratory community has the power to turn hope into reality by continuing to dedicate ourselves to delivering the highest standards of laboratory practice, and by ensuring policy makers understand the need for maintaining a qualified biomedical laboratory workforce.

My Christmas wish to you all is that you are able to take time to rest, to spend time with your loved ones, and time to enjoy peace and happiness.

Alan Wainwright  
IFBLS President

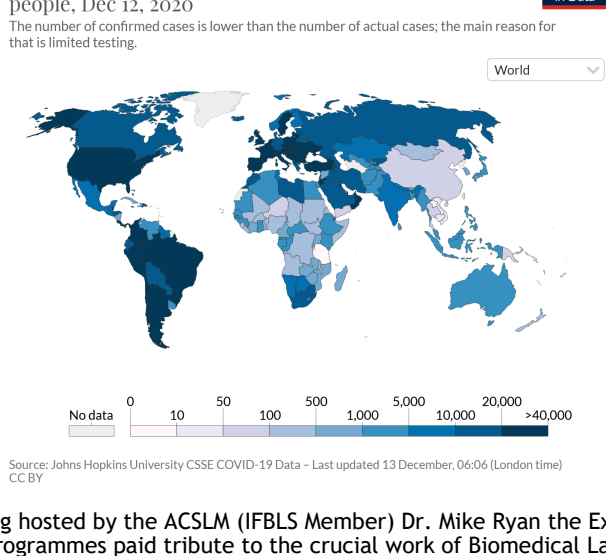
## Covid-19 Pandemic

In December 2019 most people had not heard of the Sars-cov-2 virus commonly known as Covid-19.

Since that time it has spread to become a global pandemic. As we approach the end of 2020 over 70 million people have been diagnosed with this virus and, sadly, over 1.5 million have died. Putting this in context it is estimated that 500 million people were infected with the Spanish Flu (H1N1 Influenza A) in 1918-20 with 50 million deaths.

Since the start of the year the genetic sequence of the virus has been elucidated and shared. PCR tests have been developed, verified and delivered. These have become the gold standard for diagnosis. Antibody and more recently antigen tests have been developed. Each of these testing modes has its role to play in identifying individual cases, clusters and have permitted testing in different locations. Over 1 billion tests for Covid-19 have been analysed in 2020 and as the year draws to a close the promise of a vaccine is reaching reality.

Biomedical Laboratory Scientists have played an enormous role in the development of validated testing programmes in their countries.



At a recent meeting hosted by the ACSLM (IFBLS Member) Dr. Mike Ryan the Executive Director of WHO Emergency Programmes paid tribute to the crucial work of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. He noted that while others get the attention the real science and innovation is being done in the laboratory. He further noted that our work is just starting as we will move from diagnosis to monitoring of the chronic conditions sequelae of this infection.

Biomedical Laboratory Scientists need to interact more with policy makers to ensure that the strengths and weaknesses of our testing arsenal is understood and that results are interpreted correctly. It has never been more important to have a bidirectional interface for information and communication between clinicians and Biomedical Laboratory Scientists.

Biomedical Laboratory Scientists must input into policy to drive healthcare innovation and development. We must demand of industry what we need to serve our patients. As testing modes become more distributed we need to incorporate giving advice to our competencies. We need to ensure that the tests in use are validated for the real world and not just for theoretical performance.

Dr. Ryan noted that this pandemic has highlighted global health inequalities. Laboratory Medicine has been the Cinderella of healthcare. Governments need to realise that our work is part of national defence and see the value of our service at a societal level.

Responding to this pandemic has taken a personal toll on each Biomedical Laboratory Scientist. It is important that we look after our physical and mental health and that of our colleagues.

The IFBLS will continue to work with, and contribute to, WHO policies and initiatives for the management of this pandemic. We are also available to work with each of our members at this difficult and challenging time. We applaud you for your response in this past year. We commit to sharing the learning.

## The WHO Academy COVID-19 Mobile Learning App

The current COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of health workers properly using their PPE to protect themselves and their patients.

In response, the WHO Academy has launched its first augmented reality course for health workers on the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE). This short course is available on the Academy's mobile learning app for all health workers globally.

The course can be accessed by clicking this link from your smartphone. You will first be guided to download the Academy's mobile app if you don't already have it.



For your convenience, we have prepared this media dissemination pack to help you and your colleagues spread the word about this innovative course and keep our health workers safe. It contains social media images for use on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and other channels, a poster that can be printed and displayed in health care settings to raise awareness of the course, background information and a variety of other materials.

Thank you for your help in getting the word out about this important learning tool.

WHO Academy Team

[More Details](#)

## IFBLS World Congress 2022 - Suwon City, South Korea

At the recent IFBLS General Assembly of Delegates (GAD) held virtually in September 2020, Chief Delegates in attendance voted unanimously to select Suwon City, South Korea as the site location for the GAD 2022.

The Korean Association of Medical Technologists (KAMT) submitted a successful bid to host the 35th IFBLS World Congress in 2022 which was approved by the IFBLS Board of Directors. The date for the Congress in 2022 is still to be determined pending a site visit at the proposed Congress venue.

IFBLS would like to thank KAMT for their ongoing support of IFBLS, and their commitment to hosting the 35th World Congress in 2022. It takes a great deal of time, effort and financial support to host a World Congress and we know that they will take on this challenge and prepare a superb event.

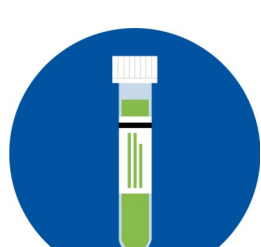


## International BLS Day - 15 April 2021

International BLS Day was established at the 1996 World Congress in Oslo, Norway and the purpose of the day is to promote and celebrate the key role of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists in diagnostic and preventive health care systems. BLS Day on 15 April 2021 will mark the 25th Anniversary of the day.

Throughout the years the themes have covered many different topics, all relevant to the scope and competencies of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists.

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic has influenced, and maybe changed, the world as we know it. As the virus spread, in many countries the public awareness of diagnostics, and Biomedical Laboratory Scientists came into the public eye.



In order to continue the momentum of increasing the awareness of and recognition of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists, but also towards other health professionals the theme for the International BLS Day in 2021 and 2022 will be:

**Testing Times - Biomedical Laboratory Scientists role in the Covid-19 pandemic**

Please mark your calendars for BLS Day 15 April 2021. Posters will be available for download on the IFBLS website in the new year.

[More Details](#)

## IFBLS Membership Fees for 2021



2021 membership renewal invoices were emailed to members in November.

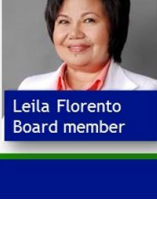
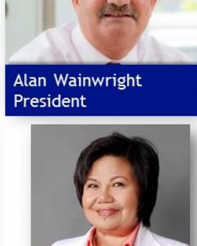
IFBLS is an independent non-governmental association of national societies, representing more than 203,000 biomedical laboratory scientists and technologists worldwide. Our mission ***"to increase the recognition and contributions of Biomedical Laboratory Science to improve global health"*** is at the foundation of our work.

We are grateful to our members for your ongoing support of IFBLS as we continue to promote the image of Biomedical Laboratory Science as the profession at the heart of public health!

To those members who have already submitted your fees, we thank you! **Membership fees are due 31 December 2020.**

If you require assistance with your membership contact the office at [communications@ifbls.org](mailto:communications@ifbls.org).

## IFBLS Board of Directors 2020-2022



Read more:

- [IFBLS Strategic Plan 2020-2024](#)
- [IFBLS Annual and President's Report 2019-2020](#)
- [Communications from the President](#)
- [IFBLS Board of Directors and Committees](#)
- [Britta Karlsson Advancement Program](#)
- [IFBLS Scientific Network of Experts](#)



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## THE GLOBAL VOICE OF BIOMEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTISTS

The International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (est. 1954) is the world's widest reaching international organization for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists, bringing the profession, the professionals and health priorities to the world stage.

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