

# International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science IFBLS

## ANNUAL AND PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020 - 2021



IFBLS Board of Directors  
[Communications@ifbls.org](mailto:Communications@ifbls.org)

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## Board of Directors

IFBLS is governed by a Board of Directors, comprising of the President, President-Elect and Past-President (Management Committee) and five Board Members, elected by IFBLS members at the biennial General Assembly of Delegates (GAD).

IFBLS Board of Directors 2020 - 2022 were elected at the virtual meeting of the General Assembly of Delegates in September 2020.

Alan Wainwright, United Kingdom  
Marie Culliton, Ireland  
Anne Lindgren, Sweden  
Bert Asbild, Denmark  
Leila Florento, Philippines  
Hironori Katayama, Japan  
Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson, Sweden  
Cathy Otto, USA

President  
President-Elect  
Past-President  
Board Member  
Board Member  
Board member  
Board Member  
Board Member

## IFBLS Board of Directors 2020-2022



Alan Wainwright  
President



Marie Culliton-  
President-Elect



Anne Lindgren  
Past-President



Bert Asbild  
Board member



Leila Florento  
Board member



Hironori Katayama  
Board member



Gabriella  
Lillsunde Larsson  
Board member



Cathy Otto  
Board member

## Executive Administrator

Ms. Janie Hames is the Executive Administrator for IFBLS and provides excellent support to the Management Committee, Board members and IFBLS Chief Delegates and the member associations. Due to the pandemic face to face meetings by the Board and Management Committee have not been possible. Janie has adapted to the changing situation and has supported the work of IFBLS, in all its facets using the virtual environment, culminating in long distance management of the virtual GAD & CD Meetings in September 2020, and the Alternate GAD & CD Meetings to be held virtually during Congress 2021 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The IFBLS office organization, including bookkeeping, banking and financial reporting has been further developed by Janie, as well as the office use of digital communication platform Zoom. The organizational development that Janie has implemented and supported as well as the competencies, administrative and social, contributes to the smooth and efficient operation of the organisation. The Management Committee are particularly appreciative of Janie's work.

IFBLS wishes to extend our gratitude to CSMLS for hosting the office and for including Janie.



## ***IFBLS Mission Statement***

*To increase recognition and contributions  
of Biomedical Laboratory Science to  
improve global health.*

## **IFBLS Objectives**

- To support, advance and promote good scientific laboratory practice through the development and adherence to high quality standards in diverse environments throughout the world;
- To support and promote education and advancement of science and technology in the professional development of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists;
- To support, advance and promote ethical and professional values in Biomedical Laboratory Science;
- To facilitate the exchange of ideas through development of partnerships within the global healthcare community.

IFBLS Mission Statement and Objectives were revised and approved by the Board of Directors in March 2019.

IFBLS Board of Directors are guided by the IFBLS By-Laws and Procedure Manual. As a registered non-profit organization in Canada, IFBLS is also mandated by *Canada's Not-for-Profit Corporation Act (CNCA)* to maintain our legal status.

In 2018, the Strategic Plan, outlining main goals and tasks was set up for 2018 - 2022. The plan was followed up and revised in the spring of 2020 (see Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024 on website for details).

The Strategic Plan is linked closely with the Mission and Objectives. Tasks are set up for each goal in the plan.

In addition to the tasks mentioned in the Strategic Plan, IFBLS also follow up tasks outlined in our By-laws and as required by our members.

## Topic

- Promote the profession
- IFBLS World Congress
- WHO Collaboration
- Promote professional standards
- Education and professional development

## Goal

- IFBLS is the global voice of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists
- The IFBLS Congress is prestigious; to host, to contribute and to attend
- IFBLS influence global health policies
- IFBLS provides support to the Biomedical Laboratory Scientist community
- IFBLS advances Biomedical Laboratory Science professionals

The Management Committee is comprised of the three officers of the Corporation. The Management Committee makes day-to-day decisions regarding the management and administration of IFBLS.

The Management Committee is led by the President, Alan Wainwright. Members are President-Elect Marie Culliton and Past-President Anne Lindgren.

## Report

The Management Committee conducts most of the tasks by regular e-mail communication and Zoom digital meetings, on a weekly basis to keep up with day-to-day issues and other business.

Key areas since September 2020 have been preparing for International BLS Day (15 April), establishing the Editorial Board for the IJBLS, developing the collaborative plan with the WHO for 2022-2024 to renew the status of IFBLS as a Non-State Actor in official relations, and supporting dbio in preparation for the World Congress 2021 in Copenhagen.

Members of IFBLS are invited to submit a Chief Delegates Report annually. Reports are thoroughly analyzed in order for their contributions to inform the future work of IFBLS. Many of these provide input for the discussions and workshops held during CD meetings and Open Forums.

The President, Alan Wainwright, sent a video greeting to Vårdförbundet (The Swedish Association of Health Professionals) and, together with a letter of greetings, participated in the Plenary Session of the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention held in November 2020 by the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (PAMET).

The Membership Committee is led by Past-President Anne Lindgren, with Board Members Bert Asbild and Hironori Katayama.

## Report

### **New member applications for approval**

Following Board decision in July 2021, the Medical Laboratory Technologists Association of Pakistan (MLTAP) has been approved as a provisional member of IFBLS. We are pleased to welcome MLTAP to IFBLS.

### **Membership renewals 2021**

As of 1 July, 2021 IFBLS has 33 paid member associations, in 32 countries, representing more than 200,000 members worldwide. Please refer to the website for a list of current members.

### **Implementation of suspension**

Members who fail to pay their membership fee are placed under suspension until the time they reinstate their membership. Suspension means they lose their rights to nominations, voting, apply for awards, to host meetings, to have members in the Scientific Network of Experts, or claim a reduced IFBLS member congress fee.

### **Recruitment of new members**

Our Executive Administrator has had inquiries from interested associations. These are followed up with membership applications forms and more information. At this time there are no membership applications pending.

Additionally, IFBLS has had many inquiries from individuals inquiring about student membership, or volunteer opportunities, or IFBLS award information. These inquiries are generally referred back to their national association for more information on their student membership or volunteer opportunities.

As we know the personal touch with colleagues from other countries appears to be the best way to increase membership, we encourage all IFBLS members to use the opportunity to profile IFBLS membership when meeting with non-member associations who are eligible for membership

Respectfully submitted,  
Anne Lindgren  
Chair, Membership Committee

The Scientific Committee is led by Board Member, Cathy Otto, with Board Members Leila Florento and Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson.

## Report

### **Advisory Group in Microbiology:**

Group is working on identifying topics for lectures and workshops for the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program as well as an additional series of articles for the journal.

### **Advisory Group in Laboratory Management:**

Group has identified one topic for a virtual presentation: ISO standards.

### **Advisory Group in Hematology:**

Group has written articles for the second issue of IJBLS for 2021. They are considering consistently publishing articles in the journal.

### **Position Papers and Topics for Virtual Presentations:**

Members of the Scientific Network of Experts participated in a survey to identify topics for virtual continuing professional education, topics for future articles in the International Journal of Biomedical Laboratory Science and ideas for position papers.

At least one idea for a future position paper was identified.

### **IJBLS Development:**

The first issue for 2021 under IFBLS was published in April. This first issue included “Laboratory Spotlight’ a Focus on Biomedical Laboratory Science Practice in the Philippines.

The second issue for 2021 will be a themed issue related to Hematology. The Laboratory Spotlight will feature Biomedical Laboratory Practice in Nigeria.

We have identified 6 individuals to serve as members of the IJBLS Editorial Advisory Board.

### **Scientific Network of Experts:**

We accepted 15 new members to the Scientific Network of Experts. The following activities are in process at this time:

- Identifying a schedule of 4 topics for virtual continuing professional education to be held in October 2021, January 2022, April 2022 and July 2022

### **Other work in progress:**

- Ideas for the next position paper will be shared with the Chief Delegates at the meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark in August 2021

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Otto  
Chair, Scientific Committee

The Development Committee is led by Board Member Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson, with President-Elect Marie Culliton and Board Member Bert Asbild

## Report

### **Developing an International Directory of Biomedical Laboratory Science Educations database (IDBLSE)**

Marie Nora Roald, Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson and Janie Hames have started this work and identified relevant documents to be included in a potential database. It is suggested to the BOD that we should use a webpage with links to the IFBLS webpage and with similar layout. Dionysis Vourtsis will be asked to assist as webmaster. We will ask member countries, and other contacts, for updates on previous documents to make sure we have the latest and correct version. We are also exploring other options besides IFBLS webpage (WIKI for example) where updates can be done by all. Next meeting will be held after the summer.

### **Communication between members-CD reports**

Chief Delgates Reports from 2020 have been collected from member countries. They have been categorized in 4 groups; Professional Identity/Promoting the Profession, Collaboration between Members, Professional Development, and Issues related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The reports have been discussed in the BOD and some activities have been prioritized such as the review of the Core Competencies and Core Curriculum Guidelines. Activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic has also been identified such as planning for a virtual webinar, linking to useful sites on IFBLS website and including COVID-19 at the upcoming IFBLS2021 Congress.

## **Review of the Core Competencies and Core Curriculum Guidelines**

There were many comments in the CD Reports relating to competence standards. The existing document on Core Competencies and Core Curriculum Guidelines is up for review in the coming period and this work will be initiated by the Development Committee.

## **Looking at the role of students within the context of the World Congress**

The Development Committee has continued to look to ways students can be engaged in the upcoming IFBLS Congress in Copenhagen. Bert has been working with the host association student committee to ensure a structure/process for the IFBLS Congress Student Forum. At the time of writing the report, few students are registered, due to the pandemic and the program might have to be adjusted.

## **Other work in progress:**

- IDBLSE: continue the set up
- Digital webinars for the Britta Karlsson Advancement Programme. The Scientific Committee will continue to meet and discuss more webinars based on the survey that was sent to the Scientific Network of Experts.
- Review Core Competencies - BOD together, after the Congress in Copenhagen.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gabriella Lillsunde Larsson  
Chair, Development Committee

The Awards Committee is led by Leila Florento, with Board Members Cathy Otto and Hironori Katayama.

## Report

The Awards List was reviewed by the Committee and approved by the IFBLS Board for the Congress2021 in Copenhagen, Denmark on August 24-28, 2021.

### Confirmed List of Awards for 2021 Congress:

- 1. ASCLS Good Poster Award** - ASCLS will be sponsoring 3 Good Poster Awards. Each of the winners will be able to choose from the on demand educational programs (all recorded) that took place this year EMC2 (Emerging Manager Conference) 2021, CLEC (Clinical Laboratory Educators Conference) 2021, and JAM (Joint Annual Meeting) 2021
- 2. KAMT Young Scientist Award** - The prize consists of \$2,000 USD. One (1) Young Scientist winner will receive \$1,000 USD with a medal, and two (2) \$500 USD each for those who scientifically contributes to the successful congress with his/her outstanding presentation.

### Next steps:

Plan with Congress 2021 Scientific Committee for announcements

- Judging mechanics for oral and poster presentation

Travel Awards and other Awards postponed to the next Congress in 2022:

1. **Nordic Award** -15,000 Swedish Crown (maybe given to 2 with 15,000 SEK each)
2. **JAMT Award** -200,000 JPY, maybe given up to 2 (100,000 JPY each)
3. **JSHT Award** - The award consists of \$300 USD including the fee of an article for magazine of JSHT.
4. **Elisabeth Pletscher Award** - IFBLS Board of Directors to select recipient and award with plaque and certificate
5. **Past President's Award** - IFBLS (3) Past Presidents to select recipient and award with plaque (work of art) and certificate
6. **IFBLS Student Award** - prize consists of \$1,500 USD
7. **TMER Award** - confirmed with JAMT for 2022 Program

Respectfully submitted,  
Leila Florento  
Chair, Awards Committee

IFBLS is a Non-State Actor (NSA) in official relations with WHO. We fully support the ongoing work of WHO in this area and the huge challenges that are being faced. In our own areas of Biomedical Laboratory Science, the impact on clinical service laboratories and staff have been monumental and we have highlighted the importance of having sufficient numbers of trained, qualified staff to carry out Covid-19 testing to appropriate standards that ensure accuracy of the results.



We have a Designated Technical Officer and to maintain our status we have a three year workplan that includes provision of: an article in HR Journal about medical laboratory staffing; input for revision of WHO Guidelines related to laboratory medicine; support for WHO Call for experts; input to WHO documents; side events at the World Health Assembly.

Attendance at WHO meetings is key and whilst this has not been possible in person, we have accessed the special sessions of the Executive Board (November 2020 and February 2021), The launch of the 3rd Essential in vitro diagnostic list in January 2021, the World Health Assembly (May 2021) and sessions specific to developing relations with Non-State Actors. We very much appreciate the opportunities to engage with these activities, recognizing there are technical challenges and differences in time zones that must be overcome.

## Triennial Review and Workplan

In our Triennial Review with WHO the plan for collaboration between WHO and IFBLS aims at supporting WHO's efforts with Member States towards achieving the WHO Strategic Priorities as set in its Thirteen General Programme of Work (GPW13), with special attention on issues related to laboratory medicine. In particular, this plan for collaboration will support WHO's work in the following areas:

- Provision of technical inputs to inform WHO's continuous review of the Essential in vitro diagnostics list (EDL);
- Improved information to support WHO's efforts towards continued education and development of the clinical laboratory workforce;
- Support the dissemination of best practice in line with WHO policies and guidance documents in the international medical laboratory community;
- Provision of technical inputs to inform the development of WHO policies and guidance documents, as appropriate, pertaining to pathology and laboratory medicine.

The annual membership fees and biennial World Congress fee fund IFBLS's activities. The financial situation is stable, but even though restrictions for traveling due to the pandemic during 2020 and 2021 have reduced expenditures, increasing costs are anticipated for coming years. The Board of Directors will continue to monitor this.

A proposal to gradually increase the membership fees by small amounts biennially remains under consideration but will not be put forward for voting until 2022.

## **Britta Karlsson Legacy**

In 2017, IFBLS received a donation from the estate of Britta Karlsson, a former IFBLS member. Ms. Karlsson was a long-time supporter of IFBLS, education and internationalization for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. The donation has been invested as the Britta Karlsson Legacy.

### **Britta Karlsson Advancement Program**

The annual profit from the Britta Karlsson Legacy will finance the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program.

The program is aimed for IFBLS member associations, primarily from Low- and Middle-Income Economy Countries (LMICs), to sponsor an international lecturer to travel and share their knowledge in a local workshop, or lead a similar event such as an online webinar.

The purpose is to promote the education and professional advancement of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists (BLS), and to provide updated information for BLS in specialized fields (e.g. clinical chemistry, clinical microbiology, clinical hematology, clinical immunology, etc.).

## BLS Day 2021 - 2022

International BLS Day on the 15 April each year provides an opportunity for all Biomedical Laboratory Scientists across the globe to contribute to the mission and objectives of IFBLS.

The topic for BLS Day 2021 and 2022 is ***Testing Times: Biomedical Laboratory Scientists Role in the COVID-19 Pandemic.***



On behalf of IFBLS members around the world celebrating BLS Day 2021 President Alan Wainwright posted a video greeting to all Biomedical Laboratory Scientists on the IFBLS website, and we were honoured to receive greetings from Dr. Michael Ryan, Executive Director WHO Health Emergencies Programme.

On 15 April, President Alan Wainwright was invited by EPBS President Fernando Mendes to address students through digital link at the BLS Day celebration at the Coimbra Health School in Portugal.

## Scientific Network of Experts

The Scientific Network of Experts was set up in 2018, and approximately 45 experts are currently registered in the Network, covering a wide variety of specialties from 9 different countries and member associations.

The Network will be used for a variety of tasks, primarily providing input to IFBLS work related to the WHO, IJBLS and providing experts for the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program.

## IJBLS

The International Journal of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IJBLS) was launched 2010 and had been hosted by Taiwan Society of Laboratory Medicine (TSLM) for its first 10 years. Professor Chuan-Liang Kao was the first Editor-in-Chief of the journal.

In late 2019 the transfer of the journal from TSLM to IFBLS was initiated by TSLM. This has entailed communication, planning and setting up a new digital platform for IJBLS. The new Editor-in-Chief is Dr. Patricia Tille, together with IFBLS Management Committee, set up the Editorial Board, identifying peer reviewers and further developing article categories, submission, publication as well as working to recruit more articles for the journal. Marie Nora Roald, former IFBLS President, has been appointed Technical Editor.

IFBLS is looking forward to continuous scientific contributions from Biomedical Laboratory Scientists of the world.

## E-learning

IFBLS e-Learning modules are produced for IFBLS by the Japanese Association of Medical Technologists (JAMT). Two new topics were presented in 2018: Risk Management and Infection Control.

All e-Learning modules can be accessed from our website [www.ifbls.org](http://www.ifbls.org).

## Website

The IFBLS website is updated regularly in order to provide relevant information and news, supported by a newsletter to member associations four times per year.

## Social Media

The IFBLS Facebook page keeps increasing its number of followers, being the communication channel that reaches the largest number of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists. The Facebook page is IFBLS's platform for interactions of both formal and informal aspects, sharing information but also creating interest in IFBLS and the profession we represent, as well as inspiration to become involved in the associations, globally or nationally.

## Newsletter

The web page and the regular member emails are supported by a newsletter to member associations four times per year. This is short information on news and upcoming events in a format that can be shared.

The IFBLS World Congress is the biennial event where Biomedical Laboratory Scientists worldwide meet, present our scientific work and learn more about Biomedical Laboratory Science globally. This is an opportunity to find out about our cultural differences and professional contexts and realize that our similarities are stronger than differences

The World Congresses are organized by IFBLS member associations. This contributes to the variations between the congresses, which are also part of the charm. All input from congress participants is taken to heart, documented and discussed by the Board of Directors. Important issues and aspects are forwarded to the organizer of the upcoming congress, in order to assure continuous improvements. The Congress Guidelines will be revised if experiences from the Congress demonstrate a need to make clarifications.

Bids for future congresses are welcomed at any time. It takes member association support for the congresses to continue being the global meeting point for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists where scientific work is shared, networking done and inspiration for the future is generated.

## IFBLS World Congress 2022

The Korean Association of Medical Technologists (KAMT) will host the IFBLS 35<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Suwon City, South Korea October 5-9, 2022.

## IFBLS World Congress 2024

Bids for the 2024 World Congress will be welcomed for review by the Board of Directors. A proposal will be put forward for voting at the next GAD in October 2022.

IFBLS collaborates with numerous organizations for mutual benefits.



World Health  
Organization

**World Health Organization (WHO).** The World Health Organization (WHO) is the global guardian of public health. The goal at the World Health Organization (WHO) is to build a better, healthier future for people all over the world. Working through offices in more than 150 countries, WHO Secretariat staff work side by side with governments and other partners to ensure the highest attainable level of health for all people. IFBLS is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in official relations with the WHO.



**Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI).** IFBLS has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CLSI for many years. This agreement is used to build collaborative endeavors based on mutual interests. The main goal is to use each other's strengths to further promote the development and dissemination of globally applicable consensus standards and guidelines to further education of Biomedical Science and healthcare professionals.

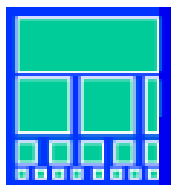


EPBS

**European Association for Professions in Biomedical Science (EPBS).** IFBLS has had a MOU with EPBS since 2012. We recognize that IFBLS has a global focus, while EPBS has a European focus. Both organizations prepare various policy documents; this is an area we will work together, when appropriate. Both organizations promote each other.



**International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA).** IFBLS has had a MOU with IFBA since 2014. Each organization will promote the activities of the other when appropriate. Policy documents can be shared, when applicable. At conferences, we could utilize the expertise from each organization for educational purposes. We may collaborate on projects of mutual interest.



## **International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).**

The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) is an international classification for which the International Labour Organization (ILO) is responsible. ISCO is a tool for organizing jobs into a clearly defined set of groups according to the tasks and duties undertaken in the job. IFBLS has established a task force with the aim to achieve correct classification for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists, in ISCO Group 2 professionals.



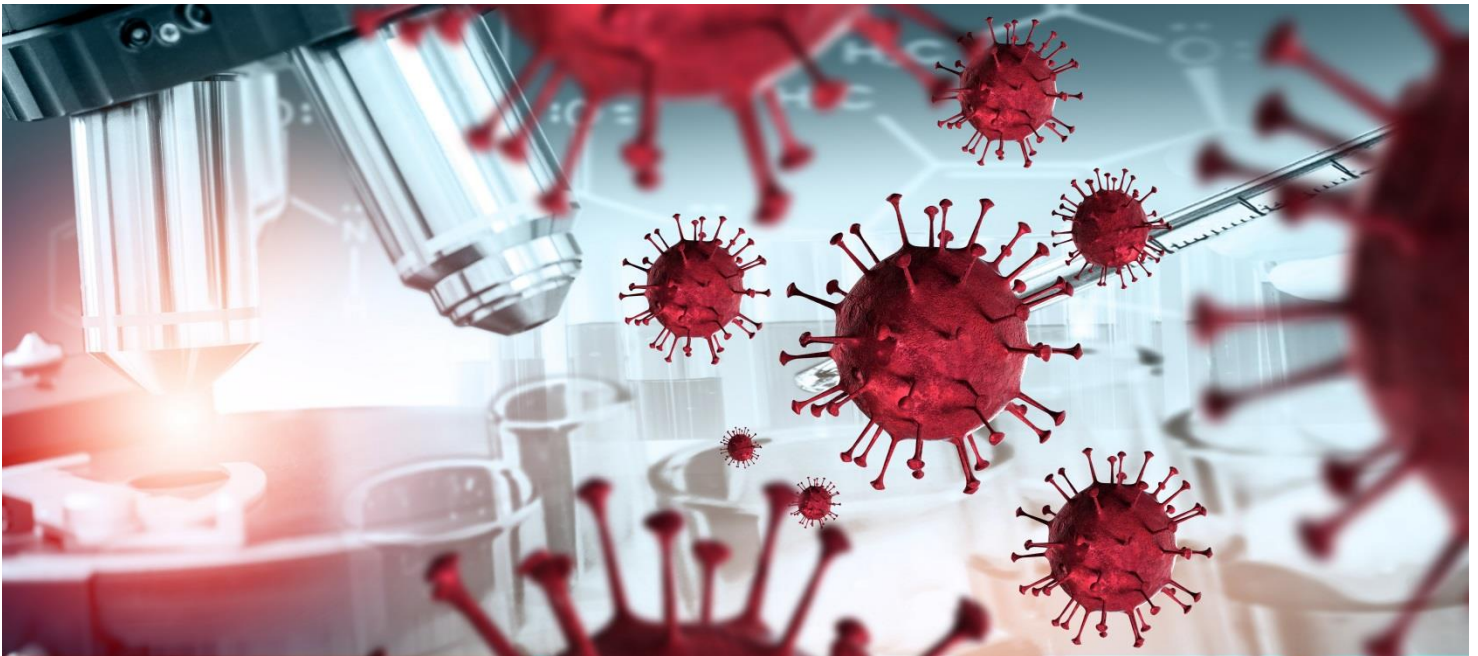
## **International Organization for Standardization (ISO).**

ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 162 national standards bodies. Through its members, ISO brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges. IFBLS is a Category A liaison to ISO/TC 212 - Clinical laboratory testing and in vitro diagnostic test systems.

## IFBLS wishes to extend our gratitude to

- Danske Bioanalytikere (dbio), for hosting the IFBLS 34<sup>th</sup> World Congress in 2021 instead of 2020 as planned.
- Korean Association of Medical Technologists (KAMT) for agreeing to host the IFBLS 35<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Suwon City, South Korea.
- All IFBLS member associations and Chief Delegates for your trust and support.

Respectfully submitted,  
Alan Wainwright  
IFBLS President 2021 - 2022



The International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS) is an independent non-governmental association of national societies in 32 countries, representing more than 200,000 Biomedical Laboratory Scientists worldwide.