EFB Environmental Biotechnology Division

Meeting of the Board held online (ZOOM) on Thursday, 9h January 2025 at 17:00 CET.
Present: JSG (Chair), JC, DR, JP, RM, SV.

1. Apologies for absence and welcome.
JSG welcomed all present. The Board was informed that apologies for absence were received from MH.

2. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not covered below.
No other matters were raised for discussion.

3. Next EFB-EB regular meeting, Aveiro, Spring 2025.
JP and SV informed the Board that there are no major updates concerning the budget at this stage. There are only two registrations so far, from one invited speaker and one staff member. It was remarked that invited speakers must register to the meeting, yet they will not be charged the registration fee. Selections concerning the menus and composition of coffee breaks will be agreed with the Central Office by JP and SV, who will then manage the internal procedures at the University of Aveiro.
The distribution of the confirmed keynote speakers through the programme was confirmed by the Board in principle, with adjustments being due if invited speakers from DG ENV and/or ACIB are confirmed. RM updated the Board concerning the ACIB session. The participation is confirmed, with major fields for talks being already defined. The internal invitations to ACIB members have already been circulated and the final configuration of the session will be confirmed soon.
Action: Board members that have direct contact with invited speakers will contact them asking for their registration in the meeting. Instructions will be circulated in short after confirmation with the Central Office.
Action: RM will manage the ACIB session assembly and will articulate with JP and SV its insertion in the programme.
So far sponsorship from Elsevier and ACIB (package to be defined after understanding the extent of participation) was securing. Some contacts have been made by different Board members and an enhanced effort will be made from now onwards to promote this income. Sponsorship packages are available in the conference website, yet the Central Office is open to negotiation if necessary.
The need to disseminate the meeting among personal contacts was reinforced, as an efficient way to raise registrations. The Central Office is open to negotiate group discounts (four or more people) and other benefits for registrants on request following our contacts.
Action: JP and SV will contact the Central Office to meet and discuss details on the conference organization, including the communication with invited speakers, updates in the webpage and the circulation of template emails for the dissemination of the conference.

4. Online meeting "Biotechnology in extreme environments".
The Board was informed that difficulties have been felt to find world-class invited speakers for two of the sessions of the meeting, namely Biotechnology in Extreme Environments; Extreme Environment of Industrial Fermenters. Concerning the first, it has not been easy to find experts that explore extreme environment but dedicated to biotechnology; regarding the second, confidentiality issues have been preventing acceptance of invitations already made.
Action: Board members will send to JC suggestions of possible speakers to fulfil the identified needs.

5. Board composition.
The Board discussed the inactivity of some members that may no longer be available to collaborate with the Division. In this context, a last contact will be made with these members to understand their willingness to continue collaborating with the Division.

Considering that JC mandate as the EFB President terminated, he agreed to assume the position of Co-Chair of the EB Division Board. The Board unanimously supported the decision provided the strong JC's engagement with and outstanding contributions to the Division activities.

A note was made on the need to elaborate succession plans within the Division.

Action: JP, JSG and JC will contact inactive Board members to understand their availability to continue collaborating with the Division.

Action: JSG will ask MWK to coordinate the necessary changes in the Division website concerning the new position assumed by JC.

6. Any other business.

No other matters were raised for discussion.

7. Scheduling of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for the 13th of February 2025, by 17:00 CET.

Action: JP will notify the Board of the next meeting schedule in the upcoming days, then send a follow-up with meeting connection details plus the Agenda closer to the date.

JP. 09 January 2025