

# SSIEM

39<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium  
Prague, Czech Republic  
4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> September 2001

**Local Organizing Committee**

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# Final report

As of March 19, 2002

# Scientific Program

## *Main topic*

The main topic of the symposium was “Growing older”. Although this theme was rather difficult for the Council and the local organizers due to the lack of known speakers, it turned out to be a very good choice. The feedback from participants and invited speakers from outside fields was quite positive, both the molecular and clinical consequences of aging, and mechanisms of oxidative stress in IEMs merit further attention of our community.

## *Invited speakers*

The uncertainty in selecting best speakers is also reflected in the late start of inviting speakers for the Symposium; the first round of speaker selection was done during the Annual Symposium in Cambridge 2000, subsequently the discussion continued in the Council in December 2000. The first letters to the speakers were sent by VK in January 2001, and several rounds of negotiations took place. Finally, 15 invited speakers agreed to participate at the meeting (Europe 10x, USA+Canada 4x, Japan 1x). In addition, Prof. Galjaard from Rotterdam was invited to present the Komrower Lecture. There was a negative feedback from the Dutch society (communicated by C. Jakobs) that women were not represented among the invited speakers and chairpersons. The absence of women was a random phenomenon as speakers were selected based on their scientific qualities and on the recommendation of specialists outside of our field; sex of the potential speaker was not considered as a selection criterion.

## *Abstract submissions*

About 90% of abstracts were received by email. The deadline was April 30; approx. 40% arrived by April 27, 47% of abstracts arrived on the last day. A total of 342 submissions including multiple entries were received, after excluding duplicates or multiple copies 308 abstracts were available for further evaluation. Duplicate entries represented a major problem; in addition, submissions from two authors were mishandled by the abstract accepting machinery (reason unknown): Jaak Jaeken's and Steve Kormans's abstracts were not evaluated in due course although they have been received and acknowledged (symbolic reduction of fee was offered to these two participants)

## *Abstract evaluation*

Meeting of judges took place in Amsterdam May 14, 2001: the judges accepted 50 abstracts for oral presentation, 241 for poster, 14 as abstract only, and rejected 3 abstracts; all communicating authors were informed by an email/fax and also by regular mail on May 17/18, 2001.

## *Free communications*

Only two sessions for free communications were organised: 2 oral presentations were given on mechanisms, and 5 on novel diseases.

### ***Parallel sessions***

Parallel workshops in the format 3x8 and 3x4 were organised on Thursday. The grouping of topics by conventional areas of the IEM field was done by the judges during their meeting in Amsterdam. The feedback from participants was rather positive and this format of presentations seems to be well accepted.

### ***Posters***

The grouping of topics by conventional areas of the IEM field was done by judges during their meeting in Amsterdam. A total of 241 posters were presented. Unfortunately the space did not allow for reasonable poster walks. Only attended poster sessions were therefore organised. Space was reserved for about 5 poster presentations for dieticians.

### ***Satellite meetings***

Several satellite meetings took place adjacent to the main Symposium: ERNDIM Trust and Executive Board meeting, Scientific Advisory Board of ERNDIM meeting, meeting of ERNDIM DPT Centres, SSIEM Council meeting, dieticians meeting, X-ALD meeting, company sponsored lunch workshops of Genzyme and Orphan Europe.

## **Attendance**

### ***Categories of attendance:***

The categories were as follows: SSIEM members, SSIEM non-members, students, accompanying persons, and local attendees registering for scientific program only

### ***Attendance by categories (includes all persons who registered with the Guarant office)***

<u>SSIEM members</u>	<u>315</u>
Early	251
Late	59
On-site	3
Single day	2
<u>SSIEM non-members</u>	<u>253</u>
Early	165
Late	72
On-site	6
Single day	10
<u>Students</u>	<u>44</u>
Early	34
Late	9
On-site	1
<u>Local attendees</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Accompanying persons</u>	<u>69</u>
Early	56
Late	13

Free registration (major sponsors and local organisers)      22

From the above number of 712 registered persons 23 participants did not arrive. Therefore, 620 scientific and 69 social participants attended physically, in addition there were 39 exhibitors, who did not participate in the scientific and social program.

*Attendance by countries for scientific attendees (total of 620 scientific attendees)*

<b>Europe</b> 477	Austria	9
	Belgium	19
	Croatia	5
	Cyprus	1
	Czech Republic	17
	Denmark	25
	Finland	8
	France	28
	Germany	43
	Greece	4
	Hungary	6
	Ireland	13
	Italy	35
	Latvia	2
	Lithuania	1
	Norway	11
	Poland	19
	Portugal	12
	Romania	1
	Russia	1
	Slovakia	6
	Slovenia	1
	Spain	35
	Sweden	15
Switzerland	9	
The Netherlands	56	
Turkey	3	
U.K.	92	
<b>Asia</b> 28	Hongkong	1
	China	2
	Iran	1
	Israel	9
	Japan	8
	Korea	2
	Kuwait	1
	Malaysia	1
	Oman	1
	Thailand	1
	U.A.E.	1
	<b>North America</b> 56	Canada
USA		53
<b>South America</b> 17	Argentina	3
	Brazil	13
	Colombia	1
<b>Australia</b> 8		
	Australia	6

	New Zealand	2
<b>Africa</b>		
<b>1</b>	Morocco	1
<b>Country not given</b>		
<b>33</b>	-	33

### ***Fees***

The prices for fees are given in the enclosure (Second Announcement), early, late, on-site and single/double day options were available.

### ***Sale of extras***

We offered a sale of additional tickets for social program and for on-site catering; this extra sale yielded a total income of 2,409 EUR.

## **Social Program**

### ***Accommodation***

Accommodation was organised by the PCO, complaints were received about hotel Business, otherwise there was no other negative feedback.

### ***Catering***

On-site catering was satisfactory, coffee breaks included snacks, 2 lunches were provided as lunch bags, the last lunch on the departure day was a warm buffet. The feedback about food was mostly positive.

### ***Evening social programs***

Welcome party took place in the Congress Venue, medieval evening was organised in Drevdice fortress, and the Symposium Dinner took place on the Prague Castle. The two evenings were very well accepted. The Prague Castle was also well accepted by participants; however, the local organisers and the PCO were disappointed by the catering services, which were below the promised standard. After the Symposium we complained and negotiated with the catering company, the final invoice was reduced by 70,000 CZK.

### ***Football match***

Cancelled due to a small number of participants.

### ***Logistics***

The symposium was organised by help of a PCO, the company Guarant, Ltd was a good choice. The only serious problems were encountered with the registration (see below), otherwise the local organisers and the Council were satisfied with the efficiency and conduct of the PCO and its representatives. Special thanks were expressed to Ms. Martina Souckova, who headed the Guarant team, for efficiency and professionalism.

### ***Registration***

About 15 participants complained about lacking and/or slow feedback from the registration office. The problem occurred mostly on the site of PCO: the team working for our conference was concurrently organising another symposium in May, the registration office did not send an email notifying about the acceptance of the registration form, there was not self-reporting mechanism for the web registrations. Another cause of delay was the long time for clearing checks, which was outside of our control.

### ***Web site***

The website was maintained from Prague, the feedback about its organisation and content was mostly positive. Total number of visitors by November 28, 2001 was 5,036.

### ***Registration desk***

No major complaints were received, the registration desk seemed to perform well.

### ***Congress Venue, lecture hall and poster section***

Although the building itself does not belong to architectural treasures of Prague, the technical equipment of the main lecture hall and of the adjacent space was well suited for the purpose of the Symposium.

### ***Projection***

Except of the Wednesday afternoon session, when the non-English speaking technician was left alone without the company of our hostesses, no substantial problems were reported. The speaker's room seemed to perform well.

### ***Exhibition***

Unexpectedly high attendance of sponsors and exhibitors was achieved, the final contribution from sponsors and exhibitors was double of what has been expected and budgeted. Three categories of participation for commercial subjects were proposed: General Sponsor, Principal Sponsor and Exhibitor. The English terminology for the different categories of sponsors was not good, however this error was recognised too late to efficiently change it. The General Sponsors included: Perkin Elmer, Milupa, SHS, Genzyme, Swedish Orphan, these 5 subjects contributed 59% of sponsorship fees. The Principal Sponsors were: Micromass, Orphan Europe, TKT, Biochrom, JEOL; they contributed 24% of sponsorship fees. The remaining 8 exhibitors contributed 17% of fees: Metax, Vuitaflo, Taranis, BSD, Applied Biosystems, Caudex Medical, Springer, AntiCancer. There was some negative feedback from the exhibitors: a/ low attendance of participants in the exhibition area, b/ several exhibitors complained that they were not treated as equal participants of the symposium and that they have not been offered any complimentary services such as lunch bag. The organisers were unaware of the standard offered in the previous meetings (although Dr.Fowler provided a lot of information on relations with sponsors, the situation in Cambridge was rather specific and could not have been directly applied for the Prague congress). It seems that consistent policy towards sponsors and exhibitors (set by the Council) might standardise and improve the relation of the Society with the commercial subjects.

### ***Correspondence***

Correspondence took considerable time of the Council and of the local organisers. The main communication means were emails and phones. Until 2000, 270 emails were sent/received. In 2001 the number of all sent and received emails reached the total of 1594 (Council 168, abstracts and posters 418, invited speakers 430, participants 238, sponsors 321, PCO and

logistics 437). In addition, two separate rounds of correspondence regarding the acceptance of abstracts, and a reminder were sent to approx. 300 participants.

## **Finances**

<b><i>Income</i></b>	<b><i>449 504.46 EUR</i></b>
Participants	11 759 410.87 CZK (i.e. 344 547.64 EUR)
Sponsors	3 582 176.40 CZK (i.e. 104 956.82 EUR)

***Expenses***                      ***373 120.25 EUR***  
(includes the fee of the PCO)

***Net balance: the surplus of 76 384.21 EUR*** has been deposited to the SSIEM account.

### ***Auditing***

The accounts of the symposium have been audited by EKMA FIN, a.s. and the statement was found to provide a true and fair view of the revues and expenditure as of December 19, 2001.

Prague, March 19, 2002

Viktor Kozich  
Head of the Local Organising Committee