INSAR 2023 Annual Business Meeting
Saturday, May 6, 2023
Stockholm, Sweden

I. Call to Order – President, Connie Kasari
The President called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM CEST and welcomed everyone in attendance.

[We should document how many INSAR members were present and whether there were any apologies. I would suggest an additional agenda item here. Do we keep a register of attendees?]

II. Approval of the 2022 Business Meeting Minutes – President, Connie Kasari
The President commented that the draft minutes from the 2022 INSAR Business Meeting were on the tables in the room for review. There were no questions from the membership about the minutes.

Motion: Alison Singer motioned to approve the minutes from the 2022 INSAR Business Meeting. Diana Schendel seconded the motion. Vote: Passed unanimously.

III. INSAR 2023 Annual Meeting Chairs Recognition – President, Connie Kasari
The President recognized and thanked Eva Loth, Scientific Program Chair, Matthew Mosconi, Scientific Program Co-Chair, and Sven Bölte, Meeting Committee Chair. She thanked them for a tremendous job to make the 2023 Annual Meeting program such a success.

IV. President’s Remarks – Connie Kasari
The President reported that 2,335 people had registered for the 2023 Annual Meeting, making it the second highest attended meeting in INSAR’s history. She stated that 70 different countries were represented at the meeting and that INSAR would continue to move the annual meeting around the globe.

She provided updates on the following concerns that were expressed last year:

i. Addressing Rigor in Intervention Science
A SIG on Rigor in Intervention Science was held at this year’s meeting, plus a new roundtable, Precision Health for Neurodiverse Communities, was added to the 2023 Annual Meeting, and it was very successful leading INSAR to believe they should continue offering it in the future.

ii. Civil Discourse Discussions
Civil Discourse discussions were held at the 2022 Annual Meeting about important but sometimes controversial topics. The intent for the 2023 Annual Meeting was to have a Civil Discourse discussion about the Language of Autism, but the leader of the discussion was unable to attend at the last minute due to illness. The President stated that it was an important topic that should be considered in the future.
iii. **Online Access to Meeting Content**

The President stated that the Board of Directors understood the desire from members to have a hybrid meeting available to them but explained the challenges of hybrid events. She stated that INSAR would be offering asynchronous content for members and non-members who attended the meeting June 5 – 10, 2023 that would include select recordings from the Annual Meeting, virtual Meet-the-Experts, and Committee webinars. This approach will be evaluated after the June meeting and will inform us of our future strategy in terms of hybrid meetings.

V. **Incoming and Outgoing Board Members – President, Connie Kasari**

The President announced that the following individuals had been elected to the INSAR Board of Directors:

- Rosa Hoekstra - Secretary
- Matthew Lerner, Treasurer
- Laura Klinger, Vice-President

She also thanked the following exiting board members for their time and dedication serving on the INSAR Board:

- Evdokia Anagnostou
- Brian Boyd
- Marjorie Solomon
- Peter Mundy

VI. **Treasurer’s Report – Diana Schendel**

The Treasurer commented that the high attendance and sponsorships for the annual meeting was going to have a positive impact on INSAR’s financials.

She showed a slide that provided the financial history for the 2018-2022 Annual Meetings and noted that the 2022 hybrid meeting was associated with a financial loss of $106,243. She went on to present a financial comparison between 2021 and 2022 and noted that INSAR’s financial reserves had decreased by $552,262 from 2021 to 2022. She said that at the beginning of 2023, a loss of $151,444 was projected, but that because of the following reasons, INSAR was more optimistic about the projected yearend outcome:

- Reduced conference expenses
- Increase in membership (up to 2019 levels)
- An estimated net profit from the annual meeting of $150,000-180,000 due to increased sponsorships and attendance
- Increased royalties from the INSAR Journal, *Autism Research*

VII. **Communications Committee – Alison Singer**

Alison Singer reported that, instead of doing a press conference this year, the committee created 15+ videos at the 2023 Annual Meeting that included featured research videos as well as videos with INSAR volunteers. She said that the videos were distributed to media outlets, posted on the INSAR social media pages, and would be posted to the INSAR YouTube
channel. She said that the content had been picked up by 150-170 different sites/media outlets.

Alison Singer also reported that the meeting’s daily newsletter had an open rate of 60% and there had been a lot of social media activity about the meeting on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

VIII. **Cultural Diversity Committee (CDC)- Past-President Peter Mundy**

Peter Mundy recognized and thanked the Cultural Diversity Committee Chairs. He noted that the committee was INSAR’s longest standing committee, and that they were very active. He stated that the committee produce a quarterly newsletter, are engaged on social media, work with the C-CAP group of mentors and mentees and grants the Cultural Diversity Research Award, which recognizes research and professional work that has a lasting impact on underserved communities.

Mundy presented the following Committee Mission:

- Increase INSAR membership diversity
- Foster Scientific career development for individuals historically under-represented
- Promote cultural diversity issues within the annual scientific program at INSAR annual meetings
- Promote inclusion and consideration of issues of diversity in scientific autism research
- Increase comfort and belonging of individuals from less represented countries

Peter Mundy stated that the committee’s mentorship program, C-CAP, was developed to grow the number of researchers among individuals from LMIC and historically underrepresented groups, facilitate career development and improve the quality of autism research using collaboration and mentorship as a mode. He reported that there were 22 mentors from Argentina, Belgium, China, India, Israel, Turkey, and the USA; 31 mentees from Belgium, Ecuador, India, Israel, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, and USA, plus 10 mentor/mentee match groups.

Peter Mundy went on to report that the pre-conference workshop that the committee had held in Stockholm had over 100 attendees from 22 different countries.

IX. **Global Senior Leaders (GSL) – Past-President, Peter Mundy**

Mundy explained that the main purpose of the committee was to create a global network of senior leaders in autism research that would support the global strategic initiative of INSAR: becoming more diverse and global. The INSAR Global Senior Leaders will serve as their Country’s point of contact for the INSAR Board about issues of national or international importance relating to autism research in their country. He then presented slides recognizing the committee chairs as well as the National Representatives serving on the Global Senior Leaders Committee.
X. **Journal Report – David Amaral, Editor-in-Chief (represented by Peter Mundy)**
In David Amaral’s absence, Peter Mundy provided a brief report on the Journal and recognized and thanked the Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors. He stated that there were discussions about moving the Journal to 100% open access instead of the hybrid open access at present. He also encouraged members to agree to act as reviewers when approached by the Journal.

XI. **Autistic Researchers Committee (ARC) – Vice-President, Brian Boyd**
The Vice-President reported that the Autistic Researchers Committee (ARC) was established in 2020 with much encouragement by John Elder Robison who had served as the Board Community Liaison for many years. He explained that the ARC marks the first organized and recognized effort to involve autistic researchers directly in contributing to the course of autism research and that the committee aims to:

- Better integrate autistic members into INSAR programs.
- Foster scientific career development for autistic autism researchers.
- Create opportunities for autistic scientists to offer their insights to all autistic researchers and fellow colleagues.
- Make INSAR conferences more accommodating and welcoming for autistic members and attendees.
- Promote the inclusion of and consideration of issues important to autistic people in INSAR meetings and in autism research across the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education, and other disciplines; and
- Advise the INSAR Board on issues important to autistic people.

The Vice-President stated that the ARC was instrumental in adding accessibility items to the annual meeting to aid participants (e.g., contact lanyards, earplugs, flapplause, sensory spaces) and provided staff training for hotel management. He also reported that the committee had held a reception at the INSAR meeting that was well-received.

XII. **Vice-President’s Report – Brian Boyd**
Brian Boyd stated that as Vice-President he was the Board Liaison for the Early Career Committee, Student and Trainee Committee, the Special Interest Group, and the Autistic Researchers Committee. He reminded members of the following INSAR initiatives:

- **INSAR Community Collaborator Request (ICCR)**
  - Researchers can post a classified ad if looking for autistic people or other autism stakeholders to collaborate or consult on a research study.
  - [https://www.autism-insar.org/page/iccr](https://www.autism-insar.org/page/iccr)

- **INSAR Institute**
  - Co-organized with STC the 2022 Institute that focused on Autistic People’s Research Priorities.

- **INSAR Mentoring Initiative**
  - Working with STC and ECC committees to help develop a mentoring initiative.
XIII. Early Career Committee (ECC) – Vice-President, Brian Boyd

The Vice-President recognized and thanked the committee chairs and members. He reported that the committee had the following three main long-term goals:

- **Mentoring Initiative** (on hold for 2023) that included 15 senior mentors who mentored 15 early career mentees and 13 student trainee mentees. The group represented 14 different countries or territories including: India, China, Uruguay, Nigeria, Turkey, Israel, South Africa, and Puerto Rico.

- **GRIP** (Global Representative Initiative Program) has the goals to expand international membership, meet the needs of the early career researchers from diverse backgrounds and locations, local capacity-building, improve regional expertise and help facilitate inter-regional networking. Boyd reported that the committee had sent regional member surveys, created local/regional Early Career networks and held virtual meetings at the peer level and with senior researchers. He stated that the committee is still recruiting new GRIP members.

- **Research Rapid Rounds** was an initiative that was on hold but would be implemented in 2023. Boyd reported that the goals of the Research Rapid Rounds are to support Early Career Researchers (ECR) with obtaining funding by facilitating expert review of ideas and to ensure ECRs with fewer opportunities available to them can engage with international experts. He stated that the data from 2019 suggests that the rounds provided a positive experience with participants rating them 4.3 out of 5. He went on to say that 16 experts and 23 applicants were interested in participating in a 2023 event.

XIV. Student and Trainee Committee (STC) – Vice-President, Brian Boyd

The Vice-President thanked and recognized the committee chairs and members. He stated that the mission of the STC is to further INSAR’s mission of promoting education and training in the field of autism research with the following goals:

- Represent the perspectives and needs of student membership in all activities of the society.
- Provide support for the student membership of INSAR through learning, networking, and mentorship opportunities.
- Increase global representation and accessibility of INSAR activities.

Boyd reported on the following 2023 committee activities:

- Student and Trainee Preconference Workshop at the 2023 Annual Meeting
- Meet-the-Experts Luncheon at the 2023 Annual Meeting
- Student and Trainee Social at the 2023 Annual Meeting
- STC Booth at the 2023 Annual Meeting
- Special Interest Group (student/trainee support)
- INSAR Institute (4-week webinar series) showcasing research from STC, ECC, ARC and CDC: *Shaping the Future of Autism Research: A Global Perspective*
- INSAR STC Newsletters (2-3 annually)
- Virtual Meet-the-Experts event planned in 2023
XV. **INSAR Special Interest Group (SIG) – Vice-President, Brian Boyd**
The Vice-President thanked and recognized the committee chairs and members and explained that the committee sets and revises SIG selection criteria, organizes the annual call, committee review, selection, and organization of SIGs plus continually evaluates the SIG effectiveness.

XVI. **Awards Committee – Secretary, Evdokia Anagnostou**
The Secretary thanked and recognized the committee chairs and members. She reported that the committee received 245 student travel award applications and granted awards to 60 students who had abstract scores of more than 3.67. The list was then sorted by distance and past awardee status to make the final selections.

She reported that INSAR received 47 applications for travel awards from lower/middle income countries (LMIC) and 20 were selected to receive an award. She stated that the individuals who had submitted abstracts and had either never received an award previously or who had only received one award previously were prioritized.

The committee received 44 applications for Diversity awards. Fifteen (15) individuals were selected to receive an award and were selected based on abstract score and distance travelled.

Twenty three (23) applications were for the Autistic Researchers awards and 10 awards were granted. Submissions were prioritized based on abstract scores and distance travelled.

Two Early-Career investigator awards and two dissertation awards were made. The Secretary stated that the two dissertation awardees had 5 minutes each to present at the INSAR Awards Ceremony.

XVII. **Membership Committee – Secretary, Evdokia Anagnostou**
The Secretary presented the membership counts for the past six years and pointed out that membership declined during the pandemic, but that the 2023 membership counts were up to 2019 levels.

She stated that INSAR had recently created the Membership Committee with the mandates for the committee being the following:

- Enhance representation from LMIC, other low representing countries, under-represented fields (e.g., neurosciences, computational sciences, implementation, health systems, etc.), across career stages
- Increase diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, LGBTQ+, gender, intersectionality
- Develop metrics to capture the above, as well as barriers and drivers

She reported on the volunteers that will serve on the committee and made note that they were still needing an autistic scientist to join the committee.
XVIII. Passing of the Gavel – Outgoing President Connie Kasari and Incoming President Petrus de Vries

The President-Elect was not able to attend the business meeting and a video was played of the Outgoing President passing the gavel to the Incoming President. In the video, the new President thanked Connie Kasari for her time and dedication serving as INSAR’s President for the past two years and went on to express his excitement about serving as INSAR’s President.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:32 PM CEST.