Planning the EAO’s 2016 meeting:

David Nisand describes the process behind the scientific programme for Paris 2016

Organisation of an EAO meeting starts three years before the event takes place, when the decision is made about where to hold the meeting and the conference venue is booked. In some cities, like Paris, the available congress centres are typically booked five or more years in advance; luckily, an event was cancelled in 2016 allowing the EAO to organise its meeting there next year.

A few months after the location has been finalised, the EAO board appoint a chair and co-chair to organise the meeting. Typically, at least one of them is local. In this case, it will be a double pain with Franck Renouard and myself.

Among the first tasks to be undertaken following our appointment was to put together a scientific committee. This was based on a mix of youth and experience, and the committee is made up of: Isabella Rocchieta (UK); Irena Sailier (Switzerland); Friedrich Neukam and Henning Schliephacke (Germany); Stefano Gracis (Italy); Goran Urde (Sweden); Yataro Komiyama (Japan); and Jose Manuel Navarro (Spain). This scientific committee was approved by the EAO board in June 2014.

For the Paris congress, we have worked to deeply involve all members of the scientific committee both in the planning of the programme and in hands-on roles during the congress. When inviting them on behalf of the EAO, it was important that we clearly outlined the time and commitment they would need to dedicate to their participation.

During a first brainstorming session at the EAO congress in Rome, Franck and I considered all the topics that were suggested, and aimed to avoid any overlap with the congresses in Rome and Stockholm. Early on in the process, the decision was made that Paris 2016 should be oriented around decision-making and the global treatment plan.

As part of this first planning session, we were able to identify a number of potential topics and sessions. We assigned each of these to a member of the scientific committee, asking them to fine-tune the topic and plan their ‘dream session’ by drawing up an ideal list of speakers, a timeline for the session, and where possible some interactive elements to make the presentation as engaging as possible, and to enhance the learning outcomes. Simultaneously, we asked each of the committee members to chair their session and identify a suitable co-chair.

The members of the Scientific Committee met face-to-face as a group in Paris in January 2015. This provided an opportunity for everyone to briefly present their session, along with the speakers and the timeline they had in mind. The group discussion that followed was extremely beneficial in enabling refinements to be made to each session, while ensuring that the whole programme remained cohesive, with input and ownership from all members of the group. Immediately afterwards, each committee member finalised their session on the basis of the group discussion. This enabled a first draft of the scientific programme to be compiled, and a refined, final draft was presented to the EAO Board during their summer meeting in London in June 2015. Some changes were requested by the board before it was formally approved, with official invitations sent to the speakers in July.

During the EAO congress in Stockholm, a second meeting was organised to discuss the structure of each session, with a special emphasis on the interactivity. This included a strong focus on reducing the amount of time in which presentations feature just one speaker, with the emphasis instead on discussions between speakers.

Key features of the programme will include:

- two sessions involving a panel discussion on treatment planning. One of these will be chaired by Michael Cohen and will involve a clinical case involving extensive rehabilitation. This will be discussed by two teams of speakers: one from North America and one team from Europe. The second session will be chaired by Stefano Gracis and will involve clinical cases that requires ‘limited’ rehabilitation
- two sessions will discuss the decision-making process, one looking at the periodontally involved patient and the other focused on the aesthetic zone
- the Junior Committee will introduce a main session called the ‘Hourglass contest’, featuring speakers selected by the committee following an invitation to submit papers. More information on this will be available soon at www.eao.org
- there will be sessions on the digital revolution; management of prosthetic and surgical complications; bone biology; emerging technologies; things we stopped doing in our practice; and the ‘carpenter approach’ to implantology

As Paris 2016 approaches, there is still a lot to do to make sure that the congress will be a success from both a scientific and social point of view. However, plans are well underway now, and we are excited about the programme that will be presented in September 2016.

Keep up to date with the latest news about the EAO Paris 2016 meeting at www.eao-congress.com