

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Members of EMWA held at Vienne House Andel's Hotel, Berlin, Germany Wednesday 4 May 2022 starting at 17.15 CET (16.15 BST)	 EUROPEAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION
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Attendees								
Executive Committee Members		66 voting members at the start of the meeting and the meeting was quorate						
Head Office (HO) – minutes		Chair: Honorary Secretary – Somsuvro Basu						
ITEM								
	Somsuvro Basu (SB) as Chair, welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting (AM) of the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA) at 17.30 CET (NB: 15 minutes later than advertised start time). SB advised that the agenda had been circulated to all members together with the AM Pack in April 2022. The agenda items to be covered at this meeting were presented on screen.							
1.	President opens the meeting							
	The President, Carola Krause (CK), officially declared the meeting open at 17.30 CET.							
2.	Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting (AM) Result of approval of minutes of 2021 AM from online voting and matters arising from the minutes							
	The minutes of the 2021 AM had been circulated to members online and in the AM pack. Voting was carried out online in April 2022. The motion was to approve the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting. The final votes were: <table border="1" data-bbox="421 1536 1391 1666"> <thead> <tr> <th>Votes For</th><th>Votes Against</th><th>Abstained</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>120</td><td>1</td><td>26</td></tr> </tbody> </table> The motion to approve the minutes of the 2021 AM was therefore carried and the minutes were approved. SB confirmed that there were no matters arising from the minutes.		Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained	120	1	26
Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained						
120	1	26						

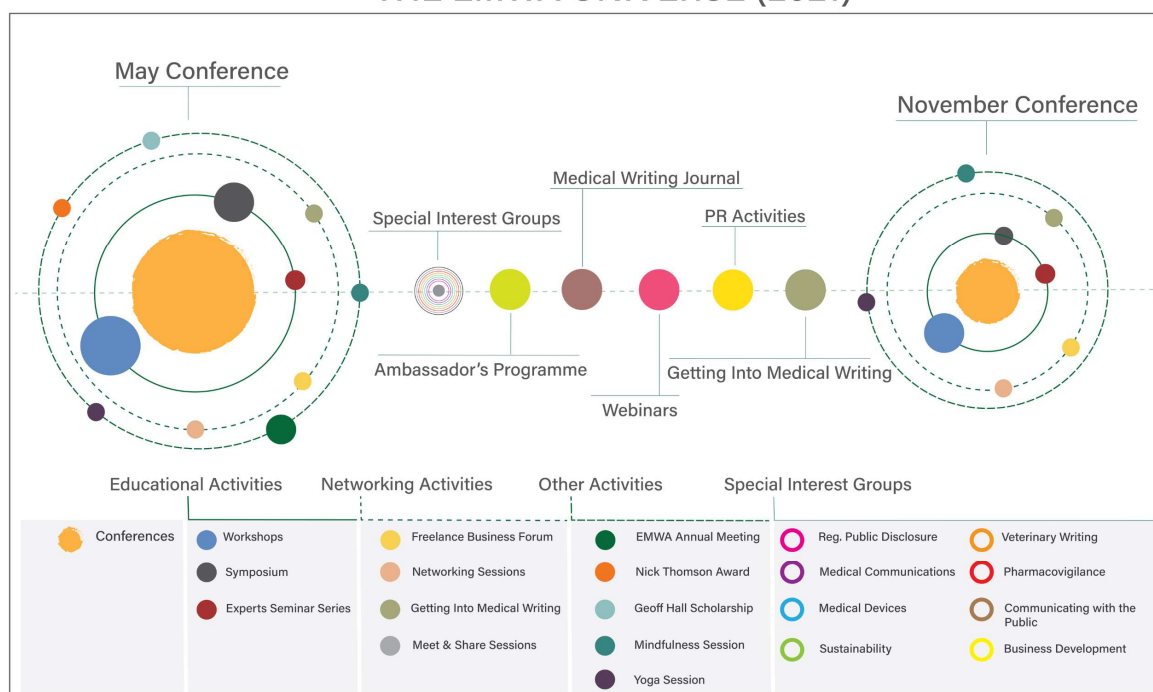
3. President's Report

President CK welcome everyone to the meeting and made the following report:

EMWA's biggest achievement this year was remaining stable during such turbulent times, surviving the global pandemic and now war in the Ukraine. Membership of EMWA had remained constant at around 1300 members, with 20 new members being welcomed during the course of the year. Financially EMWA had been doing well, and the journal had been successfully taken over by a new Editor-in-Chief, Raquel Billiones (RB). CK extended heartfelt thanks to EMWA's President during 2020-2021, Beatrix Doerr, for steering EMWA through some very difficult times.

EMWA Universe 2021

THE EMWA UNIVERSE (2021)



CK presented the above slide illustrating the EMWA Universe when CK took over as President. In 2021, EMWA held a virtual spring conference and a hybrid autumn conference, as well as various learning opportunities during the year, with SIGS, Ambassadors, the Getting into Medical Writing group, webinar team, etc. embarking on many activities.

2021 Autumn Hybrid Conference

The decision to go hybrid for the November conference had been a risk but the EC had wanted to try something new and so streamed the conference for one day to hubs in Zurich, Amsterdam, Warsaw, Potsdam, and London. Lessons had been learnt from this experience, resulting in the current spring 2022 conference being able to offer some hybrid sessions (symposium, ESS, seminars). 390 delegates had attended the November 2021 hybrid conference, where 29 virtual workshops had been offered following the one-day hybrid event. This had been supported by EMWA's 180 volunteers. The conference had largely been a success.

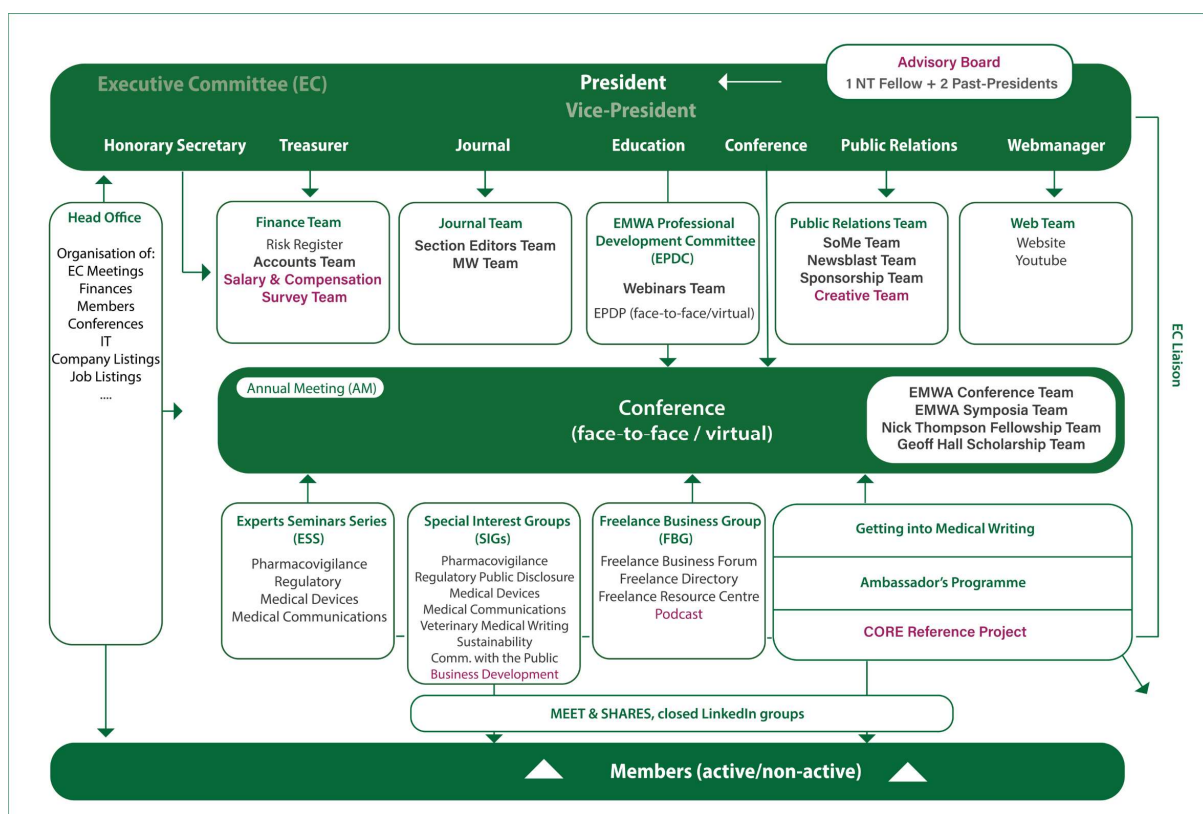
Following the results of feedback surveys from the 2021 conferences, where it had been clear that some members missed the face-to-face experience, but some preferred the cheaper, more sustainable, virtual offering, it had been decided that from 2024 EMWA would move to holding one face-to-face conference per year in May, and one virtual conference per year in November.

2022 Spring Conference - Berlin

CK reminded everyone that the 53rd EMWA conference in Berlin celebrated 30 years of EMWA. CK thanked Art Gertel for entertaining everyone on the history of EMWA at the opening session and looked forward to a free conference dinner for everyone in celebration of the 30th anniversary this evening. The dinner would be accompanied by an EMWA fair demonstrating how much EMWA had grown over the years. CK reported that all leftover food from the conference was being given to shelters and refugees.

EMWA Organigramme

CK presented the current structure of EMWA:



2022/2023

CK highlighted the new groups that had been created this year:

- Advisory Board to support the President (no voting rights) – made up of one Nick Thompson Fellow and two past presidents.
- Salary & Compensation Survey team – led by Treasurer to ensure salary survey is conducted every five years.
- Creative team – led by CK to aid visual communications and support members in this.
- Business Development SIG – chaired by Namrata Singh
- Core Reference Project – chaired by Sam Hamilton. This work had been ongoing for a number of years but the formation of a group would give this very beneficial work more presence in EMWA.

New Cooperations

New relationships had been formed, such as with The Spanish Medical Writers Association to mutually advertise events and with the Australasian Medical Writers Association (800 members). Thanks to Andrea Rossi, EMWA's relationship with the European Medical Agency (EMA) had been re-established, and biannual virtual meetings had maintained connection with ISMP and AMWA.

Through the initiative of EMWA's Sustainability SIG, EMWA was now an official United Nations (UN) Sustainability partner organisation. With the registration, EMWA officially committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 3-Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG 4-

Quality Education, SDG 5-Gender Equality, and SDG 12-Sustainable consumption and production (see March issue of MEW for more details).

With a great effort from EMWA's Medical Communications SIG (MedComs SIG), the JPS on Medical Publications, Preprints and Peer Review had been published in March 2021 (AMWA, EMWA, ISMPP. *Current Medical Research and Opinion* 2021;37[5]). Since then, the JPS had been presented at several congresses, and under the lead of Abe Shevack, translations into Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese Mandarin were uploaded to the EMWA website.

In the coming year, EMWA aims to update the JPS on the Role of Medical Writers.

Member Surveys

In 2021 EMWA ran two member surveys, the Salary Survey and the Predatory Journals Survey. The Predatory Journals Survey was run by the MedComs SIG, and the results were shared with the community in MEW (Volume 31, 2022).

The EMWA Salary Survey was conducted in 2021, and results were presented at the conference today. The full results would be published in MEW soon.

New Training and Networking Opportunities

CK thanked Education Officer Marian Hodges (MH) for doing a fantastic job transitioning EMWA's educational programme from face-to-face to virtual and back again. The following activities had been key during 2021:

- Continuous expansion of webinar and workshop programme – both face-to-face and virtual.
- Development of podcasts from Freelance Business Forum (FBF)
- Further establishment of Meet & Share sessions, run by the SIGS and Getting into Medical Writing group. Head Office (HO) were in the process of setting up a similar registration system to that used for the webinars for the Meet & Share sessions.
- Establishment of closed LinkedIn groups for SIGS and project groups.

New Initiatives

- EMWA had launched and continued some new Social Media initiatives, such as “Buzz-it-up” and “#EMWA30”, and refreshed the look of SoMe with a more modern design. The EMWA Facebook and Instagram accounts had been closed in favour of using LinkedIn and Twitter as more professional SoMe platforms.
- The EMWA name had been extended to ‘European Medical Writers and Communicators Association’.
- At least bi-annual SIG Chair meetings were now being held to use synergies and facilitate exchange.

New Internal Documents

Internal documents such as the following had been updated:

- Reimbursement Policy
- Policy on promoting products
- SoMe Guidelines
- EC Job Descriptions
- Advisory Board
- Welcome letter to new EMWA members

CK thanked the Honorary Secretary, Somsuvro Basu (SB), for the creation of a summary document of all EMWA policies to facilitate maintenance and easy access.

To create flexible connections on various topics, the EC had changed its internal and instant communication channel to SLACK.

Increased Visibility and Recognition for Members

- EMWA membership logos were still available for members to display on their emails, LinkedIn profiles, websites, etc.

	- Members could request a certificate of attendance for live webinars (for a small fee of €20). This was not available for archived webinars. - Members could also now request digital Credly badges for Foundation and Advanced EMWA certificates, which could be displayed on websites and SoMe. - New member benefits had been introduced, such as the EMWA Hardship Fund and End of Year Offer. - Further student offerings and graphical support for members were additional benefits being planned for the future.
4.	Treasurer's Report
4a.	Treasurer, Sarah Choudhury (SC), advised the audience that the draft set of audited Accounts for 2021 had been circulated in the AM pack. The finalised Accounts would be circulated as an addendum soon, but the only change had been to the corporation tax. SC further advised that the financial figures presented today had been rounded off to the nearest 100 euros. Members would today be asked to vote to adopt the 2021 annual accounts, the 2022 budget, and to appoint the auditors for 2022. SC presented the 2021 accounts, noting the healthy conference income of over €316k and a good income from adverts/sponsorship. Income from membership subscriptions was at €177,500. EMWA's reserves were at just over €1 million. Expenditure for the autumn hybrid conference had been high, and the admin costs for HO were a bit lower than in previous years. SC reported that EMWA and HO reviewed hours worked for EMWA on a quarterly basis. Journal costs remained consistent. The surplus came in at just under €200k, which was significantly more than budgeted for.
4b.	SC then presented the budget for 2022 to delegates. In contrast to previous years, the EC were conscious that having worked so hard to build a healthy reserve (necessary to ensure viability), EMWA could now start to spend more money to benefit members and to reinvest in educational activities. The projected income for 2022 had been based on previous years, but expenditure had been increased to reflect: - Increase in SIGS/groups - Need to update the EMWA website - Increased journal costs to establish DOIs, etc. - Austerity planning for members (e.g., Hardship fund) The 2022 budget was therefore aiming at a deficit of just over €100k.
4c.	i) In response to a question from the floor, SC explained that bad debt referred to member registration fees that hadn't been paid. ii) A delegate asked whether the EC had considered reducing membership or conference fees in light of the healthy reserves. SC responded that the membership subscription of €130 had remained stable for some time (rather than being increased with inflation) and covered the costs of HO. As inflation was high, in real terms, fees were actually being reduced. The same was true of conference fees, and rather than reduce either of these any further, the EC would prefer to look at other offerings for the membership, e.g., the Hardship Fund.

	iii) A delegate asked whether the EC would consider a group discount for companies to send staff to conferences. SC said this could be considered for next year once the costs of this conference had been assessed.						
4a – Vote.	Proposal from the EC to adopt the Finance report and the 2021 Annual Accounts						
	SC put the motion to approve the Finance report and 2021 annual accounts to the meeting. The final votes (including proxy votes) were: <table><tr><th>Votes For</th><th>Votes Against</th><th>Abstained</th></tr><tr><td>78</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr></table> The motion was carried and the Finance report and 2021 annual accounts were therefore approved.	Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained	78	0	1
Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained					
78	0	1					
4b – Vote.	Proposal: 2022 Budget						
	SC proposed the motion to adopt the proposed budget for 2022. The final results of the vote (including proxy votes) were: <table><tr><th>Votes For</th><th>Votes Against</th><th>Abstained</th></tr><tr><td>78</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr></table> SC announced the motion was therefore carried and the 2022 Budget was approved	Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained	78	0	1
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5.	Proposal from EC to appoint Hartley Fowler as auditors for 2022						
	SC proposed the motion to appoint Hartley Fowler as auditors for 2022. The final results of the vote (including proxy votes) were: <table><tr><th>Votes For</th><th>Votes Against</th><th>Abstained</th></tr><tr><td>78</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr></table> SC announced the motion was therefore carried and Hartley Fowler would be reappointed as auditors.	Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained	78	0	1
Votes For	Votes Against	Abstained					
78	0	1					

6.	Executive Committee (EC) Elections 2022																				
6a	Results of Electronic Voting The elections for the EC were carried out online and the results were published in the AM pack. The results were as follows: <table><tr><th>Role</th><th>Candidate</th><th>For</th><th>Abstain</th></tr><tr><td>Vice President</td><td>Maria Kołtowska-Häggström</td><td>99</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Vice President</td><td>Diana Radovan</td><td>39</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Conference Director</td><td>Slávka Baróniková</td><td>140</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>Education Officer (job share)</td><td>Laura C Collada Ali & Jules Kovacevic</td><td>144</td><td>3</td></tr></table> The meeting congratulated the successful candidates and welcomed Satyen Shenoy (SS) as the new President of EMWA.	Role	Candidate	For	Abstain	Vice President	Maria Kołtowska-Häggström	99	9	Vice President	Diana Radovan	39	9	Conference Director	Slávka Baróniková	140	7	Education Officer (job share)	Laura C Collada Ali & Jules Kovacevic	144	3
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6b	Current President Acknowledges Retiring EC Members CK acknowledged that 2021 had been a challenging year and the commitment of the EC throughout had been phenomenal. CK thanked HO for their support, and the EC for the time they put in voluntarily to resolving problems with a multi-national approach. The EC were sadly saying goodbye to two long-standing members, Diarmuid De Faoite (DDF) who had been EMWA’s Website Manager since 2012, and Marian Hodges (MH) who had served for six years as Education Officer. CK thanked DDF and MH for all of their hard work which had been very much appreciated by the EC. DDF would be succeeded as Website Manager (an appointed position) by Allison Kirsop. DDF took the opportunity to say goodbye (as Website Manager) and thank you to everyone he’d worked with over the years. DDF encouraged everyone to get involved in EMWA as they’d get so much more out of it that way. DDF was staying on as Assistant Website Manager. MH offered her thanks to the EPDC who had been a fantastic support, not least in getting the virtual programmes up and running in 2020. CK officially handed over to SS and Maria Kołtowska-Häggström as the new Vice-President, and wished them luck for the coming year. Delegates from the floor thanked CK for all of her hard work.																				
6c	New President to Introduce New EC Members SS personally welcomed everyone to Berlin, and recorded his thanks to the outgoing President and retiring EC members. CK, Bea Doerr and Barbara Grossman had faced enormous challenges during their presidencies in the time of the global pandemic and their work behind the scenes was hugely appreciated.																				

	SS invited the new EC members to take a seat with the rest of the EC and welcomed them. SS also thanked and congratulated Slávka Baróniková who had been doing a great job as Conference Director during difficult circumstances, and would no doubt continue to do so.
7.	2017 – 2022 EMWA Strategic Plan
	SS advised that the main themes of the 2017-22 Strategic Plan had been to: • Further our Profession • Grow the Association & Membership • Share expertise • Maintain Governance • Provide Value for Money EMWA had grown and thrived under this strategy with additional programmes and activities being introduced and membership having increased. A continuance of old ideas (e.g., workshops) alongside adaptability to develop new initiatives had helped EMWA to grow. Over the next year EMWA would draft and develop a new 5-year strategic plan 2022-27 which would be unveiled at next year's AM. SS outlined his key goals for the coming year under each of the above themes: Further our Profession • Enhance professional status of medical communicators • Develop informed opinions and guidelines on best practices • Collaborate with related professional organisations Grow the Association & Increase Membership • Promote EMWA at career fairs and university events (e.g., through the Ambassadors and GIMW groups) • Promote local networking to include non-members • Increase online visibility through streamlined SoMe channels Share Expertise • Continue to add workshops and webinars to the EPDP, EMWA's flagship programme (by seeking new ideas and identifying the needs of current members) • Expand the ESS programme to include autumn conference • Launch the podcast programme from the FBF Maintain Governance • Draft EMWA's Strategic Plan 2022-2027 • Invite proposals for SIGS, workshops, webinars and podcasts • Increase opportunities for volunteering and outreach Provide Value for Money • Provide hybrid/online workshops • Negotiate cross-association membership benefits • Increase the visibility of the Freelance Directory

8.	Any Other Business
	SB asked delegates if they had any questions, but there were no further questions from the meeting.
10.	Close of Meeting
	SB thanked everyone for attending the AM. The meeting was closed at 18.56 (CET).

Signed Date