

Message from the Secretary General

Richard Marais reports on the increasing strength of the Association as membership exceeds 7,000 for the first time and invites feedback on EACR activities.

I am delighted to report that as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary we have seen a resurgence in membership of the EACR. □ Active and student membership has grown enormously over the past two years and last year we exceeded 7,000 members for the first time in our history. Our challenge now is to meet your expectations of the Association.

To ensure that we do this, we have continued our development of the Association's professional office – the Nottingham secretariat – to provide us with the capacity to increase and support an increasing range of partnerships and activities. As the membership continues to grow, we have noticed an increased awareness of the Association and this has already resulted in the highest level of EACR attendance to date at an ECCO conference, with more than 800 members taking part in ECCO-14 in Barcelona in September last year. Furthermore, the partnership support we receive year on year from our Sustaining Members, provides us with the means with which to continue our development. We are most grateful for this support and I am very pleased to take this opportunity to welcome Illumina as the first new Sustaining Member of our anniversary year.

Looking forward, we are anticipating an excellent EACR-20 meeting in Lyon this year. The programme is now set and is available in this newsletter. I encourage you to click through from www.eacr.org and register for the meeting which we anticipate will be exciting and informative for all participants. We are anticipating a record attendance at our anniversary meeting. We are

very grateful to our supporters in industry for their commitment and support of this conference. The trade exhibition space, which we increased by 50% compared to EACR-19, was sold out in February.

In addition to the EACR and ECCO series of European Meetings, we are now establishing a programme of EACR Symposia in European centres. These will be focused meetings on topics identified as being of high importance to our members. Our aim is to develop a series of smaller and more intimate meetings that allow excellent chances for interaction between the delegates and speakers. The meetings will be conducted over two days and our aim is to attract between 200 and 250 participants to each meeting. The first two meetings will be held in the historic university city of Cambridge, UK, in 2009 and will be in the form of an 'EACR Summer Symposium', with meetings on 'Chromatin and Cancer' and 'Transcription and Cancer' running back to back to allow delegates to attend both meetings without additional travel demands.

A further exciting development in the context of our growing membership is the large increase in applications for travel fellowships. The number of high quality applications requiring our full commitment grew so quickly last year that the EACR Executive Committee agreed to increase the budget to ensure that all of the best applications could be supported. As you are aware, for many years these fellowships have been generously co-funded by AICR and, following recent discussions, I am pleased to report that the fellowship fund will be increased by 50% to ensure we can support even more applications



in the future. Reports from recent fellowships appear in this newsletter and further underline the diversity of interests, the quality of the projects that are supported and just how highly this activity is valued by our members. The AICR will be our guest at EACR-20 and we hope you will find time to introduce yourself to their representatives in Lyon to find out more about their valuable work, a description of which you will find in this newsletter.

In 2007, EACR was regularly in attendance at scientific conferences – meeting and recruiting new members and receiving feedback on activities and ideas for the future. We welcome feedback and ideas from as many members as possible and to that end have made a short questionnaire available for completion in the Members Area of the website (www.eacr.org). Please find time to complete and return this questionnaire because the responses will influence how we prioritise our activities in the future.

I hope you will enjoy reading this extended 40th Anniversary issue of the Newsletter. Please lend it to a colleague when you have finished reading it and encourage them to join EACR - Europe's largest member society for cancer research.