

International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB)

Activities' Report - Year 2023

1. Introduction

Since 1955 IUBMB has been promoting biochemical research worldwide, either through its own Journals and events or by supporting initiatives from its regional bodies (in Europe, Latin America, Far East and Oceania, Africa). In addition to its own triennial Congress, IUBMB each year supports several Focused Meetings and Advanced Schools, and offers a large number and variety of fellowships to young scientists willing to carry out research activities in qualified labs abroad, as well as to attend meetings or to practice novel teaching approaches. Notably, in 2021 IUBMB has rejoined the International Scientific Council (previously known as ICSU: International Council of Scientific Unions).

2. Main activities carried on by (Union name) during 2023 relevant for Italy and for CNR

IUBMB activities in 2023 have been significantly improved following the lag observed during the COVID pandemic. Among the supported activities is ENABLE Meeting (an UE-cosponsored event targeted to young researchers, also involved in its organization) organized in November 2023 in Cologne, attended in person, along with a relevant number of young Italian researchers and the support from IUBMB and FEBS.

3. Activities carried on by Loredano Pollegioni within the Union during 2023 and impact on the Italian scientific community

As anticipated in previous reports, the activity of prof. Pollegioni (in addition to his duties as the IUBMB Treasurer and IUBMB representative to various events) has been focused on the participation to the Executive Committee meetings (online), characterized by a re-organization of IUBMB activities following the pandemic period.

Prof. Pollegioni has been in close contact with the Società Italiana di Biochimica e Biologia Molecolare (SIB) and with FEBS (the Federation of European Biochemical Societies, also associated to IUBMB). In this regard, prof. Pollegioni has been appointed as IUBMB ambassador in the FEBS board, and Francesco Bonomi has been appointed to the FEBS Financial Committee. Proff. Pollegioni, Bonomi and Iametti are involved in organizing the 48th FEBS Congress, to be held in Milan in 29 June – 3 July 2024. We expect this event to represent a “turning point” for the Italian biochemical community, while bringing international visibility to the Italian scientific community as a whole.

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

CNR is supporting IUBMB as the official Adhering Body, with annual dues at **USD 6,000.00**. The financial support provided by IUBMB to the Italian scientific community is detailed in what follows:

IUBMB support USD 3,000

- IUBMB support of the Jubilee Award Lecturer, Lewis C. Cantley, from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School, USA at the “Understanding Cancer Metabolism: Exploring Tumor Heterogeneity to Advance Cancer Therapy” meeting at the University “Magna Græcia” of Catanzaro, in Catanzaro, Italy, from June 29-30, 2023. Scientific Programme Committee: Ferdinando Chiaradonna, Domenica Scumaci, Francesco Saverio Costanzo, Giuseppe Viglietto, Giovanni Cuda, Ilaria Dando, Michela Grosso, Alessio Paone, Chiara Riganti, and Federica Rizzi.

IUBMB support USD 4000

- IUBMB support for the Wood-Whelan Research Fellowship recipient, Javier La O Bonet, from the University of Havana, Cuba, to travel to the University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy in Prof. Dr. Mariano Venanzi's lab.

IUBMB support 2000 €

- IUBMB support at the Focused Meeting “IUBMB Focused Meeting on Extremophilic Fungi (FUN-EX)”, from September 19-22, 2023, in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Loredano Pollegioni represented the IUBMB. Invited lecture: Laura Selbmann, Department of Ecological and Biological Sciences, University of Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy

IUBMB support 1000 €

IUBMB support at the FEBS-IUBMB-ENABLE Conference on “THE EMERGING CHALLENGE – Environmental impacts on human health” at the University of Cologne, in Cologne, Germany from November 23-25, 2023. Invited keynote speaker: Fernanda Pinheiro, Human Technopole, Milan, Italy.

IUBMB support USD 2000

- IUBMB support of Stefania Iametti from Università degli Studi di Milano, Milan, Italy, As Associate Editor for the BioFactors journal.
- IUBMB support of Loredano Pollegioni from Università degli Studi dell'Insubria, Varese, Italy, as Review Editor for the BAB journal.

Therefore, the 2023 fiscal year has seen direct support to Italian scientists from IUBMB for a grand total of more than USD **12000**, in return of dues remaining at **USD 6,000.00**, bringing up a **positive balance higher than 6000 USD**.

5. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

The Italian attendance to IUBMB-related meetings and congresses has remained below what expected from the overall size of the Italian Scientific community in this area, and from the SIB membership. However, decreasing attendance is a general trend for large and non-specialized meetings. This is why IUBMB has changed his meeting policy, supporting small and high-quality events - likely more attractive in times of budget constraints - instead of massive and broadly focused events.

Attendance figures to IUBMB-related activities improve when considering events targeted to young scientists, such as Advanced Schools or the yearly Young Scientists' Programs or Young Scientist Forums. The same is true for even less formal events specifically aimed at junior researchers that include also some career-related aspects, as is the case – among others - of the ENABLE events.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs

The 2021 General Assembly has elected prof. **Loredano Pollegioni** as the new IUBMB Treasurer. In this function, prof. Pollegioni is also a member of the IUBMB EC and - *ex-officio* – of the IUBMB Publication Committee. The latter role is of relevance both in terms of scientific policy and because of its financial relevance, given that roughly 80% of the IUBMB income comes from editorial activities. Prof. Pollegioni has started his apprenticeship in late Summer 2021, in close collaboration with prof. Bonomi, and is expected to be fully autonomous in early Summer 2022, after the External Auditors will complete their review for the fiscal year 2021 and the resulting figures will be approved by the appropriate Authorities in the Netherlands, where IUBMB is formally registered as a not-for-profit organization. Prof. Pollegioni has been appointed as IUBMB ambassador in the FEBS board.

Prof. Stefania Iametti (University of Milan) has been appointed as Associate Editor for the Biofactor journal. The professor. Graziano Pesole (University of Bari) and prof. Marco Muzi Falconi (University of Milan State) have been indicated as delegates of the CNR for the scientific activities of the IUBMB (respectively holder and substitute) for the period 14.02.2023 – 31.1.2026.

7. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2021 CNR Commission activities

Not applicable

8. Notes (if any)

None

9. Conclusions

Maintaining and expanding the Italian presence within the IUBMB governing and counseling bodies is expected to have a positive impact on Italian participation in IUBMB activities. The perspective budget for the 2023-2026 triennium makes ample space for providing significant contributions to novel and less stereotypical initiatives, that will have to take in due consideration at least some of the new or emerging trends in the post-COVID worldwide scenario of scientific communication and in the ways of exchanging people and ideas. At the moment, the prospects for 2024 appear interesting, with the confirmation of IUBMB support for the numerous initiatives proposed by Italian colleagues.

Prof. Loredano Pollegioni
IUBMB Treasurer



Prof. Graziano Pesole
CNR representative in IUBMB



Bari, 21 March 2024