



## **ISUOG Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**Monday 13 December 2021, 12:00 PM**

**Virtual meeting**

*(Meeting quorum achieved with 120 members present online)*

### **Minutes**

#### **1. President's opening address**

**Prof. Tom Bourne**

Tom Bourne (ISUOG President) welcomed the members to the ISUOG's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and thanked them for making their time to participate in the meeting. As in the previous year, the meeting has been again organised via a virtual platform due to the ongoing pandemic. Tom emphasised that the AGM provided an opportunity to reflect on the Society's achievements during the last year and it was also time of the Society's rotations across the various groups, including the Committees and Task Forces. He thanked all volunteers for their contributions and commitment to the Society's mission.

Tom introduced the meeting program outlining the key points in the first part of the meeting, including the report of the Board of Trustees and Sub committees as well as approval and secondment of the minutes of the last AGM meeting held in 2020 that were circulated as part of the notice to members a month ago.

#### **2. Report of the Board of Trustees and Sub committees**

**Prof. Tom Bourne**

Tom noted that 2020 was a very busy year with significant limitations surrounding the COVID pandemic, which would likely continue for the next couple of months. Consequently, it was also a time of adaptation for ISUOG in terms of the delivery of its charitable purpose relating namely to education, and for ISUOG members, particularly in their clinical environments around the world. Despite the ongoing circumstances, the Society showed an enormous amount of agility in terms of the immediate response to COVID, with ISUOG team adapting to working from home for the most of the year and delivering on the strategic objectives under the trying conditions. Tom also congratulated Johan who has led ISUOG through the 2020 and helped create an optimal environment for the team and all members to continue to collaborate and work together.

Tom further emphasised that ISUOG was one of the first societies responding quickly to the pandemic and organising webinars, providing information about the emerging crisis with COVID that subsequently led to free webinar series in foreign languages, including French, Spanish and Arabic in order to increase accessibility. The lessons from the webinars were then distilled and translated into other languages. In addition, an interim guidance in 14 languages, 2 safety and 3 consensus statements have been produced within a short period of time and Tom thanked Liona Poon, Christoph Lees as well as the Safety Committee and the Journal team, including Sarah Hatcher, Renata Kotsia and Tony Odibo for their work and dedication. The UOG virtual issue with 30 free articles, including original research, reviews and opinions also represented a substantial contribution to COVID. Patient information leaflets continued to be produced and were available in 24 languages throughout the year. The Society also moved to a fully virtual World Congress in autumn 2020 and Tom thanked Wendy Holloway, Saskia Dean and other team members for making the annual conference a great success, including Johan for his courage to adopt a novel approach using a brand new virtual platform that caught a significant attention. ISUOG education courses were also moved to an online environment and Tom thanked the team for all their efforts.

Tom referred to the Society's Strategic Plan and summarised the activities throughout the last year, reporting on the key performance indicators that have been achieved in line with ISUOG's strategic objectives. The main accomplishments have been highlighted below with more detailed information provided in the presentation that will be available to members upon request:

***Strategic objective 1: To achieve (and be recognised for) the highest quality and standards in education research.***

**UOG:** Tom outlined the many continuous successes of the Journal *Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology* last year and recognised particularly remarkable achievements in terms of its impact factor (5.6) ranking the Journal in the 5<sup>th</sup> place out of 82 journals in the field of obstetrics and gynecology. Additional impressive 27% increase has been reported on the article submissions as well as the article downloads reaching just under 6 million, with 1 million increase compared to the previous year, and Tom thanked Sarah Hatcher and her team and Tony Odibo (UOG Editor-in-Chief) for all their hard work.



ISUOG World Congress recognised as the leading event in the field was transformed into an online event leveraging a brand new virtual platform and became one of a very few online events organised successfully in the virtual environment in 2020. It achieved about 3,300 attendees and amongst the impressive metrics related to the event, Tom noted 5 parallel streams over 3 days with 16 keynote speakers, over 200 invited talks and over 100 oral communication presentations. Tom emphasised a great advantage of the virtual congress - an increased accessibility for individuals who would otherwise not be able to afford to attend an in-person event. And he congratulated the team for delivering a high-quality experience within a short period of time.

***Strategic objective 2: To ensure comprehensive, innovative education programs targeted to all members: to teach, teach teachers and to improve clinical care.***

Tom emphasised that all ISUOG education courses were run online during the pandemic last year, including the Cardiac advanced online series led by Simon Meagher. Basic Training, the Society's flagship, has awarded the participants with ISUOG Certification of Completion of the BT programme and provided assessment of learning on both theoretical and practical levels. As part of ISUOG's response to the COVID pandemic, the Society also launched the BT Flex programme, a digital form of administering the basic training, which was very successful and continues to be followed by trainees. The COVID pandemic represented a particular challenge for the education team that was impacted by a turnover and Tom welcomed the new interim Director of Education, Elizabeth Brookfield, who will drive the ISUOG education forward in the coming year.

Outreach has been largely affected by the global pandemic due to travel restrictions in 2021 and had to scale down its activities. Instead, the main focus was primarily on virtual support and mentoring and review of all our initiatives to come out even stronger and more impactful after the pandemic. As a core part of our charitable mission, it is imperative that outreach is best positioned for success in the years to come.

***Strategic objective 3: To engage, retain and grow membership to remain relevant and increase reach and influence.***

Tom emphasised the importance of meaningful engagement of our members making ISUOG a truly global society. The proportion of members in different regions became more balanced and whilst the largest single member region (40%) remains Europe in 2021, the largest growth region (27%) is Far East followed by South and Central America where Jessica Preisler and Magda Sanz Cortes lead the education activities and courses in line with the Society's regionalisation strategy. This will also be supported further by the International Symposia in the LATAM region in the New Year and other activities throughout the year to address the lack of membership in some parts of the world.

***Strategic objective 4: To develop strategic partnerships and collaborative ventures to establish ISUOG as the leading authority in the field.***

In order to improve patient care, Tom stressed the importance of partnerships with other specialties in gynecology, obstetrics as well as fetal medicine. In 2021, there were 118 partner societies with new partnerships being ESGO, IOTA, ESGE and the consensus guideline being developed on the investigation and management of the ovarian masses led by Dirk Timmerman (ISUOG) and Christina Fotopoulou (ESGO).

***Strategic objective 5: To establish communication strategies to engage with stakeholders, to increase ISUOG's recognition and influence, and to improve on patient care.***

Tom recognised that communication was an essential tool allowing us not only engage with our stakeholders, including the membership, but also with the women whose care we are trying to improve. In 2021, the Society continued to improve its social media presence in order to be better positioned for advocacy and for influencing the policy makers. The key focus was on empowering women to understand what the best care looks like and to ensure they receive the right standard of care at the right time by asking the right questions. Cate Kirkbride who leads the MarComs department at ISUOG will continue driving this forward. Alain Gagnon and the Patient Information Task Force greatly supported these activities by producing a significant number of patient information leaflets (47) making these the most popular page on our website with 250,000 views in one year. The leaflets were also translated into several languages, including Chinese, with Hindi and Spanish being developed.

The global communication through ISUOG website continued to grow in 2021. Social media and emailing reach has also seen 26% increase to 144,000. Our PR activities included customised monthly newsletters and UOG alerts as well as Education weekly quiz and 14 Journal articles per month, COVID resources and practice guidelines.



**Strategic objective 6:** *To strive for excellence and efficiency in operations through continuous improvement towards best practice in governance, management, employment and learning*

Tom summarised the many activities and successes in this area, particularly at the time of the Society's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021, which included:

- 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary UOG issue and webinar >11K registrations (across 3 time zones starting in the Asia-Pacific region, through Europe / Africa and finishing in Americas).
- UOG impact factor at 7.3, c. 6 million downloads, 10% increase in issue content.
- 10 free webinars reaching 30K people in community.
- 8 OBGYN Advanced courses delivered online and our first LATAM course in Spanish and Portuguese.
- COVID-19: webinar, guidelines, UOG virtual issue and patient information.
- Patient information leaflets: available now in 24 languages.
- First virtual International Symposium North America.
- Outreach: Virtual training in Nigeria and Oman. Local Omani Society set up.
- Second Virtual World Congress: ↑ 73% in registrations from LIC registration fees £50
- ISUOG Virtual Convention on gynecological surgery and ultrasound: improving patient outcomes in Africa

Tom noted the Society's increased focus on accessibility of our events and other activities and offerings across ISUOG's portfolio as part of our charitable mission. With this in mind, he also acknowledged the contributions of the ISUOG NGen Group, a new generation talented younger researchers with interest in education that develops their own ideas about increasing accessibility to the organisation. The education offering has not finished with the Virtual Congress and the members also participated in the first in-house Virtual International Symposium (17-18 April 2021) achieving nearly 800 registrations.

### 3. Minutes of the virtual Annual General Meeting, Berlin, 2020

Prof. Tom Bourne

Tom raised a motion to approve the minutes from the previous virtual AGM. The members were invited to comment via an online platform. Due to no objections being received, Prof. Tutschek seconded the approval. *The minutes of the virtual Annual General Meeting in 2020 were approved without change.* Tom thanked all members for giving their time supporting the society despite the difficulties and limitation the 2021 brought.

### 4. Report and Accounts for the year end 2020

Prof. Christoph Lees

Christoph referred to the 2021 audit outlining the important take aways and financial information from the Society's 2020 annual report and accounts whilst providing 2019 comparison at the same time:

- In 2019, ISUOG's operating income achieved £229,783 whereas in 2020, the Society was operating with a deficit of £364,470 (-16.8%) due to the pandemic. Having referred to Tom's presentation, Christoph pointed out to main contributing factors that meant a shift to virtual platform and complete change in the education delivery.
- The Society's assets however, are significant and include foreign exchange and investments. If factored in, the operating (negative) deficit reaches almost £300k positive figure (compared to £1.5m in 2019).

#### Sources of income

- In 2020, the Society's income totalled just over £2m where most of the income (£1.1m, 52%) was traditionally received from the Congress, with just under £500k (21%) from membership, over £300k (16%) from the Journal and a quarter of a million (11%) from other activities, which includes education courses.
- Looking at the Society's trends related to the income streams, it is clear that ISUOG continues to be increasingly reliant on the income from the Congress, which was significantly reduced in 2020, whereas other income streams (education, membership and Journal) tend to be rather static in the course of the past 10 years. Johan is currently exploring other sources of income, including philanthropic donations, grants and expanding the education portfolio as the learning management platform.
- In terms of the expenditure in 2020, the costs matched reasonably closely the income streams with Congress expenditure totalling 45%, education 27%, membership 13% and Journal 15% of the Society's costs. The 5-year trend in income and expenditure shows that the costs more or less track the income. With increased total income, the costs also increase as well as the Society's operating surplus. In the last year, significant investment gains were made at the time when the market has been extremely difficult.
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- The market value of investments did particularly well throughout 2020 and it is imperative that the Society's has such buffer to fall back on should the unpredictability and volatility continue in the next one or two years.
- ISUOG continues to maintain reasonable approach towards the financial reserves available with 6-month operating costs, incl. congress as well as 18-month operating budget and several upcoming financial investments into education in the near future. Although it is not advisable to hold large reserves as charity, the COVID pandemic has demonstrated in practice why these are important in order to provide an avenue to mitigate any potential financial risks and losses.

#### 5. Appointment of the auditors

**Prof. Christoph Lees**

Christoph further addressed the Society's audit successfully conducted in 2020 and the audited accounts being signed off by the Board of Trustees in July. Since there were no questions to the accounts from the membership, Christoph proceeded to proposing a motion of approval to re-appoint the current auditors (Sayer Vincent LLP) for the next financial year (2021), which was seconded by Boris Tutschek due to no objections or comments being received. *The Sayer Vincent LLP was approved as 2021 auditor without change.*

#### 6. Trustee Appointments and retirements

**Prof. Boris Tutschek**

Boris referred to a recent change in ISUOG's Articles of Association (Article 23.5) to separate the core Committee Chair positions from the Trustee roles. In practice it means that the Chairs of the Scientific and Education Committee are no longer Trustees and are appointed from outside of the Trustee group. In case a Trustee is elected Chair of these Committees, their Trustee status will be suspended for duration of the Chair term and after its completion, they return to the Board to complete the remainder of their Trustee term.

This year, Prof. Fabricio da Silva Costa - who was appointed as Trustee in 2019 - was elected Chair of the Scientific Committee. Therefore, his Trustee term will be suspended for duration of his service in the capacity of the Chair of the Scientific Committee. He will complete the remainder of his Trustee term thereafter. Due to a number of Trustees being reduced recently, the Board of Trustees decided to fill Fabricio's Trustee position for duration of his Scientific Committee service. Jessica Preisler has been elected by the ISUOG Advisory Group and proposed to the membership as an interim Trustee. Tom Bourne seconded the approval. *Jessica Preisler has been elected approved by the membership as an interim Trustee commencing in her role with immediate effect.*

Further to the Officer appointments, Boris confirmed the following appointments:

- Reem Abu-Rustum (USA): has been elected to become the next President Elect commencing in the role in October 2022
- Asma Khalil (UK): has been elected Treasurer commencing in the role in November 2021

#### 7. 2021 Awards and Acknowledgements

**Prof. Boris Tutschek**

Boris outlined that each year, the Society would acknowledge the retiring Trustees / Officers and Committee / Task Force Chairs for their service and thanked them for their outstanding contribution and long-term commitment:

- Christoph Lees (completed his term of service as Treasurer and retires from the Officer position, 2019-2021)
- Jon Hyett (completed his term of service as Chair of the Education Committee, 2017-2021)
- Laurent Salomon (completed his full term of service as outgoing Vice Chair of the Scientific Committee, 2020-2021)
- Lisbet Hanson (completed her term of service as Chair of the Outreach Committee, 2019-2021)
- Christoph Lees (completed his term of service as Chair of the Safety Committee, 2017-2021)

Further to that, Boris also welcomed the new Officers / Committee Chairs:

- Asma Khalil (ISUOG Treasurer, 2021-2023)
- Angela Ranzini (Chair of the Education Committee, 2021-2024)
- Fabricio da Silva Costa (incoming Vice Chair of the Scientific Committee, 2021-2022)
- Hisham Mirghani (Chair of the Outreach Committee, 2021-2023)
- Andrea Dall'Asta (Chair of the Safety Committee, 2021-2023)

Boris also announced that Angela Ranzini is retiring from the Online Education Task Force and thanked her for her contributions to and leading of the Task Force during the last three years. Angela has been succeeded by Lina Youssef who was appointed a new Chair of the Task Force. In addition, Dario Paladini is retiring from the position of the Co-Chair of the

Courses Task Force and Boris thanked him for his contributions and dedication. Simon Meagher has been re-appointed as Chair of the Task Force for the next three years.

Further to the rotations, Boris notified the membership about the following retirements amongst ISUOG Ambassadors and thanked them for their service and long-term contributions to the Society:

- Kazunori Baba (ISUOG Ambassador in Japan, 2015-2021)
- Airen Sigue (ISUOG Ambassador in the Philippines, 2015-2021)
- Walfrido Sumpaico (ISUOG Ambassador in the Philippines, 2015-2021)

Boris reiterated that the Trustees continued to review the Society's governance processes and procedures in order to increase transparency and accountability. The new ISUOG Constitution (Articles of Association) has been successfully approved by the membership during the Society's Extraordinary General Meeting in November 2021. As for the next steps, the Trustees aim to:

- harmonise the Society's processes and procedures to closely align with the new ISUOG Strategic Plan (2022-2027);
- increase member engagement across all groups in the Society, including Committees and Sub-Committees; and
- increase the Society's regional representation through work of ISUOG Ambassadors and regional offices in Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Africa.

Tom concluded the meeting by personally thanking all the outgoing Chairs for their long-term service and dedication, particularly to Christoph Lees who served as Treasurer and the Chair of the Safety Committee responding to various safety issues over the years and stepping up when COVID hit by assisting with putting up important statements relating to PPE. He also congratulated Asma Khalil as new ISUOG Treasurer. Tom also addressed Jon Hyett as retiring Chair of the Education Committee and welcomed new Chair, Angela Ranzini, wishing her well in her new role. He also thanked Laurent Salomon for his service in the Scientific Committee and acknowledged his presidential post in the years to come. Lastly, he also congratulated Jessica Preisler, a new interim Trustee and representative from South America, which is in line with ISUOG regionalisation strategy. Special thanks were also passed onto the ISUOG team and membership community for continuous contributions and engagement.

Tom made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the AGM meeting was closed.