



Letter from the President



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the spring 2016 newsletter of ECTRIMS. The month of May traditionally hosts the World Multiple Sclerosis Day. ECTRIMS has only just signed a mode of understanding with the MSIF through which collaboration between the two will be more intense and effective. We encourage everybody to go out there on Wednesday 25th May and make sure the world keeps awareness of this devastatingly progressive disease.

With UCL's David H. Miller's leadership we are all working intensively for the most successful annual meeting yet. For now, the record-high abstract submission brings us all closer to this end. Also, please check the teaching courses as there surely will be ample offer for all further education needs.

Please make sure that you note down all the educational activities organized by ECTRIMS throughout the year and find a chance to participate in those that you think will be beneficial for your career. The research and clinical fellow support programs rate among the most powerful in MS worldwide. They are growing alongside those of MSIF, ACTRIMS and others. Do read about grantees and fellows experiences and let your younger peers know.

Finally, please read about the MS treatment guidelines that ECTRIMS and the EAN are developing as a joint venture. This tool is being developed by a panel of top expert colleagues with the clear aim to be up to date as to the latest degree of evidence for treatment of MS and includes all currently or soon-to-be available drugs.

I, on behalf of the Executive Committee, hope that you will enjoy this edition of the newsletter and will join us in the educational events and annual conference in London, 14th-17th September 2016.

Prof. Xavier Montalban

Topics:

- [World MS Day 2016](#)
 - [ECTRIMS 2016 Meeting in London \(14.-17. September\)](#)
 - [ECTRIMS Focused Workshop 2017 / 3. /4. March in Florence, Italy](#)
 - [ECTRIMS Summer School 2016 / 28.-30. June in Vienna, Austria](#)
 - [Regional Teaching Courses / 19-21 May Petersburg/Russia](#)
 - [ECTRIMS Fellowship 2016](#)
 - [New ECTRIMS-MSIF fellowship](#)
 - [Reports of ECTRIMS Fellows](#)
 - [ECTRIMS Clinical Training Fellowship](#)
 - [ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING IN MS FELLOWSHIP](#)
 - [Update on ECTRIMS-EAN Guideline](#)
 - [ECTRIMS support of other societies/events](#)
 - [Meeting dates](#)
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World MS Day 2016

What is World MS Day?

World MS Day, which will occur on May 25th this year, brings the global MS community together to share stories, raise awareness and campaign with and for everyone affected by multiple sclerosis. World MS Day is the only global awareness raising campaign for MS. Every year, the MS movement comes together to provide the public with information about MS and to raise awareness on how it affects the lives of more than 2.3 million people around the world.

In 2016, the theme for World MS Day is 'Independence'. It will explore how people with MS can be independent, acknowledging that independence can mean different things to different people.

Since its inception in 2009, World MS Day has grown from strength to strength, reaching hundreds of thousands of people in more than 78 countries worldwide and continuing to grow every year.

How can you get involved?

Read more about World MS Day at <http://www.worldmsday.org/> and learn about how you can take part in World MS Day.

ECTRIMS 2016 Meeting in London (14.-17. September)



The 32nd ECTRIMS congress will take place from Wednesday 14 September to Saturday 17 September 2016 in London, United Kingdom (ExCeL Centre, a modern state-of-the-art facility in east London and close by the London City Airport, www.excel-london.co.uk).

The 2016 Congress will be the first ever held in the United Kingdom, a country that has contributed much to research and treatment in MS. Many excellent UK-based scientists and clinicians have focused their career on MS and it is indeed timely that the United Kingdom will host an ECTRIMS Congress. The meeting will also partner with the Annual Conference of Rehabilitation in MS (RIMS).

The Congress is offering comprehensive scientific and teaching programmes. An exciting scientific programme has been developed by the Local Organising and Scientific Programme Committees. There will be plenary, platform, young investigator, hot topic (some in a debate format) and poster sessions. Themes will include disease mechanisms, prognostic markers, developments in imaging, and approaches to early treatment, long term treatment effects, the latest clinical trial results, and emerging targets for modulation of the innate immune system, neuroprotection and repair. While MS is the main focus, there will be talks on other inflammatory demyelinating CNS diseases. There will be a special section of the programme for MS nurses and symposia sponsored by the European Charcot Foundation and industry.

A total of 1985 abstracts were submitted for this year's congress, the largest number ever submitted to any ECTRIMS congress and 10% higher than the last year's number. This sets the scene for another exciting congress at which new findings will be reported in posters and oral presentations on a wide variety of clinical and scientific topics. Abstract reviewing is in progress and authors will hear the outcome in late June. The deadline for submission of late breaking news abstracts is 4 July 2016.

Please visit the [ECTRIMS 2016 website](#) for continuously updated information.

Deadline for reduced registration fee: 20 July 2016

ECTRIMS Focused Workshop 2017 / 3. /4. March in Florence, Italy

The ECTRIMS Focused Workshop on the topic of „Environmental, modifiable risk factors for multiple sclerosis: What have we learned, where are we headed?“ took place on 3/4 March 2016 in Florence/Italy.

The scientific organisation and hosting of the workshop was ably led by Prof. Maria Pia Amato, Florence/Italy. Mainly epidemiological, but also experimental research over the last two decades underscore the potential role of environmental and lifestyle, modifiable risk factors implicated in the initiation of the disease and sometimes in its course and prognosis. Improving our understanding of environmental factors involved in MS and their interplay with genetic factors will lead to new and more effective approaches to patient counseling, and, possibly, prevention and management of the disease.

This focused workshop gathered 59 experts (including local guests) in the field from around the world to discuss available evidence on the most prominent factors, like infections, vaccines, vitamin D, smoking, body weight, diet, alcohol, stress, co-morbidities and the role of gut microbiome. The workshop highlighted new avenues of research, to better understand the role and connections between these risk factors and MS, and to explore possibilities how to modify MS risk and course by influencing these environmental, modifiable factors. A manuscript is being prepared for publication based around the workshop proceedings.

ECTRIMS Summer School 2016 / 28.-30. June in Vienna, Austria

The next ECTRIMS Summer School on the topic of "Use of MR imaging in diagnosis and management of multiple sclerosis" will be held from 28-30 June 2016 in Vienna/Austria.

This ECTRIMS Summer School is directed to young clinicians and investigators with an interest in the diagnosis and management of MS. The immediate objective is to equip them with knowledge and expertise they need to (i) accurately diagnose MS, (ii) evaluate the effectiveness of disease modifying treatments in MS, (iii) understand the value of non-conventional and quantitative MR for assessing the structural, metabolic and functional damage, and (iv) become familiar with the different techniques used for imaging analysis.

The faculty includes internationally well-known experts with scientific expertise and educational skills to ensure

high-quality teaching and interactive discussions with attendees.

This Summer School is being jointly coordinated by MAGNIMS and ECTRIMS (Organisers: Alex Rovira, Nicola de Stefano, Xavier Montalban, David Miller). The 3-day programme includes a series of lectures from faculty (mainly on Day 1), and specialised workshops (e.g., on advanced MR techniques), interactive discussions, and group work with presentations undertaken by attendees (on Days 2 and 3).

There was very high interest in this year's summer school, with many more applications being received than it was possible to accommodate. Taking account of the high interest, the 2016 school will be larger than those of previous years, with 45 attendees being accepted this year.

Further information will be available on the ECTRIMS website at <http://www.ectrims.eu/ectrims-summer-schools/>

Regional Teaching Courses / 19-21 May Petersburg/Russia

This new ECTRIMS activity was launched this year with its first Regional Teaching Course from 19th-21st of May in St. Petersburg/Russia. For further information and detailed programme please visit the ECTRIMS Website [here](#).

The aim is to establish local teaching courses in border areas of Europe and other (neighbouring) parts of the world and to provide ready access for regional groups of neurologists to high quality training in MS clinical care. The teaching courses are organised by the ECTRIMS Teaching Course Committee. There will be a close collaboration with local MS experts and neurological associations as well as other TRIMS organizations to ensure the optimal coverage of locally relevant topics.

The second Regional Teaching Course planned for 2016 will be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 10 November 2016.

ECTRIMS Fellowship 2016

ECTRIMS offers a comprehensive range of fellowship programmes for different target groups.

In 2016 eight new fellowships were awarded:

[ECTRIMS Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Exchange Programme](#)

Dr. Bieke Broux (Belgium): 2-year fellowship at Hasselt University, Biomedical Research Institute, Diepenbeek, Belgium under mentorship of Prof. Niels Hellings. Project: The unexplored role of interleukin-24 in MS.

Dr. Mansih Malviya (India): 2-year fellowship at INSERM, Center of Pathophysiology of Toulouse (CPTP), France, under the mentorship of Prof. Roland Liblau. Project: Molecular engineering of Tregs expressing recombinant TCR: study of their therapeutic effects in animal models of MS

Dr. Sabah Mozafari (Iran): 2-year fellowship at INSERM U1127, Sorbonne Universities, Paris, France, under the mentorship of Prof. Anne Baron-Van Evercooren. Project: Analysis of cellular behaviour of skin-derived myelin-producing human cells in vitro and in vivo after transplantation in the demyelinated central nervous system

[ECTRIMS Multiple Sclerosis Clinical Training Fellowship Programme](#)

Dr. Pawel Chochol (Poland): 6-months clinical training fellowship at the St. Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, Ireland, under the mentorship of Prof. Niall Turbidy.

Dr. Nicolas Dubuisson (Belgium): 1-year clinical training fellowship at the Barts Health NHS Trust, Royal London Hospital, Neurology, London, UK, under the mentorship of Prof. Gavin Giovannoni.

Dr. Zhifeng Mao (China): 1-year clinical training fellowship at the Queen Mary University of London and Barts Health NHS Trust, Blizard Institute und ECAM, London, UK, under the mentorship of Dr. Klaus Schmierer.

ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS Fellowship Programme in MRI in Multiple Sclerosis

Dr. Alessandro d'Ambrosio (Italy): 1-year fellowship at the Ospedale San Raffaele, Neuroimaging Research Unit, Milan, Italy under the mentorship of Prof. Massimo Filippi. Project: Relating functional connectivity to cognition in multiple sclerosis: from stationary to time-varying analysis of strategic large-scale networks

Dr. Sara Collorone (Italy): 1 year fellowship at the UCL Institute of Neurology, Queen Square MS Center, London, UK, under the mentorship of Dr. Ahmed Toosy and Prof. Frederik Barkhof. Project: To investigate how longitudinal changes in Structural Cortical Networks relate to disease evolution in Clinically Isolated Syndrome using 3D T1-weighted high-resolution scans from the MAGNIMS CIS cohort

New ECTRIMS-MSIF fellowship

Starting in 2015, MSIF and ECTRIMS established a joint fellowship alumni meeting held at the ECTRIMS congress. Presentations by award recipients were followed by a reception attended by alumni, MS organizations, clinicians and senior MS researchers. This meeting proved to be very successful and was continued also at the last ECTRIMS congress in Barcelona.

Since both organizations, ECTRIMS and MSIF, are dedicated to promote research in the field of MS the idea arose that ECTRIMS participates in supporting the McDonald Fellowship program of MSIF. This fellowship program enables young researchers from developing countries to travel to an established research institution anywhere in the world to work with leading researchers in the field of MS. It is intended that these fellows return to their home countries after finishing the fellowship program to establish their own research using the newly learned techniques.

Beginning in 2017, ECTRIMS will sponsor each year a grant that supports a 2-year McDonald fellowship. This jointly supported fellowship will be called the MSIF-ECTRIMS McDonald Fellowship. As with the other McDonald fellowships also the MSIF-ECTRIMS joint fellowship will be managed by MSIF.

For more information regarding the fellowship program and for application please visit the MSIF webpage <http://www.msif.org/research/awards-grants-and-fellowships/mcdonald-fellowships/>

Reports of ECTRIMS Fellows

The ECTRIMS fellowship program provided support for 36 scientists and clinicians since 2007. It is a great chance for young fellows to get scientific training and clinical experience at leading MS centers all over Europe. To give you an impression of the excellent scientific output of these fellowships we will present once a year representative reports from selected fellows. This year two fellows from the clinical training fellowship and the ECTRIMS/MAGNIMS fellowship have been chosen. Please make your young colleagues aware of the unique opportunity to take part in one of the different fellowship programs.

ECTRIMS Clinical Training Fellowship



Fellow: Zheng Liu, MD, PhD – 2012 Awardee
Fellowship Institution: Queen Square Multiple Sclerosis Centre, UCL Institute of Neurology, London, United Kingdom
Mentor: Prof. Declan Chard
Fellowship Duration: 1 year

Dr Liu's Summary as ECTRIMS Clinical Training Fellow 2013-2014

"I am Dr Liu in Xuanwu hospital of Capital Medical University in Beijing China. I got training in Queen Square MS centre in London as ECTRIMS Clinical Training Fellow 2013-2014. My mentor Dr Chard made a considerate plan using of my time there, developing both the breadth and depth of my experience in MS. I was able to observe the full range of Queen Square MS services. In clinic, I was able to see how they establish a diagnosis of MS, and exclude alternative possibilities, consider disease modifying treatments, and address distressing symptoms. I was also able to attend additional highly relevant clinics, including those run by the uro-neurology and rehabilitation teams. I was also involved in clinical research, and was able to undertake two projects. The first was assessing the measurement of cervical spinal cord atrophy using brain MRI scans, and the second was looking at the distribution of magnetisation transfer abnormalities within brain normal-appearing white matter. Two papers resulting from these studies were published last year."

ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING IN MS FELLOWSHIP



Fellow: Yaou Liu, MD, PhD – 2014 Awardee
Research Topic: Validation of deep gray matter atrophy measurement in Multiple Sclerosis for multi-center studies: a MUSCAT project
Fellowship Institution: MS Center Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Mentor: Prof. Frederic Barkhof
Fellowship Duration: 1 year

Dr Liu's Summary as ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS FELLOWSHIP IN MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING IN MS: Fellow 2014-2015

"I am a neuroradiologist in the Department of Radiology of Xuanwu Hospital, Capital Medical University, Beijing. I was awarded the 2014 ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS Fellowship and worked in Department of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine supervised by Professor Frederik Barkhof and Professor Hugo Vreken in VU medical Center, Amsterdam.

During the fellowship, I performed three main research projects: (1) Validation of Deep Gray Matter Atrophy Measurement in Multiple Sclerosis for Multi-center Studies: a MUSCAT project. (2) A comparative study of brain and spinal cord atrophy in MS and NMO patients. (3) Validation of spinal cord atrophy measurement using head images. In addition to the above projects, I got trained in analyzing MRI data such lesion marking, diffusion measurements for clinical trials and learned skills in MRI data postprocessing. It improved my clinical and research skills and brought me into the international scientific community. Supported by the fellowship, I published six papers in high impact journals such Neurology and Radiology. It was a fantastic and rewarding stay at the VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam supported by ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS fellowship. I appreciated

the fellowship, my dear mentors and lovely colleagues very much.”

Update on ECTRIMS-EAN Guideline

As of the end of the ECTRIMS meeting in Barcelona last year, ECTRIMS has partnered with the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) to develop treatment guidelines for MS. The goal of these set of guidelines is to provide recommendations on the use of currently available drugs in MS to assist physicians, patients, health-care providers, and health policy makers in decision making processes according to published evidence-based data. This activity being the first within the context of a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between both organisations.

The effort is led by Prof. X. Montalban as representative of ECTRIMS and Prof. R. Gold as representative of EAN at the helm of a large steering committee of top MS experts from throughout Europe. At present, an extensive literature search and evidence analysis is ongoing as part of applying the GRADE methodology. It is expected that the guidelines recommendations will be presented during the ECTRIMS meeting in London in September 2016 and the complete text will be available by the end of 2016.

ECTRIMS support of other societies/events

ECTRIMS has provided support to the following event:

1st Global Schools of Neuroimmunology (ESNI, APSNI, ASNI) Pre-Course, Jerusalem (Israel), September 26, 2016

Meeting dates

Regional Teaching Course:

Dubai / UAE: 10 November 2016

ECTRIMS 2016, London, UK, 14-17 September 2016

ECTRIMS 2017, Paris, France, 25-28 October 2017

We are looking forward to seeing you in London!



Please be aware of fraudulent organisations!

WARNING

There are an increasing number of fraudulent websites that impersonate ECTRIMS 2016. We would like to alert all participants to be aware of possible scams and to strongly advise you to only use the official ECTRIMS housing agency Congrex Travel.

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