

## Minutes ELMi Steering Committee Meeting

22.5.11, 13<sup>th</sup> ELMi meeting, Arcachon, France

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Agenda:

- 1) ELMI Meeting 2014  
Oddmund Bakke
- 2) Best practice criteria for organizing ELMI meetings
- 3) Candidates for future meetings 2015 and later

## **1. ELMI meeting 2014:**

Oddmund Bakke presented the next ELMI venue. It will be from 20-23 May 2014 in Oslo at the Holmenkollen Park Hotel Rica ([www.holmenkollenparkhotel.no/en.html](http://www.holmenkollenparkhotel.no/en.html)). It is connected by subway to the public transport and easy to reach from airport and main station. It offers a large auditorium for up to 500 participants, has large space for exhibitions and up to 19 rooms for workshops. For accommodation of participants there are 337 rooms available, which would be sufficient for all participants, if some share a room (expecting a similar maximum size than the last meetings, which had about 350 participants). As suggested during the Core Facility Staff meeting of this year's ELMI meeting, it would be possible to host a Core Facility Staff meeting before the ELMI meeting on Tuesday. Even though Oslo is an expensive city, the organizer aims to offer a full package including accommodation not more expensive than Arcachon registration fee + accommodation.

## **2. Best practice criteria to organize ELMI meetings**

A list of best practice criteria to organize ELMI meetings was compiled during the Steering Committee meeting (SCM) at ELMI 2012 in Leuven (available on the [ELMI web pages](#)). An open letter by four major companies (attached as annex A1), which are ELMI partners since the beginning, was one reason to discuss the relationship between ELMI and companies as well as pricing for companies.

Representatives of the companies present in the steering committee commented that the prices for companies were much higher than in all former ELMI meetings and that it was the first ELMI meeting with different registration fee for academic and industrial participants. As a consequence most companies reduced the number of own participants or only booked one instead of two workshop rooms.

Representatives of smaller companies commented that especially product managers and R&D staff of the larger companies are missing on ELMI 2013 because of this. For the smaller companies one very attractive part of the ELMI meeting was always to have the opportunity to discuss with product managers and R&D of larger companies.

One participant commented that in his opinion it is OK to have higher fees for companies, but the majority of the SCM agreed that industry and academic participants should be treated equally. One unique feature of ELMI meetings are the high-end workshops organized by the industrial participants, if the prices for industry are too high, the quality of the workshops will decrease due to less staff, equipment and number of workshops. Without the high-end workshops there is not much difference between ELMI and other conferences like FOM. According to the present

company representatives this would lead to less interest by the companies, because they cannot explain why to present on two conferences, if they are virtually the same. The suggestion to establish ELMI as a non-profit legal entity was controversially discussed. It was suggested that left-overs from meetings could be carried over to help starting up the next meeting. Argues against were that such a non-profit organization costs money (~10k€ foundation, bureaucracy) and the left-overs of the last meetings were quite low, which does not justify the effort of founding a legal entity.

### **3. Candidates for future meetings 2015 and later**

Three locations were suggested for ELMI 2015:

- a) Hungary, suggested by Gabor Csucs and György Vamosi.
- b) Luxemburg, suggested by Andreas Girod.
- c) Barcelona, suggested by Timo Zimmermann and Julien Colombelli

It was agreed to collect more information by the applicants until end of June and vote by anonymous doodle poll to select the location for ELMI 2015.

**Annex A1: Open letter by Zeiss, Leica, Olympus and Nikon.**

To the Steering Committee of the ELMI meeting 2013 in Arcachon/France

**Concern:** Elmi meeting industry members advisory comment.

The signing industry members of the ELMI steering committee have recently agreed to propose to the committee, the introduction of organizing guidelines in order to preserve the special character and spirit of the ELMI meetings.

Since its foundation in 2000 ELMI has been instrumental in bringing together vendors of enabling technology, microscopy facility staff and customers.

Unlike other science- or technology- focused meetings like 'Neuroscience', 'ASCB', 'FOM' or 'Seeing is believing', ELMI has always been devoted to the very close, cooperative and respectful interaction between vendors and users of microscopy related technology. ELMI's main aim was to foster exchange of ideas, concepts and knowhow, offering workshops for hands on experience of the latest technology organized by the companies, alongside and equally important to high profile presentations from facility employees and scientists. Companies have been contributing equally and have not been treated different to participants from other backgrounds.

More recently, the emphasis of the ELMI meeting seems to have shifted into the direction and style of the other above mentioned meetings, in a manner that provoked the question between industry members, if ELMI will wish to preserve its special character, that has been until now the main reason for companies support and to invest into ELMI.

In particular, this year financial conditions for registration and workshop room booking for industry differed from earlier meetings in a way, that the feasibility of company sponsorship and active participation becomes questionable. We learned that smaller companies, as well as facility heads from less gifted companies/institutions were unable to afford the participation. As a result, the meeting will lack the innovative push small companies contributed in the past and companies can no longer rely on the meeting to act as a fair platform for information exchange.

As a consequence of this situation, we the signing industry members feel the necessity to take a step in order to maintain the meetings spirit and conceptual direction

We think ELMI should be

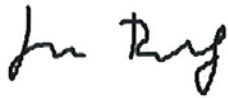
- accessible to participants from all Europe at an affordable price.
- treating company participants and other participants alike.
- keep its focus on the interaction between companies and microscopy facility staff and users.

Therefore we propose to

- make the use of fees equal and transparent.
- limit the fees, according to a previously approved business plan for the meeting.
- request steering committee approval of the business plan and fees before the meeting organizer is approved.

We, the signing parties look forward to the next ELMI meetings.

Signatures of company representatives



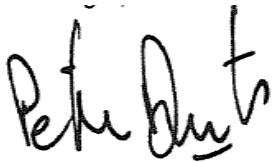
(Jens Rietdorf, Carl Zeiss Microscopy GmbH)

07.05.2013

(Gabriele Burger, Leica Microsystems CMS GmbH)



(Andreas Pfuhl, Olympus Europe Holding GmbH)



(Peter Drent, Nikon Instruments Europe BV)