

# Strategic Plan 2017-2021

# EACR

European Association  
for Cancer Research

## VISION

Science drives prevention and cures of cancer.

## MISSION

EACR galvanises excellence in multidisciplinary cancer research by:  
Fostering interactions between researchers  
Organising cutting edge scientific meetings  
Educating the next generation of cancer scientists  
Campaigning for cancer research with funders, policy-makers and society



## FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The EACR has come a long way. When it was established in 1968, cancer was feared, treatments were in their infancy, survival rates were low and the importance of prevention was only just beginning to be understood.

In 2016, the EACR reached the milestone of 10,000 members. It employs seven staff and in 2018 it will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Now seems like the perfect time to look forward to the next 50 years. What are the challenges that the EACR faces? What are the opportunities it should seize? How can the EACR best serve its members and the wider cancer research community?

This is the first time the EACR has taken this longer-term look at its future. In five years' time, our service to the cancer research community should have been substantially expanded in a number of areas. That requires a bigger, stronger and more financially sustainable organisation. Here we set out how we will achieve those aims.

We are conscious of the need for our plans to be realistic and achievable. We know that some of the changes we want to make will need investment, and we will ensure that developments are fully costed and judged to be affordable and sustainable before they are implemented. We will ensure that staffing costs continue to be proportionate, and that staff are supported to develop in their roles.

The EACR is led by a Board of Directors, experts in their field drawn from across Europe and united in their commitment to support cancer researchers. The EACR staff will continue to work closely with the Board and its Committees to ensure that the EACR is true to its values and continues to flourish and grow.

I hope that you agree with our priorities and I look forward to working with you to achieve this plan.

Anton Berns - EACR President 2016-2018

# 1

## FOSTERING HIGH QUALITY RESEARCH AND INTERACTIONS BETWEEN RESEARCHERS



Our members are the heart of our organisation and the very reason for our existence. We know that what our members value most are the opportunities we create for them to meet each other, develop their scientific networks and be part of a global cancer research community.

What we know today about cancer is largely the result of basic research focused on how cells function and communicate in complex organisms, and how these processes become disrupted in cancer. Whenever possible we need to apply this knowledge for the benefit of patients. At the same time, it is an illusion to think that we know enough and should therefore predominantly focus on translational research. Only the thorough knowledge of how tumours develop and spread will enable us to develop more effective therapies for patients. Therefore, fostering high quality basic cancer research remains the EACR's prime priority. We will maintain this focus whilst seeking to work more intensively with clinical colleagues, especially as the lines between the laboratory and the clinic continue to blur.

We will:

- ◇ Continue to grow and develop our flagship Conference Series, enabling researchers to learn from and interact with each other at small, high quality, focused scientific meetings
- ◇ Develop new services for early career cancer researchers. The Young Cancer Researchers workshop held at EACR24 in Manchester was very successful and we can build on this to create new events and online services.
- ◇ Strengthen the support that we offer to our 14 affiliated national societies, tailored to suit their needs. We do not think that our current Advisory Council structure is the right way for us to work with our national societies. As part of a review of our Committee structure, we will establish a National Societies Committee and review the Advisory Council.
- ◇ Seek new ways to recognise and celebrate individual member achievements throughout their careers.
- ◇ Continue to offer Travel Fellowships to our members to enable them to develop their research by visiting centres of excellence in different countries.
- ◇ Encourage new members to join the EACR. Where staffing resources allow, we will be proactive in identifying and implementing new ways of growing individual membership.
- ◇ Explore the potential for reciprocal membership or member benefit arrangements with other membership organisations, especially those beyond Europe.

# 2

## SEEKING SYNERGY WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS



Cancer researchers understand the importance of collaboration more than most. The EACR shares that understanding. We seek to work with like-minded organisations whenever we can. We value the relationships we have already built, such as those with ESMO, with the OEIC, with the AACR and with our affiliated national societies, and we are eager to further deepen those relationships.

We are excited at the prospect of developing new partnerships – for example, with national cancer charities, with the European Academy of Cancer Sciences (EACS) and with industry. We believe this can help us in supporting a wider community of cancer researchers, increase our influence and visibility, and assist us and the organisations we partner with to achieve our shared vision. It will also allow us to diversify our income streams.

We will:

- ◇ Further develop our relationship with ESMO with the aim of creating an inspiring interface between basic and clinical research.
- ◇ Seek to intensify our relationship with AACR, for example through joint meetings and exploring the potential for joint memberships.
- ◇ Work to strengthen relationships with and between our affiliated national societies to mutual benefit.
- ◇ Work with national cancer charities, for example by supporting them to collaborate beyond national boundaries.
- ◇ Work more closely with industry at our conferences and Congresses and developing new partnerships where there is the potential for mutual benefit.
- ◇ Develop partnerships with other actors in the field such as the EACS.

# 3

## ORGANISING CUTTING EDGE SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CANCER SCIENTISTS



The EACR is known for its top quality conferences. We are particularly proud of our Conference Series; small, focused meetings with a reputation for scientific and organisational excellence.



Our congresses are also important to us; they help us to forge our own identity, to raise our profile and to generate funding to enable us to continue our work. We remain committed to a biennial EACR Congress for the period of this plan. These will be held in 2018 and 2020.



We are delighted that in 2017 and 2019 we will partner with ESMO in the ESMO Congress in partnership with the EACR. We firmly believe in the value of bringing researchers and clinicians together to help them to learn from and understand each other and to foster new collaborations. These joint congresses are an excellent way to achieve this, and they contribute to our financial security in the short to medium term.

We will:

- ◇ Develop the EACR Congresses in 2018 and 2020 to appeal to a broader audience. We will offer more networking and sponsorship opportunities with the aim of delivering a high quality congress and generating increased revenue to support our work.
- ◇ Contribute scientifically and organisationally to the ESMO Congresses in partnership with the EACR in 2017 and 2019, and discuss with ESMO how the partnership might develop beyond 2019.
- ◇ Review the future of the EACR Congress beyond 2020 in the light of our partnerships with ESMO and other organisations, and our experience in Amsterdam in 2018.
- ◇ Continue to develop and grow the Conference Series, working in partnership where appropriate and trialling new models. Our aim will always be to organize excellent meetings which are financially self-supporting.
- ◇ Explore the potential for new mid-sized conferences in partnership with other organisations. For example, building on the success of the EACR-AACR-SIC special conferences.
- ◇ Continue to provide meeting bursaries to our members and introduce innovative new ways to support the education and development of cancer researchers, recognising that attending conferences can be out of the reach of many of our members.
- ◇ Continue to support other organisations' conferences through our Meeting Sponsorship Programme
- ◇ Consider new meeting formats to expand the range of opportunities available (e.g. meetings for non-scientists, one-day conferences, meetings for young researchers).



# 4

## CAMPAIGNING FOR CANCER RESEARCH WITH FUNDERS, POLICY-MAKERS AND SOCIETY



We believe we need to speak out on matters of interest and concern to our members. We know that our members' biggest challenge is securing funding for their research. We will be more vocal about the need to protect the future of basic and applied cancer research by providing a supportive and well-funded environment at a European level. We will work with other organisations internationally to highlight the importance of today's basic scientific research in the health breakthroughs of the future.

We aim to achieve more media exposure for the EACR over the course of this plan. We believe that this will benefit individual members and help us to communicate the benefits of scientific research to the public and policy-makers. This will raise the profile of the organisation and help us to attract new members.

We will:

- ◇ Advocate more strongly the need to protect the future of basic cancer research, including the need to provide adequate funding at a European level.
- ◇ Continue to be a member of ECCO and to contribute to its Oncopolicy Committee.
- ◇ Collaborate with ESMO and the EORTC as founding partners in the CAREFOR initiative.
- ◇ Work more closely with the European Academy of Cancer Sciences (EACS) as that organisation develops.
- ◇ Look for new opportunities to contribute to the development of European cancer policy, using the new Brussels office and considering additional staffing to build influence in this arena.
- ◇ Seek to represent and involve under-represented groups in cancer research wherever we can, starting by reviewing our own processes to make sure we are inclusive and transparent.
- ◇ Be more proactive in securing media coverage for our conferences and for the work presented at them.