

The President and General Secretary's Report to the 2021 AGM

Introduction

Welcome to the 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Aerosol Society. Aerosol science has continued to be at the forefront of national and international science with members of the Society using their expertise to inform decisions at the highest levels of government. This only reinforces the need for a strong skills, expertise and knowledge base in the UK and Ireland in our multidisciplinary field. Given the uncertainty surrounding the ongoing pandemic we decided the AGM should take place online this year in order to reach a quorate number of our members. In fact, all our activities have been conducted online over the past year, including training events, conferences and committee meetings. While we cannot recreate the social interactions characteristic of our in-person events, there are advantages to online meetings and we have worked hard to deliver exciting and useful events.

Drug Delivery to the Lungs 2019 and Focus Meetings

The annual drug delivery to the lungs conference was held online in 2020 in a form of a series of Christmas Lectures. The meeting was over the course of three days, 9th to 11th December using the iVent platform. There were 60 abstracts submitted, which led to 48 on-demand presentations and 12 live flash presentations. 1500 people registered and there were 50 sponsors. The DDL committee have done an excellent job in switching to an online meeting and making a success of it.

Given the focus on delivering the European Aerosol Conference 2021, we did not run any Focus Meetings this year.

As always, we warmly welcome proposals or ideas for future Focus Meetings from our membership, and can provide facilities for online conferences to members interested in hosting.

The European Aerosol Conference 2021

The European Aerosol Conference was due to take place in Birmingham in 2021, but we decided to run it as an online conference. It ran from 30 August - 3 September 2021 with a full programme of talks and posters, including five plenary speakers covering the full breadth of aerosol science as represented by the European Aerosol Assembly Working Groups. We had 765 people register for the conference, 602 submissions, 271 contributed talks and 14 sponsors (1 gold, 4 silver and 9 bronze). Attendees came from 47 countries. We used the Hopin platform that allowed for, formal plenary style talks, parallel talk sessions and inform video discussion around posters. Overall the platform performed well, but there were some problems with the technology. The organising committee were drawn both from the Aerosol Society Committee as well as the broader community. I would like to stress that the organising committee and the team of helpers we employed did an outstanding job and feedback from the European aerosol community has been excellent. The EAC2021 had the potential to have a significant negative impact on the society's finances, but through the hard work of the committee we turned this into a significant surplus.

2020 Annual Aerosol Science Conference

The Annual Aerosol Science Conference was run as a virtual event in 2020. The conference had two sponsors, 2 Keynote speakers, 2 prize talks, 8 contributed talks and 19 posters. Our Keynote presenters focused on issues around Covid aerosol transmission with Allan Bennett presenting on 'Looking for SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens in the air' and Prashant Kumar presenting 'Aerosols, Indoor Air Quality and COVID-19'. We also had talks from our Society prize and award winners Kirsty Pringle and Sarah Barr. TSI and Swisens exhibited. The conference was delivered on Remo which allowed us to host talks as well as have more informal discussions around tables. We did not charge a registration fee for this event.

2020 Fundamentals of Aerosol Science

The Fundamentals of Aerosol Science in 2020 was held online. 199 people registered and around 65 people attended on average through the day, which was up on previous years 41 attendees in 2019 and 43 in 2018. Feedback on the event was generally positive. Clearly the online format was not seen as an impediment and is perhaps an advantage for some. Like the AASC, we did not charge a registration fee.

Grants and awards

During 2020 we continued to review how the Society's awards and grants can best support students and researchers in aerosol science. Our Education Officer, Rachel Miles, managed the awards and independent review process and we awarded the *Doctoral Thesis Prize*, *Doctoral Student Award* (formerly called the CN Davies Award) and the *Career Development Grant* (formerly called the Small Research Grant) after receiving a good number of applications to each. In 2021 we will be introducing the *Carer's Award* which will provide funding to support members of the Society that might not otherwise be able to attend a research event or conference due to personal caring responsibilities. We hope that this award gives our members with caring duties the opportunity to network with the research community and advance their careers, and we encourage eligible members to apply. Please visit the website for details of criteria and deadlines for our different awards: <https://aerosol-soc.com/grants-and-awards/>

Committee news

At the 2020 AGM a number of existing and/or co-opted committee members were elected for 2-year terms (Jacqui Hamilton, Rachael Miles, Darragh Murnane, Ben Murray, Marc Stettler, Matthew Wright), while Dave Worton stood down from the committee at the beginning of 2021. In February 2021, Jonathan Symonds was co-opted onto the committee to represent corporate members. Then in Summer 2021, Mohsen Kazemimanesh and Katherine Manfred were also co-opted onto the committee. Jonathan, Mohsen and Katherine were all part of the EAC 2021 organising committee, where they made significant contributions to organisation of sponsorship, oral sessions and poster sessions, respectively. We are always looking for new committee members, so if you have an interest in shaping how the Society is run and would like to contribute to the work of the committee, or just want to find out more, please contact the Society Administrator Lindsey Stoner at admin@aerosol-soc.com or get in touch any of the current committee.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We continue to inform our policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, seeking advice from colleagues and organisations with an outstanding track record in this important area. Our ED&I policy should ensure we perform our work in a way that enables individuals, the Society and the aerosol science community to flourish regardless of our individual backgrounds and experiences. Amanda Lea-Langton and James McGrath are responsible for developing a Society policy and they, along with our Education Officer, have initiated a support fund for carers to enable them to attend research events and conferences (*Carers' Award*). We continued to monitor gender balance across our keynote speakers for all of the Society's activities including EAC 2021, and the COVID webinars and the Society's [Code of Conduct](#) was used as the basis for the code of conduct for EAC 2021. We are working closely with the CDT to develop a common policy that could benefit both the CDT and Society membership and we are also exploring ways in which the Society could support students from groups that are underrepresented in higher education.

Society membership

Our current membership, as of October 2021, stands at 1085. This represents a 29% increase compared to the same time last year and continues the trend of growing membership. For

comparison, membership in October 2017 was 440. In the last year, we have seen growth in every category of membership and we now have 574 student members, 207 academic members, 263 industry members, 27 retired members and 14 corporate members. The increase in membership this year is likely due in part to our organisation of EAC 2021 but we hope to continue to represent such a vibrant and growing community. Notably, the large number of corporate members this year is because membership of the Society was included as part of the sponsorship package for EAC 2021, and we hope to retain these members in coming years and the committee is working to rationalise the corporate membership package and to give greater visibility to corporate members, on the website and in e-newsletters. As ever, we are very grateful for the support of our members, without whom we would not be able to do the work that we do. As we continue to grow as a Society, we would be very grateful for feedback on what we are doing well, and where we can improve. If you have any comments or suggestions, we would be delighted to hear them. Please get in touch with Lindsey at admin@aersol-soc.com or speak to a committee member.

Website and communications

Although we maintain regular content and features curated by the Committee and our Administrator, we would be delighted to include contributions, large or small, from members and strongly encourage you to consider submitting an article. If you have any comments on items in the Newsletter or on the Website, or would like to contribute a topical news article, showcase your group's research, or advertise a job, PhD vacancy or upcoming event, please submit these contributions to Diane Foster (admin@aersol-soc.com). We have continued to send newsletters, but have not achieved the frequency we would like in part due to the workload from the EAC and a changeover in support staff. If Katherine Manfred is elected to the committee in this AGM she will take charge of the newsletter. She led the EAC21 newsletter.

European Aerosol Assembly News

The presidency of the EAA passed to the Aerosol Society after the end of the EAC2020. Prof. Murray recently chaired a council meeting of the EAA where discussions included: 1. The International Aerosol Conference, which will be held in Athens in 2022; 2) Future EACs in 2023 (Malaga) and in 2024 (Tampere, Finland). 3) proposals for EACs in 2025 and beyond and 4) a proposal for a new open access journal; 5) a proposal for the Icelandic dust association to join the EAA.

Benjamin Murray (President)

Marc Stettler (General Secretary)