

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

on behalf of the **European Society for Molecular Imaging** it is our great pleasure to welcome you all to Antwerp, Belgium for the society's 9th annual meeting: the European Molecular Imaging Meeting 2014.

THANKS

Particular thanks go to the **EMIM 2014 Committee** and the **ESMI staff** for their dedication and commitment not only to the meeting but also to the vision of the society. Special thanks to my **programme co-chair** Fabian Kiessling and the **educational chairs** Mathias Höhn and Juan José Vaquero for providing us again with an outstanding scientific and educational programme. Also special thanks to all the "red T-shirted" young **volunteers** whose commitment is to make you feel welcome, to guide you through the *Stadsschouwburg* and the EMIM 2014.

Thanks a lot to the **participating companies** for their support and helping us to make this conference – and also the ESMI – a big success. Some of them also contributed to the **EMIM get-together** on Thursday evening in the beautiful Zoo of Antwerp in the famous diamond district.

We are grateful to **Elisabeth Jonckers** and **Dimitri Roose** for their commitment in organizing this event on behalf of the young Belgium ESMI community.

We are very happy that our "**partner**" **societies** are contributing to the EMIM: the European Association of Nuclear Medicine – EANM, the European Society of Radiology – ESR, and the European Society of Molecular and Functional Imaging in Radiology – ESMOFIR, and – for the first time – the European Microscopy Society – EMS. We strongly believe that their life science members have a clear common scientific interest with our ESMI members and that cross fertilization will strengthen each others research domains.

The focus session on "**Correlative Light and Electron Microscopy**" shall contribute to bridge the gap between the two research fields and your participation is highly recommended.

SO WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

Those of you who attended previous ESMI meetings know how **interactive and enjoyable** these meetings are, the ESMI continuously strives for new ways to support our members in finding their way and feel supported within the European imaging science community.

For the first time we are offering you **four sessions in parallel** to ensure that each of you finds a session of interest during the meeting. This also reflects our aim to **broaden the society and to bring in "new" people** in order to show the benefit of cross-communication. This also means that the programme is really "**packed**" but we are very convinced that you'll enjoy the interactive atmosphere and enlarge your network for future collaborations.

As an answer to **How to strengthen European funded science networking** within our society, we have organized a focus session as well as a poster session on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning to **introduce 20 large-scale funded European projects**. On top of that there will be a focus session providing you an update on the **European imaging**

infrastructure and H2020 which shall support you on how to finance and organize European Imaging research activities. Besides the established **ESMI study groups** on "Image-Guided Drug Delivery" and "Intra-Operative Imaging" a third study group initiated by Ron Heeren on Mass Spectrometry is having its founding meeting this year in Antwerp: a warm welcome to all the **MALDI** people! If you have the demand for further study groups do not hesitate to get this started! Be invited to all study group meetings and sessions in the scope of the EMIM.

Also new is the establishment of the **young ESMI – yESMI**. The first yESMI group was founded in Belgium by a vibrant group of young MI scientists. We hope this Belgian initiative (BMIC) will be the seed of true European molecular imaging networking amongst young scientist forming a solid and continuously rejuvenating basis of our precious MI society.

This year a record of altogether **337 abstracts** thereof **125 Young Investigator Award applications** were submitted, reviewed, evaluated, and assigned to the sessions. We have increased the number of student travel stipends to encourage attendance of early-stage scientists.

To further support and stimulate young scientists, the shortlisted YIA applicants will be evaluated and the "best" three YIA presentations will be held (again) during the final Plenary Session on Friday. Furthermore, **15 guided poster walks** have been scheduled on Thursday and Friday with no other competing sessions in order to enhance the knowledge exchange of experienced and young researchers. Each of the guided poster walks will be chaired by two chair persons and will result in one poster award. These **15 Poster Awards** will also be presented during the Closing Ceremony on Friday. **Be there in great numbers to support all these young awardees!**

We are especially proud and excited that Hans Clevers from Utrecht will give the **inaugural keynote lecture**, entitled "*Visualizing stem cells in vivo; growing stem cells in vitro*". We are much looking forward to the further **plenary lectures** by Vladislav Verkhusha (New York), by Seth Grant (Edinburgh), and Guus van Dongen (Amsterdam), as well as the **Highlight Lecture** by Markus Schwaiger (Munich) and the plenary lectures by the **winner of the ESMI award** which will be announced during the Opening Ceremony and the **winners of the ESMI award for excellent PhD thesis**: Laila Ritsma from Utrecht and Hans Wehrl from Tübingen.

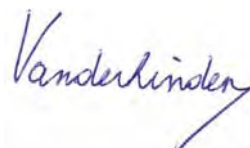
The EMIM will start for the first time with **academic industry sessions** organized by PerkinElmer on "Infectious Diseases" and Bruker on "An Eye on the Future of Imaging". Thanks a lot also for this contribution!

FINALLY

As the venue of the conference is the main theatre hall located in the heart of the city, we hope you will enjoy the conference, have an interactive meeting while enjoying the many terraces, coffee bars and lovely spots in the beautiful city of Antwerp.

A very warm welcome to all of you!

Sincerely,



Annemie van der Linden – ESMI President