

Presidential Report to the ECHA General Assembly – 3rd March 2016, Vienna

Dear ECHA Members!

This report covers the slightly less than 7 months from our 2015 General Assembly in last August in Odensee. Therefore I have good news: I will be brief.

ECHA is first and foremost serving its members. A few highlights of this work from the past 7 months will follow.

- We have an increase in paying members of ECHA having more than 330 members now. This is a significant increase from the membership a few years ago, which was below 200. Our membership will increase above 500 when we will invite non-member participants of this ECHA conference as ECHA members for one year.
- We continued the distribution of the spring and autumn issues of ECHA News as a pdf file directly to our members. Many thanks for Annette Heinbokel for her continuous efforts to fill ECHA News with high-quality content! Please help her more in this!
- With the work of Lianne Hoogeveen ECHA has been registered as a trade mark. This establishes our legal rights to defend the name and logo of ECHA if someone is using it without permission.
- The Facebook-Group of ECHA increased its membership from 350 to more than 500 in the past 7 months and has a very vivid and high quality content. Many thanks for those who contribute to the site regularly. Please join our Facebook site, if you have not done so.
- We continue the renewal of ECHA's web-site; the team of Stefan Schmedt, our new web-master, Daniel Tuzes, the content manager and Balazs Hornyak, the editor, put up a high number of up-to-date news, established an upgraded version of the map of the European Talent Support Network. We will introduce a personal access of the web-site for each ECHA members in 2016.
- After issuing a call and receiving applications, the General Committee decided that the 2018 ECHA Conference will be in Dublin on 8-11 August 2018.

This were a few "small" steps to make ECHA's activity more continuous between its excellent conferences, but none of them is really small, since they are all vital to allow our members to share their expertise and knowledge.

As large-scale steps to give ECHA more strength we made and make three important changes:

1. First, we will continue our ECHA membership campaign. The growing interest towards the European Talent Support Network helped and will help us in this. However, your personal contribution can not be underestimated to convince people that it is worth to join to the ECHA family. When going home, please ask your colleagues and friends to be members to this excellent community!
2. The second very important breakthrough area is ECHA-education. Christian Fischer will tell a detailed report on the work of the ECHA Education Board. We hope that the General Assembly will incorporate the Education Board to the Standing Orders of ECHA.
3. Last, but not least the 2014 General Assembly decided that ECHA will help and guide the formation of a European Talent Support Network. We had a great progress in the organization of this Network as it will be detailed in a separate report. Currently the Network has close to 250 cooperating nodes in 25 European countries. The 2nd round of the qualification of European Talent Centres will be opened on March 15th and will have a deadline of April 30th. The call to become a European Talent Point will be re-opened soon and will remain open until September 30th. Please spread these news when returning home!

It was a great pleasure to see how the ECHA-spirit grew further in the 7 months passed. Many thanks all of you for your contribution! The General Committee decided that we will organize the 2017 ECHA General Assembly at the Swiss Conference in Gifted Education and Talent Development September 7th to 9th 2017 at the Campus of Brugg/Windisch. The General Committee will consider a pilot experiment to allow the e-participation of ECHA members having a stream-coverage of the General Assembly at the net as well as a Twitter-based possibility for on line comments and proposals. These plans are only preliminary and will be finalized later. See you at the 16th International ECHA Conference Dublin in between 8th to 11th of August 2018!

Vienna, March 2016.

*Prof. Peter Csermely
president of ECHA*