

Presidential Report to the ECHA General Assembly 2018 (Including the Vice President's report)

Dear ECHA Members!

This report covers the less than one year from our 2017 General Assembly in last September in Brugg-Windisch, Switzerland. ECHA was continuing its 30-years traditions to serve its members. Let me highlight a few points of this work from the past year.

- ECHA celebrates its 30th birthday. It was on 29th May 1987, when ECHA was founded in Utrecht, and it was on 10th November 1988, when the first ECHA Conference started in Zürich establishing ECHA as a viable organization. The General Committee decided to celebrate the 30th birthday by collecting information on all past ECHA Conferences and by publishing them on the ECHA website. Please find the summaries here: <http://echa.info/echa-conferences>. I am thankful to Ragnild Zonneveld, the president of the Dutch ECHA Association for her work to assemble the rich material. We have also digitized the past issues of the ECHA News, which became accessible to our members as pdf files here: <http://echa.info/newsletter/94-old-issues-of-echa-news>. Great thanks to Lianne Hoogeveen and her colleagues, as well as Annette Heinbokel for their help in this.
- The First Thematic ECHA Conference on Creativity will be in Dubrovnik (Croatia) on 16-18 October 2019. The 17th International ECHA Conference will be in Porto (Portugal) on 9-12 September 2020. We have published the call for the Second Thematic ECHA Conference in 2021. With these, the flow of ECHA Conferences will become continuous, and each of our annual General Assemblies will be held at one of ECHA Conferences.
- We have a stable number of paying members of ECHA having close to three hundred members now. We are continuing our tradition to invite all participants of the Dublin ECHA Conference, who were not members of ECHA to become a "conference member" between September 2018 and 2019. "Conference members" receive ECHA News, and ECHA newsletters and may obtain High Ability Studies for a nominal price of 27 EUR (33 USD) by paying at <http://echa.info/membership>. Please note that from the start of 2018 you may also pay your ECHA membership using PayPal. The General Committee introduced a new understanding of the duration of ECHA membership by dividing the year to four quarters. In this way it is not an economic disadvantage to become an ECHA member e.g. in April, since this membership is not expiring in the end of the year (as in the former system) but in March 31st next year. I hope that the growing interest towards the European Talent Support Network will help us to increase our membership. We developed a Data Protection Policy regarding our members' data, which will be detailed in the Report of the ECHA Secretary.
- After a detailed and meticulous work the ECHA Education Board finalized the basic components and conditions of ECHA training including the details of the application and evaluation of trainings which want to become ECHA trainings, which will be covered by Christian Fischer in his report. We have uploaded a detailed information to the ECHA website. Interested members may contact Lianne Hoogeveen for more information at training@echa.info. Great thanks for the Board of its work!
- Our scientific journal, High Ability Studies has increased its impact factor from 0.737 to 1.13. Its circulation number and downloads are also increasing. Great thanks to all contributors and to the Editor-in-chief, Albert Ziegler!
- 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!

- Thanks to the efforts of Victor Müller-Oppliger, most ECHA National Correspondents have been re-elected, and members were able to read the reports of more than half of them in the last three issues of ECHA News. We will continue this series, and will re-vitalize this key asset of ECHA in other ways, too. From now on we will organize annual meetings of the National Correspondents at each International, or Thematic ECHA Conference.
- The Facebook-Group of ECHA increased its membership from 500 to more than 2100 and has a very actively changing and high quality content. Many thanks for those who contribute to the site regularly – including our vice-president, Albert Ziegler, who has frequent posts. Please join our Facebook site (if you have not done so), and follow Albert's example to share your findings, ideas and questions with this growing community.
- Last but not least, following the decision of the 2014 General Assembly to help and guide the European Talent Support Network, I am happy to report that the Network has more than 350 cooperating nodes in more than forty countries in Europe and all around the world. In 2018 the Qualification Committee of ECHA qualified four new Talent Centres in Belgium, Croatia, Portugal and the United Arab Emirates. With this the number of Talent Centres raised to 24. The 3rd meeting of the Talent Centre Representatives was very successful in February 2018. The Network is served by its Council led by Albert Ziegler and by its coordinator and secretary, Csilla Fuszek. The Council established its plans to enlist the network as an NGO to enable to get funds for the operation of the Network. The Network has its Youth Platform which also elected its Council led by Armin Fabian. The Youth Platform organized two very successful European Youth Summits in 2016 and 2017 and started a number of joint projects. As the Dublin Conference does successfully, all future international and thematic ECHA Conferences will incorporate a European Youth Summit making a new tradition related to ECHA.

These were some of the important highlights of ECHA's work in the past year. However, the most important part, the personal contacts, the exchange of best practices and the joy of cooperation can not be really described in a report. This ECHA-spirit is growing further opening new and new chapters in the history of our organization. Many thanks all of you for your contribution!

Prof. Peter Csermely
president of ECHA