

NOVEMBER 2023

Dear EBC Members, Partners, and Community,

It is my absolute pleasure to be addressing you in this first 'Letter from the President', particularly after yet another important and jam-packed year for EBC.

Since this is my first letter, I take the opportunity to introduce myself. I have served on the EBC Board for over 6 years, linked to my role as Secretary of the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology. I am currently Professor of Physiology at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. My research group is trying to figure out pathways in the brain that control appetite, which is relevant for eating disorders at both ends of the body weight spectrum as well as for brain disease and therapy induced changes in body weight.

Progress in brain research and innovation, including in my field, is essential to better understand the brain in health and disease and to make therapeutic advances. For this, we need animal experimentation, and hence, I'm pleased to have been part of **EBC's strong science advocacy activities this year**, particularly linked to a recent European Citizens' Initiative calling for the banning of all animal research in Europe. That was just one of the major activities that took place across 2023.

In the last few weeks alone, we rounded out the year with a series of milestone events that not only reflected the end of a fruitful year but also prepared us for another major year ahead of us. The **Brain Innovation Days** at the end of October, our third in-person edition, was bigger than ever. It brought together the wider brain community – with increased interaction with investors, innovators, patients, and relevant policymakers – to address the common issues and challenges we face, but also showcase the immense strides our community is making to address the burdens and the possibilities of brain health in Europe.

NOVEMBER 2023

This resonates not only at the European level but nationally as well and carried into an event organised by EBC under the aegis of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. In partnership with the Spanish Brain Council and the Spanish National Research Council, the **“Our Brains, Our Future” event**, hosted in the Senate of Spain, demonstrated just how important and urgent the prioritisation of brain health and research is at the European level.

Working across policy levels is vital for our work, demonstrated by the successful launch of the **Swiss Brain Health Plan** in Zürich last month. An outcome of consensus building from within the key stakeholders within the brain community in Switzerland, the development of such a plan is not only relevant for Swiss citizens but plays a vital role in Europe and beyond, feeding directly in the implementation of the World Health Organization’s Intersectoral Global Action Plan (IGAP) on epilepsy and other neurological disorders. We were pleased to share these latest developments at the final General Assembly of 2023 last week and have such a productive meeting to conclude the year.

As we enter the festive season, I take the opportunity to wish you all happy holidays and all the very best for the New Year!

EBC already has plenty in the pipeline for 2024 – we can’t wait for our continued collaboration with you all.

Sincerely,



Suzanne L. Dickson,
President