

Dear friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the forthcoming EFI meeting to be held in Mannheim/Heidelberg, Germany that is jointly organized with DGI. This is the 31st EFI meeting in a row that from a gathering of a small number of enthusiasts has grown to become the foremost international meeting in the field of immunogenetics and histocompatibility. We as a society are committed to help the advancement of the H&I and the well being of those need of transplantation. With that in mind, the 2017 EFI Conference will bring together participants from more than 45 countries from all over the world working in the fields of genetics, immunology and transplantation to debate key topics across this area.

The local organizers have selected an attractive location for the scientific, educational and social programs. The motto of the conference: “**Translational Immunogenetics**” reflects very well the scientific program covering the latest developments in the field of Immunogenetics, the further improvement in organ and hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, and contemporary immunotherapy. These topics will be subjected to a thorough discussion through plenary lectures, abstracts, teaching, mini oral, meet the expert, sessions and symposia. The Ceppellini Lecture this year will be delivered by Dr. John Kappler at the Opening Ceremony followed by Julia Bodmer Young Scientist Award and ‘*HLA*’ Journal Award.

I hope the upcoming EFI meeting will provide you with a forum to exchange scientific ideas, will inspire new research, and new contacts for closer co-operation, so that we can, together, envisage the future of a promising development of the H&I area.

I will be most happy to welcome you to the beautiful cities of Germany - Mannheim and Heidelberg for a meeting that promises to be exciting and without any doubt successful.

Elissaveta Naumova
EFI President

Dear colleagues,

This year's EFI conference will be the third EFI annual meeting carried out together with the German Society for Immunogenetics (DGI). After Baden-Baden in 2004 and Ulm in 2009 we are convinced that the 2017 EFI/DGI event will be also as successful as the previous two conferences were. We feel honoured that the EFI community selected Mannheim and Heidelberg to carry out the 2017 EFI conference. Both, the local organizing team around Caner Süsal and the whole DGI board have made the greatest efforts in order to set up a scientifically and socially unforgettable event. We would like to thank the EFI scientific and the EFI Education committees for their important support in setting up the scientific and educational programme of this 31st EFI and the 25th DGI annual conference.

HLA diagnostics have been always technically very demanding and with a view to future technology. This year's annual event will also focus on the most recent technical developments which we are facing as a scientific and highly specialized society. The continuously growing polymorphism in the HLA region and the need to test and detect unambiguously all these genetic variants is a unique challenge for all H&I diagnostic teams. This explains why the HLA people have been always in the forefront of technology, with NGS currently massively pushing in the routine diagnostics. All EFI and DGI members will be delighted to hear what is new and what is coming up in the next couple of years.

The Transplantation Immunology Societies around the world have always been striving for a closer cooperation. Setting up common standards, guidelines and rules appears to be a pre-requisite for the globally operating transplantation logistics. In so far it appears logical that the H&I societies were among the first in the medical field to introduce laboratory accreditation as an important quality indicator for laboratory services. This year's EFI/DGI conference will provide once again the opportunity for exchange and interaction in this important field.

Continuous training and education are equally important in order to motivate and train young colleagues entering the H&I field but also in order to inform and update experienced colleagues working in this field for many years. The newly created ESHI diploma provides an additional challenge and motivation for people to enter and stay in our field. Apart from excellent Teachings Sessions planned, in this year's EFI/DGI conference there will be an opportunity for three young colleagues to take the ESHI examination.

Exchange of scientific information but also socializing are important features for a successful conference. The EFI/DGI event in Mannheim and Heidelberg will provide excellent opportunities for all conference delegates to get together and discuss issues in a pleasant setting. The conference venue and the cities of Mannheim and Heidelberg in general are among the most impressive in South Germany and we hope that many delegates will have the opportunity to visit the beautiful Rhine-Neckar region either before or after the meeting.

Finally, I would like to thank on behalf of the DGI Executive board and the DGI members, the local organisers for their great work. I wish to all delegates, guests and faculty members a fruitful and productive meeting and hope that we will also have the opportunity to carry out further EFI/DGI joint events in future.

Joannis Mytilineos

DGI President

Dear Colleagues,

It is a great honor for us to host the EFI community in 2017 at another great location of Europe, in the Rhine-Neckar Region with two beautiful cities of Germany in close proximity, Mannheim and Heidelberg.

The scientific part of the EFI-DGI Joint Meeting 2017 will be held in Mannheim, in the modern conference center Rosengarten which is embedded into one of the largest and most beautiful Art Nouveau parks in Europe across from the Baroque Water Tower of Mannheim. For the Gala Dinner we invite you to the world-famous Heidelberg Castle.

With the help of the EFI Scientific Committee and under the motto '*Translational Immunogenetics*' an exciting scientific program covering the latest developments in the field of Immunogenetics was prepared. Seventy-two premium quality abstracts, which received the highest scores in the evaluation process, will be presented during the eight Oral Abstract Sessions and the Best Abstracts Session. To draw attention to an additional 24 highly scored submissions, we introduced four Mini Oral Sessions. Also among the contributions accepted as posters you will find excellent science that we regrettably could not consider for the Oral Abstract Sessions due to space limitations. Great experts accepted our invitation to speak in our Plenary, Meet the Expert, and Teaching Sessions, and I am sure you will enjoy the 'Hot Debates' between Frans Claas and Stefan Schaub on MFI and between Steven Marsh and Joannis Mytilineos on NGS. We will close the Conference with a Special Lecture on the 'Cure of HCV' given by Ralf Bartenschlager.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Mannheim and Heidelberg,

Yours

Caner Süsal

Conference President on behalf of the German Society for Immunogenetics (DGI) and Conference Co-Presidents Volker Daniel, Sabine Scherer, Michael Müller-Steinhardt, and Hien Tran