

A message from the president



Dear EMS members,

After four years as president of the EMS, I want to take a brief look back. When I presented the plans for my presidency at the council meeting in Prague in 2017, I was quite ambitious about what I thought would be important and what could be achieved in these four years.

I want to thank the members of the EC, the other committees, and the EMS office for their tremendous work in these difficult times, with the pandemic, a war in Europe, a website hack at the office in Helsinki, and many more obstacles. First, I would like to apologize for some of the late payments and replies from the office. We were not functioning well when the EMS secretary Elvira Hyvönen went on maternity leave. But fortunately, now she is back, and we have also decided to increase the office work capacity by an extra person who will be hired soon.

Although we sometimes felt that we would fail to achieve anything in this period, I think we can be optimistic about the future of the EMS.

First of all, the reorganization of the EMS Publishing House into EMS Press has been successfully completed. EMS Press has successfully implemented its new Subscribe-to-Open (S2O) publishing strategy and more than 20 of its journals are now published under this model. Despite this complex transition, EMS Press has established a solid financial basis, and the funds from the liquidation of the old Publishing House can and will be used for the support of scientific activities of the EMS.

The first call for nominations for an EMS Young Academy (EMYA) has been successful, and the selection committee will select up to 30 people who will be members of the EMYA for four years.

The first call for the creation of EMS Topical Activity Groups (EMS-TAG) to integrate the scientific cooperation across Europe in all mathematical fields has also been successful, and the evaluation committee will recommend the first set of TAGs to be approved by the executive committee in the next spring.

A first call for large, inclusive, and cross-institutional events can range from special semesters to interdisciplinary study groups and large showcase events, and such calls will be open on December 1, 2022.

A topic that will need further attention and a definite change of existing procedures is the sustainability and the CO₂ footprint in the EMS activities. This was easy during the pandemic years, where almost no in-person scientific or business meetings took place. Noticing, however, that it is not a good way to communicating and working together by solely looking into little rectangles on computer screens, we must think anew how to combine our need for in-person meetings and communication with the need of reducing the negative effects on the climate.

Another topic that will need further discussion is the way in which we operate big conferences like the ECM in the future. The new vice president Beatrice Pelloni will initiate a discussion of this soon.

A major concern is the ever-decreasing funding for mathematics in the European Research Council. Currently, discussions are ongoing at different levels on what are the reasons there are so few mathematics ERC proposals (with the effect that the budget for mathematics is shrinking). We call on the mathematical community to submit more excellent proposals on all levels to the ERC. Even though this is work and the success ratio may be small, writing such a proposal has a value by itself because it sharpens the view on one's own research and also helps the mathematical community.

In the last years, with all the difficulties, it became increasingly clear to me that the mathematical community is very small in the whole scientific world and that to prevent the reduction of our beloved Mathematics to an exotic niche we must stand and work together.

With this closing remark, I want to say good-bye to you. It was a great honor and pleasure to serve the EMS. And now I hand over the editorial to the new president Jan Philip Solovej.

Volker Mehrmann
President of the EMS