

Dear members of the WFHSS

As 2020 was a special year for all of us we had to decide to cancel the WFHSS congress due to the special circumstances with the Covid pandemic. Instead, the EC of the WFHSS organized a digital version.

We were blessed that 2021 the Geneva congress could continue with its live congress since the circumstances in Europe changed for the benefit and the EC decided upon advice of the Swiss association that it was safe for our members and partners of industry to organize that congress. We have received many positive reactions, both from our members as well as from our partners of industry.

After two years of preparation, the Hong Kong organization committee decided at the end of February 2022 that due to the uncertain circumstances in Hong Kong because of the Covid regulations and quarantine measures it was injudicious to organize the WFHSS congress of 2022 in Hong Kong.

The EC of the WFHSS had to take a decision with regards to the WFHSS congress: are we going to organize a 2022 congress or are we going to cancel it. Because of the numerous positive reactions as mentioned before, the EC decided that there must be a WFHSS congress this year for the benefit of all our members to collect and share knowledge.

After this decision the EC of the WFHSS decided that in these exceptional circumstances, this year's WFHSS congress will not be organized by a member association but by the WFHSS itself.

The reasons why the EC decided so are:

1: It normally takes an organization that receives most votes from the members of the WFHSS 2 years to organize a world congress like this with everything that comes with it to organize it according to the WFHSS guidelines.

Some of the members of the EC already experienced the organization of the WFHSS congress and by combining all the experience of these members it is possible, but it will be a lot of work in a very short period of time

2: To organize a WFHSS congress costs a big budget for over a million euro: in this short period of time, it is uncertain if we will be able to collect such an amount of money from sponsors and delegates. Therefore, we do not want to expose a national association to the huge financial risk that this will involve since the national organization would be fully responsible for a possible loss on the balance.

After this decision it was necessary to find a location that was available for the days in which the congress is supposed to be held (Tuesday to Saturday, the dates that are well suited for the organization (end of October until the end of November) and that can house all the delegates and with enough space and height for our partners of industry to show the delegates the newest insights of the products that they offer
Some congress centers in France and some in Spain where able to do so.

Since the WFHSS congress already has been organized in France we decided to go for Spain and in the city of Barcelona we have found a congress center that fulfilled to all the demands needed.

To inform the Spanish association about these decisions under these exceptional circumstances we organized a digital meeting with the President of the AAES, miss Sarah Lopez on Friday March 25th 2022 and a delegation of the members of the EC. We wanted to inform her because we didn't want it to be a surprise that the announcement for this congress was going to be made soon after this meeting because of the timing for the call for abstracts and to inform our partners of industry and offer them the time to make sure they can attend with a stand.

We also wanted to offer the members of the AAES some privileges since this year's congress is going to be in their country without the involvement of the AAES as explained in the above.

WFHSS offered:

- Translation in Spanish: The language of the congress will be English: translation via headphones in the Spanish language will be provided by professional translators paid by the WFHSS
- A room for around 380 people for a period of two hours as a parallel session. The AAES can organize a Spanish spoken parallel session during this timeframe by speakers they invite by themselves.
- Reduction of the registration fees for the congress to all members of AAES
- A seat in the Scientific Committee for the president of AAES
- A seat in the jury of the Poster Winning award during the WFHSS congress 2022

We as EC of the WFHSS are looking very much forward to this year's congress in Barcelona and to be able to meet friends and collect and share knowledge.

With warm regards

The EC of the WFHSS