

Future activities in ESCIF

Some of the following activities and projects are those already planned and set in motion by the Executive; others involve collaboration with other members of the SCI community. Further proposals for projects will be discussed at the Congress in the session "Future activities".

Please remember that the Executive is always pleased to hear of new initiatives from member organisations, particularly if these could benefit from a collaborative effort with other member organisations. Any ideas and proposals should be sent to president@escif.org.

Successful (re)integration of people with SCI

This project was set in motion already in 2014 but the idea started already in 2013. The final reports from the five working groups was due in January 2016. Unfortunately, some of the groups was diminished due to illness among some of the group members. Therefore some of the groups were delayed in handing in their final report.

The Executive decided to postpone the big final report that will consist of all the reports from the working groups and most importantly conclusions and recommendations regarding the aim of the project which is to answer the question:

"What can your organisation do to facilitate the successful (re-) integration of people with spinal cord injury in the community?"

After the congress in Vienna the work with writing the big final report will start and when that work is finished the report will be disseminated among the ESCIF member organisations to be used in their work to contribute to the successful (re-) integration of people living with spinal cord injury in the different European countries.

An abstract regarding the results of the project has also been sent in to the ISCoS congress in Vienna 2016. At the moment we don't know if it has been accepted for a presentation or not.

We thank Coloplast for their continued support of this project.

ESCIF Congress and Assembly of Delegates 2017

Next year's ESCIF Congress and Assembly of Delegates will be held in Dom Pacug, Slovenia, in May 2017. The venue is The Pacug Health Resort Centre is situated nearby the Adriatic Sea amidst the Strunjan Nature Park. We are very grateful to the Slovenian Paraplegic Association for offering to host the Congress in 2017!

ESCIF strategy group

As was mentioned at the last Congress, the ESCIF Executive has discussed the idea of forming a strategy group. We are very keen to go ahead with this idea.

Four representatives from some of our member organisations have been invited to join the Executive for a weekend of brainstorming and discussion in October at the Manfred Sauer Stiftung in Lobbach. The aim of the meeting will be to evaluate the progress and results of the Federation since its foundation in 2006 to the present; to draw up plans and goals for the medium term i.e. the next 3 – 5 years; to devise a longer-term strategy – where should ESCIF be in 10 years' time?

ESCIF financing group

Part of the Executive have formed a group to draw up a "sponsor and funding plan" for ESCIF in the future. We all know that the regular finances of ESCIF is of a small scale. To set any kind of project or other events in motion ESCIF is completely reliant on finding sponsors for that activity. During the coming year the group will look wider for alternative financing opportunities for ESCIF in order to be able to start up new projects and activities.

ESCIF Congress grants

Last year the Executive presented an idea to set up a small number of "ESCIF Congress grants" that will cover congress registration costs and a fixed amount towards travelling expenses for one participant (plus assistant where required). During this year the Executive will move the work forward to make the idea to fruition with the ambition to have the grants in place before next year's Congress.

ISCoS Congress in Vienna 2016

The ISCoS Congress will take place in 14 – 16 September in Vienna. The President and the Vice-President will participate at the congress.

ESCIF have been addressed by ISCoS with a request to organise the Consumer Workshop. We have also admitted an abstract for the results of the Successful Integration Project.

Further projects ...

Last year we wrote about an idea to a new project which we haven't started up yet due to lack of finances. The Executive still intends to move forward with this project. If we can find finances to be able to launch the project we plan to do so this coming year

Growing your organisation

A project designed to help national organisations to develop their organisations, activities and lobbying potential. The project is based on three specific initiatives.

- As we know that many of our present members (and prospective members) are currently suffering from cutbacks in their traditional funding, the first focus will be on

fundraising. The idea is to create a tool-box of ideas and activities that can be used to identify and contact alternative sources of funding. While we fully recognise that there may be cultural differences between European countries with respect to voluntary/humanitarian/charity organisations and how they can/should be funded, we believe that an exchange of ideas will be extremely valuable.

- We plan to establish a “partner programme” in which ESCIF member organisations agree to act as a mentor for small or newly-established SCI consumer organisations (particularly organisations that are not yet members of ESCIF). Many ESCIF member organisations are/have been involved in such “partnerships” before – we would like to take these efforts “one step further” by making it possible for smaller SCI organisations to learn from and participate actively in ESCIF.
- All our member organisations, at some time or another, are involved in lobbying the government of their countries and the relevant decision-making authorities (health, social services etc). The final focus of this “umbrella project” will look at how to strengthen these efforts – using the experience of ESCIF members as a starting point.

Ageing well with SCI

This project is an offshoot of the Congress in the Netherlands. A discussion on the final day of the meeting concluded with the idea of a longer term project based on the theme of how people with SCI can live a longer and a more healthy life.

In the President’s report you can read how the project has developed during the last year. The project group, consisting of member organisations, plan to continue with the project and is fact meeting here in Vienna during the Congress. ESCIF will continue to support the project and among other things have a representative in the project group.

On behalf of the Executive, Gunilla Åhrén, ESCIF Vice-President, Gothenburg May 2016