

New international collaboration: Young Otolaryngologists of IFOS – ‘YO-IFOS’



BY KATE STEPHENSON, NATACHA TEISSIER AND NICOLAS FAKHRY

The Young Otolaryngologists of IFOS, founded in Paris in 2017, has an ambition to fulfil four key missions at an international level: education, research, networking and congress-related activities. **Kate Stephenson** tells us more about this exciting initiative.

During the recent International Federation of Otorhinolaryngological Societies (IFOS) World Congress held in Paris in June 2017, a new ‘Young Otolaryngologists group’ was created. It focuses on ENT surgeons aged 30 to 45 from across the world and from all subspecialties. These young otolaryngologists may be in education, or in the early phases of a clinical or academic career.

History in the making

The 21st IFOS World Congress, Paris 2017, saw 8500 attendees and it was estimated that around 3200 of these were less than 45 years of age. At this fantastic meeting, the Young Otolaryngologists of IFOS (YO-IFOS) was born.

The new YO-IFOS board is composed of an Executive Committee (President and General Secretary) from the same country as the current IFOS President and a matching committee from the next country elected to host the quadrennial IFOS meeting. Canada will host the next IFOS World Congress in Vancouver, June 2021.

In Paris 2017, the first President and General Secretary were named, and regional secretaries were elected from each continent. These first regional secretaries have been tasked with assembling a regional committee representing each diverse geographical area.

“Young otorhinolaryngologists are the future!”



Young and active otolaryngologists at IFOS, Paris 2017.

The aims of YO-IFOS

The Young Otolaryngologists group has the ambition to fulfil four key missions: education, research, networking and congress-related activities. The internationally assembled committees will focus the YO-IFOS team in these areas. As a formalised group YO-IFOS plans to represent young otolaryngologists at international meetings, facilitating exchanges and promoting their interests.

Education

Young surgeons may have an alternative perspective to senior colleagues and prefer different learning styles. Their sources of information and communication preferences may also differ. YO-IFOS will develop teaching materials and

gather international guidelines in order to make information easily available in an international open access format. It is hoped that new open access online educational material will be made available on a specific website (in progress). This is planned to include a basic sciences textbook, e-learning, iconographic database, international guidelines and meta-analyses.

The education committee also aims to increase participation of young physicians in instructional courses and masterclasses. International exchange programmes for otolaryngology trainees and access to fellowships will be areas for future educational development and an online continuous medical education programme is also in the pipeline.

Research

YO-IFOS aims to facilitate high-quality research projects that will lead to publications in peer-reviewed journals and to initiate international collaborative work. A key goal is to encourage research efforts by young otolaryngologists and it is hoped that a designated prize will be awarded for research presented at IFOS meetings.

Several YO-IFOS research themes have already been identified; these include young otolaryngologists themselves and the issues and challenges related to this career stage. Systematic reviews may be an ideal focus for international collaboration and research development. Lastly, it is intended that the effects of the creation of the YO-IFOS society will also be evaluated and shared.

Networking

The YO-IFOS group aims to broadly promote the international mobility of young otolaryngologists to encourage medical, research and humanitarian exchanges and visits. This will be facilitated by the development of a dedicated website and information base.

Networking is a process that fosters the exchange of information and ideas among individuals or groups that share common interests. In this regard YO-IFOS has an excellent starting platform; members have a common interest in ENT and are likely to share a similar life and career stage. Networking has two aspects – professional and social – and of course these are often linked. Our vision is that YO-IFOS

networking will include the development of quality relationships between individuals and centres, and not be limited to the simple exchange of contact information. In this world which is getting smaller and smaller, it is hoped that we can take advantage of new technologies to communicate and network. The networking aspect of YO-IFOS will naturally link to the research, education and congress-based aspects of its work.

Congress participation

Congress-related activities connect to several aspects of YO-IFOS including the international exchange of ideas and information about education, research and clinical practice. It is intended that YO-IFOS will increase the participation of young surgeons in congresses and tailor congress session themes to their needs and interests. Through engagement at congress meetings, the other YO-IFOS key areas of education, networking and research will be boosted.

It goes without saying that young otorhinolaryngologists are the future! A YO-IFOS group is expected to serve and promote the interests of young otolaryngologists and is likely to benefit IFOS as a whole. If you are interested in being part of this exciting project, send an e-mail to yo@ifos.org. You can also follow the Twitter account @YO_IFOS, pending the creation of the YO-IFOS website. As YO-IFOS grows, it is likely to go from strength to strength and succeed in its primary aim of connecting young otolaryngologists all over the world.

SUMMARY

- The Young Otolaryngologists of the International Federation of Otorhinolaryngological Societies (YO-IFOS) is a newly created organisation
- YO-IFOS aims to promote the interests and development of young otolaryngologists across the globe
- Tailored resources for education and networking are planned.

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About the authors

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Natacha Teissier spent her childhood in Brazil, before attending medical school and working in France, and has spent a year in the United States doing research. She became an ENT surgeon in 2016. She is a paediatric ENT and has particular interest in hearing loss due to congenital CMV infection and facial clefts.

Nicolas Fakhry lives and works in France. He became an ENT surgeon in 2015. His interests are cancer care and head and neck surgery.