

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PHYSIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (IUPS)

What is IUPS?

The International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS) is the non-profit umbrella organization that represents and promotes the world-wide community of professional physiological scientists and educators. It was established in 1953 at that year's International Congress of Physiological Sciences (Montreal, Canada). It is incorporated in the United States as a non-profit charitable organization. IUPS maintains an up-to-date website at <http://www.iups.org>.

The primary objectives of IUPS are:

- 1) To encourage the advancement of the human and animal physiological sciences world-wide;
- 2) To facilitate the production and dissemination of knowledge in the field of physiological sciences through research and education;
- 3) To support and promote the (presently quadrennial) International Congresses of Physiological Sciences;
- 4) To promote internationally such other meetings as may be useful for the advancement of the physiological sciences;
- 5) To promote such other measures as will contribute to the support and growth of the physiological sciences in developing countries.

IUPS has formally adopted a broad definition of physiology:

Physiology is the study of the functions and integrative processes of life at all levels of structural complexity between the molecular level and that of the whole organism. It includes all organisms, and frames function in evolutionary, environmental, ecological and behavioural contexts. It embraces a cross-disciplinary approach to modern science, through which physiologists aim to achieve translation of this knowledge into the health of humans, animals and ecosystems.

IUPS publishes a journal, *Physiology*, in cooperation with the [American Physiological Society](#). The articles are short, up-to-date reviews of different areas of modern physiology, written by leading active researchers and directed to scientists and teachers

throughout the world in order to help them maintain a current knowledge of all fields of physiology.

IUPS is directed by an elected body made up of five constitutional Officers (the Executive Committee) and a 10-person Council. The Officers and Council are elected for 4-year terms by the quadrennial General Assembly (GA). Policies and programs approved by the GA, or by delegation by the Officers and Council, are implemented by a Manager and through eight active Scientific Commissions and seven Committees. Membership of IUPS is made up of the major professional physiological societies in many countries. There are no individual scientist members. Member societies presently (2011) include 50 National Members, 13 Associate Members, 4 Regional Members and 2 Affiliated Members. Member groups pay annual dues which are used entirely for the support of approved programs and activities. IUPS is itself an adhering member of several important international scientific organizations including the International Council for Science (ICSU), the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS), the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO), and the International Council of Laboratory Animal Science (ICLAS).

IUPS members have the following rights and privileges:

A) Right to send voting delegates to the quadrennial General Assembly (GA). GAs are held at the beginning of each International Congress. The number of voting delegates a member society can send depends upon the dues category the society has negotiated with the IUPS Treasurer. The GA is the constitutionally established meeting at which Officers and Council members are elected, bids for hosting International Congresses are presented and chosen, and at which other issues of importance are discussed and decided.

B) Right to nominate a member of the Board of the GA. The Board is a 15-person elected group authorized by the GA to act on its behalf between meetings of the full GA with respect to specified matters. The main responsibility of the Board is to provide half of the members of the Nominating Committee that recruits and selects candidates for the positions of the constitutional Officers and Council members. The Board also acts as the main communication channel between member societies and the Executive Committee and Council.

The responsibilities invested in this Board include both substantive and procedural aspects:

1. The right to appoint half of the Nominating Committee (voting members).
2. The responsibility to make suggestions to the Nominating Committee for possible Officers and Council members.
3. The responsibility to develop and present to each full GA an assessment of the current status of the field of physiology world-wide, emphasizing major challenges, opportunities, and problems.
4. The right to communicate to IUPS relevant decisions and proposals of the member societies, and to provide news items for the IUPS website (all members).

5. The right to bring items to the Executive Committee and Council for consideration and possible implementation (all members).
6. The right to be the first point of call for reactions to proposals by IUPS and to communicate relevant items to their society councils (all members).
7. The right to be listed on the IUPS website, in addition to the relevant administrative information on the member societies (voting members).
8. The responsibility to play a role in promoting the IUPS Congress and regional meetings within their own societies (all members).
9. The right to be the leading delegate for their society to the General Assembly (voting members).
10. The right to meet independently on a regular basis via teleconference (all members).

C) Right to make proposals for the scientific programme of the next International Congress. Proposals may include nominations for plenary or named lectures, suggestions for workshops, suggestions for symposia that are part of the main Congress, and suggestions for satellite symposia. These proposals are channelled via the International Scientific Program Committee (ISPC) for the Congress. Half of the ISPC membership is comprised of IUPS Officers and members of Council and Commissions. The other half of ISPC membership is selected by the local organizers of the Congress.

D) Right to receive advice and help from IUPS with respect to the formation of national and regional associations of physiologists. The IUPS Membership Committee is actively contacting physiological scientists in parts of the world where help in forming such associations is needed, and in parts of the world where adhering societies do not presently exist.

E) Right to participate in IUPS-sponsored regional and international workshops and conferences on physiology and physiology education. Between Congresses many such meetings are organised by active regional bodies such as FEPS (Europe) and FAOPS (Asian and Oceanic), by organisations linked to the Commissions of IUPS, and by various IUPS Committees (especially the Education, Ethics, and Physiome Committees).

F) Right to request financial and other support for planning and implementing regional workshops and conferences on physiology education. The IUPS Education Committee is strongly proactive in this area.

The Education Committee also operates several important services:

Members may join the IUPS Teaching listserv to obtain information about education projects and events, and to ask and answer questions about teaching physiology.

They may also join the IUPS Education Facebook page (“IUPS Teaching Group”) to share photos and news with physiology teachers from many countries.

They may request help with developing web-based materials to aid physiology educators to plan courses, find resources, and improve teaching and learning.

They may also access the web-based IUPS *Physiology for the 21st Century: A Sourcebook of Effective and Economical Experiments for Students*