

Summary Report of Activities, April – December 2013 'Post-CAMBrella' Steering Group

Background

On 10 April 2013, Benno Brinkhaus, George Lewith, Wolfgang Weidenhammer and Claudia Witt invited CAMbrella partners and others interested and involved in CAM research in various EU countries to a meeting to discuss the creation of an 'EU CAM research consortium: A progression from the EU CAMbrella project'. The meeting took place on occasion of ICCMR 2013 in London and was attended by 19 people, both individuals connected to the completed CAMbrella project and other researchers from academic institutions in various EU countries.

Those present at the meeting nominated Klaus v Ammon, Vinjar Fønnebø, Johanna Hök and Nina Nissen to form a 'Post-CAMBrella' Steering Group, to be convened by Nina Nissen. The steering group was mandated to develop a 'concept' for a future CAM research platform in Europe, to be presented and further discussed/agreed by the end of 2013.

This document summarises the group's activities and achievements between April and December 2013 and presents the planned actions for 2014.

Activities

To develop and implement the mandate, the group focused on two main areas:

1. To develop a sustainable structure for CAM research in Europe
2. To promote the inclusion of CAM research in Horizon 2020

To coordinate activities, skype meetings were held on 8/5, 24/6, 6/8, 16/9, 20/11, and 12/12, in addition to email contacts amongst steering group members and others.

1. From 'Post-CAMBrella' to EU-Res-CAM

In June, both the 'Post-CAMBrella' steering group and the steering group of the European Chapter of the International Society for Complementary Medicine Research (ISCMR) agreed that the aims of the two organisations were overlapping (but not identical) and that it made little sense to have two scientific groups in Europe pursuing similar goals. This opened discussions of how best to develop a sustainable structure for CAM research in Europe, without duplicating efforts.

After initial discussions both within the Post-CAMBrella steering group and with Wolfgang Weidenhammer (chair of the European Chapter of ISCMR), NN and WW prepared a draft document proposing how the Post-CAMBrella group could be constituted as a Task Force within the European Chapter. On 16/9 the steering groups of Post-CAMBrella and the European Chapter held a skype meeting to discuss the proposal; after some minor changes the proposal was unanimously accepted by all (see Appendix).

To elicit opinions on the proposal, it was circulated on Oct 9 by email to the members of both groups, as well as others who had expressed an interest in CAM research in Europe. The nearly 200 email recipients were invited to either support or reject the proposal within a specific time frame. After the unanimous acceptance of the proposal, WW presented it to the ISCMR Executive Committee for approval which was received shortly after (Oct 30, 2013).

To wrap up Post-CAMBrella activities and to initiate the work of the EU-Res-CAM Task Force, the EU-Res-CAM steering group and WW held skype meetings on 20/11 and 12/12.

2. CAM and Horizon 2020

A number of activities were concerned with the promotion of the inclusion of CAM in Horizon 2020, including:

- A letter written jointly with EUROCAM, requesting a meeting with DG Research (DG Research declined to meet)
- Lobbying letters aimed at MEPs
- Information gathering about Horizon 2020, via EU National Contact Points
- Renewing contact with Marcelo Sosa at the European Commission

In summary, the constitution of EU-Res-CAM as a task force within the European Chapter of ISCMR substantially contributed to the development of a sustainable structure for CAM research in Europe, while the need to identify and secure funding sources for CAM research in Europe is ongoing.

Planned actions for 2014

To take the mandate of April 2013 forward, the EU-Res-CAM steering group (in collaboration with the steering group of the European Chapter) aims:

- To ensure that relevant information about EU-Res-CAM is disseminated to members and available on the ISCMR website
- To facilitate a process through which EU-Res-CAM 'business' (e.g. future composition of steering group and modes of election) and activities can be further discussed in 2014; e.g. through a meeting, possibly at ECIM in Belgrade, Oct 10-11
- To continue networking with European CAM stakeholders
- To prepare a COST application to facilitate networking of EU-Res-CAM
- To continue lobbying for funding for CAM research in Europe

December 2013

Nina Nissen

On behalf of the EU-Res-CAM steering group

Appendix: The Post-CAMBrella group as Task force within the European Chapter

- With effect from 1 January 2014, the Post-CAMBrella group will be named 'EU-Res-CAM' (European Research in CAM; which addresses the 3 core elements: CAM, Research, Europe) and constitute a Task force within the European chapter (Special Interest Group 1) of ISCMR (see diagram)
- The Task force will be led by its own steering committee in close cooperation with European Chapter's steering committee. It is the responsibility of the Task force to decide the composition of its steering group and modes of election
- Regular members of the Task force have to be ISCMR members and so have access to the ISCMR website members area. The European Chapter website 'public area' (see diagram) will include basic information about the Task force
- Cooperation on specific research projects is understood as a separate collaboration which could be facilitated through the European Chapter and/or the Task Force. Such cooperation may include additional project partners outside the European Chapter/Task Force, who need not be ISCMR members and whose roles are restricted to defined projects.
- This structure is understood as a first step in developing sustainable CAM research in Europe; it does not preclude future developments, such as another organizational structure and/or revision of aims and focus concerning CAM research in Europe

Structure

