

Andrea Ditadi Candidate Statement

“Why would you be a good candidate for the role you are nominated for and how do you think you would be able to positively impact the society if elected?”

I have been a proud member of ISEH since 2012, when I attended my first meeting in Amsterdam. That year I also had the chance to give a last minute talk, an experience I have cherished as I could connected with many colleagues that became friends and this made me an ISEH aficionado. From that moment, I began to identify with the vibrant, dynamic and collegial spirit that defines our society. As a lab, we have been fortunate to present our work on the ISEH annual meeting podium on three occasions, often choosing ISEH as the place to share our newest stories for the first time because the feedback from the community has always been valuable. I have also supported, behind the scenes, the organizers of the pluripotent stem cell based hematopoiesis satellite meeting, which is closely linked to the annual gathering. Last, but not least, I am often easy to spot on the dancefloor of the ISEH social events.

To me, ISEH represents the leading global hematology community and a nurturing environment for junior researchers to develop their knowledge, strengthen their soft skills and broaden their networks. ISEH has been pivotal in my development as a young principal investigator, and I am committed to giving back by supporting the society's continued growth. What I value most is the collaborative nature of our society. Many of the publications from my lab stem from interactions with fellow ISEH members, including projects that were conceived at ISEH meetings and grew through these collaborations. Given our expertise in differentiating human pluripotent stem cells to blood cells, my group has trained several trainees from labs well rooted within ISEH. These exchanges reflect how much I value being part of this community.

If elected to the ISEH Executive Board, I will bring more than a decade of experience as a principal investigator, during which I have consistently fostered a collaborative research culture, with particular attention to the next generation of scientists. I also bring experience with leadership roles in other scientific societies. I served as Chair of the Early Career Scientist Committee of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR), where we implemented initiatives to increase the visibility and opportunities for junior PIs and trainees, including workshops, mentoring and training activities. I am now part of the Membership and Internationalisation Committee of ISSCR and I would leverage this experience to increase the reach of ISEH in the world. I am also an active member of the European Hematology Association (EHA) through the Stem Cells Scientific Working Group

(SWG), which provides another platform to strengthen connections and develop strategic partnerships.

My program for ISEH will focus on four axes:

1. Increase ISEH visibility and integration across related fields.

I will work to strengthen the presence of ISEH within communities working on stem cells, immunology, cancer immunotherapy. These fields naturally intersect with experimental hematology and offer opportunities for scientific exchange and joint initiatives. While keeping the focus on the basic research, connecting with these other growing fields will enable to reach a broader audience and potentially draw interests for industrial partners, increasing the chances of attracting new sponsors.

2. Build strategic bridges with other scientific societies.

Use my active involvement in ISSCR, EHA and other organizations to establish effective communication channels and collaborative activities, helping ISEH reach a broader audience and elevating its profile.

3. Support junior scientists.

Junior researchers are the engine of our labs and the future of our community. I would work to expand opportunities for them, exploring options such as short stay fellowships, travel support, and inter-lab buddy systems (mentor-mentees) to build connections for trainees and junior PIs. I would also promote inter-society working groups inspired by successful models like the EHA SWG and the G-20.

4. Without losing the focus on experimental hematology, by bridging the academic-industry interface and organizing ad hoc events such as workshops, luncheons, we could offer additional mentoring sessions (in addition to those already organized) to trainees that cover other career paths.

5. Strengthen the regional network.

Promote stronger interactions at national and regional levels, encourage cross border initiatives, and possibly identify new opportunities for networking and possibly collaborative funding. As an example, Europe has an exceptional concentration of hematology and stem cell research, and ISEH can play a central role in connecting these communities. I would be honored to serve as Director for the European Region and to contribute to the continued excellence of ISEH.