



The European School of Internal Medicine

Introduction

The European School of Internal Medicine (ESIM) was founded in 1998 by Prof. Jaime Merino, with support from the Spanish Society of Internal Medicine. The primary goal was to provide high-quality continuous medical education for young internists from our member societies. The second, and no less important, was to establish cultural and social links between trainees in Internal Medicine from all over Europe.

The Summer School was held annually in Alicante, Spain (Director J Merino) until 2005, moving to Portugal (2006-8; Dir. A Martins Baptista), UK (2009-11; Dir. C Davidson), Turkey (2012-13; Dir. E Akalin), Italy, (2014-2016; Dir. N Montana) followed by Ede, the Netherlands in 2017, under the leadership of Prof. Reinold Gans, than moving back to Spain in El Escorial since 2022 under the leadership of Dr. Javi Moreno Díaz. Because of the growing demand for places, a Winter School was started in 2011 in Switzerland (2011-14; Dir. V Briner) and moved to Riga, Latvia (2015-17; Dir. Ieva Ruza) followed by Levi, Finland in 2018, under the leadership of Prof. Risto Kaaja and Dr. Kim Pettersson-Fernholm. After the pandemics the ESIM Winter School moved to Sweden in Björkliden, Lapland under the leadership of Dr. Fredrik von Wowern and Dr. Christine Sävervall. The Schools are held over a five-day period in a single centre with appropriate facilities. The academic format has remained the same with interactive seminars, case presentations and workshops, and a social programme playing an important part with activities mid-week and in the evenings.

Physicians who are towards the end of their training in internal medicine are selected and sponsored by their national societies to attend the School. There are usually 40-50/55 attendees at each School with 20-25 countries being represented.

The aim of the School is to broaden and deepen the trainees' knowledge and scientific base in internal medicine. A secondary but equally important aim is to stimulate discussions about international aspects of internal medicine and give opportunities to establish new colleagues and friends.

The ESIM programme offers an interactive and learner-centred format with a combination of lectures and small group-work, and presentations by the trainees. Typically, two external experts will lecture on selected topics each day. The rest of the day the trainees will work in small groups with workshops, as well as participating in clinicopathological conferences and case presentation sessions where they will present their own cases.

The ESIM Faculty will include teachers with a broad competence and experience in internal medicine who will also serve as facilitators and discussion leaders. The Director and Co-director(s)

will be present, as far as possible, during the entire week. This will help interactivity and reflections based on experiences during the week.

Administration

1. *The Director*: The School is under the overall responsibility of the Director who is nominated by the organising national society and approved by the EFIM Executive Committee. His/Her role will be to oversee the scientific programme and administration of the School.
2. *Co-Directors*: The Director will be supported by one or more Co-directors, one of whom should be a Director of the previous School to provide continuity. Other Co-directors may be chosen by the Director or suggested by the national society to provide local support for the event.
3. *Young Internists (YI)*: Trainees attending ESIM form the basis of the YI network and are vital for the future of the Federation. A member of the YI Subcommittee should be invited to participate in the School to develop these links.
4. *Administrative & Secretarial Support*: This is arranged by the Director. He/She requires close liaison with the local ESIM Secretariat responsible for the day-to-day management of organisation and planning of the School. These tasks are set out in the next section: 'Guidelines for the National Society hosting ESIM'.

Trainees

Two to four trainees from each country are selected and approved by their national societies. Eligibility: They should be towards the end of their internal medicine training programme (generally under 35 years of age) and be fluent in English, the language used throughout the School. The optimum number of trainees attending each course will be 45-50/55, permitting up to a 100 trainees per year with two Schools in winter and summer. Because of the pressure for places, it will not usually be possible to accommodate a trainee who has attended ESIM previously.

National societies are responsible for advertising ESIM to their trainees, and selecting from those who apply candidates who meet the eligibility criteria.

All the costs for the trainees (registration fees and travel expenses) are covered by grants arranged through their national societies. Additional bursaries have been provided by the Foundation for the Development of Internal Medicine (FDIME) for the low-income country members.

Faculty

The Director is appointed by the national society chosen to hold the School and is responsible for the overall organisation and scientific programme with appropriate administrative support. The Director may choose one or more Co-Directors of ESIM, and these should be approved by the EFIM Executive Committee. The role of the Co-Director(s) would be to help in drawing up the scientific programme and assisting during the School itself.

Expert lecturers for the topics to be covered during the School will be suggested by the national societies. The current format of ESIM will include two such lecturers every day. All travel costs for expert lecturers are covered by their national societies, but the School provides local accommodation and subsistence for them.

Funding

Funding for ESIM is provided by the registration fees. This is currently 1250 Euros per trainee, including VAT. The national society hosting ESIM will be responsible for providing a carefully prepared budget plan, and if any change on the registration fees are necessary, these must be approved by the EFIM Executive Committee. The registration fee covers the costs of accommodation and meals, organised social programme, lecture facilities and teaching material.

Since its inception, ESIM has been funded almost entirely through the registration fees and is largely independent financially from the pharmaceutical industry. This independence from industry has been one of the features that many of the trainees have found very refreshing. Some small unrestricted educational grants have been accepted from time to time, usually to provide bursaries (see above), but national societies planning to host ESIM should not include any industry funding in their financial plan for the School without approval of the EFIM Executive committee.