

INTERVIEW: MIKI MINAMINO, IFSCC CHAIR OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE

When the IFSCC Praesidium needed a new member who could take on the role of Education Chair, Miki Minamino seemed an obvious choice. For one thing, the Praesidium is comprised of members representing a balance from the different zones, but also as somebody running her own company (BelleVenus, which manufactures for the Japanese market) while also teaching cosmetology at Mukogawa Women's University, Miki was particularly well qualified to know what the role required.



Miki Minamino, IFSCC Chair of Education

Why is education so important to you?

I really enjoy the teaching side and get a lot out of it. My students in Japan are pharmacy students and they don't generally know how cosmetics are made. Cosmetics are such emotional products and my students are always amazed. I give them the information to understand and choose the right products for themselves but at the same time I learn a great deal from them about current trends among young consumers.

Why is education so important for the IFSCC?

Education is of the utmost importance. We have 47 member countries, many of which are small and developing. Helping to advance the level of science in these countries to make them more equivalent with some of the others makes education one of the most important things for the IFSCC. We have the awards but many of them are really for leading scientists. For the whole Federation to advance it is really important to provide adequate education.

How does the IFSCC education programme work?

We have four key areas:

- International Speakers Programme
- Education Day
- Education Workshop (at conference)
- Ecaterina Merica Cosmetic Education Programme

International Speakers Programme (ISP)

This involves the IFSCC sending a speaker to a local event, covering the speaker's travel costs. This used to be available only for smaller member societies of less than 300 members but the opportunity was opened up to all member societies in 2013; in fact the US already took advantage of this and had an IFSCC ISP speaker at an event last year.

While we are trying to develop smaller societies, other societies are paying the same to be members of the Federation so it was decided that larger societies should also be given the opportunity to request speakers.

As part of our ISP programme this year we funded Professor Robert Lochhead's attendance at the Dutch Society's one-day intensive course on polymers in cosmetics in January, and Dr Alain Khaiat's involvement at the 12th Biannual Asian Societies of Cosmetic Scientists Conference in Cairns, Australia in April. In October 2015 we plan to send a speaker to Russia as part of this programme.

To take advantage of the ISP a society needs to apply to have a speaker on a particular topic [request forms available here] and we will source appropriate speakers for the successful applications.

Education Day

We often hold the Education Day alongside the spring (mid-year) meeting of the Praesidium, sometimes in a fairly small country while sometimes the location is chosen with a particular objective in mind; for example, checking out facilities for a future IFSCC Conference or Congress.

In 2012 we went to Guangzhou (China) invited by the Hong Kong Society, at which point we decided to make sense of our involvement with societies by committing to three years' support, if required. This year we held our spring meeting alongside the 12th Biannual ASCS Conference in Australia. We didn't organise an Education Day but we did provide three speakers for the ASCS event (Jürgen Lademann, Martha Tate and Claudie Willemin).

Education Workshops (at Conference)

We often provide speakers for pre-conference workshops but our assistance was not requested for Switzerland this year. We helped out with Brazil in 2013 and Thailand in 2011.

Ecaterina Merica Cosmetic Education Programme

This exciting programme was developed in 2009 to help bring science education to economically challenged societies. We cover all expenses for two full days and two speakers. We didn't actually receive any requests for the programme this year but we have had requests from two countries in zone 3 for 2016: Peru and Uruguay.

How do you select speakers for the different programmes?

Our budget is quite tight at the moment but we want to carry on with these important education programmes. As the biggest cost is travel, it makes sense to try and find suitable speakers from within the same zone as the country applying. For example, the Praesidium will hold its spring meeting in Korea next year and they have a one day conference they would like us to be involved with. They are looking for two speakers so it is likely that we will invite and support speakers from Japan.

It does take a lot of time to organise speakers and all that goes along with this. It would be good to build a panel of speakers, but again this is not without complications. We have used several speakers on a number of occasions; Judi Beerling and Dr Luigi Rigano have been very popular speakers and of course the late Dr Johann Wiechers, who did so much for the Federation. We certainly want to get others involved.

You are in your third and final year on the Praesidium. What happens next?

I am very happy to help whoever takes over from me as Chair of Education. I've worked very hard to reform and make improvements to the previous system and the person taking over from me will first need to understand the philosophy of the current system.

I feel proud of what we've done with education. Doing something for somebody else is very rewarding; I had a lot to contribute but I've also learnt a lot. I'm also proud to have been an IFSCC Praesidium member, representing my country.

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