

## Educational Sponsorship Report: International Federation of Societies for Hand Therapy, 2022



### IFSHT Evelyn Mackin Congress Grant and IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant

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The International Federation of Societies for Hand Therapy successfully applied to the IFSSH CES to fund therapists to attend the IFSSH, IFSHT & FESSH Combined Congress in London in 2022.

The funding supported travel and registrations on a global scale. This allowed greater participation among therapists from the low-middle income countries, and a return of knowledge to a broad area.

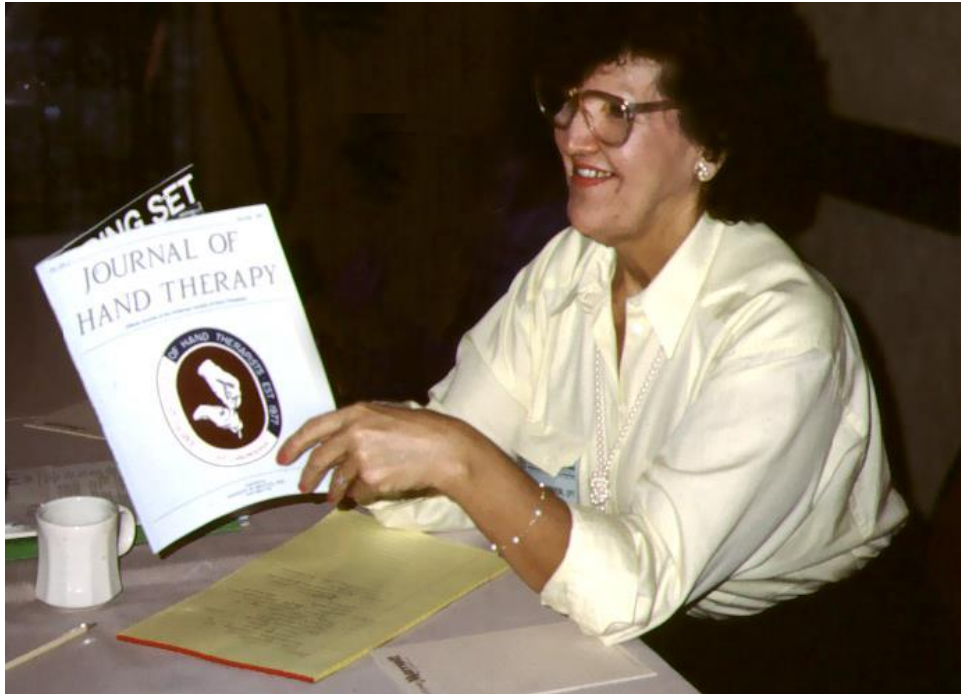
The IFSSH, IFSHT & FESSH Congress was attended by 523 therapists from 41 different countries. The therapy program consisted of 20 invited speaker sessions, 10 free paper sessions, and 10 workshops with 8 combined surgeon/therapist educational sessions. From the abstracts submitted, there were 121 oral presentations accepted as well as 40 e-posters.

The IFSHT provides two Congress related grants every triennium—The Evelyn Mackin Congress Grant and the IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant.

The Evelyn Mackin Congress Grant was established in 2010 to honour Evelyn Mackin, the first president of IFSHT and a leader in the development of hand therapy worldwide. This grant supports emergent hand therapists from countries without a formal hand therapy society. The recipients are therapists who are potential leaders of hand therapy in their country, who may otherwise not have the resources to attend an IFSHT Congress. The recipients of this grant are fully funded to attend the IFSHT Triennial Congress; providing an opportunity to further expand their knowledge and networking in hand therapy. The four Evelyn Mackin Grant recipients in 2022 were from Fiji, Bhutan, Bulgaria and Kuwait.

The IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant provides partial financial support for therapists to attend the IFSHT Triennial Congress. Therapists from countries with limited resources and those who are presenting at the congress are given priority. The ten IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant recipients were from Ethiopia, Argentina, Italy, Mexico, South Africa, India, USA, New Zealand and Bangladesh.

The IFSSH awarded **US\$9661.17** to the IFSHT for the 2022 Evelyn Mackin Grant and **US\$2561.66** for the IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Travel Grant, for a total of **US\$12,322.83** to support therapists to attend the 2022 Triennial Congress in London.



### Grant Recipient Testimonials

I attended the congress virtually and it was very interesting and beautiful experience. It was a place to contact other colleagues. Congress attendance was a way to improve my career and I was very excited to have this important experience to help me in my daily work. This grant opened a world of different ways to work. It was very useful to bring me the latest news to communicate in my country, and it was a step to begin a new relationship with the most important hand therapists. When the congress finished, I tried to share all that I learned with our society. Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

Marcela Juarez, Argentina

IFSSH/IFSHT Congress Grant Recipient

I attended the IFSSH/IFSHT 2022 Triennial Congress as a guest speaker on a panel, speaking about practice as a member of multidisciplinary team managing multiple complex conditions of hands and burns. Members of the panel shared information about their work in their own country. These therapists have been regularly arranging educational programs to share knowledge and updated information about how to practice in hand therapy with other therapists who are interested in hand therapy. We are working to find out to the gap regarding hand therapy in our local practices and we have established goals to achieve by training, practice, meeting and continued research.

Sumanta Ray, Bangladesh

IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant Recipient

In the congress, I had the opportunity to meet other therapists and surgeons from different countries. This gave me insight about the treatment approaches other therapists follow and that was very interesting. It helped me also while educating my patients about their conditions and comparing the treatment options that we follow here in Kuwait with other countries.

I was also working on accreditation as a hand therapist from the British Association of Hand Therapists (BAHT) and I had the chance to meet them and discuss my progression. I got my accreditation one year later and meeting the BAHT therapists at the Congress helped me a lot. Overall, the Congress was a wonderful learning journey and the topics were very good. I am very grateful for the opportunity that was given to me to attend the Congress.

Fatma Alshatti, Kuwait

Evelyn Mackin Congress Grant Recipient

As co-chair of the scientific program, the opportunity to participate in person provided first-hand experience of co-hosting a high-calibre scientific program delivered through a hybrid model, which was a pioneering milestone for both myself and the IFSSH/IFSHT. The exposure to this novel format has enhanced my skills in organising and executing large-scale academic events, a proficiency that will undoubtedly benefit my future research initiatives and academic pursuits. It has also added to my academic credentials, as chairing a prestigious event of this nature is a significant achievement in the field.

The responsibilities associated with this role allowed me to engage with leaders in hand therapy research and practice, offering me unique insights into current trends and future directions in the field. Additionally, the congress provided an exceptional platform to network with colleagues from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds, opening doors for collaborations and partnerships, which will be invaluable for my future research projects.

Helen Buchanan, South Africa

IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant Recipient

The grant allowed me to travel to London and present several papers. This opportunity also allowed me to network with several researchers in the field, who I am currently collaborating with. Overall, it has been a great opportunity to grow as a Clinician-Researcher.

Nico Magni, Italy  
IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant Recipient

The IFSSH/IFSHT 2022 Triennial Congress was a relevant event for my professional growth as a hand therapist because of all the knowledge and professional connections I could acquire there. All the sessions I attended were prime level and the most important hand surgeons and therapists attended too, so the networking was also very insightful.

I took the test to certify as a hand therapist in the United States a few months after the congress and I can tell that all the clinical information I received at the Congress helped me a lot to complete it successfully.

Also, sharing with so many therapists from different countries as a delegate gave me a better understanding of the hand therapy needs in other countries and motivated me to go back to my own country to start working and developing hand therapy here and to travel to Africa to use my skills as hand therapist helping patients in Sierra Leone.

In summary, this Congress was a great opportunity for me and I'm grateful for the efforts that the IFSHT always make to support hand therapists from underdeveloped countries to take part in their events.

Rosella Vargas, Mexico  
IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant Recipient

I have gained new knowledge, skills and approaches towards hand therapy from the presentations and discussions at the IFSSH/IFSHT 2022 Triennial Congress. This enhanced my ability to provide better services with leadership skills and built confidence in my career. For example, at a national level we did not have a hand therapy guideline, but after the congress I gained motivation and the knowledge to prepare a national level treatment guideline which is in the institutional process to implement.

I tried to reach out some of the research presenters for case discussions and planned to make collaboration. There was a networking opportunity with Orfit industry. They helped me get short term lessons and certified in splinting. I also tried to find an importer for their products but so far this has not worked out.

From the knowledge, skills and motivation I have gained we are working in the development of hand therapy in the country by gathering the interested individuals in the field.

Overall, the IFSSH/IFSHT 2022 Triennial Congress helped me to see gaps in research and to have exposure to emerging trends and technologies to improve the quality of care at a national level.

Sintayehu Damtew, Ethiopia

IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant Recipient

The Congress was like a big ticking of the clock for me. I had the opportunity to see and hear from some of the best specialists in the field of surgery and hand therapy. With some of them I was able to discuss purely practical professional matters, and this gave me good information, ideas and guidance. I saw that the collaboration between surgeons and therapists leads to the best results. I strive to maintain and develop this not only in my practice but also in the work for the Bulgarian Hand Therapy Association. Indeed, already, as members of IFSHT we have contacts to follow in our development and we have connections to therapists to turn to help. I made a lot of contacts that will lead to great opportunities in the future.

Georgi Petrow, Bulgaria

Evelyn Mackin Congress Grant Recipient

I believe that attending to an IFSSH/IFSHT Congress is a wonderful opportunity for those who wish to grow in hand therapy. It contributes to technical learning, but and allows opportunities to link with professionals from different cultures, build networks, know what had therapy is like in other parts of the world, meet leaders in the area and establish contacts that can lead to infinite possibilities. Being selected to receive the IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant was such an opportunity for which I will be eternally grateful. It allowed me access to a possibility that would otherwise have been difficult. Attending to the IFSSH/IFSHT 2022 Triennial Congress allowed me to rethink my practice and confirm the importance of keeping up to date, to establish new goals with my team, to reconfirm the impact and scope of team working between physicians and therapists, to create networks from which research projects emerged, and the list could go on. Above all, it contributed to my professional growth, indirectly to the growth of the team with whom I work with and last, but not least, to identify how much we have to do and develop in the field of hand therapy in Argentina.

Paula Simaro, Argentina

IFSSH/IFSHT Triennial Congress Grant Recipient