



IFSSH Newsletter May 2026

Message from the Secretary-General

Dear Colleagues,

The first months of a year are always a busy time for planning, review and reflection. I am happy to share with you that in recent weeks the IFSSH Executive Committee (ExCo) have been busy with reviewing the applications for educational grants and responding to the reports from organizers of both the 2nd IFSSH Mid-Term Course in 2027 (Italy) and the 2028 IFSSH-IFSHT Triennial Congress (Singapore). The ExCo are deeply impressed by the dedication of both organizing teams, especially the leadership of the organising chairs. With the IFSSH co-sponsored IFSSH/FESSH Academy Foundation Course in Hong Kong just completed in early March (4–6 March 2026), we are moving towards welcoming the next round of the IFSSH Course and Congress.

At the time of writing, excitement is brewing as we are exactly one year away from the 2nd IFSSH Mid-Term Course in Hand Surgery: 4-8 April 2027 (Venice, Italy). Dr Atzei, the Italian Society for Surgery of the Hand (SICM), and the extended team are preparing a practical, interactive course relevant to all hand surgeons worldwide. We recommend that you closely watch the 2nd Mid-Term Course website: <https://congressworks.com/venice2027/> and join the mailing list to ensure that you are the first to know when information is updated and registration timelines are released.

Equally exciting is the news which just came in: The 3rd IFSSH Harold Kleinert Visiting Professor, Professor Joseph Dias has accepted to serve this role for 17 days in November this year by traveling to six hand surgery centres in the host society's country.

We have many opportunities to meet and share knowledge and friendship at the upcoming IFSSH events.

Prof. Jin Bo Tang
Secretary-General, IFSSH

IFSSH Delegates' Council Meeting: 5 June 2026 – Basel, Switzerland

The 2026 IFSSH Delegates' Council Meeting will be held at 12:30pm, Friday 5 June 2026 in the Singapore Room of Congress Center Basel (CH-4058 Basel, Switzerland; www.messe-basel.com). The agenda and documentation will be distributed by email to all IFSSH Delegates.

This meeting is within the FESSH Congress to reduce time and travel commitments for our IFSSH Delegates. Please refer to the 2026 FESSH Congress website for registration and venue information - <https://fessh2026.com/>

We hope to see many IFSSH Delegates (or appointed proxies) in Basel to represent the 65 IFSSH member societies on this 60th anniversary of our Federation.

Supporting Hand Surgery education: IFSSH Patrons of Hand Surgery

Twelve months ago the IFSSH launched a philanthropic initiative dedicated to expanding global access to hand surgery education: the IFSSH Patron of Hand Surgery program. We are delighted to have received donations from hand surgeons, hand societies and industry. Thanks to their generosity, the IFSSH continues to support and extend its educational offering. In particular, young surgeons from resource-limited regions are gaining life-changing opportunities to attend international congresses, participate in hands-on workshops, and bring new skills back to their communities.

“Having the opportunity to travel in my residency and to learn from some of the best in the field, to discuss clinical cases and learn from those passionate about hand surgery was definitely something that will make my career go forwards.”

Miguel Ribeiro Matias, Portugal

“Attending this Symposium was an extraordinary experience that left an indelible impact on my professional and personal journey as a hand surgeon. Most significantly, I feel less isolated in trying to understand congenital upper limb differences and realized that many across the globe are asking the same questions as I am and that many more are trying to find ways to solve the challenges in making our patients’ lives better.”

Nathaniel Orillaza, Philippines



We invite all readers to consider becoming an IFSSH Patron of Hand Surgery and enable many more educational opportunities for hand surgeons worldwide.

For further information, please refer to https://ifssh.info/hand_surgery_donation_program.php or contact the IFSSH secretariat (donate@ifssh.info).

IFSSH Educational Sponsorship: Delivering hand surgery training to Burundi

With IFSSH financial support, a two-day Wide-Awake Local Anesthesia No Tourniquet (WALANT) workshop was held in Bujumbura, Burundi, on 28–29 November 2025. This was organized by Operating Theatre Practitioners Association of Kenya (OTPAK) and Mercy Surgeons, and supported by the IFSSH, COSECSA and Ministry of Health – Burundi.

The workshop brought together 31 trainees from Burundi (11), Kenya (5), Uganda (3), Tanzania (3), Ethiopia (3), Democratic Republic of Congo (2), Zanzibar (1), Somalia (1), Gambia (1), and Cameroon (1).

The program aimed to strengthen surgical capacity in The College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) region and challenge dogma to alter the culture of surgery thro promotion and adoption of WALANT as an innovative, cost-effective, and safe alternative to traditional surgery practice.

Trainers from Canada, Portugal, Kenya and Burundi provided intensive, focused WALANT training over 2 days, which comprised didactic lectures, formal and informal discussions, practical sessions, and live surgical demonstrations. Participants shared stories and scenarios while networking. Early feedback has demonstrated that many started using WALANT in their home countries immediately on return, sharing their experiences, videos, photos, along with questions and answers.

The IFSSH is indebted to Prof Don Lalonde (Canada) and Prof Pankaj Jani (Kenya) for their continued endeavours to improve hand surgery education opportunities within Africa. The IFSSH has worked alongside Prof Lalonde and Prof Jani to supported numerous workshops over the past 7 years and receives motivating feedback from the organisers and trainees detailing the improved skills of participants, the growing support network amongst COSECSA surgeons, and the changing landscape for enhanced patient care.

“The opportunity for young surgical trainees to network and interact with each other cannot be overstated. In our training hospital, we have already began planning to set up a more permanent WALANT room. Most of the attendees have agreed that WALANT is going to be a game changer in the COSECSA region and we are all excited to see how this innovation can bring patients and surgeons together.”

Imraan Sherman, Kenya (2022)

Announcing the 3rd IFSSH Harold Kleinert Visiting Professor: Professor Joseph Dias

The Association for Chinese-Speaking Hand Surgeons United (ACU) has been awarded the opportunity to host the next IFSSH Harold Kleinert Visiting Professor. This follows Dr Steven Moran (USA) being the inaugural Visiting Professor in Australia, and Professor Jin Bo Tang then being hosted by the Polish Society.

We are pleased to announce that the 3rd IFSSH Harold Kleinert Visting Professor will be Professor Joseph Dias from Leicester, UK.

In November 2026 Professor Dias will travel to six hand surgery centres in different cities in China, delivering education to many hand surgeons in a variety of formats. We thank ACU for organising this program and Professor Dias for his continued dedication to educate hand surgeons. A full report will be provided in the IFSSH Ezine in early 2027.

Future Meetings

A detailed list of national and regional hand surgery meetings is available on the IFSSH website. The IFSSH Courses and Congresses are as follows:

2nd IFSSH Mid-Term Course in Hand Surgery

4th-8th April, 2027

Venice, Italy

www.congressworks.com/venice2027



17th IFSSH – 14th IFSHT Congress

23rd – 27th October, 2028

Singapore

www.ifssh-ifsht2028.org



18th IFSSH – 15th IFSHT Congress

2031 (dates TBC)

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



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