

Next Generation Task Force

Members

Chair

Christos Lisgaras (Greece)

Core Members

Marian Galovic (UK)

Sheryl Haut (JSA)

Premysl Jiruska (Czech Republic)

Rosa Michaelis (Germany)

Genevieve Rayner (Australia)



Christos Lisgaras

Management Committee Liaison

Helen Cross (UK)

Task Force Aims and Goals

The Next Generation Task Force (NGTF) coordinates activities from the ILAE Mentor-Mentee program, the ILAE Leadership program, the Young Neurobiologists' Task Force, the ILAE-Young Epilepsy Section (ILAE-YES), and any other initiatives targeting the younger generation of people involved in epilepsy research, care, and allied health. The overall goal of the NGTF is to promote the next generation in epilepsy research, care, and allied health, and increase their involvement in the ILAE. To that end, the NGTF leadership has established the ILAE-Young Epilepsy Section (ILAE-YES) which currently has more than 1000 members worldwide.

Task Force activities and accomplishment

Mentor-Mentee Program

The ILAE Mentor-Mentee program is an activity that was initiated at the IEC in Barcelona and has since successfully been undertaken at ECE in Vienna, and IEC in Bangkok, with >70 individuals passing through the programme. Ongoing contact has been maintained between some mentors and mentees initiating internships and collaborations. The program is planning to resume face-to-face meetings in 2022 during the ECE in Geneva and will continue to organize joint events with the ILAE-YES Peer to Peer Mentoring program as the 2 programs are running in a complementary fashion.

Targeted conference program for young participants

Several new session formats and initiatives were introduced by the ILAE-YES group to attract and engage the next generation. Interactive brainstorming and career development sessions sparked interesting discussions attracting the interest of a sizeable number of conference attendees. During the 2020 term, one brainstorming session was organized during the first North American Epilepsy Virtual Congress (NAEC) covering translational epilepsy

research. An additional career development session was also organized aiming at advising young conference attendees on grant opportunities from NINDS and CURE foundation. An interactive ILAE-YES hot topics session was also included in the 2020 NAEC main program. The NGTF is in close collaboration with the Congress Council where it has two formal representatives and all Scientific Organizing Committees (SOCs) to curate the targeted conference programme.

ILAE-Young Epilepsy Section (ILAE-YES)

During the 2020 term, the ILAE-YES has made significant strides by expanding its general membership, leadership team, task forces, and regional chapters. Highlights include ILAE-YES' weekly Webinars which aim at educating the membership in different topics in epilepsy research, care, and allied health. The group has almost doubled its membership from last year and has established 5 ILAE-YES regional chapters (YES-Italy, YES-UK, YES-Japan, YES-Canada, YES-Finland). Additionally, the ILAE-YES board has created formal procedures for the establishment of chapters and TF/Committee/SOC nominations to ensure appropriate governance and transparency.

Public outreach and online-based educational resources

The ILAE-YES group is active over all major social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and has curated content for ILAE's social media in 6 different languages (Spanish, French, Portuguese, Japanese, and Arabic in addition to English). This multi-lingual framework is ideal for engaging the next generation in all parts of the world surpassing language barriers. In addition, the ILAE-YES group has launched bi-weekly webinars which are very popular worldwide creating an innovative infrastructure for online-based education without borders. The NGTF leadership will continue supporting these initiatives by providing IT support for upcoming webinars and other online-based initiatives.

Collaborations with other ILAE Task Forces and Committees

Importantly, the NGTF and the ILAE-YES group has established fruitful links with other ILAE TFs, Committees, and Councils. NGTF members and/or ILAE-YES members are an integral part of the following ILAE bodies:

- Congress Council
- Global Outreach Task Force
- COVID Task Force
- Nosology and Definitions Task Force
- Young Neurobiologists Task Force
- Research Advocacy and Priorities Task Force
- Communications Task Force
- Education Council
- ILAE Wikipedia Epilepsy Initiative
- IEC/ECE/AOEC/NAEC Scientific Organizing Committee
- Lancet Neurology Task Force
- ILAE Europe
- ILAE Latin America

- ILAE North America

Recommendations for Future Work

Future NGTF work will focus on:

1. Increasing ILAE-YES' involvement in upcoming conferences and online-based activities
2. Implementing the creation of the Peer Reviewer Mentoring Program
3. Offering career mentoring opportunities at 2 different levels; peer to peer and senior to junior
4. Launching a signature ILAE-YES visiting scholarship program, piloting in Europe
5. Broadening ILAE-YES' reach by incorporating targeted communication strategies

Submitted by Helen Cross and Christos Lisgaras