



FOREUM

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ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Activity report and financial statement

PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESEARCH

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PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESEARCH

FOREUM Foundation for Research in Rheumatology is devoted to promoting research in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) as an EULAR related research funding body in rheumatology research. To achieve this goal, FOREUM seeks to raise funds from various donors. Basic and applied research of highest quality will be supported to reduce the burden of disease for people with RMDs. What we have achieved in recent years was only possible thanks to the generous financial support of our loyal as well as new donors. We see this support as a sign of confidence in the value of research funded by FOREUM for the advancement of the field of rheumatology and for society. At the same time, we also see it as a mandate to live up to our high standards of quality in the research supported by FOREUM.

FOREUM will continue to strive to initiate research of the highest quality, which is oriented towards a broad spectrum of disease patterns and will regularly launch calls for proposals for which research projects will be reviewed. We are very pleased that we were again able to finance the best submitted projects in 2023.

We conclude with a word of thanks - first to our current and future donors, then to EULAR for its continued support, and last but not least to all our committee members, staff and others who contribute to making FOREUM a successful and respected institution in European rheumatology research.

Prof Hans Bijlsma

President FOREUM Board of Trustees

General information about the foundation

Purpose of the Foundation pursuant to Art. 2 of the Foundation Charter of 8 May 2013

“The Foundation’s purpose shall be to promote rheumatology research. To this effect, the Foundation shall support rheumatology research projects with financial grants.

The Foundation shall furthermore contribute to

- promote networks in the field of rheumatology research
- facilitate access to research opportunities as well as to activities permitting access to research funding for all European countries.

The purpose of the Foundation is neither commercial nor self-help.”

Tax exemption

By order of the Cantonal Tax Office of Zurich dated 14 October 2013 and confirmed on 28.04.2024, the Foundation was exempted from state tax and general municipal taxes as well as from direct federal tax with effect from its establishment because of the pursuit of charitable purposes.

Statutes and regulations

Foundation Statute of 8 May 2013.

Foundation Regulation of 31 January 2024.

Pursuant to Art. 12 of the Foundation Statutes, the Board of Trustees has issued the “Regulations for the Board of Trustees” for the attention of the Executive Committee, which set out in detail the tasks and responsibilities, working methods and role of the Board of Trustees and the Scientific Committee. Further regulations are not yet required in this initial and establishment period of the foundation.

Domicile

FOREUM, Foundation for Research in Rheumatology

Seestrasse 240

8802 Kilchberg- Switzerland

Institution

Board of Trustees (with collective signature of two)

- President Board of Trustees: Prof. Johannes Bijlsma, The Netherlands
- Vice-President Board of Trustees: Prof. Paul Emery (UK)
- Members Board of Trustees:
 - Prof. Jiri Vencovsky (Czech Republic)
 - Prof. Iain McInnes (UK)
 - Julia Rautenstrauch till 01.07.2023 and Stephan Maier as of 01.07.2023

Executive Committee

- Chair: Prof. Oliver Distler (Switzerland)
- Treasurer: Prof. Ulf Müller-Ladner (Germany)
- Members of the committee:
 - Dr. Rikke Helene Moe (Norway)
 - Prof. Elsa Sousa (Portugal)
 - Prof. Tore Kvien (Norway)
 - Prof. Seza Ozen (Turkey)
 - Ms. Codruta Zabalán (Romania)
- Non-voting members ex officio:
 - EULAR President
 - Board of Trustees members
 - Chair Scientific Committee

Scientific Committee

- Chair: Prof. Rik Lories (Belgium)
- Members of the committee:
 - Prof. Jérémie Sellam (France)
 - Dr. Diane von de Woude (The Netherlands)
 - Assoc. Prof. Annette de Thurah, HPR (Denmark)
 - Prof. Xavier Mariette (France)
 - Prof. Kimme Hyrich (UK)
 - Dr. Nuria Barbarroja, Spain
 - Prof. Fabrizio de Benedetti, Italy
 - Ms. Heidi Bertheussen, PRP (Norway)
 - Ms. Ana Vieira, PRP (Portugal)

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Management of the foundation

For the administrative tasks, secretarial positions are being held by Dr. Astrid Jüngel, FOREUM Manager (100%) and Andrea Beljan, MA (100%).

The Board of Trustees is responsible for management.

Accounting

CMT Partners AG

Dufourstrasse 147

8008 Zürich, Switzerland

Auditor

KPMG AG

Badenerstrasse 172

8036 Zürich, Switzerland

Basics of the foundation's activities

The main task of FOREUM is the promotion of research in the field of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases in the form of an independent research foundation. The aim is to initiate high-quality research into a broad range of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases through financial support. Research projects funded by FOREUM are to be carried out in cooperation with proven research centres from various countries. Only applications for research funds that meet these high standards and that have successfully undergone an external peer review process are considered, which means that the evaluation of the submitting scientific work/projects has been carried out by at least one independent evaluator/scientist from the same subject area.

FOREUM seeks financial support from interested commercial and non-commercial donors (fundraising) to achieve its goals. A list of donors and donations in 2023 is given in the chapter "Income Statement and Balance Sheet 2023". Contributions to FOREUM are guided by the conviction that further research and innovation in this field are crucial for further improvements in the prevention and treatment of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases and thus ultimately the living, working and socio-economic conditions of the more than 120 million people in Europe affected by any form of such diseases.

FOREUM is in principle an institution that defines its strategic goals and tasks independently of other institutions. Nevertheless, the intention is to coordinate the research programme with the European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology (until 31.12.2020 European League Against Rheumatism), which is active in the same field. There are different goals of both organisation, EULAR facilitates research, developing tools, harmonising methods, supporting data bases, while FOREUM funds excellent research. Additionally, FOREUM wants to maintain useful contacts with other research organizations and further circles interested in rheumatism research, where meaningfully.

For the activity of FOREUM three basic experiences or realisations are crucial:

First, the challenges of modern medicine can best be met through an integrative approach to collaboration. In the short to medium term, far-reaching progress in health care in the sense of a paradigm shift is to be aimed for with the use of modern molecular and cell technologies as well as information and database technologies.

Secondly, rheumatology should play a leading role in its implementation, as its interdisciplinary approach enables it to initiate innovations in many areas of medicine. This makes rheumatology an attractive discipline not only for external sponsors, but also for top researchers and the best of the younger generation of researchers.

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Thirdly, important research networks with academic (basic and clinical research) and industrial participation have been established in Europe in recent years. Programmes such as AutoCure, Masterswitch, BTCure, EUROTEAM, PRECISEADS, HarmonicSS, and RTCURE have received significant EU funding. Outstanding research results have been achieved, resulting in sustainable skills, networks, large and well-defined biobanks and world-leading technical know-how.

Rheumatology in Europe has already shown that it is able to work together for the good and benefit of the whole. With a view to the future and since the causes, pathways and above all successful treatment options for many rheumatic diseases have not yet been sufficiently clarified, sustainable financing models are still necessary in the long term. FOREUM has set itself the goal of taking on a significant pioneering role as a committed partner.

PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESEARCH

Activities of the foundation in the financial year 2023

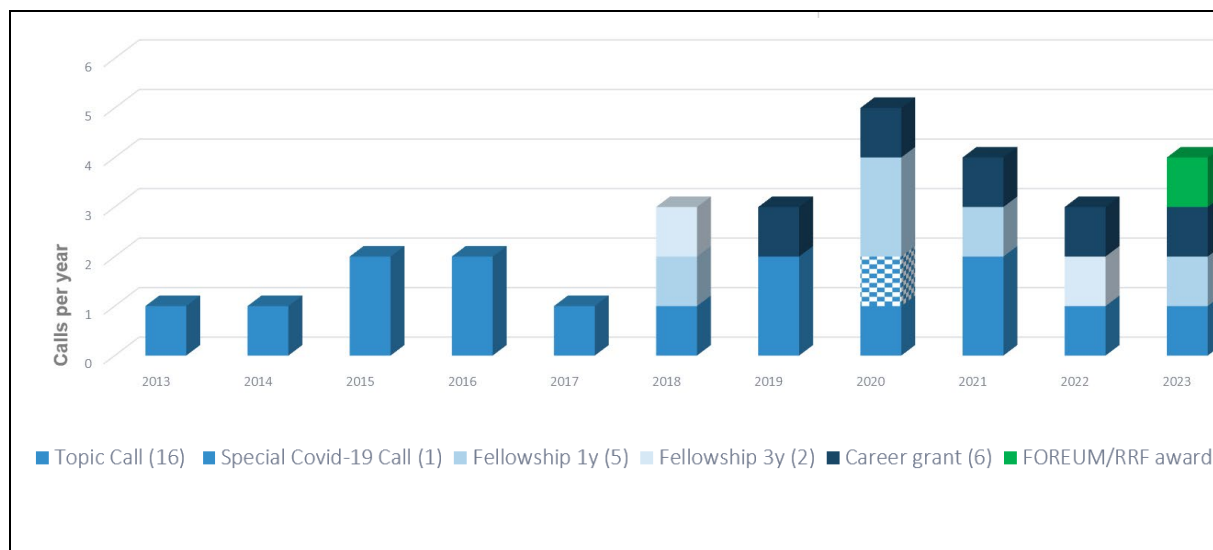
Research Funding

In order to approve the projects and determine the amounts, the submitted projects are examined and evaluated by the Scientific Committee (2 step process: Letter of intent and full proposal upon invitation). Finally, the recommendations of the Scientific Committee are examined and, approved by the Executive Committee. The Board of Trustees makes the final decision on the release of the approved project funds.

Review process



Calls per year: 28 calls and 84 projects



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In 2023 FOREUM was able to

a) Approve the projects for funding for

Call #24 Fellowship 3y

Call #25 E-health

Call #26 Career Grant

RRF-FOREUM Partnership Award

b) Approve the budget for upcoming calls.

c) RRF-FOREUM Partnership Award

Call #27 Fellowship 1y

Call #28 Topic call on innovative models of care

Call #29 Career Grant

	2022	2023	2024
Call 24: Fellowship 3y	Call Approved	Projects approval (2 projects funded)	
Call 25: Topic call on E-health	Call Approved	Projects approval (2 projects funded)	
Call 26: Career Grant	Call Approved	Projects approval (4 projects funded)	
RRF-FOREUM Partnership Award		Call Approved and Project approval (1 project funded)	
Call 27: Fellowship 1y		Call Approved	Project approval planned in 2024
Call 28: Topic call on innovative models of care		Call Approved	Project approval planned in 2024
Call 29: Career Grant		Call Approved	Project approval planned in 2024

PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESEARCH

Within the framework of **RRF-FOREUM Partnership Award 2023** (2y project, total of €200.000 for the European and \$200,000 for the USA partner) Eve Smith, MD, PhD from University of Liverpool (Co-PI) and Rebecca Sadun, MD, PhD from Duke University (Co-PI) were awarded for a joint project focused on rheumatic disease.

Title: “Childhood Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Treat-to-Target Analysis across Global Registries”.

The budget for Eve Smith, MD, PhD from University of Liverpool was covered by FOREUM: € 200.000.

Within the framework of topic **Call 24: Fellowship 3y** (total of € 300.000), two projects were selected by the Scientific committee, approved by the Executive Committee, and approved for funding by Board of Trustees at the request of the Executive Committee. These are the following projects:

- **20FS3078: Hanna van Steenberg**, Leiden University Medical Centre, The Netherlands.
Host Center: Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCCS – Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, IT.
Title: “Unravelling the cellular phenotypes in subclinically inflamed synovium and tenosynovium in Clinically Suspect Arthralgia related to Rheumatoid Arthritis development – a longitudinal translational project”. Budget: € 150.000.
Host Center: Dept Immunology, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- **20FS3079: Edoardo Cipolletta**, Polytechnic University of Marche, Italy.
Host Center: Academic Rheum., University of Nottingham, UK
Title: “Patient-centred outcomes of gout flare and treat-to-target urate lowering treatment (clinical)”. Budget: € 150.000.

Within the framework of topic **Call 25: Topic call on E-health** (total of € 1.189.371), two projects were selected by the Scientific committee, approved by the Executive Committee, and approved for funding by Board of Trustees at the request of the Executive Committee. These are the following projects:

- **25EH080: Anna-Maria Hoffmann-Vold**, Department of Rheumatology, Dermatology and Infectious Diseases Oslo University Hospital, Norway.
Title: “Home based clinical management of Interstitial Lung Disease in systemic rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases; mILDeR-RMD”. Budget: € 599.371.
- **25EH081: Laure Gossec**, Sorbonne Université, Paris, France.
Title: “A personalized, AI-driven dynamic appointment prioritization system using data from wearables for patients with inflammatory arthritis: impact on disease activity and other outcomes”. Budget: € 590.000.

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Within the framework of topic **Call 26: Career grant** (total of € 800.000), four projects were selected by the Scientific committee, approved by the Executive Committee, and approved for funding by the Board of Trustees at the request of the Executive Committee. These are the following projects:

- **26CG082: Marc Scherlinger**, Strasbourg University Hospital, Strasbourg France.
Title: “Platelet selectin promotes neutrophils immunogenic death and participates in systemic lupus pathogenesis”. Budget: € 200.000.
- **26CG083: Jolien Suurmond**, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Title: “When autoimmunity gets more than skin deep”. Budget: € 200.000.
- **26CG084: Gaetane Nocturne**, ImVA: Centre for Immunology, Paris-Saclay University –INSERM U1184. Le Kremlin Bicêtre, France.
Title: “ALTO: from Autoimmunity to Lymphoma: To unravel lymphomagenesis in primary SjOgren disease”. Budget: € 200.000.
- **26CG085: Nikolaos Vlachogiannis**, Joint Academic Rheumatology Program, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Medical School, First Department of Propaedeutic Internal Medicine, Athens, Greece.
Title: “Microhemorrhage-related iron deposition in the tissues of patients with Systemic Sclerosis: a prospective study”. Budget: € 200.000.

Meetings Board of Trustees and Executive Committee

The Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee held two meetings on the course of business in the period under review:

- Ratification of the Executive Committee’s proposed allocations for three projects (**Call 27: Fellowship 1y**) totalling € 150.000.
- Ratification of the Executive Committee’s proposed allocations for three projects (**Call 28: Topic call on innovative models of care**) totalling € 1.800.000.
- Ratification of the Executive Committee’s proposed allocations for one project for the **RRF-FOREUM Partnership Award in 2024** totalling € 200.000.
- Ratification of the Executive Committee’s proposed allocations for four projects (**Call 29: Career grant**) totalling € 400.000.

Information on the amount of the research grants

As explained in the previous chapter, FOREUM 2023 has approved research grants, some of which have already been paid out. In detail these are:

Call 24: Fellowship 3y. Budget: € 300.000.

- 20FS3078: Hanna van Steenberg, Budget: € 150.000.
- 20FS3079: Edoardo Cipolletta, Budget: € 150.000.

Call #25: Topic grant: E-health. Budget: € 1.189.371.

- 25EH080: Anna-Maria Hoffmann-Vold, Budget: € 599.371.
- 25EH081: Laure Gossec, Budget: € 590.000.

Call #26: Career Grant. Budget: € 800.000.

- 26CG082: Marc Scherlinger, Budget: € 200.000.
- 26CG083: Jolien Suurmond, Budget: € 200.000.
- 26CG084: Gaetane Nocturne, Budget: € 200.000.
- 26CG085: Nikolaos Vlachogiannis, Budget: Budget: € 200.000.

Foundation assets

The foundation assets on 31 December 2023 amounted to 10.525.745 EUR and are invested with UBS and Zürcher Kantonalbank (ZKB) Zurich in current accounts in EUR and CHF and in securities with a stock market price.

The foundation assets are managed by the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer, as a member of the Executive Committee, is regularly informed by the Secretariat about payments and account balances. The Treasurer reports to the Board of Trustees at regular intervals on the financial situation of FOREUM. Expenditure planned is examined and approved by the Board of Trustees in full knowledge of the financial situation of the Foundation. The details are set out in the appendix to the annual report.

Income statement and balance sheet 2023

Income statement

The 2023 income statement ends with a positive result of 321.394 EUR, with donations received last year amounting to 2.050.000 EUR. In addition to other costs, personnel expenses amounted to 249.919 EUR and operating expenses to 134.258 EUR.

Balance sheet

The balance sheet at the end of 2023 includes assets of 10.525.745 EUR in the form of cash and cash equivalents and invested in securities. Shareholders' equity of 2.058.836 EUR is made up of 100.000 EUR endowment capital, 1.637.442 EUR retained earnings, and 321.394 EUR net profit for 2023.

	2023
EULAR	600.000
Pfizer	500.000
AbbVie	250.000
Novartis	250.000
UCB	150.000
BMS	100.000
Boehringer Ingelheim	50.000
Janssen	100.000
Vifor Pharma	50.000
Total	2.050.000

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Platinum Donors	  
Gold Donors	 
Silver Donors	
Bronze Donors	  
Donors	

PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESEARCH

Resolution of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees approved the activity report and annual financial statements for 2023 on 11 June 2024 and adopted unanimously. The auditors for the coming 2024 financial year were also confirmed.



Prof. Hans Bijlsma,
President Board of Trustees



Prof. Iain McInnes,
Member Board of Trustees

Kilchberg, 11 June 2024

Appendix risk evaluation and management

As part of its duties, the Board of Trustees regularly reviews all organs and processes of the foundation to identify risks and, as far as possible, avoid or at least mitigate them. At its meetings on 18 January and 30 May 2023, the Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the decisions and recommendations of the Executive and the Scientific Committee and found the decision-making processes to be good. In its assessment of the financial situation of FOREUM, the Board of Trustees reviewed the revenues and planned expenditures and approved them in accordance with the foundation's assets. No financial risks are discernible regarding the current activities of the foundation. To avoid financial risks in the future, the Board of Trustees reserves the right to make adjustments at any time. The principle only applies that donations are made for which the financial framework is 100% guaranteed.

Contact information

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FOREUM Manager

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