

	
 <p data-bbox="488 548 1138 680">IBRO-ISN WRITING PAPERS WORKSHOP 2019 Lagos, Nigeria - 20-24 March</p> 	

Organizer: Marina Bentivoglio *Local Organizer:* Funmilayo E. Olopade
Venue: BW Starfire Hotel, 128, Joel Ogunnaike Street, Ikeja
Secretariat: Silvia Gabrieli - e-mail: writing.papers2019@gmail.com

Mentors:

Marina Bentivoglio, *University of Verona, Italy*
Philippe De Deurwaerdère, *University of Bordeaux, France*
Kristen Kristensson, *Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden*
Willias Masocha, *Kuwait University*
Susan Sara, *Collège de France, Paris, France*
Evelyn Sernagor, *University of Newcastle, UK*

The IBRO-ISN Writing Papers Workshop, 2019 took place from 20 -24 April, as a pre-conference workshop prior to the Society for Neuroscientists of Africa (SONA) in Lagos, Nigeria. It was jointly sponsored by International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO) and International Society for Neurochemistry (ISN).

The aim of the workshop was to introduce to the participants, basic concepts which are essential to produce strong scientific papers. This was done through a series of lectures and personal mentoring of each participant to help them produce a scientific paper based on their own previously completed research work. This is very important as it is necessary to help these participants to be able to compete favorably for publication in high impact journals.

The selection process was highly competitive with a total of 71 applications. Selection was done on the basis of scientific merit of proposed manuscript and career potentials. A total of 22 participants were selected, 3 from Morocco and 19 from Nigeria. Priority was given to female candidates with equal qualifications, and we had a total of 10 female and 12 male participants.

A total of 6 mentors and one facilitator were invited for the workshop. The mentors were from Italy (1), France (2), UK (1), Sweden (1) and Kuwait (1), and the facilitator was a Nigerian with affiliations to University of Verona, Italy.

Activities started every morning at 9am and finished around 7pm, with tea and lunch breaks in between. Every day there were several lectures of various topics related to preparing data for publication, choosing journals, writing different types of papers, addressing reviewers' comments etc. Every day there was also significant time allocated for direct personal tutoring to work on preparation of manuscripts. Each mentor had 3 or 4 tutees. Tutees had sent their draft manuscripts to their mentor well ahead of the workshop, allowing them to read through and provide initial feedback. Mentors worked with each student on their paper throughout the workshop, with the aim of progressing the draft as much as possible towards final submission status. There were about 3-4 hours every day dedicated to mentoring activities.

Feedback from the participants showed that the workshop was highly impactful, a serious eye-opener and a great initiative for early career investigators, young academia and students. The participants learned and acquired new writing paper skills, especially from one-on-one interaction with mentors, acquired a better understanding of experimental designs as well as many other issues that can aid manuscript development. The summary of the feedback was from one participant who wrote 'This workshop has addressed salient issues affecting early career scientists from initiation of idea, to design and to completion'.

Suggestions for improvement included requests for practical trainings on the use of writing tools like citation tools, image software and statistical tools, addition of classes on how to write the discussion part of manuscripts, and the creation of a platform for the alumni of the course to update their mentors on progress in terms manuscript written/publications, so as to further assess the success of the program.

The ISN funding provided indispensable support in allowing us to procure economy flight tickets for two of the three international participants, travel stipends for the Nigerians who came from outside Lagos, SONA conference registration fees for all the participants, in order to encourage their attendance, among other things.

Please find below, a breakdown of how the ISN funds were expended.

Item	Cost (\$)
Flight tickets for 2 Moroccans	2,113
Travel subsidies to Nigerians	1,032
Conference registration reimbursements (Nigerians)	1,461
Gift plaques to mentors	194
Hall Rental x 4 days	645
Tea break x 4 days	516
Miscellaneous	39
TOTAL	6,000

The organisers, participants and mentors of the Writing Papers Workshop, 2019, are extremely grateful to the International Society for Neurochemistry for this support which has enabled us to have such an impactful and truly rewarding workshop.



Cross section of participants and mentors listening to a lecture delivered by Prof. Krister Kristensson



Participants receiving their certificates of participation from mentors at the closing ceremony



Group photograph of mentors and participants at the venue.