

FELIX MOTTAGHY EANM Internal Groups Officer

Felix Mottaghy has been an EANM Board member since January 2023. As the EANM Internal Groups Officer (formerly called 'Committee Coordinator'), he has played a pivotal role in the restructuring of the EANM Committees. His term is set to conclude in December 2024, meaning that his position will soon need to be filled. Read his interview to get a deeper insight into his commitment to the field and the work expected from the EANM Internal Groups Officer.



1. Nuclear Medicine is rapidly advancing and getting increasing interest within the medical community. Could you walk us through your journey into this unique field?

When I started looking for a topic for my MD thesis, I quickly decided to focus on Neuroscience. I had the chance to find a novel and very interesting application of transcranial magnetic stimulation in cognitive tasks and pursued my experiments. I also got involved in the use of MRI and brain imaging to get a better delineation of brain structures. After completing my thesis, I was able to get a temporary position as an intern at the Research Center Jülich and was intrigued by the possibilities of PET imaging in Cognitive Neuroscience. I also was introduced to the breadth of Nuclear Medicine applications in both diagnostics and therapy.

Since I started my studies, I have always been strongly interested in Physiology and Biochemistry. With Nuclear Medicine, I realised that these two fields could be brought together and impact various medical applications (Neuroscience, Oncology, Cardiovascular, Endocrinology or Musculoskeletal). This realisation encouraged me to further my career in Nuclear Medicine, after I pursued a postdoc fellowship programme at Harvard University in Boston, USA.

The subsequent stages of my career in Ulm, Germany and Leuven, Belgium, steered me towards the translational aspects of Nuclear Medicine. Ultimately, I ended up in Aachen, Germany and Maastricht, The Netherlands, where I have assembled a multidisciplinary team that works on basic science, tracer development, and on the comprehensive scope of theranostics and conventional nuclear medicine practices.

2. Since its establishment in 1985, the EANM has been dedicated to expanding the reach and enhancing the visibility of Nuclear Medicine worldwide. What convinced you to invest your time in its mission?

My first encounter with the EANM was at the 2004 Annual Congress (EANM'04) in Helsinki, Finland, where I presented an abstract. Ever since, I have been participating in all the EANM Annual Congresses and have deeply enjoyed the dynamic exchanges with colleagues from different countries.

Along this journey, I was involved in the EANM Oncology & Theranostics Committee for several years, thanks to which I learned a lot. After a short break, I also joined the EANM Translational Molecular Imaging & Therapy Committee.

Upon recognising the importance of contributing to, not just benefiting from, the EANM's offerings, I decided to further devote my efforts and ran for the Board position of EANM Internal Groups Officer.

3. Since January 2023, you have played a pivotal role as the EANM Internal Groups Officer in the restructuring of the EANM Committees, an initiative known as 'EANM 3.0'. How necessary was this overhaul in meeting the evolving needs of the Nuclear Medicine community?

Nuclear Medicine is in an ever-evolving world, with a lot of new opportunities for clinical applications, mostly in Oncology but also in other medical fields. This has sparked growing interest in the EANM's mission, and has concurrently led to an increased demand for our prompt and effective response to emerging challenges.

To maintain pace with these changes and address existing gaps, a restructuring of the EANM's internal framework was therefore imperative. With the precious support of our outstanding office team, I contributed to the development of new statutes and to the reshuffle of some of our valuable volunteers into new internal groups. The main challenge in this process was to ensure that our dedicated volunteers within the internal groups understood the necessity of redesigning the Committees and introducing Councils. These reforms were crucial steps in preparing the EANM for a future-proof trajectory.

Now that the new structure is in place, my role entails coordinating projects and activities across all our Committees and Councils. This position demands strong coordination skills and a multidisciplinary approach. Being Internal Groups Officer has been immensely rewarding, as it has allowed me to navigate the diverse facets of our field and oversee the full spectrum of EANM's activities.

4. Beyond the Blouse: Deep down, what is your real motivation for coming to Vienna regularly?

During the introduction round we had at our recent National Delegates meeting in Vienna back in March, I heard a little bit of the beauty of several European cities from my colleagues, who depicted their hometown with a lot of passion.

However, it was clear that Vienna, with its historic and cultural magnetism, holds a special place in our hearts. And I am no exception: every time I come, I am enchanted by the monuments and palaces, the concert halls, and the galleries presenting the timeless works of Klimt and Schiele.

Next to the unique Viennese dialect, I also always enjoy the warmth of Austrian hospitality and the great culinary experiences. In the end, I must admit that the motivation for returning to Vienna regularly is as multifaceted as the city itself. Each visit I make for EANM meetings is a chance for me to explore another dimension of Vienna's vibrant cultural landscape – and I look forward to perhaps continuing combining both scopes of activities in the years to come.

5. What's next? After several years of dedicated service as EANM Committee member and Board member, what are your plans regarding your involvement in the EANM?

Over the past 15 months serving as an EANM Board member, I have developed a deep understanding of our operations, benefiting from engaging, solution-focused collaboration – supported by an exceptionally professional office. Our concerted efforts have broadened our network and crafted strategies for present and future challenges in Nuclear Medicine, which is getting increasing interest from larger societies for its best practices.

Feeling that I can continue contributing to the EANM, I have decided to run for the position of EANM President-Elect – aiming to succeed Paola Anna Erba in January 2027. By remaining on the EANM Board, I would like to use my insights to broaden the EANM's reach, reinforce Nuclear Medicine's independence, and amplify our impact on EU policy (with the help of our Policy & Regulatory Affairs Council).

I am also strongly aware that the attraction and inclusion of emerging talents into our specialty is essential. I would therefore like to develop even more initiatives dedicated to the next generation of Nuclear Medicine professionals.