

# Presidents' Messages

## From EMWA's new President Carola Krause 2021-2022

A year of EMWA firsts has passed and while we are still not in a post-pandemic phase, one can see that our profession has regained its momentum.

In the past, you might have experienced the need to explain to family members and friends what "medical communications" is all about. I, at least, always received the same reaction: "People pay money for the services you provide?" Well, that perception has changed with the pandemic. Not only is there a better public understanding but actually an appreciation of professional medical writing and communications. In other words, societies associate a certain value to the services medical writers and communicators provide.

Professional, fact-checked medical communi-



cations became a key element in this pandemic. However, the toolkit to communicate medical facts has expanded and adapted to the individual audiences. Nowadays, medical communications utilise not only the written word but also audio and visual communications. Particularly, podcasts, infographics, and social media are becoming very popular tools to communicate medical facts.

It is interesting to see that medical communication is no longer seen as unidirectional. Engaging audiences is now state of the art. I believe that our profession has benefited from the pandemic, but with the increased public awareness, the demands on our profession have grown.

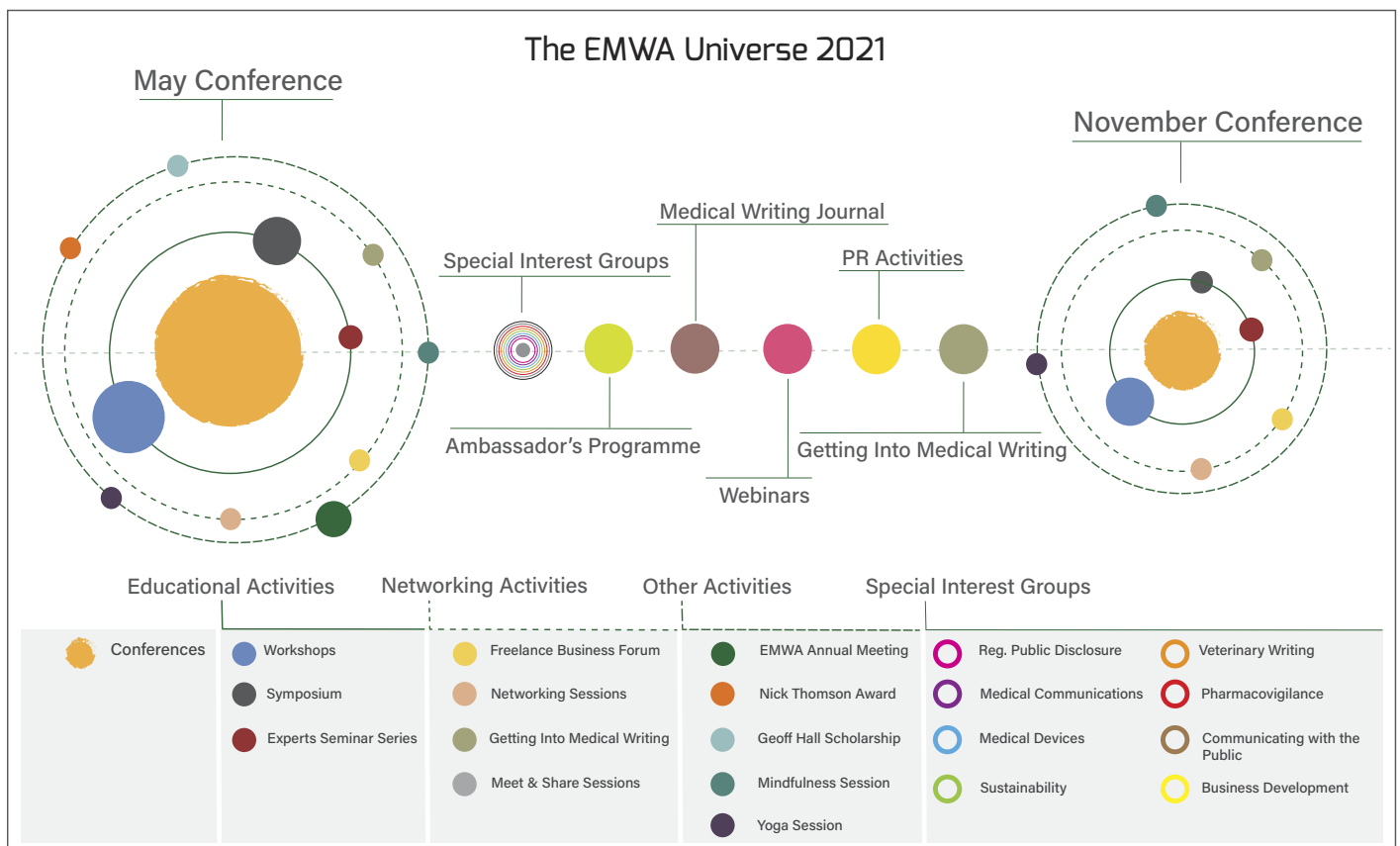
Therefore, the question arises how EMWA

adapts to this ever-changing world of medical writing and communications.

Over the next few months, we aim to revisit the role of medical writers and communicators and emphasise an update of the AMWA-EMWA-ISMPP Joint Positions Statement on the Role of Professional Medical Writers.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, I am very happy to announce that we will have two new Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within EMWA: the Business Development SIG (#EMWABDSIG; chaired by Allison Kirsop) and Communicating with the Public SIG (#EMWACWPSIG; chaired by Lisa Chamberlain James).

We also aim to broaden the possibilities for our newbies. We are expanding the 'Getting into Medical Writing' conference sessions to year-long activities to increase awareness of our profession. Whereas the Ambassador's Programme is an outreach initiative, the 'Getting into Medical Writing' activities (chaired by Evguenia



1. [https://www.ismpp.org/assets/docs/Initiatives/amwa-emwa-ismpp%20joint%20position%20statement%20on%20the%20role%20of%20professional%20medical%20writers\\_january%202017.pdf](https://www.ismpp.org/assets/docs/Initiatives/amwa-emwa-ismpp%20joint%20position%20statement%20on%20the%20role%20of%20professional%20medical%20writers_january%202017.pdf)

Alechine) aims to attract people directly to EMWA activities and the educational programme. Thereby, we foresee broadening EMWA's educational offers by extending the portfolio of foundation and advanced workshops. Additionally, EMWA will launch a podcast series called 'Tab Key', initiated and run by members of the Freelance Business Group (chaired by Laura Kehoe).

Like the universe, EMWA is expanding. EMWA membership numbers have grown substantially within the last year, from 600 members in May 2020 to 1100 members in May 2021. The demand for EMWA's professional development programme (EPDP) is very high. However, it appears to me that the networking opportunities as well as the personal and cultural exchange within our community are as valuable as the EPDP. We aim to maintain EMWA's personal touch through a variety of year-long virtual and face-to-face activities. An up-to-date overview of EMWA's year-long activities can be found in the infographic 'The EMWA Universe (2021)':

As our professional community is growing, EMWA's responsibilities are growing as well. EMWA requires a framework of good practice which we aim to develop through a Code of Conduct.

Please feel free to follow EMWA's activities on our website, social media channels, and our journal, *Medical Writing*. If you wish to actively participate in our activities, you can send us a message via [info@emwa.org](mailto:info@emwa.org).

Hopefully, we will enter a post-pandemic phase within this summer which allows for future face-to-face or hybrid conference.

I am very much hoping to see you all in person in Cascais in 2021!

**Carola**  
[president@emwa.org](mailto:president@emwa.org)

## From EMWA's Outgoing President Beatrix Doerr 2020–2021

Time to say goodbye! After having served on EMWA's Executive Committee (EC) for six years in various roles, my term ended at our Spring conference in May. These have been rewarding years, with lots of work, but also lots of unforgettable experiences and memories.

I now want to take the opportunity to share some personal words. First, I want to thank the EC members for their support in these challenging COVID-19 times. I will truly miss you! Luckily, vaccinations are speeding up so that I hope that we can see each other soon. I also want to thank our people at the EMWA Head Office, particularly Debra Cairncross and Claire Whittingham, for their continuous support. Thank you, too, to all EMWA volunteers who are the backbone of our organisation.

Lastly, I want to thank all EMWA members. Thank you for being so kind and friendly, which makes EMWA unique. And thank you for helping me keep the faith that there are still smart people out there. Particularly in these times when hate and ignorance seem to have gained the upper hand, it is a blessing to have smart and kind people like you around.

Please hold on to your kindness. One of my favourite sayings is: "In a world where you can be everything – be kind." Another credo I live by is

We need to do our part to provide reliable information and (re)establish trust in science.

that there are two ways of enlarging your business: either take it from your competitors or expand your business opportunities. I live by the latter and this is the spirit I feel during our conferences, face-to-face or virtual. This is what

makes EMWA unique. I hope that during my presidency, we have enlarged the business opportunities of medical writers/communicators. And there is more to come!

So let's aim to combat hate with kindness, and let's combat misinformation with accurate information. Continue to be kind, but be firm, and stand up when needed.

Hold your ground when it comes to defending good scientific practice.

With the pandemic, misinformation grew. In the current environment, our role in science communication is more important than ever. We need to do our part to provide reliable information and to (re)establish trust in science. To adequately inform patients, lay language and virtual aids are increasingly important. With my successor Carola Krause, you have a president well-equipped and qualified to prepare EMWA for these tasks and to transform it to an even more inclusive "Medical Writers and Communicators Association 2.0."

It was an honour to serve you as president. I will continue to serve EMWA as a volunteer, but for now, I plan to take the time to travel around in our camping bus again. Over and out!

Kindly,  
**Bea**

