

## Info.

## JNS Online General Assembly

The Japan Neuroscience Society

President: Michisuke Yuzaki

Director of General Affairs: Yoshikazu Isomura

The General Assembly is a key opportunity for important issues to be reported and discussed with the members of the Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS). Similar to 2020, the 2021 General Assembly was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all participants for the large number of votes and

valuable opinions which they contributed. As part of the sound management of the JNS, we will share and discuss opinions we have received with the Board of Directors and each Committee.

For the future development of JNS, we ask all members to continue to proactively participate in JNS activities.

## FY2021 Report on the JNS General Assembly

**Date and Time :** July 20<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021

**Location :** Online

**Participants:** 1,380 (i.e., the number of people who viewed the agenda materials)

#### Agenda materials

Votes to approve minor changes to agenda materials: 1,379

Votes against: 1

The majority of the participants approved.

<Announcement on correction of typographical errors>

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the first day of the Assembly, the following typographical errors were found in the Agenda material and corrected.

(The date of the Neuro2022 conference, on page 10)

Incorrect: June 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

Correct: June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

We apologize for any inconvenience.

#### Agenda item 1 Reports on accounting

Votes to approve this agenda: 1,378

Votes against: 2

Since the majority of participants approved, this agenda item was approved. (Article XXI, bylaws of JNS).

#### Opinions from members

- Matters concerning document style/language:

1) Numerical units need to be specified

2) Japanese version is needed

- 1. I assume this has already been discussed many times, but why don't you provide a Japanese version of Assembly materials?

2. I believe that it would be better if you provided members with an explanation on how the Society's budget became balanced, as there had previously been a large deficit.

- This comment is not about the accounting, but about the meeting participation fee for regular members: I believe it to be a problem that the participation fee has recently increased by almost 10,000 yen compared to 6 or 7 years ago.

I believe that this increased participation fee is likely to be the main reason that the number of JNS members has decreased by 20%, as seen in the data in the Activity report.

- I would like to hear a projection of the reduction in assets.

#### Explanation by Treasurer Yamanaka

Due to the gradual downward trend in the number of members and the increase in expenditures for introducing

information technologies (IT) into the Society's operation, the JNS's budget was initially in the red. In the fiscal year 2020, a financial deficit was avoided due to the reduction of expenditures on international exchange programs and annual meeting-related events by holding such events online. This decrease in expenditures is also the result of a decrease in operating expenditures achieved by the introduction of improved IT and the improvement of operational efficiency. We will continue to improve operational efficiency and strive to continue to contribute to our members' activities and achieve a long-term and stable operation.

Regarding the retaining assets every year, we think such retention is needed as a safeguard for any large deficit in the annual meeting's budget, which currently totals more than 100 million yen, due to unforeseen circumstances in the future.

As for the Meeting participation fee, I will not go into details here as it is not on the agenda of this General Assembly. We will continue to rationalize costs and keep the Annual Meeting participation fee as low as possible, so we humbly ask for your understanding and support.

#### Explanation by Director Isomura, Director of General Affairs

In the past, the materials for the General Assembly were only available in English. However, this year, agenda items included a revision of the Bylaws of the Society, so we prepared a Japanese version for that agenda as a special measure for the convenience of members. The provision of Japanese versions of General Assembly materials from 2022 onwards will be subject to future consideration. Thank you very much for your comments.

#### Agenda item 2 Revision of Bylaws

Votes to approve this agenda: 1,373

Votes against: 7

Since two-thirds of participants approved this agenda item, the revision of the Bylaws was approved (Article XXIV, Bylaws of JNS).

#### Opinions from members

- Aren't Directors elected from among the Councilors?
- Are the membership fees for Councilors the same as for regular members?

- Regarding the eligibility for Councilors.

1. I feel that requiring 10 years of membership for Councilor candidates is too demanding. Clinicians sometimes start their research late. In order to increase the number of young Councilors, please consider easing the Councilor's eligibility, for example, requiring the years of membership to be 7 years.

2. In order to promote the participation of the younger generation, how about limiting the term of office of Councilors to 10 consecutive years and allowing them to apply again after 2 years (in that case, no recommendation by Councilor is required)?

- If section 4, Article V is revised as proposed, I think it would be better if the order of section 4 and section 5 of Article V is reversed.

- Although not directly related to this change, I wonder if the reasons for a leave of absence from the Society need to be broadened beyond maternity and paternity leave. In modern society, life events are not limited to childbirth, but include childcare not covered by maternity leave, nursing care, and altered physical function. Also, I don't think there are many benefits to limiting the reasons for leave-of-absence to life events. I hope that the Society will be flexible enough to accept the various reasons for absence of members.

- In the future, is it possible that the annual membership fee will be higher for Councilors than for general members?

- Since increased restrictions will be imposed on the Society after the incorporation, the Society should expect to have pushback for some time until its members get used to the incorporated Society's rules. I think it would be very helpful if you gave an explanation of the changes associated with the incorporation to the members in an easy-to-understand manner.

- I think it is desirable that the Councilors are elected by direct online voting by the Society's members.

- 1. I approve of the proposed procedure for junior members. 2. I do not approve of the proposed Councilor system because I believe that the election by members is needed for the appointment of councilors.

#### Explanation by Director Isomura, Director of General Affairs

In anticipation of the incorporation of JNS, and in order to

ensure its sound and stable management, we have proposed, as the first step, the revision of the Bylaws on matters related to membership and the Councilor system. At present, the Board of Directors of the Society and the Working Group for the Management of the JNS, part of the Future Planning Committee, are playing a key role in detailing the concrete path to incorporation, referring to examples of incorporation by other academic societies. We will make the most of valuable comments from members in the future.

We assume that the appropriate number of Councilors for the Society is approximately several hundred people. Under this assumption, it is reasonable to require 10 years of membership in order to be eligible to become a Councilor. We have designed the Councilor system to reflect the wide-ranging opinions from the Society members by adding a provision to the Bylaws establishing a system that allows members to recommend suitable candidates who have less than 10 years of membership in consideration of diversity and balance.

Although a direct election should be the ideal way for appointing Councilors, in reality, it is difficult for us to conduct an election from an operational standpoint. We will continue to carefully consider the membership categories, panels, membership fees, etc. at the above-mentioned opportunities for deliberation. We would be grateful if you could deliberate on the stipulation of the Bylaws towards the incorporation again, at a future Annual Meeting. In addition, we will conduct member questionnaires, as appropriate, to fully make use of variable members' opinions and strive to provide members with an easy-to-understand explanation about the changes associated with incorporation.

#### Explanation from the secretariat

In addition to maternity and childcare leave, it is possible to take a leave of absence for nursing care, medical treatment, etc. In such a case, please contact us with the reason. In the past, we have also approved leaves of absence for other reasons such as conscription.

#### Report item1 Reports on General Affairs

##### Opinions from members

- It would be more helpful for members if you provided a Japanese version of the agenda document. (I apologize if this language-related issue has already

been discussed with the conclusion that only either a Japanese or English version is fine—please omit this opinion if this is the case.)

-- For the Japanese version of the agenda document, please refer to the explanation from the Director of General Affairs under Agenda Item 1.

#### Report item 2 Reports on the 44th Annual Meeting (2021)

##### Opinions from members

- It would be more helpful for members if you provided a Japanese version of the agenda document. (I apologize if this language-related issue has already been discussed with the conclusion that only either a Japanese or English version is fine—please omit this opinion if this is the case.)
- I wish for the successful organization of the Annual Meeting of the JNS so that neuroscience research in Japan can grow and develop as a whole.
- Thank you for your efforts in holding the Annual Meeting under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It seems that the costs and participation fee for such a hybrid event can escalate quickly, so after the pandemic situation settles down, I hope that Annual Meetings will be held in-person as before. If the pandemic situation continues, I hope that the Meetings can be held on-demand, as they were in 2020.
- It was good to have the event as a hybrid of online and onsite venues because I could see all sessions on Zoom. I think it would be convenient if we could use Zoom even if we are participating in the event onsite.
- I would like to express my sincere respect for the efforts of those involved in organizing the Annual Meeting. On the other hand, while I agree that it was preferable to hold the Meeting onsite, I think it would have been better to hold it online this year. Though I understand the current pandemic situation forced many members to abandon on-site participation, it was inconvenient to participate in the hybrid event. It would be of no surprise, should the crowding seen at some poster sessions give concerns for potential outbreak clusters.

#### Explanation by Director Bito, President of the 44th Annual Meeting

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to

many of our members for attending the 44th Annual Meeting.

The questionnaires collected from the participants to the 43rd Annual Meeting last year revealed that many members wished to hold this year's Annual Meeting in a hybrid format. Accordingly, following deliberations by the Board of Directors, it was decided to hold the 44th Annual Meeting in a hybrid manner. I believe that there are pros and cons in holding an event in-person, on-demand, or in a hybrid format. I will ensure that the experiences and lessons from the 44th Meeting will be fully available to the 45th Meeting. As for the internet connection at the on-site venue, thanks to the efforts of the people at the Kobe Convention Center, we were able to increase the capacity of the wireless LAN compared to the previous Meetings held in Kobe. We recognize and will continue to emphasize the importance of a comfortable wireless LAN environment in future Meeting operations.

I would like to express my sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused to our members by the Society's first ever hybrid event. To hold the 44th Annual Meeting, we first notified the Hyogo Prefectural Government and complied with all guidelines issued by Kobe City to strictly ensure the safe and secure operation of the event. Until the very last minute of the Meeting, we tried to accept as many requests as possible from participants to change their participation mode from onsite to online, resulting in a significant increase in the number of presenters who gave their presentations online. During the Meeting period, we asked for on-site participants to observe a strict meal rule: only with up to one close contact AND no more than two people per occasion. At the on-site poster venue, we strictly adhered to the following measures to prevent infection. We made sure that the room was well ventilated, that poster boards were arranged so that they were well-spaced, that presentation times were staggered according to odd and even poster numbers, and that there was always a 3-meter distance (1.5 meters in width on either side) between adjacent poster presenters. In addition, we mandated the submission of a daily health status questionnaire before entering the meeting venue and controlled the flow of visitors to the poster session room. Furthermore, we used automatic monitoring equipment for body temperature, visually inspected mask wearing, and ensured that all participants disinfected their hands each time they entered the venue building. We noted that areas around a few posters were momentarily crowded at the peak times, but we also observed that there was no stagnation in the flow of people due to the crowding. Though we had already started to prepare to limit the access of visitors to the poster session rooms, should the crowd size further increase, we eventually judged that the increase in the

crowding was transient and not sustained enough to take further measures.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude once again to all those who cooperated with us to overcome these difficulties and participate in the Annual Meeting.

-- For the Japanese version of the agenda document, please refer to the explanation from the Director of General Affairs under Agenda Item 1.

### Report item 3 Reports on the 45th Annual Meeting (2022)

#### Opinions from members

- It would be more helpful for members to be provided with a Japanese version of the agenda document. (I apologize if this language-related issue has already been discussed with the conclusion that only either a Japanese or English version is fine—please omit this opinion if this is the case.)
- Minor typographical errors: the date of the Neuro2022 conference on page 10 is indicated as June 28th to 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. However, this is a mistake and should be replaced with June 30th to July 3<sup>rd</sup> as shown on page 12 and the official website.
- Considering the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am assuming that it is possible that infection control measures will also be required in 2022. As for the outline of the infection control measures to be taken at the 2022 Annual Meeting, I would like to ask you to accurately understand the latest situation at that time and accordingly inform us as soon as possible.
- Next year, I hope to see that the on-site event is strengthened while retaining the strong advantages of the online meeting.
- I am looking forward to the next Annual Meeting at Okinawa. I can only pray that the current pandemic situation ends. (In my laboratory, a student decided to proceed to graduate school education because the student wanted to participate in Neuro2022. I just hope the event will be held somehow.)

#### Explanation by Director Doya, President of the 45th Annual Meeting

I am very sorry that I overlooked the error in the date in the initial version of the material. While taking into account the COVID-19 pandemic situation, we would like

to improve and enrich our programs and services so that as many people as possible can participate in the Meeting on-site. Please continue to send us your opinions to help us organize a better Meeting. I look forward to seeing you at the 45th Annual Meeting in Okinawa.

-- For the Japanese version of the agenda document, please refer to the explanation from the Director of General Affairs under Agenda Item 1.

#### Report item 4 Reports from the Annual Meeting Committee

##### Opinions from members

- It would be more helpful for members if you provided a Japanese version of the agenda document. (I apologize if this language-related issue has already been discussed with the conclusion that only either a Japanese or English version is fine—please omit this opinion if this is the case.)

##### Explanation by Annual Meeting Committee Chair Ohtsuka

In the past, the materials for the General Assembly were only available in English. However, this year, Agenda Items included a revision of the Bylaws of the Society, so we prepared a Japanese version for that agenda as a special measure for the convenience of members. The provision of Japanese versions of General Assembly materials from 2022 onwards will be subject to future consideration. Thank you very much for your comments.

#### Report item 5 Reports from Neuroscience Research

##### Opinions from members

- This year, impact factors (IFs) in the field of biological sciences have risen across the board. Is there any particular reason for this?
- I think that the acceptance rate and the time to decision of acceptance are very important pieces of information. Many problems have been pointed out with the IF. Do you indicate the IF values because JNS has approved it as an appropriate indicator for journals? Wouldn't it be better that you indicate other indicators as well?
- It is just great that the journal got an IF of more than 3!
- There may be some problems in using and discussing IF values, but at any rate, congratulations to Neuroscience Research for achieving an IF of greater than 3!

##### Explanation by Journal Director Kamiguchi, Editor-in-Chief of Neuroscience Research

The acceptance rate for Neuroscience Research has been hovering around 20%. We will continue to strive for prompt and fair review. As we have already announced in an email, the method of calculating the IF has been changed this year. As you pointed out, it is not possible to properly evaluate the influence of a journal based on IF alone, but we have included the IF value in the document for members' reference only. It is not an evaluation method officially approved by JNS.

We will strive to make the journal even better. We look forward to receiving many submissions from JNS members.