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Editorial

Introduction

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I would like to welcome you to this special issue of Forensic Science International. It summarises the 9th conference of the European Academy of Forensic Science held in Stockholm from May 30th to June 3rd 2022. It was hosted by Mrs. Helena Tröllang, Director of the Swedish National Forensic Centre (NFC), Mrs Christina Bertler Edlund, chairperson of the EAFS 2022 organising committee and Dr Emil Hjalmarson, chairperson of the EAFS 2022 scientific committee. This Issue reflects the diversity and the scientific level reached during the five days of workshops and conference.

It is important to mention that, for this Special Issue, the review process differed from the normal review process of the journal. All presenters at the conference were invited to submit their contribution for consideration to the journal in a written form. Members of the Editorial Board were given access to all submissions, except when they had a particular connection with the institution it originated from. Additional external reviewers were invited when an insufficient number of members of the Board shared the relevant expertise. The Board met during the conference and made a first series of decisions on the contributions submitted prior to the conference. The contributions submitted later were reviewed online and decisions were made based on a minimum of three reviews. Every selected submission was accepted by a minimum of two reviewers.

In the end, a total of 45 contributions were submitted, from which 26 were accepted. In this issue, 10 first authors are females and 16 are males. Many of the reviewed and rejected papers contained good quality material and several authors were encouraged to rewrite or carry out some additional work and resubmit their manuscript for consideration in a regular issue of Forensic Science International. The contributions accepted in this Special Issue represent a snapshot of the state of the art within forensic research, showing the richness of its topics: archaeology [taphonomy] (2), (4) biometrics [face, fingerprint] (4), chemistry [chemometrics, drugs, environment, explosives, fingermark development] (8), DNA (2), evidence interpretation (1), firearms (1), firearm discharge residues (1), forensic IT (1), microtraces [glass, fibres] (3), physical evidence [tape, footwear] (2) and quality management (1). All this work reflects the spirit of the EAFS 2022 theme “*Together for a safer*

world” and includes a broad representation of the 5 overarching themes of the conference: digital transformation of the forensic process, forensic data science, forensic human factor, forensic social responsibility and forensic technology innovation.

The reviewing and selection process for suitable contributions entailed a great deal of work, albeit an enjoyable one. My primary goal is to ensure that the quality of contributions meets appropriate scientific standards and, which is of paramount importance, maintains the highest level of integrity. In this respect, the members of the Board have developed a consistent and sustained effort in reviewing the submitted contributions over the last year: Ingo Bastisch (Bundeskriminalamt, Germany), Niamh Nic Daeid (University of Dundee, Scotland), Simon Dunne (Swedish National Forensic Centre, Sweden), Zeno Geradts (Netherlands Forensic Institute, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Johannes Hedman (Swedish National Forensic Centre, Lund University, Sweden), Emil Hjalmarson (Swedish National Forensic Centre, Sweden), Lena Klasén (Swedish Police Authority, University of Linköping, Sweden), Bela Kubat (University of Maastricht, the Netherlands), Jonas Malmberg (Swedish National Forensic Centre, Sweden), Pierre Margot (University of Lausanne, Switzerland), Tereza Neocleous (University of Glasgow, Scotland), Claude Roux (University Technology Sydney, Australia), Justice Tettev (UNODC) and Sheila Willis (University of Dundee, Scotland).

As a guest editor I feel deeply indebted to my colleagues of the Board for their professionalism and their diligence throughout the reviewing task; whilst resource consuming, additional work and dedication to the task remain invisible and attract very little recognition, despite this being a fundamental pillar in supporting the credibility of the scientific process. Before concluding, let me express my most sincere gratitude to the individuals that have provided expert advice to guide my editorial decisions.

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