

## ESC 2014: The Inaugural Session



---

Barcelona, Spain, ESC Congress 2014 Report.

The heart of cardiology is beating in Barcelona. A stunning audio-visual backdrop set the scene for the opening ceremony of the congress, a presentation filled with inspirational speeches, prestigious awards and impressive musical intervals which took place last night.



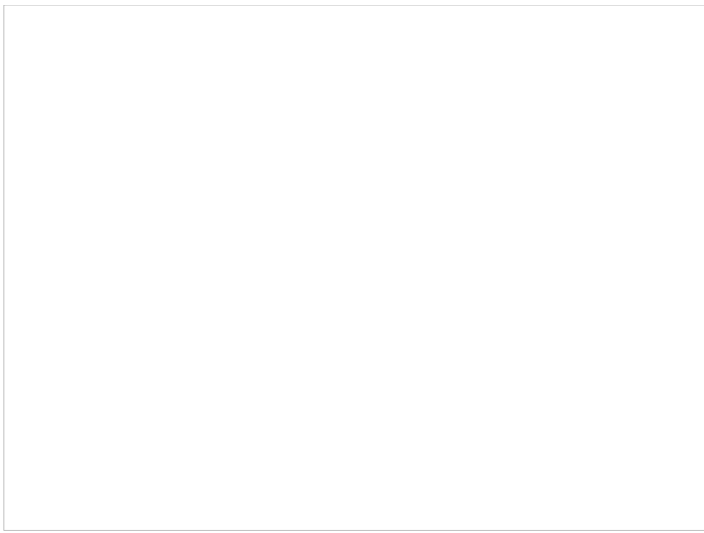
It all began with a video designed for this year's theme "Innovation and The Heart". In his welcome address, ESC outgoing president Prof. Panos Vardas' spoke of the achievements that had been made in cardiology over the years and the significant discoveries that had led to the changing spectrum of cardiovascular medicine. The world is in perpetual motion, however, and as the global population ages, new challenges are emerging in addition to the social and economic ones, he added. Prof. Vardas recalled the cardinal virtues defined by Aristotle: courage, temperance, justice and prudence, and explained that these constitute the main pillars of the ESC and contribute to its effort to fulfill its missions.

Prof. Vardas then welcomed Prof. Keith Fox to the stage; he presented the congress programme and thanked the various teams for their work in setting up the rich agenda. The involvement of all the multinational presenters has led to the scheduling of hundreds of sessions, all with the central theme "Innovation and The Heart", both in scientific discovery as well as in the clinical setting.

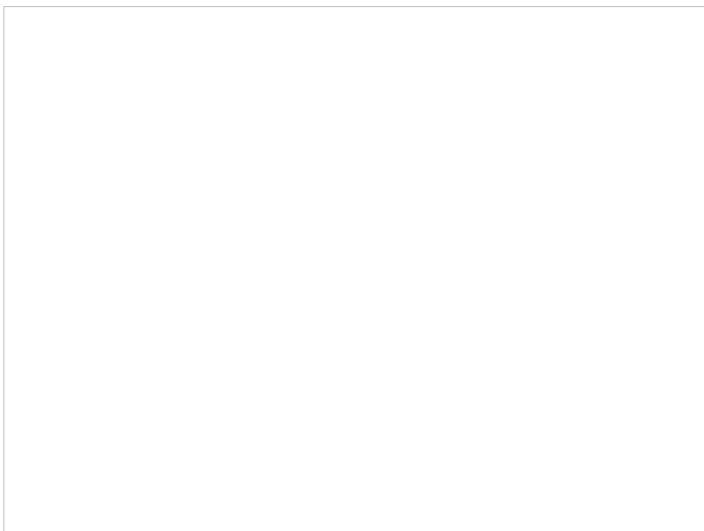
The innovative congress App was explained, and Prof. Fox highlighted the prestigious lectures entitled "Meet the Legends", outlined the various Poster Presentations (moderated and non-moderated), the ESC Guidelines update sessions, the ESC eLearning Platform, and announced the ESC "Primus Inter Pares" Quiz, which will take place on Tuesday at 16:30.

Prof. Vardas then returned to the stage and introduced the new ESC fellows, mentioning that the society was now 40 times larger than when it was first founded 25 years ago. This was followed by the presentation of training and research awards and grants for 2014.

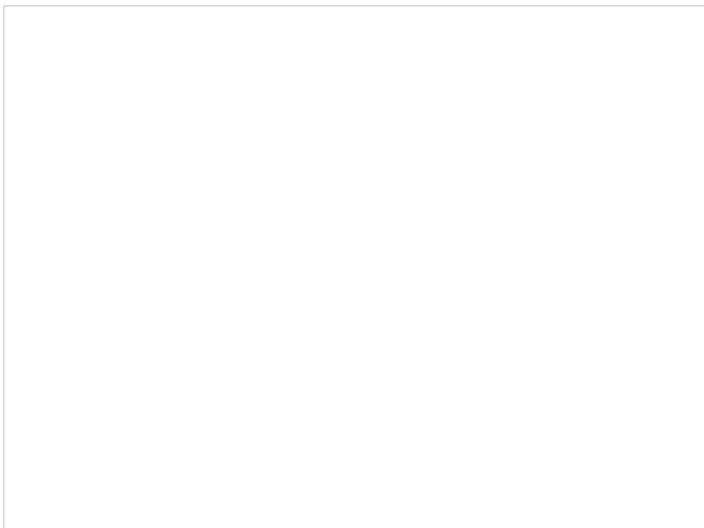
By recognising exceptional cardiologists for their contribution to medicine, the society hopes to inspire future generations and awards ESC Gold Medals on an annual basis. This year, it honoured the lifetime dedication of Prof. Petr Widimsky, Prof. Alain Carpentier, and Sir Rory Collins, who were invited to the stage to collect their awards. Prof. Widimsky was recognised for his contribution to interventional cardiology, Prof. Carpentier for his groundbreaking work on bioprosthetic heart valves, and Sir Collins was honoured for his scientific work on the establishment of large-scale epidemiological studies.



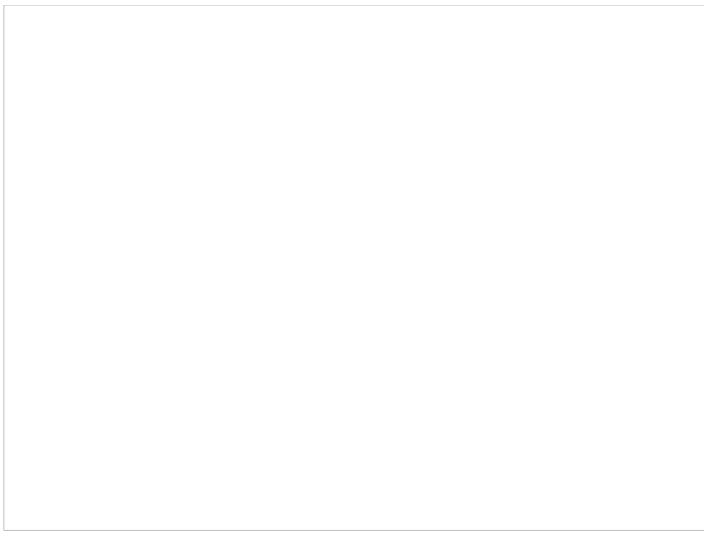
Prof. Fox then proceeded to present the ESC's European Heart for Children, an initiative founded in 2009 by Roberto Ferrari and Claudia Florio. This humanitarian non-profit organisation supports the society's efforts aimed at reducing the burden of congenital heart disease in children living in countries where the need is most felt, such as Syria and Irak.



The topic coordinators of the various villages then convened on stage to present their various village topics, inviting attendees to discover the multitude of sessions on offer.



The inaugural ceremony was concluded with Prof. Vardas' opening address, in which he outlined the society's future aspirations, projects and objectives. He declared the congress open, and thanked the board members for their support during his presidency over the years.



[To find out more about how the ESC is planning to shape the future of cardiovascular medicine, read our exclusive interview with Prof. Panos Vardas, published in HealthManagement issue 3 - available in print and online.](#)

Published on : Sun, 31 Aug 2014