

Annual Report – 2025

Juniors Group

Current members

Irene de Boer (chair), Netherlands
Mohammad Al-Mahdi Al-Karagholi, Denmark
Faraidoon Hagdoost, Australia
Kuan-Po Peng, Taiwan
Ayush Chandra, Nepal/China
Tatiana Castro Zamparella, Argentina
Soohyun Cho, South Korea
Carlo Lastarria, Peru
Bianca Raffaelli, Germany
Eloisa Rubio-Beltran, UK
Gloria Vaghi, Italy
Edoardo Caronna, Spain

1) Junior Research Grants

This is the fifth year that we are proudly running the IHS Junior Research Grant programme. This programme aims to support innovative and impactful research from young investigators, promote the career of junior researchers in the field of headache, and increase the knowledge base concerning headache disorders. Applications are considered for basic or clinical headache research, or a combination of both.

This year we received ten excellent applications for the Grants, which are being evaluated by a Committee consisting of two junior (Gloria Vaghi and Edoardo Caronna) and two senior (Andrea Carmine Belin and Oved Daniel) IHS board members. The winners will be announced at the IHC Juniors excellence tournament.

A grant of GBP 10,000 each will be awarded to our three highest ranking applicants, of which at least one will be from a low or middle income country. We look forward to the previous winners of the Junior Research Grants presenting their work at IHC 2025.

2) Short stay scholarships 2025

The Short stay scholarships were started by the Juniors Group in 2013 and provide an opportunity for young clinicians and researchers from developing countries to visit headache clinics and research institutions to actively increase knowledge on headache disorders and specialised headache management. They are also intended so that recipients can spread this knowledge to their home countries without headache infrastructure or expertise. This year, applicants identified their own prospective hosting institutes, insuring a high likelihood of a good match between applicant and the host.

This year, we received 7 eligible applications. We were able to allocate four scholarships. The applications were reviewed and ranked by the members of the Juniors Group and the top applicants received the

scholarships. We expect these scholarships to create meaningful benefits both for the recipients and for their home countries.

3) Medications project

Under the umbrella of the IHS, the Juniors group (both current and past members) had been working on a project aimed at understanding the availability of different headache medications around the world. Our aim was to have information from as many countries as possible in order to provide the basis for the IHS to develop guidelines for headache treatments to be used worldwide. The results of this project have been published in *Cephalalgia* in November 2024.

4) Virtual Mentoring Programme

The aim of the project is to further promote global mentorship, collaborations, and support within the society by pairing young clinicians and researchers with experienced headache science mentors from around the world. Mentees are assigned mentors Once every two years. Our pool of mentors consisted both of enthusiastic previous participating mentors and first-time mentors, with many IHS members showing interest in further participation. After the successful introduction of the virtual mentoring program in 2021, the IHS Juniors Group is still working on optimizing this program with the feedback of both mentees and mentors.

5) iHEAD scoring

This year, the Juniors Group was entrusted with selecting the delegates for iHEAD 2025. The objective was to assemble a diverse cohort that ensures global representation. A well-balanced group of motivated candidates, comprising physicians, clinical scientists, and basic scientists was carefully chosen. Of the 183 potential delegates who applied, 90 were offered the chance to participate in the iHEAD.

6) Headache Science Excellence Tournament 2025

The Juniors Group is organising for the “Headache Science Excellence Tournament” which will be held during IHC 2025. The Tournament is designed to give young scientists a platform to present their data through short talks and discussions. Participants will not only gain from sharing their research insights but also enhance their communication skills and broaden their understanding of the headache field. The Tournament will be divided into two sessions, one focused on clinical research and the other on basic headache research.

We received a total of 112 abstracts for this tournament, which were reviewed in a blinded fashion by the Juniors Group. Six abstracts (3 clinical science and 3 basic science) were selected for the tournament. The best clinical and basic science presentations, voted by the audience, will receive a trophy and award.

7) IHC 2025 travel grants

With the travel grants the IHS aims to facilitate the participation of juniors in headache conferences. This grant provides young scientists with the opportunity to present their research during the congress. Education grants are offered to those from low and middle income countries to provide applicants with a proven interest in headache the opportunity to expand their knowledge of the headache field. Grant awardees will also be able to extend their professional network during the conference.

The Juniors Group received 76 eligible travel grant applications for IHC 2025 (45 research, 31 education). All applications were reviewed and ranked by the members of the Juniors Group. If multiple applicants had the same overall score, random allocation was used to distribute the grants. A travel grant could be awarded to 42 applicants.

On behalf of the Juniors Group
Irene de Boer, chair
22 August 2025