

GIOVANNI FORESTI

CANDIDATE STATEMENT



Be simple, be effective

Giovanni Foresti (Italian Psychoanalytical Society)

Since its foundation, the IPA's essential function has been that of guaranteeing the ethics, the technical standards and the transmission of psychoanalysis throughout the world. Pursuing this task, the IPA also serves to maintain continuity, cohesion and development of the psychoanalytic community as a *Bewegung*: a living, active and creative cultural movement.

The IPA's fundamental mission has become more difficult in recent decades, as our fast changing world has presented psychoanalysis with numerous challenges: the competition from other disciplines and methods of treatment; the economic crisis and the widespread impoverishment of many nations; the cultural changes in post-modern societies and their focus on quick resolution and short-term interventions; the consequences of new technologies with their peculiar mix of opportunities and dangers; the relentless "greying" of our membership base and the consequently precarious finances of many component societies.

Having long worked in IPSO as a candidate and at the level of the national society (SPI) as a member of the Executive Board, I have learned that these problems can be faced effectively and that institutional solutions can eventually be found, provided the central and local levels of the organizational network are capable of cooperating (principle of subsidiarity).

In order to fulfil its difficult new tasks, the IPA needs to go on providing an intense and increasingly effective level of communication between the different levels of its complex structure. Without coordination, mutual support and the sharing of best practices, the current lack of institutional integration could render all endeavour ineffective or even counterproductive.

If elected, the key words of my work will be the following.

1) Pluralism

The past cohesion of the psychoanalytic theory and practice worked as a robust container for personal and professional identity. The present, numerous cultural differences within the psychoanalytic movement are a major problem. Yet, if we are able to respect the differences and to systematically compare their characteristics, pluralism could also be a source of conceptual strength and clinical richness.

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2) Research

Over the last two decades, many prominent colleagues have worked to fill the gap between clinical practice and updated research strategies. Besides a refinement in historical and conceptual research, we can now profit from new methods of empirical, quantitative and semi-quantitative research. The IPA should sustain the new generation of research programs not only by funding them, but also by offering institutional support and visibility.

3) Outreach

The IPA can do a lot to encourage, highlight, support and reward local groups that invest in effective outreach programs. We must learn to share the programs that have proved to be most successful and to diffuse them more widely.

4) Group dynamics

The relevance of group phenomena, and the primitive institutional dynamics which they cause, have been intensively studied. So far, though, these insights have had a very limited influence in our organizations. Many IPA members have developed methods and theories in this field and our institutions should take advantage of these skills ensuring their diffusion throughout the entire community.

Giovanni Foresti: *IPSO*: Italian representative (1995-1997) and part of the Executive Committee as Treasurer (1997-1999). *SPI*: Scientific Secretary of the “Cesare Musatti” Milan Centre for Psychoanalysis (2007-2009); Scientific Secretary of the Società Psicoanalitica Italiana (2010-2012); faculty of SPI National Institute of Training (2008-2014). *IPA*: part of the IPA/IPSO working group chaired by R. Tyson (2002); co-chair for Europe in the IPA Committee “Psychoanalysis and the mental health field” chaired by C. Eizirik (2013).