EPOS–SLAOTI Travelling Fellowship 2026

Report to the EPOS Board

Brazil · Panama · Guatemala — 13 to 27 September 2026

Fellows:

- Madeleine Willegger, FEBOT — Medical University of Vienna, Austria
- Gergő Józsa — Department of Pediatric Trauma Centre, University of Pécs, Hungary
- Tristan Langlais — Department of Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery, Toulouse University Hospital, France

We are grateful to EPOS and SLAOTI for the opportunity to take part in the 2026 Travelling Fellowship. Over two weeks, we visited three countries and their leading paediatric orthopaedic centres, and closed the programme by presenting at the SLAOTI Annual Meeting. This short report summarises the itinerary, our scientific contributions and our feedback on the host sites.

1. Itinerary and hosts

Dates	Stage	Hosts
13–16 Sept 2026	São Paulo, Brazil	Prof Mauro C. Morais Filho (SBOP President 2025–2026); Dr Susana Braga (SBOP President 2026–2027)
16–23 Sept 2026	Panama City, Panama	Prof Ricardo Mosquera (Former SLAOTI President); Dr Leonardo I. D. Barnett
23–27 Sept 2026	Guatemala City, Guatemala	Prof Ana D. Zambrano López (SLAOTI President); Dr Alexia L. Gil Macías; Dr Karen Barbales

2. Programme

São Paulo, Brazil (13–16 September)

- **Sunday:** welcome by Dr Francesco Blumetti, sightseeing in São Paulo and dinner.
- **Monday:** morning outpatient clinic on interesting rare orthopaedic disorders with Dr Felippi Cordeiro and his team; visit with Dr Nei Botter Montenegro to a social rowing programme for children with disabilities, including cerebral palsy—an inspiring initiative—followed by a visit to Hospital Israelita Albert Einstein and dinner with our hosts.
- **Tuesday:** visit to UNIFESP (Federal University of São Paulo). Dr Eiffel Dobashi and his team put together an exceptionally interesting and educational programme for us. At one of the largest hospitals in the city, we had the opportunity to gain insight into the work of all the major medical specialties. During the morning multidisciplinary meeting, representatives from each specialty presented and discussed the cases encountered during their on-call shifts. This multidisciplinary approach was particularly interesting and instructive for us, providing valuable insight into the collaboration between different specialties in clinical practice.

  In the afternoon, we visited the AACD facility under the guidance of Dr Monroe. It is difficult to find words to describe what we witnessed there. The highly specialised, centralised care provided to children with cerebral palsy (CP) is delivered through an exceptionally well-organised system, ensuring a high standard of multidisciplinary care.
- **Wednesday:** visit to Santa Casa de São Paulo before our flight to Panama. We visited the oldest hospital in São Paulo. Alongside their deep respect for its historical heritage, the preservation and transmission of traditions to future generations clearly played a vital role. This commitment was evident in almost every word they spoke and every action they took.

A balanced programme across public and private institutions, from historic heritage to modern medicine, with an immersion in Brazilian culture and rich exchanges with our Brazilian colleagues. Special thanks to Dr Susana Braga for a flawless organisation.

Panama City, Panama (16–23 September)

- Programme hosted by Prof Ricardo Mosquera and coordinated by Dr Leonardo Barnett.

- **Hospital visits:** several institutions caring for children (historic, under construction and modern), organised according to insurance type and reimbursement system, including the Hospital de Especialidades Pediátricas (Caja de Seguro Social) and the Hospital del Niño. Our hosts openly shared the limits and inequalities of the healthcare system for children, a challenge that goes beyond any single nation.
- **Other point of interest: we attended a lecture on rickets.**
- **Spinal deformity:** a rich exchange with Dr Valverde on spinal deformity surgery — respecting a legacy while letting techniques evolve with technological progress.
- **Hip surgery: we attended hip arthroscopic** surgery in a private hospital.

Panama as a crossroads: between North and South America and between two oceans, offering a valuable perspective on paediatric care across the continent.

Guatemala City, Guatemala (23–27 September)

Our visit coincided with the XII Congress of SLAOTI and the 1st Congress of the Guatemalan Association of Paediatric Orthopaedic and Trauma Surgeons (AGOTI).

- **Wednesday:** meeting of the Latin American International Ponseti Association and the SLAOTI pre-course.
- **Thursday–Friday:** SLAOTI scientific sessions and a festive traditional opening dinner; the closing ceremony marked the end of the 2026 EPOS Travelling Fellowship.
- **Cultural programme:** the historic city of Antigua and its volcano, a guided tour of the historic centre of Guatemala City, and a memorable visit to the National Archaeological Park alongside local schoolchildren.

3. Scientific contributions (SLAOTI Annual Meeting)

- **Madeleine Willegger:** Osteochondral and ligament lesions of the ankle — update on current treatment strategy.
- **Gergő Józsa:** Indications for resorbable implants in paediatric trauma.
- **Tristan Langlais:** Halo-gravity traction in adolescent idiopathic scoliosis — work of the French Paediatric Orthopaedic Society (SOFOP). Also presented at the AGOTI congress.

4. Feedback on the host sites

All three stages were excellently organised. Transfers, local transport and accommodation were arranged in advance, and our hosts were available throughout. The programme offered a well-balanced mix of hospital visits in public, private and university settings, exposure to community and social projects, a high-level scientific meeting and a rich cultural programme. Beyond the clinical exchange, the fellowship created lasting professional and personal links between European and Latin American colleagues.

We would be happy to share our experience with the Board and future fellows, through a short presentation at an upcoming EPOS meeting and more detailed site-by-site feedback if helpful.

5. Acknowledgements

We warmly thank Prof Mauro C. Morais Filho, Dr Susana Braga and the SBOP team; Prof Ricardo Mosquera and Dr Leonardo Barnett; Prof Ana D. Zambrano, Dr Alexia Gil and Dr Karen Barbales, as well as all the colleagues in São Paulo, Panama City and Guatemala City, for their outstanding hospitality. We congratulate Dr Gilberto Brandão, the new SLAOTI President, and thank EPOS for making this fellowship possible.

Madeleine Willegger · Gergő Józsa · Tristan Langlais
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