

Brazilian gerontechnology

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C. da Silva Santana. *Brazilian gerontechnology*. *Gerontechnology* 2016;15(2):63-64; doi:10.4017/gt.2016.15.2.002.00 In 2016 the 1st Brazilian Gerontechnology Conference took place. It resulted, among others, in the erection of a new Chapter of the ISG (International Society for Gerontechnology).

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This issue of 'Gerontechnology' starts with scientific studies and talks presented at the 1st Brazilian Gerontechnology Congress (Figure 1), held on the 8th and 9th of April 2016 at the Ribeirão Preto Campus of the University of São Paulo. This was a joyful and successful event involving the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Ribeirão Preto Center and the Ribeirão Preto School of Medicine. The idea for the event arose from a brief discussion with Dr. Alain Franco, former ISG President, about the possibility of bringing together Portuguese-speaking researchers engaged in the Gerontechnology field. Thus, the 1st Brazilian Gerontechnology Congress was born, with the aims of addressing the debate on

the subject in Brazil, recognizing the research groups in the country, and promoting research collaboration among these actors.

The 1st Brazilian Gerontechnology Congress proved an unparalleled forum for discussion on the theme of ageing of the Brazilian population as well as the demands arising from the shift in population profile that Brazil is currently undergoing. According to projections for 2050, Brazil is set to have the highest number of older persons in Latin America¹.

The event brought together 398 national participants from different regions of Brazil, and the International Society for Gerontechnology members Prof. Ryan Woolrych and Prof. Dr. Helianthe Kort, to discuss the latest research in the field of technologies, products and services for older persons. Over 40 scientific studies were submitted, 29 of which were selected for oral presentation. These studies addressed multisensory environments, assistive technology and mobility devices, automated and controlled environments, tele-assistance services, use of digital technology by older persons, product innovation and development, among others².



Figure 1. The opening session of the First Brazilian Conference of Gerontechnology; from left to right: Prof. Dr. Antonio José da Costa Filho, vice-coordinator of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Ribeirão Preto, Prof. Dr. Helio Cesar Salgado, vice-director of Ribeirão Preto Medical School, and Prof. Dra. Carla da Silva Santana, professor of Ribeirão Preto Medical School, all from the University of São Paulo, and Prof. Dr. Ryan Woolrych, Secretary-General of the International Society for Gerontechnology

The event paved the way for the construction of a Brazilian chapter of Gerontechnology, expected to also add members from other countries in South America such as Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Peru and others. This new Portuguese-speaking chapter will be presented during ISG2016. Currently this chapter under construction has about 30 members from different regions of Brazil including researchers, students and companies involved in gerontechnology. We intend to use the year 2017 to formalize, and to develop its 1st master class as well as regional meetings around gerontechnology. This will be an important step towards the construction of new shares to the needs of a rapid population aging process.

The support received from the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) and Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), together with the interest shown by a large contingent of Brazilian researchers and students, confirms society's interest in the themes involving gerontechnology. This also highlights the urgent need for debate and liaison of the different actors involved in the development of specific applications and services for the ageing public to meet the special needs of this population, promote well-being and successful aging. We trust that the readership of 'Gerontechnology' finds the Brazilian experience in the gerontechnology field² of interest, paving the way for future collaborative studies.

References

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