Dear friends, dear colleagues

It is a distinct pleasure to be able to share with you my candidacy for the position of EHRA secretary.

As briefly outlined in the CV that accompanies this candidacy, my involvement with EHRA is an ongoing journey that started over 10 years ago, when I was given the unique opportunity to create a committee and community for young EPs from scratch within the association. Under the leadership of then EHRA president Karl-Heinz Kuck, my mentor during fellowship in Hamburg, we set out to engage with and foster development of young and early career electrophysiologists by providing them with opportunities and incentives for their own professional development. The network of national ambassadors, exchange projects between sites, multicenter research projects, dedicated congress sessions and faculty opportunities at congresses are initiatives which were developed during the 4 years I chaired the committee, and which are alive and successful today.

This formative experience allowed me to gain insights in the inner workings of EHRA and participate not only in board meetings but also in initiatives and networks of associated organisations, such as the ESC European Heart Academy where I served as university course coordinator for the DAS-CAM program and the national cardiac societies committee, selection committee and congress programme committee which I co-chaired over the previous years. In the CPC committee in particular I got to experience first-hand the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for EHRA in terms of engagement with its members, having to compete with ever increasing alternative means of obtaining scientific information.

As a secretary for the association, I would like to use this experience to support the board and its president, generically as expected of the position and specifically for domains where I believe I may offer additional value:

**Membership:** Any association exists for and lives by its membership. Attracting new members from incoming generations as well as continuing to deliver value to the existing audience is one of the top priorities for the association. The network building experiences I enjoyed in creating the young EP community and in co-chairing the NCS committee have helped me form ideas on how to further strengthen EHRA.

**Annual congress:** The pandemic, and organizing a virtual congress in 2021 and a hybrid meeting in 2022 (the latter a “first” for the ESC family), have been challenges and learning opportunities which I experienced first-hand as CPC co-chair in 2020-2022 together with Isabelle Van Gelder. Another first in “our” CPC was a formal position for a patient as a committee member, providing a point of view from a position that at times is not intuitive. A key insight of the virtual experience has been the engagement of a previously difficult or even unreachable audience using the online format, and one the strategic goals for the near future is (re-)enabling all positive aspects of pre-2020 meetings while retaining the expanded audience.

**Education:** EHRA is one of the few providers of structured education free of disclaimers within its specialty, and my experiences in the DAS-CAM steering committee, the European Heart Academy and the advanced AF ablation course have given me knowledge to strengthen this key asset of the association.
Young / future EPs: Having grown up within EHRA myself, I am ready to help identify opportunities for future generations of physicians, teachers and leaders and to accelerate their careers. These individuals will form the future backbone of EHRA and will join and later lead the discussion on where our association is headed.

The topics above, and the many topics not covered, support EHRA in its ambition to remain a cornerstone of the ESC family and to become the natural preferred partner for research, education and advocacy in the global EP community. I am 100% motivated to contribute to this goal and I hope to count on your support for this endeavour.

Sincerely

Tom De Potter