# ISSFAL Board of Directors Candidate Statement : Marius Smuts

**Background:**

I obtained my PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, in 1996 and am currently a Professor in Nutrition at the North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. Previously I worked at the Medical Research Council for more than 22 years. My career started by studying the effect of the quantity and quality of dietary lipids on plasma lipoprotein metabolism and atheroschlerosis. I then focused on the effect of fish oil (omega-3 fatty acid) supplementation on established atherosclerosis in the Vervet monkey model. My interest in omega-3 fatty acids extends over a period of 20 years and includes work on plasma and erythrocyte membrane fatty acid profiles in very low birth weight (VLBW) infants on different parental nutrition regimes; the effect of omega-3 (DHA) essential fatty acid supplementation on maternal outcomes (post-doctoral work under the supervision of Dr Susan Carlson); the effect of using omega-3-containing products in school feeding schemes and cognition. I also have an interest in the interactions between omega-3 fatty acids and micronutrients in cognitive development. I have published more than 60 refereed papers as first and co-author and am currently the President of the Nutrition Society of South Africa.

**Statement:**

I accept the challenge, if I am elected, to serve on the Executive Committee of ISSFAL as I valued the Mission Statement of ISSFAL *to increase understanding through research and education of the role of fatty acids and lipids in health and disease* almost as my own mission in my training and research environment. I have experienced and witnessed how ISSFAL has grown in the quality and depth of research presented at various meetings since 2000. The relevance of ISSFAL is unnegociatable and is growing on an annual basis as experienced, again, at the Vancouver meeting earlier this year.

I will commit to attract and keep members, as there is still a huge marketting role to play on behalf of the Society. We need to attract more people from a broader spectrum of disciplines at our biennial and other meetings, i.e. more people involved in cancer research and fatty acids, lipids in the developing world, etc. I will coordinate the 2016 biennial ISSFAL meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. This meeting will hopefully bring research on lipids and fatty acids closer to people from the developing world and for the first time to Africa.

To summarize, ISSFAL is an important society that should be seen as a leader in creating opportunities to present cutting edge research and to educate on the role of lipids and fatty acids in health and disease. I, Marius Smuts, believe that I can contribute to ISSFAL leadership and I am thrilled to be considered as a candidate for Board of Directors.

Professor Marius Smuts

North-West University, South Africa

**My nomination is supported by:**

1. Professor Susan Carlson, University of Kansas, USA
2. Professor Philip Calder, University of Southampton, UK
3. Professor Berthold Koletzko, University of Munich, Germany