

March 2026

## Dear Friends and Colleagues

Dear Members of the IASTAM,

### Greetings to all of you!

We hope this finds you all well. We would like to inform you about ongoing developments concerning IASTAM and the preparations for ICTAM XI to be **held in Singapore July 12-16, 2027**. The registration and abstracts submission process will start in early summer, and the call for papers will close on September 15.

We have revised our procedure for the **Charles Leslie Prize**. In order to be considered for the prize, all manuscripts must be submitted to the *Asian Medicine* journal through the normal submission process (<https://brill.com/asme>) **no later than Sept 1, 2026**. Contributors are kindly asked to follow all points in the Instructions for Authors document. However, at the very top of your manuscript, contributors should label it with {Submission for Charles Leslie Prize}. This will trigger our editorial team to place it into consideration for the prize.

All competition submissions received before the deadline will undergo the normal editorial board screening and peer review process. The winning paper will be selected from the manuscripts that have been accepted for publication, and all papers that are accepted will move forward to publication in the next available journal issue.

Another issue is that we'd like to announce the formal **integration of the scholarly blog site Asian Medicine Zone (<https://asianmedicinezone.com>) into the IASTAM association**. While AMZ has since its inception been "loosely affiliated" with the *Asian Medicine* journal, this integration marks a deeper commitment on the part of the association to promote AMZ as a platform for communication in our field.

We feel that, as Asian medicines are becoming more ever more important players in global healthcare, it is important for scholarly voices and perspectives about these topics to reach more people outside the academy. A typical post in AMZ is read by 400-700 people within the first month of its publication, and it is delivered via email to over 200 subscribers. While AMZ is by no means a replacement for articles published in scholarly journals, it is clear that posts distributed there can have much broader and more immediate circulation than scholarly articles.

With this in mind, we would like to invite all members of IASTAM to consider writing content (or recording a video essay) for AMZ. Whether it's a short research note on something you are thinking about, an opinion piece about medical policy, a reflection on current affairs, or any other kind of writing that would be of interest to others who seriously think about Asian medicine, we would like to publish it.

Authorship on this platform is open to established authors with a track record of publication in the field, recent PhD recipients, and doctoral students. AMZ does not copyedit or proofread articles and there is no peer review process, although there is a light editorial review done

before publication by the site moderator, Pierce Salguero (also editor in chief of the *Asian Medicine* journal).

If you are looking for a high-impact home for your work, you are most welcome to reach out to Pierce to discuss further.

We have recently established the presence of our activity on IASTAM's various social channels:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IASTAM/>
- X: <https://x.com/IASTAM>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@IASTAMHQ>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-association-for-the-study-of-traditional-asian-medicine/>
- Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/iastam.bsky.social>

Please feel free to contact Olga Carlino ( [OLGA003@e.ntu.edu.sg](mailto:OLGA003@e.ntu.edu.sg) ) with any interesting news stories etc., so that we can share them. If you are giving a talk, organising a workshop, have a new publication, or see job or grant opportunities that others could benefit from, please let us know!

Recently we received the sad news that our long-standing member **Rodo Pfister** (1962-2026) has passed away. Our former president, Angelika Messner, and Elisabeth Hsu, are writing and coordinating a longer obituary, which we will be published this summer. Here Angelika wrote a shorter obituary: Rodo Pfister (\*14.10.1962 in Langenthal) passed away in Basel in February 2026. He was a prolific Early China scholar, with encyclopedic interests in the history of medicine, sexology, materia medica, drugs and spices, historical geography, OC phonology and many other topics. Rudolph, who disliked the first name in his passport, and used “rodo” as his pronoun long before pronoun discussions became fashionable, had studied Sinology, Ethnology, Art History and Anthropological Psychology in Zurich 1982-1993, then Chinese Calligraphy and Painting at the Zhejiang Academy in Hangzhou in 1985-86, before embarking on ethnographic fieldwork in Burundi and Rwanda during the most violent phase of the Hutu and Tutsi war in 1987-88. He received his Licentiatum philosophiae at University of Zurich in 1993 and concentrated on the Mawangdui sexual texts for his doctoral dissertation. The text, sexuelle körpertechniken im alten China: seimbedürftige männer im umgang mit lebens-spenderinnen: drei manuskripte aus Mawangdui was already monumental when he handed it in 2001, but it kept growing into three volumes with more than two thousand pages, when it became available as a book on demand in the 2010s. Luckily, he also published a short translation of two of the texts, including all the more juicy parts, as Der beste Weg unter dem Himmel sexuelle Körpertechniken aus dem alten China; zwei Bambustexte aus Mawangdui (Zürich: Museum Rietberg, 2003).

Rodo published on many subjects close to his heart, and we were in particular close discussions since 2001 on the subject “Emotions in Chinese History”. We’ve met almost every year, from 2002 until 2011 at conferences on this topic, that were organized by Paolo Santangelo and later together with Angelika Messner, in the realm of the Villa Vigoni research conferences.

Rodos scholarship is well presented on his academia-site:

<https://independent.academia.edu/rodopfister>. His co-authored “The Circulation of *Yersinia pestis* in Central Eurasia before and during the First Plague Pandemic (Second to Eighth Century CE): Palaeogenetic and Historical Evidence and Sociopolitical, Ecological, and Climatic Factors” (<https://doi.org/10.1007/S10745-025-00617-6> of 2005), stands beside his great contribution “The Body Maps of Master Yan Luo, as used in meditation, anatomically corrected by superintendent Zhu” for *Comparative Guts: Exploring the Inside of the Body through Time and Space*, ed. Chiara Thumiger, Exzellenzcluster ROOTS: Kiel, 2024: <https://doi.org/10.38071/2024-00345-3>.

On the occasion of the Comparative Guts Conference, we met for the last time face to face in June 2023 in Kiel. Rodo, you are missed deeply, and we are right now in the process of writing a more detailed obituary to come out in Summer 2026. Everybody is invited to contribute!

Many thanks and warm regards,

We look forward to hearing from you

In this time of global conflict, we sincerely hope all of you and your families take care and stay safe.

Best wishes

Michael Stanley-Baker (President)

James Flowers (Vice President)

Katharina Sabernig (Secretary General)

Reinhard Bögle (Treasurer)

Pierce Salguero (Editor in Chief)

Nina Cheng (Communication Officer)