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Dear members of EVSSAR,

As an academic affiliated for more than 30 years to the Reproduction department of Ghent University, Belgium, I wish to express my interest in becoming an academic member in the board of EVSSAR. EVSSAR is a society which I have followed for many years and which I consider to be of utmost importance for increasing our knowledge on companion animal reproduction. With the advent of assisted reproduction in dogs and cats, the topic of controlled breeding of healthy pedigree dogs has become a major goal of my research. My background on assisted reproduction in different domestic animal species has provided me with a broad network and many contacts in this field. My focus has always been on animal reproduction research. Since the start of my career as a professor some 20 years ago, I have supervised a total of 43 PhD students; with 5 more PhD defenses foreseen before the end of 2023, and six of those had a focus on small animal reproduction (T. Rijsselaere, M. Filliers, F. Snoeck, E. Moens, H. Ali Hassan, G. Domain). Recently, 2 more PhD students have started to work on a topic related with small animal reproduction under my supervision.

I have also supervised several ECAR residents successfully (Tom Rijsselaere, Eline Wydooghe, Guillaume Domain) and am at present following up on two more residents (Penelope Banchi and Robby van Leeuwenberg). I have attended several EVSSAR conferences as a participant (not all unfortunately, due to my broad interests and other responsibilities) e.g. those in Toulouse, Paris, Vienna, Venice, during COVID online, and last year in Milan. I have presented an invited lecture on the progress on dog and cat in vitro fertilization at the EVSSAR in Toulouse in 2013. A more recent connection that I have with EVSSAR (which some of you may still remember) is that one of my students, Robby Van Leeuwenberg won the prize for the best Student presentation last year at EVSSAR in Milan

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2022, on a topic of general interest, namely the effect of spaying on the health of dogs in later life.

I expect that with my background, I will be a useful connecting person to increase collaboration and discussion between scientists and veterinary practitioners. I have also been invited for working on legislative aspects of small animal reproduction and I believe I have been promoting the increase of the overall knowledge in the field of small animal reproduction. I have been working with the animal welfare department in Belgium on the effects of spaying on dog's health and we have produced an informative online lecture to instruct veterinarians and dog owners on this controversial topic.

Last but not least, I have been teaching small animal reproduction and breeds of animals to the veterinary students in Ghent, Belgium for over two decades. I have also been breeding Somali cats and English Springer Spaniels as a hobby. I am eager to reach out to the EVSSAR community and to learn from them, and share my broad knowledge to this enthusiastic community.

Kind regards,



Prof. dr. Ann Van Soom DVM, Dipl ECAR, PhD