

ESEB Members' Meeting 2015

Lausanne - August 14, 2015; 13:45 – 14:45

Attendees:

Officers: Laurent Keller (President, Chair), Nina Wedell (President-elect), Jacintha Ellers (Executive Vice-President), Michael Ritchie (Editor in Chief), Nicolas Perrin (Congress organizer), Hinrich Schulenburg (Secretary), Leo Beukeboom (outgoing Executive Vice-President & incoming Congress Organizer)

Excused: Juha Merilä (Vice-President), Roger Butlin (Past President)

Members: 118 (lists attached); invited to present: Erik Svensson (Chair ESEB Election committee)

LK opened the meeting at 13:45 and welcomed everyone. He introduced the presenting officers (JE, MR, and HS) and thanked Leo Beukeboom for his work as Executive Vice-President.

1. Minutes of the last Members' meeting in Lisbon 2013

The minutes have been approved and signed by the President and the Secretary.

2. Secretary's Report

Erik Svensson presented the new officers elected in 2015 (NW, JM, and JE) and thanked the election committee members (T. Schwander and T. Lenormand) for their work.

HS announced the new council members and pointed out that council members are geographically well distributed and the gender ratio is balanced.

2.1. Membership

The society has a stable membership of about 1500 members.

2.2. Evolution Letters

The proposed journal aims to become a high impact, fast turn-round, and open access journal to unify and promote evolutionary biology. In 2014 the council approved to develop a detailed plan to establish the journal and negotiations about the contracts are ongoing. Details on the format of the journal will not be available until the inaugural Editor in Chief has been appointed. Questions should be addressed to the ESEB representatives R. Butlin and J. Merilä in the oversight committee.

2.3. ESEB initiatives

Conference Travel Award

The award supports members from countries with low GDP to attend the ESEB congress or the conference of the Society for the Study of Evolution (SSE). The committee (M. Egas, J. Hermisson, H. Kokko, and N. Wedell) granted 14 stipends in 2013 and 5 students received support to travel to the Evolution 2014 conference.

Equal Opportunities Initiative

The newly established initiative chaired by J. Schroeder and P. Pennings aims to ensure equal opportunities in all aspects of our society. Additional committee members are currently recruited and will establish "best practice guidelines" as well as monitor status and progress of underrepresented groups in our society. Therefore, the membership may be approached by the committee for related information in the future.

Global Training Initiative

The committee (T. Kawecki, L. Bacigalupe, S. Barrett, and J. Höglund) is proactively approaching emerging evolutionary communities to offer support for the organization of workshops. In 2014, workshops were successfully organized in Turkey and Chile, and future activities are planned in Colombia. Members are welcome to contact T. Kawecki for further questions and suggestions. Details on the initiative and their previous activities are available at the ESEB website.

Godfrey Hewitt Mobility Award

This grant is available for young researchers to support field trips or lab visits. Preference is given to candidates with no other funding sources and to self-contained projects. The committee (R. Butlin, P. Beldade, and M. Ritchie) granted 14 awards in the last two years. Further details on the application procedure and the projects are available at the ESEB website. The next deadline for applications will be in mid-January 2016.

John Maynard Smith Prize

Since 2014, the JMS Prize committee chaired by the ESEB Vice President distinguishes an outstanding young evolutionary biologist with the JMS Prize annually. In 2014, Laurie Stevison was selected. Matthew Hartfield has been awarded in 2015. The next call will be announced in autumn with a deadline in January 2016.

Outreach Initiative

The outreach initiative is one of the most successful initiatives of the society. Since 2010, over 200 applications had been received and 59 projects have been funded all over the world. Details about the projects (e.g. kids' books, movies, workshops) are available at the ESEB website. The committee (S. Magalhães, S. Elena, and K. McCoy) selects new projects twice per year. The next deadline is September 15, 2015.

Proposed initiative: Special Topics Network

The council received a proposal from R. Butlin, E. Decaestecker, and S. Immler for establishing the new initiative "Special Topic Networks". The concept aims to complement the biannual ESEB congresses with small workshops, summer schools or similar events on specific active, controversial, or developing evolutionary topics organized by networks. Each congress year, two new topics would be chosen from suggestions by the members in an open bidding process. Networks would receive funding for a six-year period, and thus six different networks would exist in a given year. The final proposal will most likely be emailed to the council during the next two years. If then approved by the council, the membership will be informed in due course.

2.4. Upcoming ESEB Congresses

Biannual congress 2017 – Groningen

The next ESEB congress will take place from 20 – 25 August 2017 in Groningen, The Netherlands, organized by Leo Beukeboom (chair), Bregje Wertheim, Martine Maan, Simon Verhulst, and others. Franjo Weissing will chair the scientific committee. Further information is available at the congress website: www.eseb2017.nl. The organizers welcome suggestions and questions from the membership.

Joint Congress 2018 – Montpellier

The joint meeting with SSE, organized by Ophelie Ronce and Yannis Michalakis, will take place from 18 – 22 August 2018 in Montpellier, France. The congress center with a capacity of 2,500 persons will allow 14 parallel sessions with approximately 1,000 presentations during the 4-day meeting. Symposia topics will be selected from membership suggestions. Additionally, contributed talks will add a North American flavor to the conference. The organizers welcome suggestions and questions from the membership.

On request by LK the membership approved that the organizers Ophelie Ronce and Yannis Michalakis will join the ESEB steering committee from 2017 - 2019.

Biannual congress 2019 – Turku

The officers received a proposal for the ESEB congress to be held from 18 - 22 August 2019 in Turku, Finland. The organizing committee will consist of Craig Primmer (chair), Lotta Sundström, and Johanna Mappes. Turku offers good connections to Helsinki airport and cheap accommodation. The meeting will take place at a congress center in town with sufficient capacity for 8 parallel session and about 1,000 posters. The council supports the proposal for 2019 because of the excellent current organization and the opportunity to showcase Finland as a central ESEB location with one of the largest and most active ESEB communities.

On request by LK the membership approved that Craig Primmer will join the ESEB steering committee from 2017-2019.

Biannual congress 2021- Prague

The officers received a proposal for the ESEB congress in 2021 to be held in Prague, Czech Republic. The organizing committee will consist of Lukáš Kratochvíl (chair), Adam Petrusek, Pavel Munclinger, Pavel Hulva, and others. Prague is an attractive, central European city with excellent travel connections and accommodation options. The meeting will take place at the University of Prague, which offers a capacity for about 1600 participants. The council supports the proposal for the opportunity to highlight evolutionary research in an Eastern European country and to further develop the Czech ESEB membership. Further meeting details will be presented at the next membership meeting.

On request by LK the membership had no objection to the congress proposal 2021.

3. Executive Vice President's Report

JE reported that the society is in a healthy and stable state and presented the annual financial reports 2013 and 2014. JE explained that the expenses include office and journal costs, budgets of the society's initiatives, and the congress support, while the JEB profit share comprises most of the income. JE pointed out that the society's annual accounts closed with a positive balance in both years, despite the fact that more initiatives were supported in 2014.

As a non-profit organisation ESEB is obliged to establish a policy plan, which states the goals of the society and describes the activities planned to accomplish them. JE presented the policy plan for 2015-17 and highlighted the following points:

- The society supports ESEB congresses and Joint meetings with 200.000 €
- The Conference Travel Award will have an annual budget of 15,000 €
- The Equal Opportunities Initiative will have an annual budget of 15,000 €
- The Global Training Initiative will have an annual budget of 12,000 €
- The Godfrey Hewitt Mobility Award will have an annual budget of 10,000 €
- The Outreach Initiative will have an annual budget of 20,000 €
- The John Maynard Smith Prize will have an annual budget of 5,000 €
- The Stearns Graduate Student Prize will have an annual budget of 250 €

On request of LK the members approved the presented annual financial reports 2013 and 2014 without a dissentient vote. The members unanimously granted discharge to the officers in duty. The members approved unanimously the policy plan 2015 – 2017.

4. Editors in Chief's Report

MR reported about the development of the *Journal of Evolutionary Biology* in 2014. The journal continues to receive a high number of submissions and publishes around 200 papers. Recommendations to the cascading journal *Ecology & Evolution* were increased. As a "hybrid" journal, JEB offers the option of Open Access publishing with a 50% discount on the OA publication charges for ESEB members. The

excellent average time to first decision is 20 days and the editorial board is extensive. Deciding editors are on a rotation scheme and Thomas Flatt (914 papers handled) and Jacek Radwan (419 papers handled) will retire by the end of 2015. The first special issue was published last year and MR welcomes further suggestions for special issues and targeted reviews. The Stearns Graduate Student Prize for the best publication of a student in *JEB* was introduced in 2014, and MR chaired the selection committee. The impact factor of the journal remains modest. In 2015, the journal became an online-only publication and the JEB board decided to implement compulsory double-blind reviewing.

Question by Pim Edelaar: Will ESEB/JEB receive the amount saved due to Open Access publishing and can this be used to further decrease the ESEB member's discount? MR stated that this is not foreseen in the current contract with Wiley and any changes to how we calculate profit share would need to be negotiated in the future.

Comment by D. Fairbairn: Isn't it possible that not only JEB, but also other evolutionary journals saw a decrease of their impact factor in the last years? MR replied that this is unfortunately not entirely the case for some of JEB main competitor journals.

Question by NN: Will the number of publications, which is also restricted by the page limit, change with the new Open Access option. MR stated that this is not included in the current contract with Wiley and that an increase in the number of accepted articles may not advantageous for our aim to increase the journal's impact factor. MR nevertheless suggested to further evaluate such an increase in articles, also in future negotiations with the publisher.

Question by Y. Michalakis: Will there be an option to avoid double-blind reviewing for a manuscript and when will the policy be introduced. MR stated that double-blind reviewing will be compulsory for all submissions and it will be implemented during the current year.

Question by Bram Kuiper: Many journals are moving to Open Access publication, will this influence the submission charges? Some institutions may not pay for OA publication charges – would it be possible to increase the member's discount? MR stated that the development is difficult to predict and should be monitored. New discounts for members would need to be negotiated with the publisher.

5. Other business

LK closed the meeting at 14:45 and thanked all members present for attending. All participants have been asked to sign the participation list.

The minutes have been adopted by the President (Chair) and the Secretary.