Rebecca Kimball

Regional Society Liaison Committee Chair

American Society of Naturalists

February 13, 2024

Hi Rebecca,

I hope this message finds you well. I am reaching out as a member of the organizing committee of the 50th Ontario Ecology, Ethology, and Evolution Colloquium (OE3C) being hosted at the University of Waterloo May 2-4, 2024. The colloquium is a provincial conference organized by (graduate) students for students that meets annually. Hosted at a different university every year, the goal is to give young researchers the opportunity to practice their communication skills in presenting their research, gain feedback on their work, and provide a platform for invaluable networking opportunities among emerging researchers and local experts. Each year, OE3C also hosts several plenary speakers who present their cutting-edge research and organizes local field trips. Last year’s colloquium had 165 attendees. Our website includes a brief history: <https://www.oe3c.ca/>

 The American Society of Naturalists previously sponsored OE3C in 2017. As the title of OE3C suggests, it aligns well with the Society’s dedication to the study of ecology, evolution, and behavior. It also aligns well with the Society’s goal to diffuse knowledge of evolution and other broad biological principles to enhance the conceptual unification of the biological sciences. Attendees of OE3C include undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral students, as well as a small number of postdoctoral fellows and professors. In other words, most attendees are at the beginning of their careers and are unlikely to already be ASN members.

The colloquium is not backed by a professional organization and relies solely on sponsorships. These contributions directly impact the success of the event, ensuring accessibility for students by keeping registration fees low.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you require any further information or wish to discuss this in more detail, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Warm regards,

Karen

Karen Vanderwolf, PhD

Liber Ero Postdoctoral Fellow

University of Waterloo

**Ontario Ecology, Ethology, and Evolution (OE3C) 2024 Budget (02-04 May 2024)**

Revenue

Conference Registration (200 Attendees) = $30,000

University of Waterloo Faculty of Science = $20,000

Conference Seed Fund = $10,000

= $60,000

Expenses

Catering (2 Breakfast, 2 Lunch, 3 Dinner, Coffee Breaks) = $40,000

Keynote Speakers (1 Ecology, 1 Ethology, and 1 Evolution) = $ 5,000

Facility and AV = $ 3,000

Miscellaneous (Tables, Chairs, Website, Nametags, etc) = $ 1,000

Student Awards (Undergraduate/Graduate, Oral/Poster) = $ 2,000

10%. Contingency Fund = $ 5,000

= $56,000

**NET = $**4,000

Our current budget estimates 200 attendees which spans undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty from across Ontario. We received $20,000 from the University of Waterloo Faculty of Science, but other University of Waterloo sectors were unable to sponsor our event. The OE3C 2023 organizing committee informed us there is a ~$10,000 seed fund, but we have yet to receive these funds. We reached out to other organizations (e.g., Canadian Botanical Association, Birds Canada, etc.) and are still awaiting responses from many.

This year, the committee is prioritizing the promotion of undergraduate excellence by highlighting the research of 4th year undergraduate students. Opportunities for undergraduates to present their research outside of their home institute are rare. For many students, the financial burdens of travel and registration fees make conferences unrealistic, as labs cannot always fund students at the undergraduate level to network and communicate their research. The current organizing committee is committed to making OE3C 2024 an affordable experience for students.

We request the American Society of Naturalists sponsor subsidized registration fees for undergraduate students. Your support will help us reduce the economic barriers to science that many undergraduates face, foster an inclusive academic community, and provide undergraduates the opportunity to network with professors and current graduate students at other Ontario universities in hopes building potential graduate and professional connections.