

SSB Awards Report – December 2017

Awards Committee

- Awards Director: Tracy Heath (ssb.awards.director@gmail.com)
- Committee member: Emily Jane McTavish
- Committee member: Felipe Zapata

Overview

This report will provide details on each of the awards managed by the Awards Director and Awards Committee.

New Awards

In June, the council approved the following

- Postdoctoral award - this award will be a career development award for postdocs. We will announce this award in the spring of 2018.
- Student travel award - this award will provide \$500 to students traveling internationally to attend the Evolution meetings or SSB meeting.
- Extending the eligibility of the GSRA

Award Submission Procedures

We anticipated that acquiring Google Suite would allow us to use Google Forms for application submission, since Google Forms now allow applicants to upload files. However, it does seem as though the applicant and letter writers *must* have a Google account to submit a form. We feel that this is a limitation for applicants and thus, we opted to use Iowa State's license with Qualtrics again for the Mini-ARTS awards. Before the GSRAs are announced again, we will be researching other options for form submission.

2017 Mayr Award

Two winners were selected for the 2017 competition in Portland, OR:

- Eli Levy Karin, Tel Aviv University
- Rosana Zenil-Ferguson, University of Idaho

The Mayr Award website features a list of winners. Additionally, since some of the previous awardees opted to have their talks recorded, the site also has links

to videos of three winning talks. This will be helpful for future applicants as they prepare their presentations.

2018 Mayr Award

Because the joint meetings will be held with ESEB in Montpellier, France, the organizers require submission of a proposal for the Mayr symposium. Tracy Heath and Emily Jane McTavish submitted the proposal for the Mayr symposium. We will both be present at the conference and organizing the symposium. The call for abstract submissions opened on 6 November 2017 and will close on 15 January 2018. We have updated the Mayr site to include information about abstract submission and have promoted the competition on social media. So far, we have not heard from the meeting organizers if we have a sufficient number of submissions, so we will up our efforts to encourage applicants.

One very important difference for the 2018 competition is that we will have **14** speakers instead of the 10 we normally have. This is because of the program at the conference this year. The awards committee agreed that this was a good opportunity to encourage more international applicants to the competition.

2017 Graduate Student Research Awards

We received 84 completed applications, which is a very large increase compared to 2016 (52 complete applications). Because of the large number of proposals, the Awards Committee sent out 172 requests to members of the systematics community seeking reviewers. The response was excellent and we have 58 volunteers, each of whom are reviewing 4-5 applications. The reviewers did an *amazing* job. Their hard work helped us to select awardees and gave valuable feedback to all applicants.

We awarded **36 student awards!** These awards totaled \$49,400. The awardees have been listed on the GSRA web page.

2017 Mini-ARTS Awards

The 2017 Mini-ARTS competition was announced in October, with an application deadline of 30 November 2017. We receive 33 submission and are working to verify the completeness of each application. We will contact reviewers shortly and hope to announce the winners by the end of January. Unfortunately, because of our busy schedules, we have not been able to complete this award before the end of the year.