

# SSB Program Director's Report

2023 Summary for Mid-year meeting on February 1, 2024

Prepared by Alison Davis Rabosky, Program Director 2023-2026

## Symposia and Workshops

We supported two symposia (other than the Mayr/Best Student Paper Symposium) and one workshop at the 2023 Evolution meeting in Albuquerque, NM.

1. **Symposium:** "Paving the road to the phenome: challenges in working with a large number of phenotypes" Organized by: Daniel Caetano, Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Towson University
2. **Symposium:** "Modern biogeographic approaches for integrating complex data across time and space" Organized by: Isaac Lichter Marck and Fábio K.Mendes
3. **Workshop:** "Reconstructing evolutionary dynamics of phenomes using new ontology-informed phylogenetic methods" by Sergei Tarasov and Diego Porto

For the upcoming Evolution 2024 meeting, we have recently received one request for sponsorship:

1. **Workshop:** Brooke Long-Fox, a Data Curation Scientist from MorphoBank, has sent an informal request to host a virtual workshop at the Montreal Joint Congress on how to deposit data and access morphological matrix data for phylogenetic analysis from the open access repository MorphoBank. SSB President Corrie Moreau has replied that we are enthusiastic, requesting more information about whether this can be just verbal sponsorship or if other resources are needed.

## Ad hoc funding requests

Two other *ad hoc* funding requests were received in 2023.

1. A request for \$3925 was submitted to support a single attendee to the University of Chicago's Marine Biology Laboratory's "Workshop on Molecular Evolution," with a future plan [without any further requested support] for using the acquired skills to lead further workshops serving historically marginalized groups. Given the high requested amount and the somewhat unique request structure, the proposal was sent out for review, but was ultimately not supported. However, the future plan for a further workshop set would be highly competitive as its own proposal and was encouraged.
2. \$373.09 was requested for printing new SSB materials for distribution at SACNAS, which was awarded.

## Next decisions:

1. **Next standalone meeting** - in our February 2023 meeting, we heard that AMNH expressed interest in potentially hosting in summer 2025(?). However, the council did

discuss concerns that travel and especially lodging, etc. costs in New York City (during summer tourist season) might be prohibitively expensive for many prospective attendees, especially students. The success of the 2023 That said, **hosting is a large service burden and volunteers for this job are highly valued** - this will need further discussion before making a decision. In summer 2023, there was also an informal email discussion from Felipe Zapata to host in Los Angeles, timing undecided. Incoming President Corrie Moreau recommended that we think explicitly about our goals in hosting standalone meetings to make sure that we are mindfully choosing locations, timing, and programming to meet these goals. I think these will be exciting discussions and I'm looking forward to them.

2. I've never been able to attend a Joint Congress, so I'm not sure I'm completely clear on exactly what SSB programming is expected to look like at the 2024 meeting. Do we know which symposium proposals submitted last fall were chosen, and do they intersect directly with SSB programmatic responsibilities? Note also that the Evolution 2024 website suggests that they are also soliciting some extra workshop requests on a special "pre-meeting workshop day" but that these proposals are not necessarily coming through SSB directly (except for the virtual one mentioned above):  
<https://www.evolutionmeetings.org/workshops-and-special-events.html>
3. Matters arising?