

SSB AWARDS REPORT - JUNE 2023

1) Awards Committee

- Awards Director: Liliana M. Dávalos (outgoing, incoming is Heath Blackmon) (awards@systematicsbologists.org)
- Committee members (as of late May 2023): Sebastian Höhna (1.5 year), Hannah Owens (3.5 years), Anne Yoder (2 years, resigned), Matt Hahn (2 months)

2) Overview

This report outlines activities managed by the Awards Director and Awards Committee, including calls for proposals, proposal evaluations, and awards.

3) Awards Committee Membership

Our most experienced committee member, Hannah Owens has served for >3 years and should rotate off. We ask for nominations for one new member to join this calendar year.

4) Online System

Following much frustration from submitters, reviewers, and our committee, the online system has been replaced. This is a temporary setup, however, as the society management system is expected to include a submission management system. These functions should be evaluated by a member of the Awards committee, as our experience is highly relevant to effective submission management. The new system can be viewed [here](#).

5) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in awards

The optional demographic questionnaire we had previously implemented has been ported over to the new system. Anonymized data from the first two consecutive rounds of GSRA using the questionnaire are being shared with the DEIC.

6) 2022 GSRA

Based on (mostly) external reviews, we identified 45 very good to excellent proposals that were selected for funding in full. These amounted to a total of \$130,589.13. Both submitters and Rob Clayton have been notified of the results and disbursements are in process. Winners were announced on our [website](#).

7) 2023 Mayr symposium

In the interest of providing opportunities to systematists worldwide, the Mayr symposium currently has both virtual and in-person sessions. Holding these two sessions as a single symposium, however, generates issues with judging with potential implications for fairness. This year, for example, we received 5X more abstracts for in-person than online. But since the online session happened weeks before in-person, decisions about the online session had to be made quickly and before we had received the in-person abstracts. There are also questions as to how the panel can fairly judge such different format talks for a single symposium. We ask Council to consider either holding the Mayr symposium exclusively online (raising the profile of the online meeting) or holding two symposia. The disadvantage of the first option is that for two consecutive years we see a bias toward the online meeting being considerably smaller. Should these trends hold, having two symposia would result in one (online) being undersubscribed.

8) 2023 Mini-ARTS

The call for these awards was slightly delayed because we had to set up the system. Nevertheless, the current call is [up and running](#). Make sure to disseminate to potential applicants. When these are awarded, Rob Clayton has asked that expenditures be noted [here](#).

As we have reinstated the Mini-ARTS to an annual schedule, there have been fewer than a handful of successful GSRA applicants who have succeeded in obtaining a Mini-ARTS, or vice

versa. In these cases, submitters often endeavor to differentiate between projects. We currently have no guidelines on receiving more than award in a year, and in fact encourage all submitters to remember our other funding calls. We ask Council to vote on: 1) requiring past successful grantees to submit a different project, 2) asking successful applicants for a 1-year cool off period after their first award before applying for another award, 3) some combination of both, or 4) status quo—one can potentially submit a similar project and get a double award.