

SSB Program Director's Report

Prepared by Alison Davis Rabosky, Program Director 2023-2026

2022-23 Summary

(Note: Alison Davis Rabosky took the position in January 2023, some items have been reconstructed from Mark Holder's [outgoing Program Director] notes)

Symposia and Workshops

We are supporting two symposia (other than the Mayr/Best Student Paper Symposium) and one workshop at the 2023 Evolution meeting.

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

Ad hoc funding requests

Four other *ad hoc* funding requests were received.

1. One undergraduate student's travel to conduct research on caecilians with Dr. Mark Wilkinson at the Natural History Museum in London was supported. This request was made before SSB had approved the undergraduate research awards. Given that it required a decision before that program started, Mark Holder approved the request and tried to keep it in-line with the expected amount for the undergraduate awards based on the discussion of those at the June 2022 meeting. 1,000 USD was provided to cover some of the travel costs.
2. One request for \$1276 for binoculars for field courses at a university was denied. The application made a persuasive case about the value of the equipment for increasing engagement with natural history, but Holder felt that the university in question should provide the funds.
3. A request for support for a workshop on genomic techniques - RADCamp - to be held at Columbia University (NYC) was received from Deren Eaton. Davis Rabosky approved for \$2000.
4. 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 to get broad perspectives and is still pending.

Standalone meeting

The 2023 SSB standalone meeting on the UNAM campus in Mexico City and subsequent workshop in Chamela Field Station (Jalisco, Mexico) organized by Dr. Susana Magallón and her colleagues were successful. We have requested a report from the organizers of that meeting, but it has not yet been received - Alison Davis Rabosky will follow up.

Next decisions:

1. **Next standalone meeting** - in our February 2023 meeting, we heard that AMNH expressed interest in hosting in summer 2024 (or 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. 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. Possible alternate locations were briefly mentioned, especially for an option with similar timing to the 2023 meeting which was so successful, e.g., January/February 2025, somewhere where we would again serve a broader segment of our field (and, frankly, get a pulse of new memberships)?
2. Matters arising?