

Secretary's Notes from the DEE Members Meeting
2025 Annual SICB Meeting
January 5, 2025
Secretary: Ariel Kahrl

NSF PROGRAM OFFICERS

Matt Herron - Evolutionary processes program

- Thanks to the SICB community for panelists and reviewers for the NSF proposals.
- NSF is present at this meeting at a booth and with 2 lunch sessions on Sunday - early career researchers and one for graduate students.
- Program officers from Behavioral Systems, Neural Systems, IOS and DEB.
- How to keep in touch with NSF - newsletters, blogs, and virtual office hours. The virtual office hours happen each month with different topics, usually aiming around 2 months before the different calls (e.g. CAREER, PDFB). Can get daily or weekly newsletter updates from NSF.
- Feel free to email the program officer any time. If you aren't sure who to reach out to, don't worry! Any program officer can direct you to the correct officer.
- New assistant director who sets priorities for funding. PAPG - next one is 2025 will be coming out in the spring. Some recent changes are that certain proposals require you to use a tool to reach out to program officer to check about your proposal plans.
- Mentoring plans have changed - merged for graduate students and postdocs.
- Need tribal approval for any situation where tribes might be impacted.

DEE - Division of Ecology & Evolution

Officers:

Chair: Tonia Schwartz (1/2023 – 2/2025)

Chair-Elect: Christian Cox (1/2023 – 2/2025)

Secretary: Ryan Earley (1/2023 – 2/2025)

Secretary-Elect: Ariel Kahrl (2/2024 – 2/2025)

Program Officer: Kristi Montooth (2/2024-2/2026)

Program Officer-Elect: Aundrea Rummel (2/2025 – 2/2026)

Student/Postdoc Representative: Morgan Muell (2/2023 – 2/2025)

Divisional Nominations and Elections:

DEE Program Officer-Elect: In Spring 2024, Aundrea Rummel and Charles Watson accepted nominations. Aundrea Rummel was elected and accepted the post of Program Officer-elect.

Upcoming Elections: A committee has been formed to identify candidates for our Secretary-Elect position and for the Chair-elect position. These elections will be held in Spring 2025. Also we need suggestions for a DEE SPDAC, which will be appointed by

the Executive Committee Secretary. Anyone interested in these positions should contact the DEE Chair (Tonia Schwartz).

Social Media

Although we have Twitter and Facebook accounts, @SICB_DEE and find us on Facebook (SICB Division of Ecology and Evolution), we currently not active on these social media. Waiting on guidance from Executive Committee.

Looking for help to support our presence on social media. Please fill out our survey about social media. There is some concern that there is career-structured usage of social media, and we need to find a home for SICB's social media that includes everyone. Therefore, we are particularly interested in input from grad students and postdocs to make sure they are not left behind.

Program Information & BSP competitions

DEE presentations

For the 2024 meeting, 311 presenters selected DEE as their primary SICB divisional affiliation (compared to 262 in 2023 meeting and 208 at the 2022 meeting). These submissions break down to 188 oral and 123 poster presentations.

For the 2025 meeting, 590 presenters in the broad areas of ecology and evolution. These submissions break down to 340 talks and 250 posters in the broad areas of ecology and evolution. Co-sponsoring 7 symposia at the 2025 meeting.

For the upcoming 2025 meeting,

DEE is co-sponsoring 7 symposia at the 2025 meeting in Atlanta:

Jan 4 S1: Cities as a natural experiment: how organisms are finding different solutions to the same urban problems

Jan 5 S4: From Evolution to innovation: Bridging biology and engineering through bioinspired design

Jan 5 S5: Organismal Systems Biology

Jan 5 S6: Pollinator-plant interactions in a changing landscape: embracing integrative approaches across scales

Jan 6 S7: Integrative Organismal Biology at HBCUs: Highlighting the effectiveness of HBCUs in training the next generation of organismal biologists

Jan 6 S9: Cnidarian sensory systems as comparative models for the evolution of complexity

Jan 7 S12: Identifying the physiological mechanisms that underlie phenotypic responses to rapid environmental change

This year the program officers tried to build sessions that are more integrated among the divisions. To do this, they used some AI models to help them sort the abstracts into the sessions with manual curation after. Kristi is happy to answer any questions about how this process works.

We are currently working on symposia for the 2027 meeting. Please think about symposia ideas soon and get in touch with Kristi for help and support.

2024 Huey Award – Best Student Presentations

At the 2024 annual meeting, two DEE students received the Huey Award:

Best Talk: **Emily Lau**

Best Poster: **Megan Hemmerlein**

For the 2025 annual meeting, 74 DEE student members submitted abstracts for consideration as finalists for the Huey Award, 45 for oral competition, 29 for the poster competition. A committee of judges carefully evaluated all the abstracts and selected our finalists. On Jan 5th, 8 finalists will present in our Huey Award talk session, and 8 poster finalists will present in the poster session. Winners will be announced at Meeting of the Minds and in the spring newsletter.

Meeting of the Minds (f.k.a. Beer & Brains) and Division Social

We continue to run our mentoring networking social for early career DEE members to chat with “later career” folks, at Meeting of the Minds (the new name for Beers and Brains). Over 125 mentees requested to RSVP. We have selected 100 DEE mentees with priority to those that have never attended, and then on order of Reservation. They will have opportunities to chat with 25 later career mentors over dinner on Jan 6th from 4-7PM at the Conference Hotel (room information sent to all confirmed attendees). We’re excited to see such enthusiasm for this event on both the mentees and the mentors' willingness to give their time for this event.

This event is supported by our division dues and support from the SICB executive committee.

At the 2024 meeting we ran a joint breakfast social with DOB and DPCB at the conference hotel, and this was deemed a good success. This year in Atlanta we are planning a joint breakfast social again with more divisions.

Budget

As of July 1, 2023 (end of the fiscal year), DEE had a balance of \$73. This reduced balance is largely due to the reduced membership due in previous years due to COVID combined with inflation increasing costs of conducting our Beers & Brains event. Our Food Fund went to support our joint social. Our Discretionary Funds that come from

membership dues supported our mentoring event Beers & Brains. At the 2023 meet we voted in have \$5 DEE membership dues to support our Beers & Brains mentoring event. Reported constraints with the website has prevented us from being able to collect these dues. With the increased cost of conducting Beers & Brains, at the 2024 meeting we will discuss the future of this mentoring event and ways of reducing costs or an alternative plan for funding this event moving forward.

DEE Strategic Planning

We participated in the strategic planning within DEE through surveys and zoom meetings. The following were defined as goals for DEE.

1. Continue to improve mentoring of early career stage scientists.
2. Continue to improve on inclusion and diversity, with emphasis on postdocs.
3. Improve communication with members.
4. Improve participation in Division Meetings

Next steps:

Comment on SICB strategic plan, revisit these goals and align with SICB strategic plan, make action items.

SICB STRATEGIC PLANNING

Bold step: Broad, long-term outcomes that are reasonable but also a stretch (5 year)

Strategies: Multi-year outcomes or initiatives that defines the bold steps

Objectives: High-level plan for achieving the strategy (please see strategic plan document).

Tactics: specific action to achieve objective (not set yet by the planning committee).

All members were sent the strategic plan as well as a survey for feedback. Please read this and send responses via the survey

Bold Step 1: Career support and mentorship

Strategies:

- Universal mentorship program - find successful mentorship programs within SICB and use them as models.
- Expand professional development opportunities for all career stages
- Create and fund postdoctoral awards and strengthen existing student awards
- Develop intensive leadership training plan to cultivate inclusive pipeline of future leadership
- Partnerships with non-academic career paths

Bold Step 2: Building a scientific culture of belonging

Strategies:

- Implement comprehensive training and education for broadening participation and instill inclusion within SICB. Hopefully through Bio-leaps?
- Establish at least 2 NEW significant, transparent, accessible support mechanisms for groups not currently well-supported.
- Integrate these considerations into all society activities, such that by 2030, all SICB Committee charges, bylaws, and process documents will include an inclusive perspective.

Bold step 3: Financial sustainability

Strategies:

- Optimize journal operations to enhance financial stability for both journals
- Enhance resource management to safeguard SICB health
- Develop and implement a fundraising strategy so 15% of revenue comes from fundraising
- Improve financial literacy among SICB members and provide financial transparency so that the majority of members feel confident in financial operations of the society.

Bold step 4: Membership grown and engagement

Strategies:

- Support divisions to evaluate and readjust their scientific scope
- Grow SCIB from regions and communities currently underrepresented at SICB (metric: 5% growth in membership with emphasis on smaller divisions and 5% growth in target demographics)
- Develop member retention efforts
- Elevate SICB's scientific profile

Feedback and Discussion from audience:

"Love the leadership mentorship. Having an on-ramp for early career folks is great"

"Is this something the membership committee is going to be focused on?"

-Those decisions have not been made.

"Send the email with the strategic plan and the survey again after the meeting"

-Yes! Also encourage your membership after the meeting as well.

"How is social media being used? Communication or to recruit new members?"

-Mostly to communicate with current members. Our social posts are not aimed at outreach. The public affairs committee does outreach. SICB struggles with email notifications because of junk mail filters, and they want to try to use social media to best reach the member base.