

Minutes from the Division of Invertebrate Zoology Business Meeting: 5 January 2014, Austin, Texas

DIZ Chair Jim McClintock called the meeting to order. We approved the minutes from last year.

The meeting began with a presentation by Sophie George, who is a Program Director for NSF in the Division of Biological Infrastructure. Sophie reported that the budget for NSF is not yet finalized, but is assumed to be 90% of the levels for fiscal year 2013 (which itself was 8% less than the budget in 2012). As in the past, NSF is interested in continuing to support forward-thinking, prospective (not retrospective), SICB workshops and symposia. The funds for this support are highly competitive. Sophie also reminded members about the funding mechanisms for doctoral dissertation improvement grants (DDIGS) and research experiences for undergraduates (REU) supplements. In terms of the REU supplements, be aware that the PI's now need to put the supplements into the original, full NSF proposal, not apply for supplements after the initial award is granted. Sophie also noted differences within the divisions (DEB vs IOS) about the ability of PI's to bypass the preproposal process if a previous proposal was highly ranked but not funded. Along these lines, it can also be beneficial to PIs applying for CAREER awards to have them first reviewed as a pre-proposal for early feedback. As always, contact your program officer to get the details for how your division is currently handling pre-proposals. Finally, Sophie mentioned that NSF will be particularly interested in funding work focused on genotype/phenotype interactions and will be developing a new funding program to support this interest.

Following Sophie's presentation, the DIZ Secretary, Jon Allen, made brief remarks on the state of the newsletter, along with a request for images and announcements to help make the newsletter more interesting and useful for members. Jon also urged members to generate material for the member profile database that exists on the SICB website. According to the leadership of SICB, this is one of the more heavily trafficked areas of the SICB website.

The SICB Executive Committee visited the business meeting and reported on the progress of the current meeting and looked forward to future meetings. Billie Swalla thanked DIZ for the contributions to symposia and encouraged future submissions. The society overall is in great health and DIZ is a vibrant part of it. Lou Burnett commented that the DIZ newsletter was among the best in the society.

John Zardus, the Outgoing DIZ Program Officer, said that the current meeting was among the largest ever for SICB, with 1585 abstracts (about 100 fewer than San Francisco, which was the largest) split into 1004 oral and 581 poster presentations. There were 131 total sessions, with 10-12 concurrent sessions at any one time. There were 4 DIZ sponsored symposia. Next year, for West Palm Beach, DIZ will be sponsoring 6 symposia. If you are thinking of a symposium for Portland, talk with the incoming Program Officer Bruno Pernet now. John also noted that the Libbie Hyman auction has been scheduled for every third year. Bob Podolsky asked John where the extra time is going following the switch from 20 minute to 15 minute talks. John replied that it was going to more talks, not more sessions.

Karen Chan, the Student-Postdoctoral Affairs Committee (SPDAC) Representative, reported that there was a brown-bag lunch workshop on building and maintaining a web presence. The SPDAC also has compiled a list of funding opportunities. Karen also noted that she got a job this year, no doubt due to her hard work on the SPDAC (congratulations Karen!)

Anne Boettger reported on the status of Student Awards in DIZ. She noted the abundance of judges and the diverse ways in which judges could turn in scores. As in the past there is also a poster of past Student Award winners in the exhibit hall. (Secretaries note: having posters of student award winners was discussed at the divisional secretaries meeting and it was clear other divisions were envious of our leadership on this front). The report on Student Awards led to a lengthy discussion of the Student Award process. A general summary is given below, but given the large number of comments, it is likely incomplete.

Sarah Berke asked how interested judges can get on the distribution list for judging talks and posters. Anne noted that when you register there is a box you can check to note your willingness to judge.

Bob Podolsky asked whether now was a time to discuss a new model for making student awards (following the lead of DEE)?

Brian Tsukimura noted that this may be a matter of volume: DIZ has many more abstracts to judge than does DEE.

Several people asked whether we wanted to limit the opportunity for students to be judged and whether a new model might be problematic for that reason.

Beth Davis Berg noted that the DEE model may do a disservice to students because it can take them out of sessions with leaders in their field and place them into a students-only session. Similarly, some posters have low numbers of visitors and the assigned judges may be some of the few people to view them.

It was also noted that a more diverse audience (as would happen in a general student award session) might be good for students and force them to target a broader audience.

Others reflected that the judging of student presentations is not simply a mechanism to determine the award for the best, but is also a valuable teaching opportunity.

Another suggestion was to have an unlimited number of students participate in the poster session (with judging) but have a limited number of talks be judged in a group session.

Rachel Merz noted that broad talks are given in all sessions, so a diverse audience may not be a strong argument for changing the award system.

There was some concern that in the future judges may be in short supply for both the current system and the new system, but currently there is not a shortage of judges.

After further discussion it was suggested that a survey of DIZ and/or a wiki for collecting comments on changes to the student award system is needed. A diversity of viewpoints, both pro and con, were presented at the meeting but no consensus was reached beyond the need for further discussion.

Jennifer Burnaford reported on the Libbie Hyman award. There were 10 students who applied this year and the winner was unable to take advantage of the award. In the future, applicants and advisors should note that this is only for a *first* field experience for students (although very brief visits to field stations would not exclude applicants). The award deadline is February 14th. Previous recipients of the award are encouraged to contact Jennifer to provide a reflection on their experience to include in the newsletter. Finally, Dawn Vaughn will be replacing John Zardus on the Libbie Hyman Award committee.

Jim McClintock, Chair of DIZ, reported on the SICB Executive Committee meeting. He reported that there is a proposal under consideration by the Executive Committee to return to Orlando after the 2017 meeting in New Orleans. One reason for this return would be a significant (\$40,000) savings if we followed New Orleans with Orlando (4% savings in each year). He opened the floor for discussion of this idea.

Dianna Padilla noted that the previous visit to Orlando was limited by poor access to restaurants, coffee etc. and that attendees felt isolated by the location of the facility.

There were several other negative comments that were made, all along similar lines, noting the general disgruntlement of those in attendance with the selection of Orlando.

Jim McClintock also noted an increase in the balance of the Libbie Hyman Award thanks to a successful auction and a private gift. The balance was increased sufficiently to allow an increase in the size of the award for 2015.

The discretionary fund for DIZ this year is planned to be used to scan hard copies of past DIZ documents that currently reside with Dianna Padilla. Alternate uses for future years include rolling over the balance into the Libbie Hyman fund and/or using the money to bolster student support at meetings.

In terms of other announcements, DIZ member Meghan Rock is a biological illustrator and has offered to do illustrations for graduate students and post docs at a low cost. She is also willing to be commissioned to illustrate for professors and professionals, but at a higher rate. Bob Podolsky noted the Invertebrates section on the SICB digital library. There are Research Focus Boxes submitted by students of Bob Podolsky, Jan Pechenik and Jon Allen as part of that site. There are also clicker questions from Karen Chan and others. Karen asked for additional clicker questions to be submitted. Bruno Pernet, Editor in Chief of Invertebrate Biology, thanked the members of DIZ for submitting and reviewing papers for inclusion in the journal.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Jonathan Allen, DIZ Secretary