

Young Scientists – IAVS working group

Report 2016/2017 for the IAVS Council meeting in Palermo

Steering committee

In early 2017, a new steering committee was elected into office. This new committee consists of:

1. Chair: Jana Michaelis, University of Bremen, Germany
2. Membership officer: Marco Malavasi, Czech University of Life Science, Czech Republic
3. Webmaster: Ricarda Pättsch, University of Hildesheim & Albrecht-von-Haller Institute, Germany
4. Event coordinator: Emma Shidolo, Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia
5. Public relations manager: Alla Aleksanyan, Institute of Botany of National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, Armenia

We would like to thank the old committee for their brilliant work and wish them all the best for their future!

Activities and plans

At the IAVS symposium 2016 in Pirenópolis we had a very nice working group meeting and were able to welcome many new members, especially from Brazil and South America in general. The fact that no former committee member was able to join the meeting, mainly because they were not able to join the conference at all, led to a discussion about the main challenges the YS group faces: (a) a high fluctuation of active members and (b) limited funds of members to attend conferences and meet each other personally. We accepted these challenges and plan to overcome them with the help of the IAVS community and new social media and online technologies.

The following activities were conducted to help to build a closer network, ease online communication and foster exchange of information within the working group:

1. A new YS website was launched, which can now be found on the official IAVS homepage. This website will be updated regularly and the content will be expanded continuously.
<http://iavs.org/Working-Groups/Young-Scientists.aspx>
2. The YS mailing list was transferred to a new provider, who features several new and interesting possibilities to create newsletters and informative mails.
3. A YS social group was created at LinkedIn, which needs to be advertised at the conference.
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13519646>

Based on the interest of many YS to improve their skills in reviewing manuscripts, Michael Palmer, editor of AVS and JVS, led a workshop on “how to write an effective manuscript review in vegetation science” at the conference in Pirenópolis. Inspired by this workshop and the enthusiastic feedback, we organized another workshop for YS at the conference in Palermo:

4. Organization of a workshop on “how to write a successful grant application”. We invited four brilliant speakers who share their experience on applying for funds/grant with us. The focus will be on the EU Marie Curie program, but some other EU-based grants will also be introduced.
5. We conduct a survey among all experienced scientists at the conference. We plan to ask them about their three most important experiences/lessons learned/ hints regarding grant

application. This information will be collected, shared among the YS group and published at our website. Thus, we hope that people who cannot attend the conference are still able to benefit from the community's experience.

To expand our scientific activity, we plan to proceed with the idea of the former committee:

6. YS Online talks: the problems we faced with using free video conference tools (e.g. Skype, Hangouts) have not been resolved, yet. We have planned to check out gotomeeting.com with the help of Silvy Song as soon as possible.

Some more ideas we would like to give a try in the future:

7. Write an article for the IAVS Bulletin to contribute more to the IAVS community and broach the issues most interesting for YS.
8. Check out the IAVS online activities and maybe encourage the IAVS to increase them, e.g. by streaming or broadcasting conference talks or workshops, to make the information available also to those who are not able to attend the conferences in person.