



The International Society for Microbial Ecology

ISME Office

PO BOX 50

6700 AB Wageningen

The Netherlands

Tel +31(0)317 473 467

Fax +31(0)317 210138

office@isme-microbes.org

www.isme-microbes.org

Subject: Activity Report 2016

January 20, 2017

Introduction:

This document is a summary of the activities of ISME in 2016.

From 2016 onwards ISME will publish an activity report annually and it is expected to be published online each January. ISME will refer to the report in the quarterly newsletters.

Membership:

We started the year with our membership renewals & applications. This year we could offer a substantial discount to the symposium registration fees (of ISME16) for our members, raising the total membership numbers to 1540 at the end of 2016.

ISME always seeks new membership benefits to reach a bigger community. At the same time we realize we have to look for better ways to serve this community too. Especially scientists in developing countries or in countries that need to gain knowledge in microbial ecology to keep up with the western world.

Society Budget:

The international board has decided during the board meeting in Montreal in August 2016 to increase budgets for travel grants, ambassador sponsorships and better media. But of more importance, two new funds were established: a development fund of 60.000 EUR and a promotional fund for 10.000 EUR. The development fund is meant to fund training workshops or PhD summer schools and to fund engagement with national or Regional Microbiology societies. The promotional fund is to sponsor visiting scientist in travel costs and to fund writing workshops of the chief and senior editors. Both funds focus on Africa and South America (but not limited to). The final decision made by the board was to increase the Ambassadors program budget. Scientists can ask for small funding via their local or regional ISME ambassador to help in the organization of their events, workshops or trainings. This program has been highly effective and popular in 2016 so increasing the budget for 2017 to aid more people around the globe seems sensible. Reports of sponsored events are placed on the ISME website.

Legal Changes:

The most important event in 2016 was of course the demerger of The ISME Journal from the Society. The process was extensive but ISME needed to split the fundraising activities of The ISME Journal from the association by starting a so called ltd company named ISME Publications BV. By realizing this, the company will now fulfill all tax obligations and donate remaining funds to the members' association, the owner of the company. The association can therefore remain a not-for-profit society.

Two minor adjustments were made in the by-laws of the association during an online members meeting, held in November 2016, to better accommodate the above activity.

The ISME Journal:

Our journal is still growing its editorial pool. Submissions keep going up and the workload can become too high if we do not take actions. Therefore we added 2 more senior editors and also appointed a new chief editor, who will start early 2017. In 2017 we will add a few more editors and we welcome suggestions for new Editorial Members too.

During the ISME symposium we held several journal related meetings to discuss the course the journal must take but also to include young scientist and introduce them to the world of writing and publishing. Two successful events during ISME16 were the "how to get published session" and the "meet the editors" event, where direct discussions and questions were welcomed.

The most important message the Chief Editors of The ISME Journal wanted to spread this time that they have never planned a publication strategy by looking at the Impact Factor. That is the job of the publisher but not that of the editorial team. We should always aim to publish the best and most novel scientific papers in microbial ecology. We realize that the turn-around time of publishing papers has become slower in the last years and we have installed several new mechanisms in the workways and flow to be faster. Publisher Springer nature is working on a new manuscript tracking system and journal website, which is very welcome because both systems are out of date. We anticipate working with the new website in 2017 and with the tracking system in 2018.

ISME Events:

ISME16 was held in August 2016 and was highly successful. According to the survey most delegates were very happy about the overall program. This specific symposium we tripled the travel grant budget to help young researcher to attend our conference. Furthermore we could also include the social gathering in the registration fee, which was a huge success too.



The symposium budget always strives for a break-even outcome. ISME has no interest to profit from the symposia but every symposium has a different budget (depending mostly on venue costs, sponsorship and delegate numbers). While we were extremely pleased to offer the social gathering for free this time, we cannot guarantee the same offer at future symposia yet. But we are happy to announce that also in 2018 (next symposium year) the travel grant budget will keep the tripled amount as it did in 2016.

ISME17 will be held in 2018 in Leipzig Germany and ISME18 will be held in 2020 in South Africa.

2017 activities:

In the coming weeks, the Executive Board and ISME Office will research the best way to shape the newly established development and promotional funds. Furthermore The ISME Journal will celebrate its 10 year anniversary in May 2017. More information will follow soon in the newsletter. And finally, members can expect a new and improved ISME website mid-2017 with an accompanying Society app. In this app one can find all relevant society news and information but also it will show the conference app within the society app. That way we can offer all members one single location on their smartphones and tablets to access all ISME related items.