

2006 Report from the Foreign Scholar Travel Award Committee

2006 Committee

Sam Riffell (Committee Chair, Mississippi State University), John Bissonette (Utah State University), Sarah Gergel (University of British Columbia), Elena Lioubimtseva (Grand Valley State University), and Jianguo Wu (Arizona State University). Ex officio members: Pete August (US-IALE President), Mary V. Santelmann (US-IALE Treasurer).

Mission

Create opportunities for landscape ecologists from foreign countries to attend the 2006 US-IALE Symposium at San Diego, California USA.

Advertisement Strategy

USIALE Newsletters; various listservs and bulletin boards, conference webpage.

Applicants

7 applicants from 6 countries. All via email.

2006 Awards

The Silent Book Auction in Syracuse netted the FSTA program \$443. So we used this to support one (1) award.

Foreign Scholar for 2006 was:

Solomon Gebeyehu is a post-doctoral fellow at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute at the University of Pretoria (South Africa). Dr. Gebeyehu's research focuses on the interactions among insects, grazing and land use in South Africa the implications of these interactions for managing biodiversity.

NOTE: Solomon was unable to attend because of financial considerations. Funds he was depending on to cover the rest of the cost of attending were re-allocated at the last minute. Award money will be rolled over and two awards given next year.

Action Items for Executive Committee

There are no action items for the Executive Committee this year.

Summary of FSTA Program to date

Since 1993, the program has funded a total of 32 scholars from 17 different countries. The distribution of winners among regions has been reasonably balanced (see regional breakdown of winners below):

Winners from 1993 - 2006

Africa	4 winners
Australia/New Zealand	4 winners
Europe	3 winners
Indo-China	11 winners
Middle East	2 winners
South America	8 winners

We have data on the applicants (winners and non-winners) for 2002 – 2006. We received applications from 31 different countries during that time. The regional breakdown for applicants is as follows:

Applications from 2002 - 2006

Africa	11 applications
Australia/New Zealand	1 applications
Europe	19 applications
Indo-China	27 applications
Middle East	1 applications
South America	8 applications

Thank you for your continued support of this program. Each year, the foreign scholars have expressed their appreciation for this opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Riffell, FSTA Committee Chair

Selection Criteria and Review Process

Each applicant was reviewed by 5 committee members. The final score was the average of the reviews.

Eligibility

1. Applicants are NOT eligible if:
 - a. the applicant is a citizen or current resident of the United States or Canada.
 - b. the applicant is a citizen of a G7 country (France, US, Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy).
 - c. the applicant (of any nationality) is currently studying in the United States or Canada.
 - d. the applicant (of any nationality) received a Master's or Doctorate at an institution in the United States or Canada.***
 - e. any previous recipients are also ineligible.
2. Applicants must submit an abstract for a paper or poster presentation at the 2005 conference. You must submit your abstract to the conference organizers by 30 September 2004.

Selection criteria

1. Scientific merit and application to landscape ecology. We will favor applicants who demonstrate that their research (i) advances the scientific basis of landscape ecology, and/or (ii) the application of landscape ecology for natural resource protection or management. New and established landscape ecologists are encouraged to apply.
2. Financial need. Applicants must have demonstrated financial need and show that without FTSA support, they would not be able to attend the Conference. Applicants currently studying or residing in G7 countries must demonstrate the extent to which they have pursued travel funding from their host institution.
3. Professional development. Applicants must demonstrate that attending the US IALE Conference will represent a significant professional opportunity for developing their expertise in landscape ecology and establishing working relationships with landscape ecologists from other countries. We may favor applicants in earlier stages of career development and applicants who have not previously studied in the US or Canada.
4. Geographical representation. Selection may be made to maximize the number of countries and regions represented.
5. Clarity of English and expression.