

International Relations Committee

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Mission:

The Board of Directors (BOD) established the International Relations Committee (IRC) in 1960 to maintain and enhance communication between members of the Society and mammalogists outside North America. The IRC's mission is to advance the field of mammalogy by encouraging and facilitating international collaboration among members of the ASM and mammalogists from other countries.

Ongoing initiatives:

(1) Sponsored Membership Program: The IRC continues to receive nominations and requests for processing sponsored memberships. In line with the goals set by the committee over the past two years, the IRC will continue to work to geographically expand and administratively streamline the process by which sponsored memberships are allocated. This is a major effort that we hope will be used to further engage mammalogists and mammal societies across the Global South.

The IRC currently has ~165 sponsored memberships supporting mammalogists from across 40 countries.

(2) Carol and Jim Patton Award for Outstanding Latin American Graduate Students of Mammalogy: These awards are named in recognition of the generous contribution that Carol and Jim Patton made to endowing the annual costs of this program and making it independent from the General Reserve Fund income. The Carol and Jim Patton Award goes to outstanding students from numerous mammal societies in Latin America, and has recently been expanded to help students throughout the Global South. Each year, the participating Societies provide the name of a student selected based on criteria established by each society. The award consists of three consecutive years of ASM sponsored online membership.

The awardees for the 2024 Carol and Jim Patton Award are as follows:

- Vinícius Araújo Costa – Universidade Federal da Paraíba - Brazil
- Gabriele Zenato Lazzari - Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul – Brazil
- Sofía B. Iturrieta Jeno - Universidad de Valparaíso – Chile
- Jennifer González Buve - Universidad de la República - Uruguay

(3) ASM International Travel Award: The past meeting saw the ASM BOD approve a total of 3 awards (\$5,250 total) in IRC travel awards to assist a graduate student, post-doc, early career,

or professionals from the Global South with funds for travel from outside the United States to present at ASM's annual meeting.

The IRC received 65 applications (33 graduates, 13 post-grads, 10 early careers, 9 professionals) for the International Travel Awards from 29 countries. Evaluations were based on an applicant's career stage, merit, research in the field of mammalogy and need (based on economic status of the home countries, from an online World Bank assessment).

Our ASM International Travel Award 2025 recipients were:

- Démétriuss Ella Delphine Harisoamalala, graduate student, Université de Fianarantsoa Madagascar, Madagascar
- Aristide Junior Sock Bell, graduate student, University of Douala, Cameroon
- Evance Ouya, post-graduate, Maasai Mara University, Kenya

Due to visa issues, not all reward funds have yet been issued. It may occur that not all our recipients are able to attend ASM 2025. Updates will be provided at the Board Meeting.

Update:

Latin American Mammalogy Congress: ASM provided \$3,000 USD to the VI Latin American Mammalogy Congress meeting organizers to help support symposium participants. This critical support was brought to the attention of ASM by IRC committee member, Andrea Previtali, after uncertainty as to whether the Congress would be able to meet in 2024. This conference occurs every 4 years and ASM has provided support for past meetings (2017 and 2020).

Action Items:

(1) International Travel Awards for the Global South: A continued endeavor of the IRC is to support the participation of international members in the ASM annual meetings. The awards are intended for international graduate students and professionals, who will not only benefit their careers in mammalogy but also contribute to the quality and diversification of the meeting. For that purpose, the IRC requests \$5,250 to partly defray three travel awards for international ASM members to present at the 105th Annual Meeting of the ASM.

Respectfully submitted,
Catalina Tomé, Chair
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