

NASBR Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Student Fund

Description

This fund is a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative that aims to support students of color, to promote diverse participation in NASBR and bat research and, more generally, to bolster continued involvement of minority groups in STEM education and professions.

Providing travel support to attend the NASBR conference is just one of the types of initiatives that may be supported by this fund. Other initiatives may include, but are not limited to: research scholarships, local outreach, and opportunities for mentorship. (See Appendix A for details.) The DEI Committee will regularly solicit ideas from NASBR Board Members, conference organizers, and membership to tailor these efforts to the needs of the organization each year.

Funding sources

The establishment of this DEI Fund was generated by individual donations to NASBR and a sponsor willing to match funds. Additional funds will be sought annually from the membership, sponsors, other external donors, and designated auction items with the ultimate goal of establishing an endowment to support an award.

Timeline

A call for applications will be made 6 months before the start of the annual NASBR meeting. The application deadline will be 2 months thereafter, and awards decisions will be announced 2 months before the meeting registration deadline. These dates and deadlines may be adjusted to accommodate the needs of NASBR, especially, but not limited to, years with a jointly held International Bat Research Conference, changes to the conference schedule or attendance rules, or a need to extend the award application period. DEI Fund awards may not be made in years in which there are insufficient funds or no qualified applicants.

Selection process for student awards

The Awards and the DEI Committees will develop and, regularly thereafter, update a rubric to evaluate application materials. Students will submit their application materials electronically through the NASBR website 5 months in advance of the meeting. The DEI and Awards Committees will oversee a subcommittee tasked with evaluating applications and making awards.

Application materials

- Application form, including acknowledgment of the requirements to:
 - Attend a NASBR meeting within the current or the upcoming calendar year;
 - Engage in a monthly mentorship exchange with a NASBR member, facilitated by the DEI Committee.
- Statement from the applicant, in 500 words or fewer, that describes:
 - The student's interest in the aspects of biology typically represented by NASBR (i.e., zoology, ecology, evolution, behavior, conservation, physiology, morphology, molecular biology, genetics, paleontology, monitoring technology, modeling, biostatistics);
 - What the student will do with award funds (see the non-exhaustive list, below);
 - What the student hopes to gain from attending the NASBR meeting;
- Recommendation letter describing the applicant's demonstrated and future potential for engagement in STEM fields;
- Itemized anticipated budget.

Non-exhaustive list of potential uses for DEI Award funds

- Attendance of two consecutive or near-consecutive NASBR meetings, in the interest of strengthening the required NASBR-facilitated mentorship relationship and of establishing professional connections through the many networking and social opportunities provided by meetings:
 - In year 1: travel costs (including airfare or mileage, passport application, visa fees), registration, shared lodging, and per diem, capped at the cost of 5 student registrations;
 - In year 2: waived student registration and a \$500 stipend.
- Research expenses, such as equipment and expendables, software, laboratory analyses;
- Travel for field work, museum work, or other research activities;
- Attendance of a research skills-based workshop.

Eligibility and requirements for student awards

Undergraduate and graduate students at, or those having graduated within 24 months (by the start of the upcoming NASBR meeting) from any institution, and who identify as students of color, can be considered for this award. Students studying and residing in North American countries and those who have not yet begun graduate studies will be given preference. Awardees must attend a NASBR meeting and participate in a NASBR-facilitated mentorship exchange.

Other considerations

- The student award requires the establishment of a NASBR mentor and other networking support for each awardee:
 - Mentor may be a professional bat biologist or a later-career student;
 - Pre-, post-, and during-conference contact is expected;
 - A longer-term mentoring relationship is encouraged;
 - NASBR student reps will be asked to reach out to awardees before and during meetings to welcome them to the Society and assist with questions about attendance, networking, etc.
- The DEI Committee, Awards Committee, and/or Local Hosts will contact institutions within the regions of upcoming annual meetings to seek help in distributing award announcements to potential applicants;
- NASBR should buy tickets and reserve lodging on behalf of the awardees to avoid placing the burden of purchase and delayed reimbursement onto awardees;
- Students are not required to present at the meetings they attend while supported by the award;
- The award will be named after a genus of bats in the style of: The *Genus* Award
 - The DEI Committee will organize an auction for naming rights (with Board veto power).
- Because the award aims to encourage participation in NASBR meetings and engagement with NASBR members by an early-career student, and it is not a juried award for completed research, the awardee will not be included in the research award presentations at the post-meeting banquet;
- The award will be decided by a group of NASBR members, including at least one student, selected by the DEI and Awards Committees;
- Feedback regarding the award will be solicited from the membership, especially but not limited to NASBR student members and attendees of the Diversity Breakfast.