

ROOT&SHOOT UPDATE - 6/2023

STEERING COMMITTEE

- BSA currently represented on the steering committee of the ROOT&SHOOT RCN by Brenda Molano-Flores and Catrina Adams.

SACNAS/MANRRS Travel Awards

- Two student/mentor pairs have been selected to attend Botany as part of these ROOT&SHOOT sponsored awards.
 - Keily Peralta & Ayress Grinage (Cornell)
 - Betsabé D. Castro Escobar & Jesus Martinez-Gomez (Berkeley)
- ROOT&SHOOT are covering travel and lodging expenses for these attendees.
- BSA and ASPT agreed to split registration fees to cover these 4 attendees (Johanne will bill appropriately after the conference.
- BSA has committed to including the travel awardees in our awards recognition event. Theresa Smid (ASPT) is serving as a contact-person to help the pair with any questions or concerns, and to orient them to the conference and point them towards events of interest.
- More information on the awards and our involvement:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17Hpi4L3eXRViCx8w8kKmZUnoblw9fYSs6KUIH7ra0o/edit>

Inclusive Conference Working Group (ICWG) Recommendations

- First (model) working group for ROOT&SHOOT. Included 28 members in 5 subgroups, including 10 BSA/ASPT representatives. Working group members receive a small stipend to support their efforts.
- The ICWG has drafted recommendations covering 5 topics:
 - An RCN-wide **Community Agreement** for conferences and participants, outlining principles and standards that support equity and inclusiveness,
 - A **reporting structure** that ensures accountability and compliance with the Community Agreement,
 - A **transparent site selection** process that incorporates considerations regarding safety and inclusion of all potential attendees,
 - Guidelines for practices that improve **conference accessibility**, including for those with disabilities and young families,
 - Guidelines for **inclusive selection of speakers and equitable programming**.
- Additional BSA members provided feedback which was incorporated into the recommendations.
- While expect these to undergo iterative development and refinement, current set of recommendations is available here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PAuwT24pAug12LqvteeLPRJTa2fJwEuV/view>

- ROOT&SHOOT is making efforts to support some of these recommendations being implemented during conferences this year (see bystander training and Joint conference ombuds sections below).
- More information on the Working Group is available on the ROOT&SHOOT website: <https://rootandshoot.org/inclusive-conferences-working-group-update/>

Bystander Training for ROOT&SHOOT partner conferences

- ROOT & SHOOT has scheduled a Bystander Intervention Training for members of the RCN, provided by the [ADVANCEGeo partnership](#). These workshops will be held on Tuesday, June 27 from 11am-2pm EDT and Monday, July 10 from 3-6pm EDT.
- Each partner society can invite up to 28 participants to these trainings. Each training is capped at 100 participants. So far there are roughly 50 participants per workshop signed up.
- Participants are expected to attend the conference this year and be willing to actively apply what they learn during the workshop at the conference
- So far BSA has 21 people signed up and ASPT has 9, so there is still some room to sign up for either workshop.
- If interested, please apply here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdbQDq6nRYvqxmD3z6Tzi7Fe1FRACwpJM4v7ue6XZT7cu0w8g/viewform?usp=sf_link

Joint Conference Ombuds/Reporting Structure/Community Agreement

- The Inclusive Conferences working group recommendations include many recommendations related to a conference community agreement and reporting mechanisms for creating accountability.
- ROOT&SHOOT is working to contract with two consultants (Bathabile Mthombeni, J. D., M. S. LODc, PCC (helped BSA with training related to last strategic planning effort) and Laura Minero, PhD, LP. ***Purpose:*** *To create a sustainable and responsive process of accountability, understanding, healing and transformation that is responsive to instances of harm and oppression and provide mediation support in the interim, at 2023 conferences.*
- Details of the work plan are being worked out now, R&S expect to have a signed contract by Monday (June 19) at the latest.
- The exact plan and what is included is still in negotiation, but may include one of the two consultants attending the Botany conference to provide in-person mediation and reporting support. Remote ombuds support for mediation and code of conduct reporting for Botany Conference will definitely be included.
- ROOT&SHOOT will cover the cost of this for 2023. Future suggestions to align practices with suggestions of the inclusive working group and sustainability of a new, more inclusive system of accountability will continue after being informed by the 2023 conference season.

BSA Capstone projects: last phase of ROOT&SHOOT Equity Training (Movement Consulting)

- Over 20 BSA members, leaders, and staff went through 6 months of training with Movement Consulting last fall and winter involving monthly self-guided lessons and personal reflections, small group discussions, and large group discussions
- The next phase of the equity training involved a three-month capstone project this spring supported by biweekly consulting sessions from Movement. Six BSA participants elected to continue through the capstone project process. Two topics were selected for BSA-focused capstones:
 - **Topic 1:** Reviewing the BSA election process and suggesting improvements related to increasing transparency and equity (Brenda Molano Flores, Imeña Valdes, MinYa, Catrina Adams)
 - **Topic 2:** Developing an equitable, transparent process for authors to request and for editors to allocate waivers for article publication charges (APCs) or page charges for our journals (Applications in Plant Sciences, American Journal of Botany) (Briana Gross, Amy McPherson)
- Summaries of the Capstone Projects from BSA and other participating societies are available on the ROOT&SHOOT website here: <https://rootandshoot.org/capstone-projects/>