

## **Program Committee**

**Committee Members:** L. Alexander, K. C. Bell, B. R. Blood, P. K. Connors, D. Eline, E. J. Finck, J. D. Hanson, A. Hope, S. A. Jansa, K. Jones (2023 Co-Host), D. A. Kelt (2023 Co-Host), E. A. Lacey (2023 Co-Host), E. P. Lessa (2023 Co-Host), J. E. Light, V. L. Mathis, C. McCain (2024 Host), M. McGowen, R. N. Platt, J. L. Rachlow, D. A. Ricketts, J. M. Ryan, S. R. Sheffield, R. Sikes (2023 Co-Host), K. A. Speer, K. Stanchak, C. W. Thompson (Program Director & Committee Chair), K. Stanchak, and N. Woodman

### **Mission:**

The Program Committee is responsible for the solicitation and acceptance of proposals for symposia and workshops, for advertising the meeting to other scientific societies, for soliciting bids to host meetings, and assisting meeting hosts in preparing for annual meetings. In 2011, the committee was charged with venue selection, organizing the annual meeting, the solicitation and acceptance of proposals for symposia and workshops, and advertising the meeting to other scientific societies.

### **Information Items:**

#### **(1) Sponsors & Exhibitors**

2021---James Ryan, Drew Eline, Jessica Light, and Katie Stanchak organized sponsor and exhibitor solicitations. Vendor solicitation was very difficult given the economic conditions caused by the pandemic. Seventy businesses, government agencies, museums, and universities were contacted. At the time of this report, these efforts have resulted in five sponsorships (cash and in-kind). This resulted in a 7.14% success rate.

Given the low return rate, it is the recommendation of the Program Committee to consider establishing long-term relationships with companies that have histories with the Society (e.g., H.B. Sherman, Tomahawk, etc.), as well as large companies that deem us too small and specialized to sponsor the meeting (e.g., Fisher Scientific, Garmin, Sigma-Aldrich, etc.). Annual corporate sponsorship could provide financial support in exchange for advertising options on the website, in the journal, and at the meeting (vendor show and auction). Leadership from the Development Committee would help in this regard. The Program Committee stands ready to discuss how this might be implemented to the benefit of the entire Society.

2022---Solicitation efforts will continue for the Tucson meeting with hopes to retain sponsors. The 2022 brochure will be distributed to sponsors and exhibitors this summer with an invitation letter signed by the Society President. With the help of the local ASMers, efforts will also focus on identifying university sponsors, government agencies, and local businesses with interest in providing vending options.

2023---Solicitation efforts for the Anchorage meeting will begin immediately following the 2022 meeting.

## **(2) Website & Social Media**

2021---The Society continued to use the *mammalmeetings.org* domain name to maintain continuity and increase reach for the meeting. This will serve as the meeting URL going forward. However, all website management has been shifted to the Program Committee, and WordPress was used to host and manage the meeting website.

The meeting website was live by the first week in January, and updates have been provided as needed since that date. The meeting website also includes a Twitter feed of *@mammalmeetings*. Both outlets were used to distribute information and announcements of the 2021 meeting.

2022---The *mammalmeetings.org* domain will continue to be used for the Tucson meeting. The goal will be to transition some of the support of the meeting's web presence to a subcommittee within the Program Committee, potentially with membership overlap from the Informatics Committee.

2023---Because of the joint meeting with the International Federation of Mammalogists (IFM), the Society purchased the *imc13.com* domain name, and it has been live with minimal information since November 2019. The website is still managed by the Program Committee via WordPress.

## **(3) Registration**

2021---The ASM Business Office continued to operate the meeting registration site. This has greatly simplified the registration and abstract submission process. However, the registration software continues to be limited in its utility for revising already submitted registrations. This necessitates meeting attendees to contact the ASM Business Office to process changes. Sponsors and vendors utilized a similar form for their registration, which also was organized by the ASM Business Office.

Because of the virtual format, registration rates were roughly half of in-person meeting rates. Non-member rates were maintained at approximately twice the cost of annual online membership to encourage new membership. The Developing Country registration rate was reduced even further to hopefully recruit a larger international audience. Despite some concern in participation levels given the virtual format, at the time of this report, the meeting registration numbers exceeded expectations by more than double and currently total 776 conference attendees (as of 14 May 2021). This is a Society record.

Presenters also were required to register and pay in full prior to submitting an abstract, which has virtually eliminated cancelled abstracts and drastically reduced downstream scheduling issues. The travel award process has been completely decoupled from the abstract submission process, alleviating financial concerns previously expressed by students. However, there has been some confusion by student applicants about the process, so better communication and coordination between the Honoraria and Travel Awards Committee is necessary.

2022---The ASM Business Office will continue to manage the registration process for the Tucson meeting with support from Next Great Event.

2023---Ideally, registration will open for the 2023 meeting during the summer or fall of 2022 to allow for international meeting attendees time to navigate post-COVID travel hurdles. Given the financial uncertainty created by the pandemic, careful consideration should be paid to registration rates to avoid “pricing” potential meeting participants out of attendance. Pricing is an extremely important aspect of supporting justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) efforts within the Society.

#### **(4) Travel & Lodging**

2021---Given the virtual meeting platform, travel and lodging were not a consideration in 2021 conference planning.

2022---A single hotel, i.e., Westin La Paloma, has been secured for the Tucson meeting. Given the uncertainty currently in the hospitality industry, there are no plans to pursue additional contracts to limit financial exposure of the Society.

2023---Several hotel room blocks have been secured for the Anchorage meeting. In addition, dormitory room blocks will be available at the University of Alaska-Anchorage, and downtown Anchorage access will be provided to meeting attendees via a bus shuttle system.

#### **(5) Abstract Submissions**

2021---Steve Sheffield, Lois Alexander, Brad Blood, Sharon Jansa, Lisa Walsh, and Neal Woodman managed the abstract submission and revision process. Abstract submissions were completed through the X-CD virtual conference platform, allowing for seamless integration of uploaded presentation recordings. Presenters were asked to use the form to submit their abstracts following the guidelines of the *Journal of Mammalogy*. A total of 458 abstracts were submitted, making ASM 2021 the largest scientific program on record for the Society.

2022---Interest in the printed Abstract Booklet continues to decline and removing abstract submissions altogether is being evaluated (e.g., see Evolution meetings). Abstracts could be received but without review and made electronically available only. Presentation titles, author lines, and author affiliations could be used to develop the program, reducing the workload and timeline required for abstract review and scheduling. Either way, the committee hopes to offer abstracts only in electronic format in 2022, and no longer provide a print version of the booklet.

2023---Given the upcoming joint meeting with the IFM, careful examination of existing processes will be needed to accommodate the large number of abstract submissions.

#### **(6) Program**

2021---The scientific program included five workshops, three field trips, four plenary sessions (2020 and 2021 speakers), four symposia, and a capstone presentation.

2022---Given the late decision to move the 2022 meeting to Tucson, symposium and workshop solicitation is currently in process. Proposals will be reviewed in time for presentation to the board for funding consideration.

The continued development of the mobile meeting app will occur to allow the program to be distributed entirely in an electronic format. With only 22% of meeting attendees purchasing a meeting program in 2019, the Program Committee's plans to only provide a print program to those selecting such as an a la carte purchase during registration.

2023---Symposium and workshop solicitations for the Joint ASM-IFM meeting will start in fall 2021 to allow for full vetting of proposals prior to the 2023 ASM budget process. Reviews for these proposals will be completed by a joint committee consisting of IFM appointed individuals, as well as current members of the Program Committee's Professional Development Subcommittee. The members of the Professional Development Subcommittee are Kayce Bell, Patrice Connors, Andrew Hope, Michael McGowen, Neal Platt, Drew Ricketts, and Katie Stanchak.

### **(7) Receptions & Socials**

2021---The social agenda for the virtual conference included an opening social, student social, and an awards ceremony. All three social events were adapted for the virtual meeting format.

2022---Efforts to control the cost of the picnic and closing and awards ceremony (formerly, the banquet) will continue, allowing for the opportunity of increased participation and to fulfill JEDI goals.

2023---Many social events are planned for the Joint ASM-IFM meeting. Most social activities will occur in the Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center (i.e., opening social, poster socials, auction, and closing banquet/dance). However, two specific events will occur offsite. The first is the Student Social, which will occur at the Anchorage Museum. The second event is a Diversity Social, which will be hosted by the Human Diversity Committee. The Diversity Social will take place at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, and will include cultural demonstrations by Native Alaskans.

### **(8) Special Meeting Events**

2021---In 2018, the Special Events Subcommittee was developed to help support meeting special events of other Society committees, such as the Run-for-Research, Student Social, and Auction. This subcommittee consists of Kelly Speer, Lois Alexander, Brad Blood, Elmer Finck, and Verity Mathis. The goal is to transition to a protocol similar to the process used for Symposia and Workshop solicitations to help organize these collaborative activities.

2022---In anticipation of the 2022 meeting, the Special Events Subcommittee will work with other Society committees to organize their activities.

2023---The Special Events Subcommittee will work with other committees and the 2023 local hosts to organize special meeting events at the Joint ASM-IFM meeting.

### **(9) Media, Social Networking, and Public Relations**

2021---With help from the Informatics Committee, the Society's official website and social media resources (Facebook and Twitter) were used to promote the meeting. Meeting announcements also were sent directly to the membership through the ASM Business Office and Mammal-L. The conference Twitter handle (@mammalmeetings) was also used. The #ASM2021 hashtag was used to generate social media interest.

2022---The Program Committee will continue to research streaming conference services as a possible way to incorporate a broader community into the annual meetings. This may be especially important given the ongoing uncertainty surrounding global travel and the potential economic limitations because of COVID-19.

2023---Given the international audience for the 2023 meeting, early communication will be essential to advertise the meeting, and streaming services should be considered.

### **(10) 2022, 2023, and 2024 Meeting Venues**

2022---Given ongoing limitations surrounding COVID-10 at the University of Colorado-Boulder, the 101<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists will be held at the Westin La Paloma in Tucson, Arizona. The meeting is scheduled for 17-21 June 2022. All potential meeting site locations were reviewed by John Hanson, Elmer Finck, Sharon Jansa, and Janet Rachlow.

2023---The Joint ASM-IFM meeting will be the 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists. The Joint ASM-IFM meeting will be held 14-20 July in Anchorage, Alaska. Kim Jones, Doug Kelt, Eileen Lacey, and Bob Sikes will serve as local hosts.

2024---Pending Society approval, the 103rd Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists will now be held in Boulder, Colorado. Christy McCain has agreed to again serve as the local host. The meeting dates have not been finalized.

### **Action Items:**

(1) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to cover expenses associated with the 2022 Annual Meeting. Specifically, this request is for *all meeting revenue* generated from attendee registrations, a la carte fees, and sponsorships. This line item will function as a pass-through in the Society budget and is subject to change based on meeting attendance.

**REQUEST:                   \$213,605**

(2) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support the administrative activities at the 2022 Annual Meeting, specifically expenses related to the board meeting and membership meeting.

**REQUEST:               \$6,500**

(3) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support meeting costs and other expenses for plenary and capstone speakers at the 2022 Annual Meeting. This includes expenses for the 2021 plenary speakers.

**REQUEST:               \$33,780**

(4) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support lodging expenses for ASM officers at the 2022 Annual Meeting.

**REQUEST:               \$4,050**

(5) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to help reduce registration costs and other attendee expenses (e.g., student social, picnic, and closing social) at the 2022 Annual Meeting.

**REQUEST:               \$62,642.87**

(6) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to serve as a contingency fund for the 2022 Annual Meeting. Specifically, a 10% contingency fund is being requested to support unanticipated meeting expenses. The contingency funds will only be used in consultation with the Society President and other Officers.

**REQUEST:               \$33,157.79**

(7) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support expenses associated with future meetings and site visits.

**REQUEST:               \$11,000**

(8) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support an honorarium for the Program Director.

**REQUEST:               \$2,000**

**TOTAL REQUEST:               \$366,735.66**

**Respectfully submitted,**

Cody Thompson, Program Director & Committee Chair  
([mammal.meetings@gmail.com](mailto:mammal.meetings@gmail.com))