

International Society for Microbial Ecology Rule Book

Introduction and purpose

This document has the purpose to describe all procedures and guidelines of the International Society for Microbial Ecology. It is to compliment the associations' by-laws. The rulebook has the same legal status as the by-laws despite the fact that changed made within the rulebook do not have to be submitted through the notary and the general members meeting. The rulebook must at all times be in accordance with the Dutch law. It is required of the Board of Directors and the ISME Office staff to revise and update the rulebook and to publish the rulebook on the association's website.

“Procedures and guidelines for ISME; to compliment and elaborate on the current bylaws of the society”

1) The Society

The Association is non-political and non-discriminatory, whether for religion, race or gender.

ISME holds no employees but receives the (part-time-) services of external parties.

The Association can be affiliated with other relevant scientific organizations as determined by the Board of Directors.

The Association is composed of active members. Additional membership categories may be established by the Board of Directors.

The resources of the Association consist of membership dues, donations, proceeds from conferences and other activities organized by the Association and any other resources the Association shall benefit from like publication revenues.

The members of the Association and of the Board of Directors do not assume any personal responsibility for the obligations of the Association, which are exclusively guaranteed by the assets of the Association.

Membership

All persons interested in microbial ecology may become members. The membership fee for each membership year is determined by the Board of Directors. ISME can call to life and/or determine various membership types but will always give a discount to student members. Student members must proof their studentship to benefit from the discount.

Finances

The daily finances of the association are handled by the Secretary/Treasurer and the ISME Office. Both have access to the online payment systems and debit/ credit cards. Any payment needs the approval of both the ISME Officer and the Treasurer. For transactions exceeding 6000 Euro the written approval of the Chairman of the Society is needed. All finances are to be presented to and approved by the Association's accountant for the yearly financial report.

Staff and Salary

ISME does not employ officers. The ISME Office is manned by staff of NIOO-KNAW in Wageningen, The Netherlands. ISME reimburses NIOO-KNAW for the personnel costs. The ISME Office salaries are based on the *Collective Labour Agreement of the Dutch Universities*, under which NIOO-KNAW falls. Except for the ISME Office staff, no other person with an ISME role (such as a board member, editor or ambassador) gets a salary or monetary reward.

Travel Reimbursements

Executive Board members and Chief Editors can claim travel reimbursements based on economy fare. Speakers for

the ISME conferences will be reimbursed accordingly.

By-laws and registration at the Chamber of Office

The by-laws of ISME are signed and kept at Notary Office: Dirkzwager in Arnhem. An official signed copy of the by-laws is in the possession of the ISME Office together with the chamber of commerce registration forms. The ISME Office is responsible for keeping these up to date at all times and for translating the documents in English. Changes in the by-laws must be approved by the general members meeting during the ISME Symposia. New Board Members must be submitted at the Chamber of Commerce but do not have to be submitted in the by-laws.

Insurance

The association has an insurance policy for the liability of the entire Board of Directors up to 250,000.00 EUR per claim and per contract year, starting and ending on June 23rd of each year. The ISME Office has a copy of the terms and conditions of the insurance (in Dutch) and is responsible for renewing it each year, therefore making sure that the association is insured at all times. A special clause in the policy is that there no possibility of a claim when the direct cause is sabotage and/or terrorism.

Sponsorship

ISME sponsors events outside its own symposium year (in the uneven numbered years). The events can be symposia, workshops and meetings in the field of Microbial Ecology. Sponsorship requests must be written to the ISME office and include a full description of the event. The Executive Board decides which events will be sponsored and to what amount. In return, ISME requests a full report of the event (no later than two months after the event has taken place) which can be placed on the society's website. The report must show what has been done/ achieved with the ISME funds. Only after receiving this report, ISME will transfer the funds.

2) (Executive) Board

The Board of Directors has the widest powers to act in all circumstances on behalf of the Association, including the powers to undertake or authorize any act or operation in accordance with the objectives of the Association and which are not expressly reserved to the General Meeting pursuant to the present by-laws.

New Board Members will be registered at the chamber of office. This can be done in a) the new Board member must obtain a notarized copy of their passport and sign a registration form, both must be send to the ISME Office or b) the new Board Member must, upon appointment, visit the Chamber of Office in Arnhem, The Netherlands with his/her passport to be registered.

The Board of Directors can call to life various committees. These committees do not have to be named in the by-laws. The role and task of a committee should be described in the present rulebook. ISME currently has 4 committees:

- **Nomination Committee (NC)**

A Nominating Committee is appointed by the Board of Directors upon advice of the Executive Committee at least one year before the next General Meeting and consists of four members who are not members of the Board of Directors and who include representatives of different areas of microbial ecology and different countries. The members serve a four-year term with new members appointed every second year. The Vice-President presides the Committee. At least two candidates should be proposed for each of the positions as board members. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not serve consecutive terms.

- **International Advisory Board (IAB)**

The International Advisory Committee advises the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee on all

matters related to the functioning of the Association. The International Advisory Committee consists of persons with a long standing reputation in microbial ecology or related fields of science. The members of the International Advisory Committee are appointed for life by the Board of Directors.

- **Local Organizing Committee (LOC)**

The Local Committee together with the Board of Directors are responsible for the leadership in organizing the Symposium. The Local Committee is responsible for securing additional financing. The President of the Association represents the Association on the Local Committee

The Chair of the Local Committee represents the Local Committee and reports every month to the Executive Board, including an account of the status of the program of the Symposium and its budget. The LOC is supported and advised by the Event officers of the society, who are formally members of the LOC. The Symposium program is arranged by the Local Committee in accordance to the program rules and recommendations adopted by the Board of Directors.

The chair person of the LOC will automatically become a member of the next LOC to pass on the knowledge and experience. Members of the LOC are allowed to be also members of the Board of Directors and vice versa.

- **Award Committee (AC)**

The AC is formed by 3 members of the Board, i.e. the Vice-president and two Board members:

The task of this committee is to nominate 3 candidates for a) The Tiedje Award and 3 candidates for b) The Young Scientist Award to be awarded at the ISME symposia. The Board of Directors selects the award winners out of the proposed nominees.

3) Ambassadors

ISME has representatives worldwide in the form of ambassadors. Their goal is to help promote ISME and reach all (members and/or interested parties) in their region their costs for this will be reimbursed and promotional materials will be sent to them.

4) ISME symposia

The biennial invitation to the International Symposium is considered as conveyance to the ordinary General Meeting. Extraordinary General Meetings are convened by simple mail to the members.

The Association organizes the International Symposium on Microbial Ecology every two years. The venue of the Symposium is decided by vote of the Board of Directors. Any member or group of members can propose to host the Symposium to the Board in response to a call for nominations. The application must be endorsed by a national microbiology association or similar entity in the country of the venue and a significant number of members from the region must be identified as willing to work on the Local Organizing Committee (hereafter the "LOC"). Any venue that is seriously considered must be visited by one or more member(s) of the Executive Board of Directors and a member of ISME Events, who will prepare a report to the Board prior to the vote.

Bidding Procedures

4 years prior to the symposium the ISME Office sends out a message to all relations and members, that the bid process is open.

Step 1: Expression of Interest

Any member or group of members can propose to host the Symposium to the Board in response to a call for nominations. The application must be endorsed by a national microbiology association or similar entity in the country of the venue and a significant number of members from the region must be identified as willing to work on the Local Organizing Committee (hereafter the "LOC").

Step 2: Full Proposal

The Executive Board together with ISME Events will narrow the bids down to a top 3. A full proposal is asked of the top 3 parties.

Step 3: Site Visits

The 3 venues will be visited. The site visits are done by one or more member(s) of the Executive board and one member of ISME events. After the site visits a detailed report is made and presented at the Board Meeting during the following symposium.

Step 4: Vote

An official vote during the Board meeting will determine the winning venue; excluding all board members of a vote who are somehow involved in the bids presented.

Society Awards

ISME hands out 4 awards during the ISME symposia:

- Jim Tiedje Award "Outstanding lifetime contribution to microbial ecology"
- Young Investigators Award "Significant contribution to microbial ecology"
- David C. White Award "Most innovative student poster"
- Tom Brock Awards "most innovative research by an early career scientist"
- Bill Costerton Award "for research that best involves new theories in microbial ecology and wider inter-disciplinary significance"
- Poster Awards "Outstanding posters"

The nominees of the Jim Tiedje Award and the Young Investigators Award are proposed by the Award Nomination Committee (ANC). The winner of both these awards is decided, by vote, by the Board of Directors.

The David C. White Award winner and the Poster Award Winners are decided by the LOC during the ISME symposia.

Travel Grant Awards

The Society hands out Student Travel Grants to the top submitted abstracts. The amount of the grants is determined by the Executive Board after consulting the LOC. The grants come out of the society budget.

5) The ISME Journal

The ISME Journal is the official journal of the Association and is published, and managed by Nature Publishing Group. Subscription to the journal is considered as an integral part of membership. Publication in the journal is open to members and non-members alike. The terms and conditions agreed upon with Nature Publishing Group as the publisher of the Association journal shall remain in effect until modified with mutual agreement by Nature Publishing Group and the Association.

The Editorial Board

The Editorial Board consists of Senior Editors and Editorial Board Members. This Board is responsible for the leadership of the journal including timely review and publication, quality of review and of papers accepted, and technical quality of the publication. After editorial review for merit and suitability, the Senior Editors shall make decisions regarding acceptance of manuscripts for publication.

Senior-Editors and all editorial board members of The ISME Journal are nominated by the Board of Directors (on the advice of the Publication Advisory Committee). An editor appointment may be terminated for cause at any time by the Executive Committee after consulting the publisher.

Senior Editors

The Senior Editors are appointed by the Board of Directors of the association and their term of office is 4 years. Members of the Board of Directors are excluded of Senior Editorship and vice versa.

Associated editors are appointed for three years by the Executive Board; they can be re-appointed once.

Publisher

As owner of The ISME Journal, ISME has a long term agreement with Macmillan Publishers Limited (trading as Nature Publishing Group) for publishing its journal. The agreement started on 1 January 2007 and shall continue until 31 December 2021. Thereafter, this Agreement shall continue for successive three (3) year terms (each, a “Term Extension”) unless and until terminated by either Party giving to the other not less than 12 months’ written notice of termination prior to the end of the Initial Term or of any Term Extension, subject at all times to earlier termination in accordance with this Agreement.