

BSA Membership Ad-Hoc Committee Report – June 2024

By Amelia Neely

Committee Members:

Amelia Neely (Chair), Nina Baghai-Riding, Tineka Burkhead, Rachel Jabaily, Richard Hund, Yesenia Madrigal, Funmilola Mabel Ojo, Chelsea Pretz, Dennis Stevenson

This committee was created to assess current BSA membership strategies and propose changes or additions to the program, using the current Strategic Plan as a guide, with a special focus on increasing the number of professional members in the Society and retaining the student members. This committee has met four times since the committee started last Fall.

Top items that have been discussed/proposed:

- **2025 Spring/Summer Professional Lapsed Campaign** – This campaign focuses on a list of lapsed Professional members and asks Society leadership to help reach out to them by email or phone.
- **Availability of Flyers** – BSA membership flyers have been created and shared by PDF format via the *BSA Membership Matters* newsletters so that current members can print them and share them at their institution.
- **PostDoc Survey** – This survey will specifically target the PostDoc members and recently lapsed PostDoc members to see how BSA can help support the transition from student to professional, including non-academic pathways.
- **Permanent Affinity Groups** – A program for permanent BSA Affinity Groups (LGBTQ+, BIPOC, etc.) is being discussed as a way for these groups to connect throughout the year.
- **Lapsed Member Survey** – A lapsed membership survey has been sent to all lapsed members who expired between 2015 and 2023. The committee will be using the findings from this survey to create and adjust strategies for the coming year. The committee also has access to the last full membership survey done in 2023 and have narrowed down which Strategic Plan strategies they want to focus on.
- **Making Virtual Events More Accessible for International Members** – Ideas were discussed that would make BSA events and membership more attractive for international members as well as give them an avenue to share their research in their native languages.
- **Jobs Board RSS Feed Updates** – The committee is working on an update that would allow people to sign up for specific RSS Feeds for the free BSA Jobs Board, such as those targeting graduate students, or non-academic posts.
- **Events** – The committee has discussed different types of virtual Botany360 events and has suggested regional in-person gatherings.
- **Membership/Website Updates** – There have been several discussions related to membership levels, benefits, and how these items are accessed on the BSA website.

The members of this Ad-Hoc Committee have a one-year commitment ending on July 31, 2024. Though a future Ad-Hoc Membership Committee may be convened at a future date, there will be at least one calendar year before that happens so the projects that have been discussed can be planned and implemented.

I wanted to take this opportunity to give a big thank you to the members of this committee who were very active in discussions and spent significant time outside of meetings compiling information and reporting back. There will be a final meeting of this committee in July 2024.