

BSA GSRA Award Committee Report
July 2022
Submitted by Morgan Gostel, Chair

The 2022 awards committee received 84 student applications for the BSA Graduate Student Research Award, of which we were able to award 1 Karling Award (for the top proposal) and 30 GSRA proposals of \$1500 each! (19 Master's students and 65 PHD students applied with 3 Masters students and 28 PhD students were awarded). In further analysis, 19 of the students were in the first 1-2 years of their program and the remaining 12 had been in their program for longer than 2 years. This year we had 12 members on the committee reviewing proposals.

Based on discussions held in 2021, the GSRA application process was revamped. The application's abstract and narrative requirements was shortened from four pages to two pages which made it easier on the reviewers and resulted in what some committee members felt were a higher quality of proposal. Also, while salaries are NOT considered a research expense for this award the committee adjusted the award description in 2022 so that awarded funds, can be used to pay hourly wages for student research assistants.

In accordance with the committee's discussions from 2020, this year's committee continued the use of a number of demographic questions related to gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial/ethnic identity in the online application. These were presented as optional (and anonymous) questions during the application submission process. In this way, the overall pool of applicants will be compared to the pool of winners. This demographic comparison will be performed this fall after BSA staff has completed CITI training for human subjects. It should be noted that this reporting is not and will not be used for discriminatory purposes. Demographic information was not part of the proposal evaluation process and was not available to reviewers at any time during the proposal review process. Only staff working on behalf of the society have access to identifiable demographic data for the sake of reporting.

We additionally asked applicants to prepare a short (200 words or less) synopsis of how their work contributes to diversity and inclusivity in botany and BSA. Overall, we felt these to be useful and worthwhile additions to the application.

The committee will meet again prior to solicitation for 2023 award proposals and we plan to open the portal earlier so the deadline for applications can be moved up, allowing for award to be made earlier in the spring as opposed to early summer.

Two members of the GSRA Committee are rotating off of the committee this year (appointment terms: 2019–2022; Morgan Gostel and Tanya Livschultz, Richard Moore has been reappointed for a second term).