

11th IAHR-BW Colloquium

in Stuttgart (Germany)

IAHR – Young Scientist Forum

Open Discussion**Topic: Towards a European network of IAHR students and young scientists****Participants:** on Podium

- A. Angela Codina – President SC IAHR-Madrid, Spain
- B. Jenny Campagnol – President SC Northern Italy
- C. Prof. H. Kobus – Stuttgart (Germany)
- D. Prof. A. Armanini – Trento (Italy)
- E. Prof. S. Wieprecht – Stuttgart (Germany)
- F. Henning Lebrecht – President SC IAHR-BW (Germany)
- G. Prof. R. Hinkelmann – IAHR Berlin (Germany)
- H. Dr. M. Kadiri – President SC IAHR-Cardiff (Wales)
- I. A. Aristeidis – Treasurer SC IAHR- Thessaloniki (Greece)

and approx. 30 students in the audience:

- K. approx. 30 students from audience

moderated by : J: Min Liu - former president IAHR-BW (Germany)

Short Protocol of Discussion:J: What can a student expect from IAHR?

D: Normally, it is a bilateral relationship, closing gaps between students, research and professionals by interacting within an international environment.

F: How can IAHR be more attractive to non-PhD students? The Stuttgart Student Chapter has had approx. 200 student members in its history, but only a few found their way later to IAHR.

D: IAHR can provide better access to the EU job market.

J: Can IAHR help to find a job?

G: In general, networking means better access to jobs.

E: From personal experience, building an international network helps in modern business.

K: For comparison, American student societies have clear objectives while IAHR has relatively vague objectives for their student members. Social objectives are often not enough to attract students and to let them stay with IAHR.

- F: IAHR-BW is a special case, since it has financial support by the German Exchange Service (DAAD) specifically allocating social objectives to the funding
- G: The water field has undergone a variety of changes in the past. The largest benefits will come with time.
- J: How to develop regional student chapters with various universities involved?
- K: In general, the acceptance is low and IAHR SCs (Student Chapters) are not taken seriously. Social aspects are often missing, except with IAHR-BW. General financial support by the IAHR is non-existent, constraining the number and extent of student-organized activities of the SC.
- K: Why do we have to pay membership fee to IAHR if can build a network by ourselves?
- D: Membership offers participation in IAHR international network and at regional IAHR congresses.
- C: IAHR was founded in 1935 as the global association of hydraulic engineering institutes existing at the time, and this has remained the core until today. IAHR has never been a professional organization with lot of money, and for the sake of offering its services to all interested professionals it keeps its membership fees very low.
- K: IAHR should look for external donors from EU and/or the business world.
- E: What is the aim? Funding for congress participation and/or access to people from which your personal career can profit. In the end is the access to people, not capital which matters most. You have to build a network consisting of individuals at all levels.
- K: Yes, but the higher levels are more accessible via IAHR mother organization. The IAHR SCs are at the lowest level.
- G: Precisely, gaining access to the higher levels helps in becoming a good practitioner.
- E: The objectives of the SCs need to be more clearly defined.
- K: The mother organization needs to define the roles and take the lead. Being a member is important, and it is better to have more active participants.
- K: More investment into the individual SCs is needed, for example via IAHR exchanges.
- C: On an informal scale this already exists. During my professional career, I sent many students abroad. I made use of the IAHR's large network. IAHR is in fact willing to spend money but not huge amounts via a reduction in fees and services for the students, not by reallocating its money to directly sponsor student activities.
- K: Job offer lists work to most attract graduate students.
- C: Socializing is primarily a matter of each individual local group. We should focus our discussion today on the EU-wide scale and on interactions of various student chapters. What can IAHR do on EU scale?

J: What financial support is available?

A: Currently our SC is only 1 month old. Can't do more without more money, and are working to improve our financial situation.

C: IAHR has installed the so-called "IAHR lecturship". Upon application to IAHR, a renowned scientist can attend a student chapter and offer a short course, his expenses being paid by the mother organization. This may be a strong specific support for a student chapter.

G: It is important to recognize that the IAHR is a not particularly wealthy organization.

H: Our SC is active after a long period of inactivity. We see the benefits of membership more as meeting people at conferences.

C: National scale is clear, but the IAHR is a worldwide organization.

E: The largest benefit of being a member is the contact to professionals of an engineering organization.

E: Concerning the IAHR Conference in Munich in 2012: A probability might be to link PhD professionally for topics on their dissertation.

E: There should be an official call for ideas for a student session at the conference! Send the ideas per e-mail so that they can first become vetted by the students.

D: Organize speakers program including 'hot' topics. Get personal advisors for papers in advance.

C: Master classes for half a day or a day during the Munich Congress for the students interested in special topics.

G: Master classes can be published so that non-participating students can find the material at a later date.

D: We have to design ways to become active in the organizing committee of the Munich congress.

C: Finances on national level might be easier than seeking out EU finances. IAHR provides money for students activities and provides cheap accommodation in Munich

D: ERASMUS for EU-members could help and support via EU community funding.

F: Munich conference has got good input. World has changed, hierarchy has become smaller, e.g. IAHR is competing with the internet and has to state clear benefits for students in order to keep them in the organization.

G: Calls for ideas into what activities it should go. Active contribution - you don't get something from nothing!

Summary of Discussion:

- 1) IAHR has to formulate clearly the benefits and advantages in order to attract students from a modern, interlinked world. It should become obvious, why students should join IAHR and stay in the organization after graduation;
- 2) Individual solutions should be found to alleviate the Student Chapters from their financial constraints, e.g. by external funding, affordable student fees at conferences, etc.;
- 3) The European Student Chapters are aiming to connect among each other permanently by internet. In addition, personal encounters on Regional Congresses could further sustain these connections;
- 4) A student session at the Congress in Munich 2012 has found interest. The Student Chapters could organize the layout & content of the student session by themselves. The idea for student presentations and/or master classes has been formulated.

Photos of Discussion: