

World Federation of Science Journalists

2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

January

Adessium Foundation : The foundation announces it will not renew its funding agreement with the WFSJ beyond the current contract. The Adessium Foundation 3 year grant helps finance the salary of the executive director. As a result, and to cover part of the announced shortfall, the Executive Director decides to cut his salary by 30%.

Associations : WFSJ Director goes on whirlwind tour of Europe and meets representatives from the Swiss, French and Dutch associations.

February

WFSJ recruits a new administrative assistant. First 6 months of the contract is supported by an Emploi Quebec grant (Government employment agency).

Board Meeting, the Executive Board meets at AAAS in Chicago. The final report & the financial report **for the 2013 World Conference** in Helsinki, are presented by Satu Lipponen of the Finnish Association of Science Editors and Journalists (FASEJ). The 2013 conference made a profit of just over 1,400 euros. The FASEJ representatives said that World Conferences are financially challenging because many participants expect to have their expenses paid for. They added that World Conferences (probably) weren't the best "moneymaking strategy" for the Federation.

The 1st **Kavli Symposium on the Future of Science Journalism** took place in Chicago, February 17th to 19th. It brought together an international group of 50 leading science journalists and specialists from 16 countries to explore the future of science journalism. A series of recommendations were generated from the discussion of three themes: (1) defining science journalism; (2) international collaboration in science journalism; and (3) supporting science journalism. Detailed report can be found [here](#)

March

Alpha Galileo, the Internet press center for European science, medicine and technology, joins the WFSJ as a new Associate Partner.

April

SjCOOP Asia: April 22nd to 25th, 24 mentees from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam joined the team of six mentors and three coordinators and met in Bogor, Indonesia for a face-to-face workshop. The meeting included field trip visits to research institutes: Center for Southeast Asia Food and Agricultural Science and Technology, the Eijkman Institute and the Bogor Agriculture University. The workshop was an opportunity to offer up-to-date, intensive skill training and to help build the core group network that will lead the way to the building of national science journalist associations in Vietnam and Indonesia.

Ecohealth 2014. WFSJ launches of an international competition, for eight science journalists from around the world, to attend and cover Ecohealth 2014 - the 5th Biennial Conference of the International Association for Ecology and Health in Montreal, August 11th to 15th. Partners: International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Université du Québec à Montréal.

May

Fondation Hironnelle USA, approaches WFSJ to collaborate and partner on a biodiversity and climate change mitigation project in West and Central Africa. WFSJ would contribute to the training and mentorship component of the 3 year long project.

June

Board Meeting and General Assembly are held in Copenhagen, Denmark at ESOE 2014. The General Assembly, attracted only 10 member associations, *Europe (8); Americas (1); Asia (1)*. The attendees expressed concern about the Federation's financial situation. All present, agreed the Federation needed to consider a broader base of possible donors and sponsors.

Arctic. WFSJ Executive Director meets with the Icelandic President, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson to discuss a potential WFSJ project in the Arctic regions. Draft project document on the Arctic is also discussed with the Arctic commission in Ottawa and representatives of the Nordic Council in Copenhagen.

August

Ecohealth 2014 scholarships. The competition was a huge success with 213 complete applications from 78 different countries from all continents, of which 63 were developing countries. The Eight winning journalists were able to attend the 5th Biennial Conference of the International Association for Ecology and Health, Montréal, Canada, August 11th to 15th. They originated from Chile, Italy, Spain, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and China (although the

visa for the latter was rescinded at the last minute). Six of the journalists were also able to attend the pre-conference workshop day.

September - October

Kavli Prize 2014. The competition attracted 43 complete applications. The five winning science journalists originated from Argentina, Australia, France, India and the USA. They had the opportunity to attend the Kavli Prize in Oslo, Norway, between September 8th and 11th, where they met and exchanged with the winners of the Kavli Prize awarded in astrophysics, nanoscience and neuroscience. The travel grants were provided by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters.

SjCOOP Asia. With funds from the Sasakawa Peace Foundation the WFSJ organizes the 3rd face-to-face training conference in Tokyo September 8th to 12th. Over 70 people participated in the conference including trainees, trainers, organizers, speakers and delegates from the Japanese Association of Science and Technology Journalists. A total of 30 science journalists from Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia took part in the conference as trainees and trainers. The meeting consisted of two-day in-class sessions, a two-day field trip to the Fukushima area and a one-day story writing and group sharing sessions.

The 2nd **Kavli Symposium on the Future of Science Journalism.** WFSJ recruits science journalist, Véronique Morin as project director to oversee the organisation of the 2nd edition of the Symposium, which will be held 16th to 18th February 2015 in San Jose, California.

Ebola crisis, press release. In view of the unprecedented Ebola epidemic in West Africa the WFSJ, with the input of individual science journalists in Africa, decided to draft and circulate a press communiqué. Seventeen African science journalist associations countersigned the press release. The Ebola crisis has been an information crisis. It has exposed not only failures in the local and international response to a deadly epidemic, but the ineffectiveness of using top down messages to reach communities that exist largely in an information blackout. The overall objective of the press communiqué was to promote and strengthen independent journalism of high quality in science and health in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Ebola training project. In view of the continuing Ebola crisis, the WFSJ drafts a training project with the aim of developing the capacity of non-science journalists through science/health awareness. The short-term “emergency” intervention slated to take place in the 3 territories (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) directly affected by the Ebola crisis, offering local journalists a health and science reporting toolbox. This would be followed by a post outbreak phase looking to move the workshop program to Eastern and Central Africa to raise the awareness of journalists’ in those regions.

November - December

Ebola. The **US State Department** agrees to fund a Virtual Ebola reporting workshop for journalists in Sub-Saharan Africa targeting specialized and non-specialized journalists in territories directly and indirectly affected by the Ebola. Twenty-five US Embassies in Africa, invited local journalists to attend a four hour-long live videoconference workshop. The session on December 2nd was in English and the session on December 3rd was in French. The second phase of the project will take place in 2015 and includes the development of an online course in French and in

English, and the hosting of 3 webinars.

Ebola. Late December the **Wellcome Trust** and the **International Development Research Centre** in Canada decide to fund the wider Ebola project slated to run over a period of 24 months. The project is entitled "Ebola crisis: improving science-based communication, local journalism in emergency and post-outbreak periods. The projects remit goes further than Ebola to include all infectious diseases.

Ebola. The WFSJ, in association with Fondation Hironnelle USA and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, launches its first crowdfunding campaign on Indiegogo, to help local radio stations and their staff in Ebola-affected regions. The campaign raised US\$5,000.

Online Course in Science Journalism. The WFSJ launches the Vietnamese version of its 10-online course in science journalism. The course is now available in nine languages. <http://www.wfsj.org/course/>

Kavli Symposium on the Future of Science Journalism. The first Steering Committee meeting is hosted in New York. The central theme of the second symposium will be on data mining tools and data-based science journalism. The German Science Academy joins as a second funding partner.

New WFSJ logo. The previous logo was 10 years old, the Executive Director recommended the WFSJ brand evolve and become more relevant in this ever-

changing world. WFSJ chose a colorful design because it is more contemporary and current. In no way does it change the mission and objectives of the organization.

WCSJ 2017. WFSJ opens the bidding process for member associations to have the right to host the 2017 World Conference of Science Journalists. The winning bid will be announced in Seoul at WCSJ 2015.

The WFSJ changes address yet again: The WFSJ moves from the ground floor to the third floor of the same office building in Montréal.

Our new address,

1124, Marie-Anne Est Street, **suite 33**, Montréal QC H2J 2B7, Canada

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