

European Physical Society Young Minds (EPSYM) Action Committee Reporting on the year 2013

After four years, the EPS Young Minds (YM) Project has been connecting proactive students around the world amongst themselves and with the European Physical Society.

The first aim of the YM project is to encourage and support professional skills of the next generations of physicist in Europe. The first tool that we identified in 2010, the year of launch of the project, was the creation of local student groups, called Sections.

YM Sections, once joined the project, direct their efforts a) to organize seminars, workshops and schools, b) to carry out educational activities for schools and in general outreach activities, c) to join and enrich the scientific community through the implementation of national and international network collaborations, between them, with the local communities and with other societies.

Nowadays, the project includes 300 young scientists from over 22 Sections in 12 countries: Spain, Italy, Russia, Ireland, Germany, United Kingdom, Ukraine, France, Switzerland, Turkey, Hungary and USA. The YM project supports their activities with small activity grants for their activities. The main criteria for evaluating their grant applications are professional relevance, cultural outcome, visibility impact for EPS, and impact per Euro. Professional relevance means the activity potential to bring new skills to the Section members to improve their own professional development. Cultural outcome is ensured requiring all activities to either have a direct connection to scientific research, dissemination of science, or building a professional network. Visibility impact for EPS is required to obtain another goal of the project, which is to make EPS and the National Physical Societies better known among young people, who often do not know the benefits that these Societies reserve them. Finally Impact per Euro is our catchphrase to emphasize the fact that we expect our members to work hard to maximize the effect that money spent has, issue that a young scientist will always have to face in the world of scientific.

With respect to the previous year statistics show an increment of the 20% of the Sections, 30% of the project members, 10% of the granted activities, and 2 new countries.

In the next paragraphs the key points of the project, not only as set of its YM members, but also as YM members of its action committee, had to face in 2013 are described, with the aim to how these activities have contributed to the strengthening of the main criteria described above.

1. YM Action Committee

The YM Action Committee always has had some fixed members who ensure the best connection between the project and EPS: the EPS President, in 2013 John Dudley; the Secretary General EPS, David Lee; and the Conference Manager assistant, Ophélie Fornari. This year the project invited a new member of the ExCom, Fülöp Zsolt, to join the action committee in order to strengthen the cooperation with EPS. The other action committee members are usually chosen between young EPS members: Antigone Marino, elected in April 2013 project chair; Armand Niederberger, 2010-2012 project chair; and Giovanni Volpe. To ensure the project a proper replacement of its action committee members, this year two new members have been invited. These two, Ulrike Ritzmann and Adriano Conte, have been selected from the YM Sections according to their motivations and their commitment shown in the previous years.

The action committee met two times in 2013: on the 25th of April in Mulhouse, and on the 30th of October in Budapest at the E2C conference in occasion of the EPS General Meeting.

2. YM Granted Activities:

During 2013, the project funded 34 activities, submitted from 20 Sections: 33% outreach activities, 33% networking activities, 33% seminars. These percentages show how networking is the activity in which the YM members require the greatest support from EPS, and how the organization of seminars is considered the most important activity, as strongly linked to their research and their life in the Institution where they work.

For each year 2 dates, fixed for the 15th of January and the 15th of July, are set as deadlines for the grants request submission.

In 2013, only the 10% of the requests has been rejected, as not considered relevant in terms of the main criteria described above. The total budget for YM granted activities has been 13k€. A list of the granted activities and their outcomes are reported from the Section on the YM website.

3. YM and e-EPS:

In 2012, the YM action committee identified the e-EPS newsletter as the best tool to connect YM members and the EPS community. Since October 2012, 14 electronic pills had been published to present the project activities. Every month a Section is asked to submit a text on a topic. This tool is excellent not only for EPS, but even for YM members, often undergraduate students, who discover the importance of writing an article for the community, as they will later do to share their research activities.

3. 2nd YM Leadership Meeting:

On 21-22 June 2013, Mulhouse EPS Headquarters hosted the 2nd Young Minds Leadership Meeting. The idea of an annual meeting between Sections or its presidents is to give them the opportunity to meet people, share experiences and ideas. The Meeting was joined from 16 Sections Presidents, who had a 15 minutes talk to report their YM activities. The Best YM Activity Award was attributed to the BMSTU section of Moscow, Russia.

On the other hand, young scientist had the opportunity to hear three eminent speakers invited from EPS. Professor Jo Hermans, from the Leiden University, was invited to give a talk about "Physics in our daily life". The EPS President John Dudley gave a talk on "Surviving in Science: what they don't tell you about careers in research", a simple and practical advice to help early-career researchers to build a long-term career. And the young researcher J.A. Hutchison, from the University of Strasbourg, introduced his scientific studies on "Hybrid Light-Molecule States".

The meeting was sponsored by the EPS, the University of Haute Alsace, the city of Mulhouse and the Wolfberger wines.

4. YM New Website

In its first three years of life, the YM project has used a website developed by one of the Action Committee members, Giovanni Volpe. Following the line chosen by the project, of a better integration of YM with the EPS, this year it was decided to redesign the YM website and totally integrate it in the EPS one. Ahmed Ouarab, Gina Gunaratnam, and Xavier de Araujo are helping the YM action committee to build the new site up. In a meeting, held in Mulhouse on the 30th of September, technical details and tasks division had been established. Inside the AC, Adriano Conte has been chosen as YM responsible for the website and for the contents migration from the old to the new one.

The new website will be visible on the URL epsyoungminds.org in Spring 2014.

5. YM interaction with other societies/associations:

The first three years, 2010-2012, have seen the formation of new Sections as one of the main purposes, in order to increase the number of young researchers involved in YM, as well as the visibility of the project itself. Once reached the critical mass of 200 members, we felt that the dissemination of the project in Europe was enough to kick off a series of collaborations with other societies or associations, related to Young Minds as characterized by the same intents.

In November 2013 the YM Chair, Antigone Marino, became member of the Management Committee of the COST Target Network TN1301, *Next Generation of Young Scientist: Towards a Contemporary Spirit of R&I (Sci-GENERATION)*. Sci-GENERATION is a new COST initiative that aims at elaborating contemporary scientific thought and thereby disseminating a new Spirit of Research and Innovation in Europe. These aims will be developed through the creation of a bottom-up and pan-European platform for young outstanding European next generation researchers (including ERC Starting Grantees and other talents of less research intensive countries) in order to share and transmit their visions on emergent research paths and research policy as well as their respective experience and ideas, platform in which YM is included.

In addition YM started to have a fix collaboration with the International Association of Physics Students (IAPS) on two fronts. The former is the contribution that YM can give to the organization of the annual International Conference for Physics Students (ICPS), that will be held in Heidelberg, Germany, in 2014. The latter is the cooperation to the EPS Grand Physicists Project, for the realization of an electronic database of the most famous Physicists of the world.