

## European Physical Society Young Minds (EPSYM) Action Committee Reporting on the year 2015

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.

In 2015 the YM growing trend continued. Nowadays, the project includes 400 young scientists from over 35 Sections in 20 countries: Spain, Italy, Russia, Germany, United Kingdom, Ukraine, France, Switzerland, Turkey, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Denmark, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Austria, Belgium and Morocco.

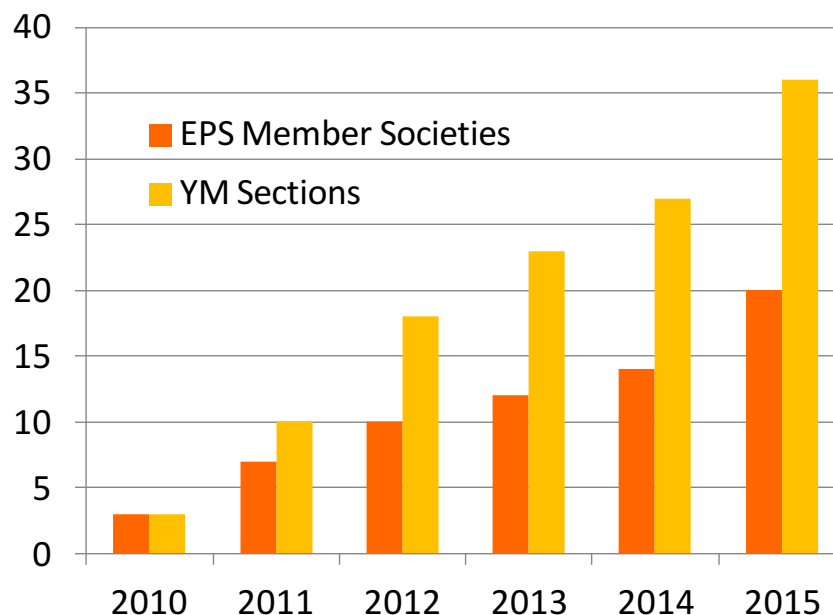


Figure 1 – YM growth from 2010m to 2015.

The YM project supports their activities with small grants. 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 of the money they spend, issue that a young scientist will always have to face in the world of scientific research.

In the next paragraphs the key points the project had to face in 2015 are described.

## **YM Granted Activities**

For 2015 the main goal was to involve more and more EPS member societies. YM is now running in 20 countries, with the help of its related national societies. Among them, new ones respect to 2014 are Portugal, Denmark, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Austria, Belgium and Morocco. The last one clearly expresses the interest of the project for Mediterranean countries.

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

During 2015, the project funded 64 activities, submitted from 23 Sections: 68% outreach activities, 21% professional development ones, and 11% networking activities.

What worries us is the number of rejected requests, grown from 10% in 2014 to 20% in 2015. This is due to increase in the number of YM Sections, while the project budget is fixed to 20k€.

A list of the granted activities and their outcomes are reported from the Section on the YM website: <http://www.epsyoungminds.org/sections/>

## **International Year of Light (IYL2015)**

2015 will be remembered from the scientific community as the International Year of Light. Young Minds had the opportunity to run special grants. Between the 44 outreach activities, 20 were specially dedicate to light and light based technologies.

## **YM Action Committee**

The YM Action Committee is composed from senior scientists, young scientists, and people from the EPS staff, for a total of 10 members.

The senior part is composed from Christophe Rossel, EPS President, and Fülöp Zsolt, member of the ExCom. The EPS staff members ensure the best connection between the project and EPS: the Secretary General EPS, David Lee; and the Conference Manager assistant, Ophélie Fornari. The young scientists part this year was increased. Apart Antigone Marino (Italy) and Ulrike Ritzmann (Germany), Enrique Sanchez (Spain), Eva Salvador Balaguer (Spain), and Bence Godo (Hungary), two new members joined the group: Roberta Caruso (Italy) and Jonas Berzinš (Lithuania).

The action committee met twice in 2015. On May 29<sup>th</sup> in Barcelona (Spain) during the 4<sup>th</sup> YM Meeting at ICFO, and on November 28<sup>th</sup> in Konstanz (Germany).

## **4<sup>th</sup> YM Leadership Meeting**

On 29-30 May 2015, representatives of the EPS Young Minds sections were invited to present and discuss their activities at the 4<sup>th</sup> Young Minds Leadership Meeting, held at the Institute of Photonic Sciences (ICFO) in Barcelona, Spain.

As in previous editions, the meeting started with a general overview of the EPS YM project, its growing success and expansion over the past 5 years. All the Sections had the opportunity to present their activities. Once again outreach remains the pillar of the YM activities, followed by events for professional development (schools, seminars, etc.) and networking events.

Physics League, the YM Section of the University of Valladolid in Spain, won the 2015 Best YM Activity Award with an amazing outreach show on Physics and Superpowers. This year the prize was sponsored for the first time by the frontier letters journal EPL.

ICFO was one of the best places for the YM Leadership Meeting 2015, during the International Year of Light. Moreover, the institute offered an enviable palette of invited speakers that the young scientists had the opportunity to listen to and meet. Romain Quidant, leader of the Plasmon Nano-Optics Group, was invited to talk on "Nano-Optics: When light gets us into the nanoworld". Niek van Hulst, leader of the Molecular nanophotonics group, gave an overview

on the research at ICFO by more than 20 research groups, making the Institute one of the leading research centers in optics in the world. Finally Lydia Sanmarti-Vila, leader of the Knowledge & Technology Transfer Department, introduced ICFO's outreach projects aimed to bring photonics closer to the society.

The EPS activities were presented in two interesting talks. Christophe Rossel, president of EPS, gave a plenary lecture providing his personal view of the relations between Physics and Society. David Lee, the EPS Secretary General, gave a talk about "The European Physics Community", highlighting the importance of the YM project for the society itself, and the increasing need of interaction with European initiatives involved in policies for research.

Looking to the future, YM explored the possibility of activities aimed at developing countries. Lorenzo Giorgi, Executive Director Liter of Light Italy, and Barbara Capone, C.E.O. and project leader of Sunshine 4 Palestine, introduced the YM members to the world of physics for development, showing how physicists can work to help needy communities.

### **YM and EPS**

In 2015 YM was invited to give a talk at the Bad Honnef EPS Council. It has been a good opportunity to present the first 5 years project results, and be in contact with all the EPS groups, divisions and committees.

YM is trying to be, year after year, more integrated in the EPS structure. In the past years our collaboration with the Historic Sites Committee and the Forum for Physics and Society one were settled up. This year new collaborations had been realized by the YM AC to succeed the goal of a better integration inside EPS:

- For the International Year of Light, the Quantum Electronics and Optics Division (QEOD) and Young Minds Action Committee offered a limited number of travel grants for PhD Students who wish to attend CLEO®/Europe-EQEC 2015. During the award ceremony in Munich, YM had the opportunity to award 10 students.
- YM organized a special session at the European Nuclear Physics Conference (EUNPC), which took place from August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup> in Groningen (NL). In this session invited speakers gave overview talks to train young scientists for their professional knowledge as well as in promoting science.
- YM has been co-working with the EPS Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) for the publication in e-EPS of short portraits of young women researchers in physics. YM believes that young scientist can and have to give a contribution to a social action like gender equality.

### **YM and Collaborations**

All the collaborations set in these years are going on, in particular the one with 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 goals will be developed through the creation of a bottom-up and pan-European platform for young outstanding European next generation researchers in order to share and transmit their visions on emergent research paths and research policy as well as their respective experience and ideas.