Overview

The Research Biobank of the Year Competition (RBYC) \(^1\) is organized by the ESBB\(^2\) Working Group of the European, Middle-Eastern and African Society for Biopreservation and Biobanking (ESBB). The competition was launched at ESBB’s 2013 Annual Conference in Verona\(^3\) and is intended to promote outstanding biobank services for research.

ESBB herewith announces the 2014 call for entries for the RBYC. The closing date for receipt of entries will be the 1\(^{st}\) August, 2014, 9:00 am Central European Time. Proposals will be evaluated and short-listed by an independent jury of international experts, including several members of last year’s panel\(^3\). The top-ranked biobanks will be presented at ESBB’s Annual Conference in Leipzig, Germany, for the final vote by Conference Participants on October 23, 2014.

Eligibility

The contest is open to Biobanks for research purposes, situated in Europe, the Middle-East and Africa. These may be in either public or private settings. The RBYC 2014 is open to Biobanks for human samples only\(^4\). Re-applications will also be eligible except for the winner of last year’s RBYC. Applicants must provide proof of registration for the ESBB meeting in Leipzig, October 2014, by the deadline of submission (August 1\(^{st}\), 2014).

Application Procedure

Written applications (DIN A4, Arial, 11 pt.) of maximum 6 pages (including figures and tables) must be prepared as pdf-files. They will be considered the only basis for the jury’s decisions and kept confidential. Applicants shall provide information on their biobank’s

1) Quality (material and operations)  
2) Transparency (outreach activities and donor relations)  
3) Usage (sample turnover)  
4) Connectivity (integration into biobank networks and trans-institutional infrastructure)  
5) Innovation (innovative solutions for any kind of biobank-related problems)  
6) Sustainability (outline of business model)

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\(^2\) http://www.esbb.org/translate.html

\(^3\) http://www.esbb.org/verona/RBYC.html

\(^4\) Although included in the 2013 Call, there were no entries from non-human biobanks (environmental, biodiversity, veterinary etc) at that time. In preparation for future RBYC calls, non-human biobanks are now invited to indicate their support for a separate non-human RBYC category in 2015 by email to admin@esbb.org or j.mackenzie-dodds@nhm.ac.uk, with suggestions as to their preferred format and evaluation criteria.
Research Biobank of the Year Competition
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In addition, applicants are advised to consult the 2013 jury’s BIO paper¹ for detailed information on assessment criteria and the RBYC scoring system. Applications must be submitted with a letter from the responsible biobank representative. These documents must be sent by email to admin@esbb.org and must be received by the 1st August 2014. They will be acknowledged directly by email reply. Applicants are also asked to provide a poster presentation of their biobank at the ESBB meeting in Leipzig.

Judging Procedure

The jury will make use of the scoring system they developed in 2013¹ to rank the 2014 entries and establish, as a result, a short-list of the top-ranked applicants. Although integration of quantitative BRIF parameters into RBYC scores is not yet possible at this stage, gross information on a biobank’s scientific impact will be factored into into scores as outlined in the BIO paper¹. Proposals must be received by the 1st August, 2014. The jury will decide on the short-list by end of August, and in September 2014 short-listed biobanks will be invited to make short presentations in the RBYC session of the ESBB conference on October 23, 2014. Conference Attendees will then choose the winner using an electronic voting system.

Notifications

Ranking of applicants will be kept confidential. Shortly after the ESBB Conference in Leipzig, applicants will be informed by e-mail on the scores they have reached (overall and in the different categories), compared to the average scores of all applicants and the average scores of short-listed biobanks.

Award

The short-list of top-ranked applicants will be published in the Programme Book for the ESBB Conference in Leipzig. These short-listed applicants will be introduced by a jury member during the RBYC session and will be required to make a short presentation prior to the final voting procedure. The winner will be presented with a Challenge Cup donated by ESBB’s Platinum Sponsor. Details on the 2014 Award Winning Ceremony and support from ESBB Sponsors will be provided at a later stage. Award winning and shortlisted biobanks will be promoted through the post-conference communications of ESBB and sponsors.

For further information, please contact Robert Hewitt (hewitt.r@sfr.fr) or Christina Schröder (Christina.Schroeder@ibmt.fraunhofer.de).

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