



The Charles Michener Bee Research Grant supports graduate student research on the biology of bees, defined broadly as the Anthophila. The award will be given to the IUSI-NAS graduate student member whose research has the greatest potential to make a substantive contribution to our understanding of the biology of this fascinating group.

The winner of the 2021 Charles Michener Grant is **Kate Hunter** who will receive a \$2,500 grant to support her research.

Kate received her bachelor's degree in Animal Ecology and Biology from Iowa State University, and is currently a PhD candidate, in the lab of Dr. Karen Kapheim at Utah State University. The title of her proposed research is, "Investigating the dynamics of bee immune responses." Kate's project begins with a large and thorough field collection of 20 bee species across 5 families, which includes significant diversity of social organization. Next, Kate plans to test the encapsulation response and microbial secretions of the collected bees, as well as their nutritional state. Combined, these studies will allow her to compare the relationship between immune response and social organization.

The awards committee wishes to recognize her persuasive and well-contextualized proposal, which was both well informed by the literature and also uniquely timely. Kate's project aims to test two specific hypotheses, and will ultimately further our understanding about the role of social interactions in bee immunity.

Sincerely,

The Awards Committee:

Sarah Bengston, Kaitlin Baudier (Co-Chairs)

Rachelle Adams, Floria Mora-Kepfer Uy, Olav Rueppell, Qian Sun