



International Union for the Study of Social Insects

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Happy 2025! I hope this year brings you all success in all your social insect endeavours!

In the UK we're waiting for spring (which, given the vagaries of our weather and climate, could be anywhere from late January to mid-March...) to re-invigorate our social insects, and the research projects that depend on them. It's at this time of year that I think enviously of IUSSI colleagues who have social insect activity all year round, or who are in the midst of summer right now. For me, this has to be a time of reflection, and planning for what we want to do with bumblebees in 2025. Importantly, this also gives me time as your Secretary General to consider how we can move the IUSSI forward this year, and in particular how we can improve support for members and Sections that are less financially supported. I am inspired by the thought our President, and other members of the Congress organising committee, are putting into making our next Congress as inclusive as possible. It's my pleasure to bring you important updates on our fund-raising activities, website, journal, and 2026 International Congress.



Social insects are very much waiting for it to warm up in the UK!

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IUSSI 20th International Congress 2026

Judith Korb, President

We have exciting updates on the upcoming 20th International Congress of the IUSSI in Freiburg, Germany, August 2026.

1. Please check out the Congress homepage with **updated deadlines** for symposium submission (see below), abstract submission, and registration, and where we are proud to announce the **invited plenary speakers** of the Congress: <https://iussi2026.org/>. Please keep checking the website for updates.
2. The deadlines and process for abstract submission and acceptance have been designed to facilitate IUSSI members who require a visa to attend the Congress (a process that can take 6-8 months for some of our Sections). We will give further information about this in the next Newsletter, and on the website.
3. The call for the submission of symposia is open. This is your opportunity to **bring together people working on a topic you find interesting** and would like to be discussed. **Shape the congress by proposing and organizing a symposium**. Submit symposia proposals by **31. March 2025** to judith.korb@biologie.uni-freiburg.de We are looking forward to receiving many exciting propositions that cover a broad range of topics. Please see further details in the box below.

With best wishes for 2025. Judith Korb, President of the IUSSI

Call for Symposium Proposals – XX IUSSI International Congress 2026

We invite submissions for symposium proposals for the XX. IUSSI International Congress in 2026 (<https://iussi2026.org>). Each symposium will be allocated either 2 hours (8 short talks of 15 minutes each, incl. discussion) or 4 hours (16 talks) in the program. Symposium organizers are free to combine two short talks into one longer talk and invite up to 2 (for a 2-hour symposium or 4 (for a 4-hour symposium) speakers. Please note that due to budget constraints, neither symposium organizers nor speakers will receive honoraria, travel reimbursements, or other expenses.

Submission Deadline

31 March 2025

Symposium Proposal Requirements

You will need to provide:

- The names and email addresses of the primary organiser (for correspondence) and 1-2 co-organisers, who must commit to attending the meeting.
- The proposed symposium title.

- A brief justification (up to 200 words) explaining the significance and relevance of the proposed topic and your preferred symposium duration (2 or 4 hours). The symposium should be of general interest to the IUSSI community in order to encourage abstract submissions from a wide range of participants.
- If you would like to invite speakers, please mention how many and whom.

Balance in terms of gender, nationality, and career stage among invited speakers and organisers is expected. Organisers are also expected to maintain this balance when selecting additional presenters.

How to Submit a Proposal

- Email your proposal to judith.korb@biologie.uni-freiburg.de with the subject line "IUSSI 2026 Symposium Submission."
- The primary organiser must submit the proposal and will act as the main contact.

Evaluation Process

Your application will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee. Selected symposia will be announced by 1. June 2025.

We look forward to receiving your proposals!

The Scientific Committee

Supporting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

It is with great pleasure that I share the news that the North American Section of the IUSSI, led by their President Professor James Nieh, have begun fund-raising to support student attendance at the 2026 International Congress (for more on the meeting, see above). They are using the Zeffy platform, which they recommend to other Sections as a fund-raising platform as it comes with zero cost. I have put a screenshot of their fund-raising webpage below, and if you'd like to see it in more detail or donate!, click [here](#).

Donate to help students attend the 2026 IUSSI conference in Freiburg, Germany

Who We Are

The International Union for the Study of Social Insects (IUSSI) is dedicated to advancing the study of social organisms and their impact on our environment. From essential pollination to resource management, social insects play a vital role in our world. Through research, education, and dissemination of knowledge, the IUSSI promotes global collaboration and innovation. The organization hosts Congresses and Symposia, publishes the journal *Insectes Sociaux*, and fosters recognition through awards.

The Challenge

For students from minoritized communities and low-income countries, attending international scientific conferences presents both challenges and invaluable opportunities. Financial constraints often make it difficult for them to cover conference costs (approx. \$3,000 for the International Congress). However, participation in these conferences provides access to cutting-edge research, networking opportunities with global experts, and exposure to diverse perspectives. It fosters collaboration, knowledge exchange, and enhances their academic and professional development, ultimately contributing to their scientific growth and broader impact in their communities.

Our Goal

We plan to raise \$12,000 to support student travel. Given that it costs approximately \$3,000 for a student to attend the international meeting, our goal is to support four students or partially support more, depending on the amount that we raise and what students request in their travel award applications. These student travel awards will be distributed by the IUSSI-NAS Awards committee, as they have in the past in the 2022 San Diego IUSSI meeting.

\$657.00 of \$3,000.00



International Union for the Study of Social Insects, North American Section

♥ \$100.00

by Karen Kapheim 1 month ago

♥ \$1.00

by Anonymous 1 month ago

♥ \$50.00

by Michael Breed 1 month ago

♥ \$25.00

by Maya Saar 1 month ago

♥ \$50.00

by Sarah Lawson 1 month ago

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I look forward to hearing news from other Sections of similar activities, so that we can support our members from all over the world to attend the 2026 Congress in Germany.

IUSSI Website – New Webmaster!

I'd like to start here with a huge thank you to our members who showed interest in serving the Society as the new Webmaster. As always, the enthusiasm people show for the IUSSI leaves me humbled.

I am delighted to announce that our new Webmaster will be [Dr Patrick Kennedy](#). Patrick was our West-Eberhard Prize winner in 2022, and expressed huge enthusiasm to be able to serve the IUSSI, which has been his academic home throughout his career. Patrick is a lecturer at the University of Bristol, UK, whose research focuses on social evolution, using wasps as a study system. Patrick has many exciting ideas for our new website, and we look forward to it being up and running by the end of March 2025. If you have ideas for what you would like to see on the website, please contact Patrick [directly](#).

We are very grateful to Professor David Nash, our previous Webmaster, for agreeing to mentor Patrick and enable continuity from our old to our new website in this transition period.

News from *Insectes Sociaux*

Madeleine Beekman, Editor-in-Chief

Sadly, Miriam Richards has stepped down as associate editor as per January 2025. Miriam served as Editor-in-Chief for four years, taking over from Mike Breed at the IUSSI Congress in Brazil. When she stood down after the Congress in San Diego, Miriam stayed on as associate editor for which I have been extremely grateful because that meant I didn't have to feel too bad about asking her for help when I couldn't figure things out myself. I would like to thank Miriam for the many years she has dedicated to the journal, not only as Editor-in-Chief and associate editor, but also as author and reviewer. I will miss her.

Now is perhaps also the time to update the IUSSI community on the discussions I have had with a professional who assists journals with obtaining publishing agreements. In May of 2024 I met with Max Reuter, the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Evolutionary Biology. JEB had just switched from Wiley to Oxford University Press. The journal joined forces with Evolution and Evolution Letters and the three journals moved publishers together. Max brought me in contact with Paula Gantz from Paula Gantz Publishing Consultancy who assisted JEB, Evolution and Evolution Letters with the negotiations.

To cut a long story short, after a few (free, thank you Paula!) consultations, the conclusion

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was drawn that our journal is simply too small to be attractive to publishers. Paula also did some sums and concluded that we actually get a pretty good deal from Springer. I, in consultation with Mark, therefore came to the decision that the IUSSI is best served by renewing our contract with Springer. Negotiations are currently ongoing.

I appreciate that many would prefer the journal to move to a not-for-profit publisher, but my reasoning is that we have to look after the IUSSI. Currently, the income generated from our journal is the only IUSSI income. Until that changes, or a miracle happens, the society is best served by sticking with Springer.