

Women in Plant Biology Committee

ECR reps: Sabrina Chin & Maryam Rahmati Ishka

1) In the broadest sense, what are the responsibilities of your committee?

- promote gender equity for women scientists (broadly)
 - eg. petition letter to NSF to address the absence of parental leave for recipients of Graduate Research Fellowship and Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology because they are not considered university employees, hence they are not covered by FMLA
- participate as the selection committee for Women's Young Investigator Travel Award for Plant Biology conference travel
- host workshops either at Plant Biology conference or online Plantae webinars
 - eg. Career in Science with a Masters degree, Parenting & Scientific Training, science communication
- raise public profiles of women scientists on ASPB platforms, eg. Twitter, Plantae

2) How many hours per month of commitment does it take?

- Meetings with committee members every 2 months for 1.5 hours
- in-person meeting at Plant Biology for 2 hours + optional networking session
- additional meetings when planning an event
- typically, meetings become more frequent May/June in anticipation of Plant Biology in July
- averages about 2-3 hours per month

3) How can ECR reps influence the functioning of the committee?

- ECR reps are more active on social media to promote committee work
- influence the planning of workshops and activities
- ECR reps propose novel ideas to their committees for reshaping the organization and sometimes big changes

4) Do the ECR reps have an equal "say" in matters/ decisions?

- yes, our voice has "equal weightage" as a regular committee, but having said that as there are more non-ECR reps, ECRs can get out-voted in that instance

5) What have you learned by serving on this committee?

- effecting change takes a lot of time and work!
- Of course, all members are so passionate by serving on each committee.

Additional notes-

For planning workshops and webinars, etc ECR reps need support from their committee otherwise it is hard to get anything done.