



European Crystallographic Association

ECA

Report for school financial support

1. Date, location and title of meeting:

Title meeting	4 th International Symposium on Halogen Bonding (ISXB-4)
Location	Online (originally scheduled for Stellenbosch, South Africa)
Date	2-5 November 2020
Website address	https://isxb42020.net/ [Twitter handle @isxb4v]

2. Please describe how the bursary was used.

The original application for support was to bring young scientists to attend the ISXB-4 in Stellenbosch, South Africa, 22-27 March 2020; however, this was postponed to 2-6 November 2020 just two weeks before the start of the conference owing to the COVID-19 pandemic (just in time: South Africa went into hard lockdown for five weeks on 27 March). When it became clear in June 2020 that it would not be viable to keep to the 2-6 November 2020 date for an on-site meeting the decision was made to move the ISXB-4 to a fully online mode. The funds very kindly provided by the ECA (€1000, R18 906.82) were thus used to help the following young scientists with contributions towards their online attendance:

Name	Surname	Organisation	Country	Bursary
Thomas	Bates	University of Pretoria	South Africa	R800.00
Alfy	Benny	Indian Institute of Science Education and Research	India	R800.00
Rohit	Bhowal	IISER Bhopal	India	R800.00
Tristan	Borchers	McGill	Canada	R800.00
Jacky Sorrel	Bouanga Boudiombo	University of Cape Town	South Africa	R800.00
Andrea	Daolio	Politecnico di Milano	Italy	R800.00
Alan	Eaby	Stellenbosch University	South Africa	R800.00
Shubha	Gunaga	University of Ottawa	Canada	R800.00
Govinda	Khanal	Indian Institute of Science	India	R800.00
Khadijatul	Kobra	Clemson University	USA	R800.00
Danijela	Kretić	Faculty of Chemistry University of Belgrade	Serbia	R800.00
Dusan	Malenov	University of Belgrade	Serbia	R800.00
Alessandro	Marchetti	Politecnico di Milano	Italy	R800.00
Anuradha	Nandy	IIT MADRAS	India	R800.00
Ayodele	Odularu	University of Fort Hare	South Africa	R800.00

Uchenna	Ogodo	Institution	Nigeria	R800.00
Stefan	Peintner	Uppsala Universitet	Sweden	R800.00
Somananda	Sanyal	Stellenbosch University	South Africa	R800.00
D	Sathish	IIT MADRAS	India	R800.00
Nandini	Savoo	University of Mauritius	Mauritius	R800.00
Lorenzo	Sori	Politecnico di Milano	Italy	R800.00
Radhwane	Takouachet	Abbes Laghrour Khenchela University	Algeria	R800.00
Jogirdas	Vainauskas	McGill University	Canada	R800.00
Robin	Weiss	University of Strasbourg	France	R800.00
			Total	R19 200

3. Report (min. 250 words, max. 500 words, will be published on the ECA web site)

The ISXB-4 was originally supposed to be held in Stellenbosch, South Africa, 22-27 March 2020; however, this was postponed to 2-6 November 2020 just two weeks before the start of the conference owing to the COVID-19 pandemic (just in time: South Africa went into hard lockdown for five weeks on 27 March). When it became clear in June 2020 that it would not be viable to keep to the 2-6 November 2020 date for an on-site meeting the decision was made to move the ISXB-4 to a fully online mode. The funds very kindly provided by the ECA were thus used to help 24 young scientists from 11 different countries (including four African countries) attend the conference.

The ECA funding definitely contributed to the success of the conference as it allowed the organising committee to sponsor the attendance of many more students than would have been possible otherwise: 220 delegates attended the online event, as compared to the original 88 registrations for the on-site conference in Stellenbosch. In addition, two of the ECA bursars, Alessandro Marchetti and Somananda Sanyal, won poster prizes for their excellent contributions.

The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive, despite the online only format, as the organising committee specifically made time for social interactions so that delegates felt like they were at a "real" conference. For instance, at the start of the conference a "speed-greeting" social event was held that randomly dealt small groups of delegates into a group to chat for 5 minutes before moving to the next group; this allowed young scientists to meet established researchers in the field on a very informal basis. In addition, a virtual 'room' created for young scientists to meet and interact at the end of each day was enthusiastically embraced and was busy every day. The poster sessions were also well attended and gave the young scientists the opportunity to discuss their work with other attendees. In addition, delegates could leave questions for the poster presenters that could be answered by text, or they could arrange to meet the presenters through the 'meeting hub'. A positive aspect that was noticed was that the anonymity of the online format gave the students more confidence to ask questions at the oral sessions, which they would often be too shy to do at on-site conferences. This was aided by the very high quality of the oral presentations, with contributions from the top scientists in the field of halogen bonding.

Please return this form (in Word format) within three month after the event to
 Prof. Carl Henrik Görbitz
meeting.officer@ecanews.org

A group picture is appreciated!