

FEATURE ARTICLE: TWAS associated organization: TWOWS- a new perspective

The Third World Organization for Women in Science (TWOWS) has recently undergone a programme development and planning process. The TWOWS Secretariat, TWAS, and the TWOWS Executive Board (EB) all met recently to develop new activities in the framework of the 2007-2010 Strategic Action Plan. In the course of these discussions, it was agreed that an important strategy for achieving its goals is to build on collaborations with other women in science and technology organizations around the world, such as the Gender Advisory Board of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the UNESCO Chair on Women in Science and Technology for Latin America, the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences and others. Areas of focus will include: expanding and supporting TWOWS membership through e-networking; working with girls at younger ages; promoting women's leadership and leadership development in science; launching an international campaign on the role of women in science and technology for development; and supporting women's contributions to development at the grassroots level through technology. TWOWS also convened its fourth EB meeting on 30 and 31 March in Trieste, Italy. All members of the EB were in attendance, and interesting and fruitful discussions ensued. The future strategy of the organization, priority actions to be taken, as well as new projects, national chapters, and fundraising for TWOWS and programmes, were discussed with great enthusiasm and optimism. One of the major activities for 2009/2010 is the TWOWS Fourth General Assembly and International Conference. This international event will be generously hosted by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), in June 2010, in Beijing, China with about 800 participants expected to attend. Meanwhile, TWOWS's flagship postgraduate fellowship programme for young women scientists from sub-Saharan Africa and Least Developed Countries, sponsored by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and launched in 1998, continues to grow. In 2008, 24 young women scientists from 15 countries were awarded fellowships, and one more young woman scientist, Nadège Okémy-Andissa (see her photo and details below), completed her higher degree, bringing the total since the programme began to 72. For more information visit www.twows.org, under the 'Activities' tab. Contact e-mail: info@twows.org.

TWOWS Picture Profile



Nadège Okémy-Andissa, from the University of Marien Ngouabi, Brazzaville, Congo Rep. completed her sandwich (part-time) PhD degree in the field of medicinal plants at the University of Lome, Togo, thanks to a TWOWS postgraduate fellowship award.

IAP and the WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

• Launched in 1993, the **InterAcademy Panel on International Issues (IAP)** is a global network of the world's science academies. Its primary goal is to help member academies work together to advise citizens and public officials on the scientific aspects of critical global issues. IAP is located in Trieste, Italy, and operates under the administrative umbrella of TWAS. In 2008, IAP and the World Economic Forum (WEF) partnered in a pilot project whereby more than 40 young scientists, nominated by IAP member academies, met other young 'champions' – individuals younger than 40 – in fields related to business, politics and technology. The meeting was held in Tianjin, China, on 26-28 September 2008, at the WEF Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as 'Summer Davos'. TWAS Young Affiliates were also invited to attend the meeting, which provided a unique opportunity for tomorrow's leaders to exchange ideas both with one another and with more experienced professionals. IAP organized two sessions: 'Managing Science for a Better World' and 'The Role of Frontier Science in Shaping Society'. More detailed information about the meeting, including the text of an article published in *Science*, and a statement by the young scientists, is available on the IAP website: www.interacademies.net. Discussions are now under way to organize the second IAP Young Scientists Conference at the WEF Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Dalian, China, 10-12 September 2009.

Programme News:

• **NEW BIOTEC-TWAS FELLOWSHIPS: The National Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (BIOTEC), Thailand, and TWAS** will offer postdoctoral fellowships in biotechnology for up to two year research stays. Deadline: **15 September each year**. Complete information and eligibility criteria will soon be available at: www.twas.org > Programmes > Exchange. Contact e-mail: fellowships@twas.org.

• **CSIR-TWAS Postgraduate and Postdoctoral fellowships** deadline has been extended to 1 July 2009. For complete information see: www.twas.org > Programmes > Exchange. Contact e-mail: fellowships@twas.org.

• The deadline for nominations for the **TWAS-AAS-Microsoft Award for Young Scientists** has been extended further to 31 July 2009. Nominations of young African computer scientists are invited from national science academies, senior academics (heads of departments, heads of universities), members of TWAS and AAS, and others. Deadline now: **31 July 2009**. For queries contact: prizes@twas.org.

• **Ernesto Illy Trieste Science Prize:** TWAS and Trieste-based illycaffè have established high-level prizes to honour distinguished scientists from developing countries. The Trieste Town Council and the Trieste International Foundation for Scientific Progress and Freedom are collaborating in this effort. 2009 marks the fifth year of the prize and the beginning of its second four-year cycle (2009-2012). The prize is now named Ernesto Illy Trieste Science Prize to honour the late former President of illycaffè and in recognition of the unique and fundamental role that the Trieste System of scientific institutions plays in promoting science and technology in the developing world. The first four-year cycle of the Trieste Science Prize focused on basic science. The second four-year cycle will focus on sustainability issues in the following fields of science:

- Climate change and its impact on agriculture in developing countries (2009)
- Energy (2010)
- Materials science (2011)
- Human health (2012)

The prize carries a monetary award of US\$100,000 generously contributed by illycaffè, a medal and a certificate bearing a citation highlighting the major contributions for which the prize is awarded. Candidates must be nationals of developing countries, living and working in the South. The evaluation is carried out by a scientific committee, chaired by the TWAS President, consisting of an authoritative and international jury and a designated representative from illycaffè. For additional information and nomination forms, please contact: prizes@twas.org or visit www.twas.org.

Deadline for 2009 nominations: **31 May**.

- The **TWAS Regional Office for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific (TWAS-ROESEAP)** is inviting scientists, especially young scientists under 45, to present oral or poster presentations for the TWAS Regional Young Scientists Conference on 'Food, Health and Fuel: Plants for the Future' in Selangor, Malaysia, in November 2009. The conference will examine the role of agricultural biotechnology to ensure food security and production of bioenergy in developing countries. Deadline for submission of abstracts: 30 June 2009. Guidelines for abstracts and posters are available on the conference website: www.frim.gov.my/twas/main.html.

- The **Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)** and **TWAS** are organizing a workshop for young scientists from developing countries entitled 'Cutting-edge methods and techniques in protein research', to be hosted at the Institute of Biophysics in Beijing, China from 14-18 July 2009. For complete information contact Mr. Xiaoke Xia (xiaokx@ibp.ac.cn).

EURO-AFRICA ICT COOPERATION FORUM

- The **First Euro-Africa Cooperation Forum on ICT Research** was held in Brussels on 25 and 26 March. More than 320 people from some 50 European and African countries – including policy-makers and ICT researchers in the public and private sectors – attended. In her opening presentation, Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for DG INFSO, affirmed that the EU was looking forward "to working with everyone, in Africa and the EU, on ICT policy and research." Vera Brenda Ngosi, Director, Directorate of Human Resources, Science and Technology, African Union Commission, added that: "We are opening a new chapter and Africans are ready to work shoulder to shoulder with our European partners."

The event was organized by the European Commission (Directorate General, Information Society and Media, DG INFSO) with the support of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the EU EuroAfrica-ICT project (of which TWAS is a partner). For further details see: www.euroafrica-ict.org.

Other Opportunities

- The **African Centre for Crop Improvement (ACCI)** at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa offers a prestigious scholarship to young African MSc graduates interested in a PhD Scholarship in Plant Breeding and who are keen to make a career in plant breeding. The aim of the ACCI is to train African plant breeders, in Africa, on African crops. This involves two years of academic studies at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and three years of field research in the students' home countries, at their home institution. For information visit: www.acci.org.za.

- **WFL Publisher** is a leading Scandinavian science publisher. Recently published articles in the International Journal of Food, Agriculture & Environment (JFAE) are available at: www.world-food.net/scientificjournal.ph. WFL offers temporary free online access to JFAE. Authors are invited to submit manuscripts reporting recent developments in their fields. Submitted papers must describe original research not published nor currently under review by other journals. All submitted papers, if relevant to the theme and objectives of the journal, will go through an external peer-review process.

For more details, please visit the journal website: www.isfae.org/publishurwork.php. Any interested scientists or libraries are also welcome to subscribe to the journal and link with the journal website at: www.world-food.net/scientificjournal.ph.

- The **Volkswagen Foundation** intends to invite 100 promising young researchers from all over the world interested in and capable of contributing to the conference "Our Common Future" to be held in November 2010 in Germany. The Conference, which will be held in Hanover and Essen, will focus on global challenges of the 21st century. Deadline for applications is 31 July 2009. For details, see: www.volkswagenstiftung.de/funding/off-the-beaten-track/our-common-future.html.

- The annual conference of the **Mycological Society of Nigeria (MYCOSON)** will be held between 25-28 October 2009 at the Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria. The theme of the conference is Biotechnology: Revolutionizing Mycological Research in Nigeria. The aim of conference is to direct the attention of the public, government and other funding bodies to the dearth of diagnostic tools in the new technology available in Nigerian laboratories as well as challenge Africa's vibrant scientists to take up the challenge in their research efforts. For updated information please see: www.aaukepoma.edu.ng or contact the organizers, Marshal Azeke (m_azeke@yahoo.com) and Charles Omonhegbele Omoifo (coomoifo@yahoo.com).

Research Grants Picture Profile



Dr. M. Asadullah from the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh, was awarded a TWAS Research Grant and purchased a pyrolysis plant for bio-oil production. The group photo shows Asadullah's PhD and MSc students who have benefited from this equipment.

Reminder for all our fellowship and grants awardees: send us your photos and a short caption, and you could be featured in our next issue.

TWAS Contact details

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