

## ABOUT SYMBIOSE

SymBioSE is a Symposium of Biology Students in Europe. It was founded in 1996 by members of a German student association. The basic idea was to connect all European biology students, allowing for the exchange of ideas, perspectives and experiences about student concerns. This led to the first meeting in Berlin in 1997. After a successful start with twelve European countries, it was continued as an annual event to be held in the different participating nations. Since then, every host country has built upon the initial idea and upgraded it with different aspects of their own cultural background. Thus far, every time this has resulted in a unique and enriching symposium.

Today, SymBioSE meetings have three major goals: to broaden the horizons of the participating students by lectures and excursions, to share information about current university matters and to connect people by discussions and cultural exchange.

The biological topics presented are always based upon the trends in research that complement both local institutions and their resources. Lectures are usually held at a local university, so the students gain a detailed insight into other university systems. Participants are strongly encouraged to present their research or interests, thus gaining experience on an international level. During interactive workshops, students discuss theoretical, practical and ethical topics related to science.

Social events further enhance contacts between the participants. This allows everybody to create a personal network of collaboration and friendship throughout Europe, thereby facilitating student exchanges and international work experience. This promotes a mutual understanding between countries and nations through academic and cultural exchange whilst developing a new perspective on their own educational systems.

In general, SymBioSE is not a rigid organization with a hierarchical structure. During international meetings, representatives of the participating countries discuss topics such as: developments within their universities, different biological study programs, and the various ways of student collaboration. SymBioSE is organised annually by students and is open to all students. Participants of SymBioSE are part of a living community that connects biology students throughout the year.

