

Section Reps Meeting

November 20, 2025

Attendees: Shoshana Kronfeld (ASPB Staff), Marco Burger, Miguel Pineros (NE Section Rep), Colleen Doherty (Southern Section Rep), June Simson (Mexico Section Rep), Azam Noori (Pui Section Rep), Aruna Kilaru (MemCom Chair), Mike Michelbart (MW Section Rep), Elena Pelech (EEPP Section Rep), Ying Wang (Southern Section Secretary)

Next steps

- Shoshana: Send budget request template to section reps who need it and registration and abstract submission information to sections that want to use ASPB services
- Shoshana: Send list of ambassadors in each region to section reps and meeting organizers within next week or two
- Shoshana: Put PUI section monthly meetings and webinars in the Signal, Global Plant Calendar and coordinate social media promotion with Jayson
- Shoshana: Draft standard post-meeting survey for all section meetings and send to reps for feedback
- Mid-Atlantic & Western Section (with Bay Area BioHub): Finalize meeting dates

Summary

The meeting focused on updates and planning for section events, with Shoshana providing reminders and guidance. She noted that the 2026 budget has not been finalized but assumes each section will have \$3,500 available for events, subject to approval via a budget request. Shoshana requested that sections notify her if they need help with registration and abstract submissions, and she offered to provide templates and account balance information. She also mentioned that some sections, like PUI and EEP, typically hold events at the annual meeting, while Mexico might organize an event this year, though Shoshana discussed upcoming regional meetings, noting that a staff member will attend each meeting, hopefully. Shoshana will provide section representatives with a list of local ambassadors to assist with organizing. Azam inquired about advertising monthly meetings and webinars, to which Shoshana suggested promoting them further through email, The Signal, the Global Plant Council calendar, and social media. Shoshana also offered to help

update websites with current meeting information and to grant additional users access to edit webpages.

The group discussed section meeting coordination, with Shoshana confirming she could provide current section members and past meeting attendees. Aruna joined late and learned that while most section dates were set, Mid-Atlantic and Weston were still finalizing theirs, likely for late April. Shoshana mentioned that the Mexico section might hold a meeting in 2026, alternating with their usual biennial schedule.

Shoshana shared feedback from the Plant Biology meeting survey indicating interest in game nights at future section meetings. The group discussed organizing career-oriented activities and workshops for early career scientists at section meetings, with Aruna suggesting that the Southern Section's previous panel format could be replicated. Shoshana mentioned that ECPS, EEPP, and PUI sections are interested in being more involved in regional section meetings

It was agreed to hold a debrief meeting after the upcoming meetings to share information and discuss what worked well. Mike proposed centralizing post-meeting feedback through a standardized survey with QR codes, which Shoshana agreed to develop and distribute both during and after the meetings.

The discussion moved to how convert section members into national ASPB members and in general how to use section meetings to boost both section membership and national membership. Aruna suggested ideas like offering monetary awards or free memberships for presenter awards. Miguel highlighted budget constraints as a key barrier for many attendees. The success of previous promotional activities, such as student ambassadors speaking at meetings and offering swag for new ASPB members was discussed. The group also discussed the need for better advertising of existing membership benefits and programs like "Give Your Students Roots"