

IASSID activities

Contributed by Administrator
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What Activities Does IASSID Sponsor?

IASSID is involved in many diverse activities. These include holding a quadriennial international Congress, being involved with international activities within the United Nations and the World Health Organization, recognizing the outstanding contributions of key scientists through awards and underwriting the work of young scientists beginning work in the field, promoting scientific publications, advocacy and policy development in research and services, and maintaining an international network of scientists and others concerned with the study of intellectual disabilities.

The IASSID World Congresses

First and foremost IASSID sponsors international congresses, now held once every four years. These international meetings provide an exciting opportunity of presenting recent findings as well as keynote addresses about major advances in the biological, behavioral, and social sciences related to intellectual disabilities. These advances are also addressed in presentations concerned with progress in the provision of services and supports for persons with intellectual disabilities. The most recent Congress was held in Capetown, South Africa in August 2008.

International Newsletter

IASSID distributes a periodic newsletter containing information about association activities, announcements about upcoming conferences throughout the world, feature articles about special programs of research and research training throughout the world, and news from the IASSID's various Special Interest Research Groups.

Affiliated Journals

In 1995, IASSID became a co-sponsor of the Journal of Intellectual Disability Research (JIDR). JIDR is published every other month by Blackwell Science Press. The journal is interdisciplinary as well as international in its scope and invites submission of empirical research and integrative review articles from IASSID members. It is peer-reviewed and readily available in major libraries and universities throughout the world. IASSID individual members receive the JIDR as a membership benefit. The IASSID also sponsors free or reduced rate subscriptions to JIDR for countries and individuals when funds for acquisition of journals are severely limited. Members of IASSID are nominated to serve on the international editorial board. In addition, JIDR prints a special "news" section to keep members informed about activities related to IASSID.

The bilingual European Journal on Mental Disability has recently become an IASSID affiliated journal.

Sponsorship of Special Interest Research Groups (SIRGs) and Regional Interest Groups (RIGs)

Special Interest Research Groups provide a unique opportunity for researchers from diverse countries and disciplines to engage in a more active exchange about key issues and findings in specific scientific areas to explore opportunities for international collaboration, and to sponsor special events and meetings.

Any member of IASSID may join a SIRG or may propose the establishment of a new SIRG. There are a number of formal and informal SIRGs. The formal ones are aging, mental health, and health issues. For a list of the informal ones see the Informal SIRGs page.

Regional Interest Groups (RIGs) were created to encourage discussion and collaboration within geographically related areas. IASSID facilitates such scientific inquiry and exchange, especially to encourage local and culturally appropriate adaptation of research methods and findings, through its membership participation in RIGs. The IASSID has recognized the European ASSID and a Pan-Pacific ASSID is forming.

Participation in National and Regional Scientific Meetings

IASSID co-sponsors many regional and national meetings related to the Association's mission. In the past, IASSID has co-sponsored scientific meetings in Hong Kong, Italy, Ireland, Austria, South Africa, Switzerland, and Great Britain. IASSID seeks to provide active support for international exchanges, especially during the years between the World Congresses, in the form of sponsored symposia and presentations by IASSID elected officers, councillors, and individual members.

Public and Research Policy Initiatives

IASSID works closely with various international and national organizations in policy activities to further understanding and

research related to intellectual disabilities. It works in partnership with the Inclusion International (formerly called the Intellectual League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap), the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and many international groups concerned with the well-being of individuals and families affected by intellectual disabilities and other developmental disabilities. Policy activities are designed to increase research opportunities, the dissemination of research findings, and the translation of scientific advances into more effective intervention practices and prevention efforts.

Awards and Recognition

The IASSID provides awards for travel scholarships for promising young scientists. Its Stevens-Shapiro Memorial Fellowship awards were established in 1988 in order to encourage participation by outstanding young scientists in the IASSID international meetings. This award is open to young researchers under 35 years of age who are actively involved in the field of intellectual disabilities.

The IASSID also provides awards for major scientific and humanitarian contributions to the field. It confers its highest awards for contributions to the field of intellectual disability research and service once every four years. The categories for awards include: Distinguished Achievement Award -Research, Distinguished Achievement Award - Scientific Literature, and the Distinguished Service Citation. The recipients are honored at a special event at the World Congress. Many of the recipients have played leadership roles in IASSID and have presented findings at the World Congresses.