



The International Association of Physics Students

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Title

IAPS - From history to student engagement

Abstract

IAPS is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation run entirely for and by physics students from around the world. With a spirit of mutual understanding and equality, our goal is to achieve global collaboration among physics students. As an umbrella organisation, we support both local groups at universities and national Physics student societies in promoting transnational cooperation on scientific, social and cultural issues. Since the birth of the organisation 33 years ago, motivated by an interest in creating a global student community that could contribute both to the personal and professional growth of its members and to a sense of collective cooperation towards shared goals of scientific development, IAPS has grown to being present in over 50 countries. Throughout each year, IAPS activity takes several forms, with members engaging in student-oriented events with the support of IAPS grants, in outreach efforts to middle-school, high-school students or the general public on IAPS School Day and International Day of Light and in volunteer groups that are the operational structure of IAPS. But when it comes to activities organised by members, major yearly IAPS events like the International Conference of Physics Students (ICPS) and the Physics League Across Numerous Countries for Kick-ass Students (PLANCKS) are the main focus, involving hundreds of students in physics-related activities, plus in the sharing of experiences on cultural and social engagement. More specifically, we create opportunities for students to connect with colleagues from various different countries by exchanging scientific knowledge, experience and cultural heritage, while attending lectures on various topics, workshops on a variety of themes related to the activity of IAPS that are of interest to students, plus exploring the local culture of the host country. Though it has been, historically, mainly concentrated in Europe, IAPS has taken many steps, particularly in the last few years, to expand its membership in North, Central and South America, Africa and Asia. With financial support available for new members, our main institutional priority is to help students organise to be able to create their own opportunities and represent themselves, with IAPS as permanent support in the direction of contributing to increase access to resources and opportunities. With an opportunity to present IAPS to students from various African countries, we believe there is a good chance to get closer to achieving our goals, mainly through 3 parts in this presentation: first, talking about IAPS and each aspect of its management; second, addressing PLANCKS, an international physics competition, and how students can participate; third, introducing ICPS and how students can attend. Let's make it happen!