

Centennial Campaign

Enabling Participation

by Troy M. Miller

This is the fourth in a series of articles highlighting the goals of the ECS Centennial Campaign based on the ECS Case for Support. The first article highlighted education; the second highlighted the membership objectives of the Case for Support, while the third discussed objectives that enhance the Society's relationship with industry. If you wish to view the Case in its entirety, or want more information about the Centennial Campaign, visit the ECS website at www.electrochem.org.

The Electrochemical Society was established as an international society over 100 years ago. Its list of charter members included representatives from nine different countries—an astonishing reach for a fledgling organization in 1902. To achieve the Society's mission of disseminating the technical information with which it is concerned, it has had to reach as wide an audience as possible. In 1902, it took many, many months for the Society's Transactions and meeting notices to reach its farthest members. Today, members can access the Society's technical content in seconds and can register for meetings online in minutes. With the Society's latest tool—online manuscript submission and peer review—sending content to ECS has become many times easier. Yet, for many there remain barriers to access. Whether those barriers exist because of geographic distances or economic challenges, ECS is committed to enabling the participation in all programs of all who are interested.

The Electrochemical Society's Case for Support includes four quantifiable objectives to meet this goal. These four objectives include providing annual funding for page charge waivers and meeting travel grants to scientists and engineers demonstrating need; recruiting and supporting one additional satellite meeting by 2007; and developing a fund to support individual membership dues for members who are unable to pay their personal dues.

Page Charge Waivers

It is traditional for peer-reviewed technical journals to charge a fee for publication to help cover the production costs. ECS technical journals (*Electrochemical and Solid-State Letters* and *Journal of The Electrochemical Society*) are ranked number one and two in the field in terms of impact factor.¹ Going through the publishing process at ECS, therefore, not only provides a review process made up of a world-class international review board that offers valuable comment and suggestions, but when a paper is accepted it provides tremendous prestige for the author. This is one powerful reason why The Electrochemical Society is the leading publisher in the field.

ECS page charges are very reasonable, considering the value and prestige involved in publishing in ECS technical journals. Non-members may publish for only \$70 per page, while members receive an additional 10% discount. However, even though these charges are inexpensive, to some constituents they are difficult to afford. Currently, the Society does grant page charge waivers, but the request for waivers has been increasing for a number of reasons: the Society is receiving more submissions and publishing more papers, research funding is decreasing in many countries, and many countries are experiencing serious economic downturns. If ECS technical journals are to continue to represent the increasing scope of electrochemistry and solid-state science, a program to help subsidize page charges for authors who demonstrate a need for this support is needed. The Centennial Campaign hopes to raise approximately \$35,000 annually to boost the current page charge waivers program.

Meeting Travel Grants

As an international society, it is our responsibility to keep meeting costs down and meeting value high. In a recent benchmarking survey, ECS's meeting costs were found to be one of the lowest, and the cost was significantly lower than most other technical societies. Still, travel to ECS biannual meetings can be significant.

ECS Divisions have done a wonderful job in distributing travel grants as they organize their symposia; and the ECS Centennial Campaign is working on raising an additional \$50,000 annually to provide travel grants to ECS meetings for scientists and engineers who demonstrate need.

Satellite Meetings

The Electrochemical Society meets twice a year, in spring and fall, in order to provide the solid-state and electrochemical communities the opportunity to present papers, and network with their peers. These biannual meetings are comprehensive. In Paris alone there were 58 technical symposia.

ECS satellite meetings are smaller, more technically-focused meetings organized with the assistance of The Electrochemical Society. Examples of ECS satellite meetings include: the International Conference on Solid State Ionics, the International Meeting on Lithium Batteries, and the International Semiconductor Technology Conference.

While these meetings are smaller and are overseen by local organizing committees, the amount of assistance The Electrochemical Society provides is great. Using the experience and infrastructure developed through 100 years of organizing meetings, ECS provides important support for satellite meetings.

The Centennial Campaign is looking to raise \$70,000 annually to support the recruitment and maintenance of one international satellite meeting. Recently, ECS has been approached by numerous organizations with viable programs that are relevant to ECS's core technical areas that could become successful satellite meetings; however, ECS did not have the staff capability to provide the assistance necessary. Meeting this need, along with initiating a mechanism to determine the merits of proposed satellite meetings, is an important objective of the Case for Support and will help support our technical program goals.

Special Membership Fund

In a recent benchmarking report, The Electrochemical Society was the only technical society surveyed that provided its members with access to two technical journals (along with other additional membership benefits) for less than \$100 (USD). In addition, ECS student membership dues of \$10 (USD) were less than any comparable society. As an international society, ECS believes it is our responsibility to provide membership and access to technical content at as low a price as possible. Still, for some individuals paying the \$90 membership dues can be a hardship.

Recently, Dr. Alexander B. Velichenko, an ECS member for seven years, prior author, and professor at the Ukrainian State University of Chemical Technology in Ukraine was unable to pay his annual dues due to temporary problems. His appeal for support was heard by the Individual Membership Committee and was approved using funds raised through the ECS Centennial Campaign. Professor Velichenko had this to say:

My name is Dr. Alexander B. Velichenko. I am an electrochemist with twenty years experience and a member of ECS since 1996. I take pride in my membership, and it is very important for my professional activity and interna-

tional cooperation. I was happy to know that thanks to funds raised through the ECS Centennial Campaign, my request for help to continue my membership due to temporary financial problems was approved. I am very happy to be a member of the best professional society of electrochemists worldwide again.

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The ECS Centennial Campaign will raise \$1,000 annually to support a special membership fund. This money will allow nine individuals and ten students the opportunity to become members, despite any financial hardships with which they may currently be dealing. The Individual Membership Committee will receive all requests for support, and will determine twice annually who will receive support from this fund.

Conclusion

The broad discipline of science has become increasingly global, thanks largely to ever-astonishing communications advances. Multi-organizational, multi-discipline, and multi-national research groups are becoming more common. The Internet has become an indispensable tool for students and accomplished practitioners alike. The ECS Centennial Campaign also plans to raise money to create a complete online archive and resource of its technical publications and to create a suite of Internet-based training resources.

Today, ECS has over 8,000 members in 75 countries. From James S. Fitzmaurice of Sydney, Australia, a charter member in 1902—to Alexander Velichenko of Ukraine—to Bruno Scrosati of Rome, Italy, ECS's current president—ECS has enabled the participation of its members and other workers in the field, regardless of their geographical location, point in their career, or financial situation. ECS is the perfect forum for this global collaboration in electrochemistry and solid-state science and technology, and with the support of our Centennial Campaign donors, ECS can increase its capacity to fulfill this mission. ■

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1. According to the 2002 impact factors from ISI's Science Citation Index, the impact factor for Letters was 2.505, and the impact factor for the Journal was 2.330. The impact factors for both journals represent an increase over the 2001 numbers.