

ISEE 2009 Dublin: Highlights from the Ethics and Philosophy Committee

The first of the two sessions sponsored by the Ethics and Philosophy Committee during the ISEE 2009 Conference, August 25-29, 2009 in Dublin, was organized by Jutta Lindert and co-chaired by her and Wael Al-Delaimy. This session, titled Philosophy and Epidemiology, was a big hit! The speakers were Jutta Lindert, Jouni Jaakkola, and Tony McMichael (President of ISEE). The room was filled and overflowing with both young and more established ISEE members (see photo). The



Philosophy & Epidemiology session, Dublin 2009

success of the session was noted by the ISEE President in the General Members meeting the next evening and at the ISEE council meeting. There will likely be similar future sessions on the topic. The second session was on Global Change, Food Security, Safety and Ethics, and was organized by Cristina Tirado and co-chaired by Wael Al-Delaimy and Colin Soskolne. The presenters were Cristina Tirado, Jan Staman, and Marco Martuzzi. There was a lively discussion by some of the audience about the need to address such important issues and the avoidance of stakeholders in dealing with such ethical matters related to food.



E&P organizers and presenters in Dublin: Back left to right: Colin Soskolne, Wael Al-Delaimy, Jouni Jaakkola, Dan Wartenberg, Jutta Lindert, Elihu Richter, Adetoun Mustapha; front left to right: Shira Kramer, Cristina Tirado

Ethical discussions were added to nine symposia at the Dublin conference and moderated by several members of our Ethics and Philosophy committee. The ethics discussions went very well according to all presenters. All expressed very positive discussion and engagement by the audience. The evaluation forms indicated overwhelming support to include these ethical discussions for future meetings. After appropriate consultations with the ISEE Council, ethical discussions will now be regularly included as part of selected oral sessions at future ISEE conferences, in coordination with conference organizers.

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We would like to welcome our new members – 19-strong – to our committee. They joined the committee during the Dublin conference. We hope they will find the committee interesting and that they will eventually take the lead in bringing topics of interest to our committee and ISEE.

Wael Al-Delaimy presented the achievements of the committee to the ISEE General Members meeting, noting that the committee was the most productive among ISEE committees. He summarized these activities in the last year as follows:

- Finalized a complex whistleblower case that took 10 months to a final decision
- Revisedd whistleblower guidelines
- Re-analyses ethical guidelines additions and improvements
- Provided two ethics symposiums for the Dublin conference
- Assisted in nomination of scientists for the Research Integrity Award
- Co-sponsored a White Paper on children’s participation in research on environmental exposure, as well as the ISEE response to it
- Arranged ethics discussions at the end of nine symposia and surveyed the session participants on the value of these discussions
- Updated the committee membership list
- Published a brief item in the ISEE News section of *Epidemiology* highlighting the committee and its future vision

Wael Al-Delaimy
Chair, Ethics and Philosophy Committee
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