



**HISPANIC ORGANIZATION OF TOXICOLOGISTS**  
**ANNUAL REPORT: 2021–2022**  
 May 1, 2021, to April 30, 2022

**I. Officers/Committees**

**Officer**

President:

Vice President:

Vice President-Elect:

Treasurer:

Secretary:

Past President:

Councilor:

Postdoctoral Representative:

Graduate Student Representative:

**2021–2022**

Aline de Conti

Teresa De Jesus Palacios-Hernandez

Veronica Ramirez-Alcantara

Kelly Salinas

Julieta Martino

Enrique Fuentes-Mattei

Patricia Ruiz

Mercedes Salvador-Silva

Federico Leonardo Sinche Chele

Alexandra Maria Moita Antunes

Isabel Alvarado Cruz

Jose Francisco Delgado-Jimenez

**2022–2023**

Teresa Palacios-Hernandez

Veronica Ramirez-Alcantara

Carmen Rubio Armendáriz

Kelly Salinas

Teresa Anguiano

Aline de Conti

Alexandra Maria Moita Antunes

Julieta Martino

Jorge Gerardo Muñoz Ortiz

Federico Leonardo Sinche Chele

Luma Melo

Madeline Vera-Colon

Committees, if applicable:

**Awards Committee**

The main task for the Awards committee is to nominate, select, and announce candidates for HOT Awards. Historically, HOT has awarded Hispanic Travel Awards to students and postdoctoral trainees based on the scientific merits of the abstracts they will present at the SOT meeting, as well as Recognition Awards for service to the HOT and SOT. A “Distinguished Hispanic Toxicologist Award” is given each year to a toxicologist of Hispanic origin whose work exemplifies the mission of the HOT-SIG by contributing to the advancement of the field of toxicology. Historically, a Councilor chairs the committee, and the Vice President serves as co-chair. Other HOT members are recruited to serve as judges for the awards. **Members:** Federico Sinche (Chair); Patricia Ruiz (Co-Chair); Veronica Ramirez-Alcantara (Volunteer)

## **Bylaws Committee**

This committee reviews the bylaws every year and proposes changes according to the needs and evolution of the HOT. Historically, a Counselor, Vice President or Vice President-Elect chairs the committee and recruits other HOT members to advise the Executive Committee as needed. **Members:** Veronica Ramirez-Alcantara (Chair); Julieta Martino (Co-Chair)

## **Communications Committee**

This committee is responsible for coordinating all communications issued by the Executive Committee to the HOT membership, including email alerts, publications and posting to ToXchange, and Facebook. Historically, the President and Secretary co-chair this committee and recruit talented HOT members (often not Executive Members) to lead key initiatives. The Website Coordinator will interact with SOT Headquarters staff to maintain the HOT/SOT website information (including ToXchange) current and useful as a repository of information for future Executive Committees. **Members:** Julieta Martino (Chair); Teresa Palacios (Co-Chair); Aline de Conti (Volunteer)

- **Website Subcommittee:** The chair acts as Website Coordinator and interacts with SOT Headquarters staff to maintain the HOT/SOT website information current and useful as a repository of information for future Executive Committees. **Members:** Isabel Alvarado (Chair); Jose Delgado (Co-Chair)
- **Toxenlaces Editorial Subcommittee:** This subcommittee of the Communications Committee is responsible for the tri-monthly electronic publication of the HOT newsletter *Toxenlaces* by the third week of the third month in which is due for publication. Issues for electronic publication are Fall (September-October-November), Winter (December-January-February), Spring (March-April-May) and Summer (June-July-August). Historically, the *Toxenlaces* Editor works with HOT members to create content and produce the publication, and the Secretary facilitates publication by interacting with HOT Headquarters staff. **Members:** Julia Rezende da Silva (Chair and *Toxenlaces* Editor); Jose Delgado (Volunteer)
- **Social Media Subcommittee:** This subcommittee of the Communication Committee is responsible for the maintenance and updating of social media accounts held by the organization, including Facebook and LinkedIn. **Members:** Julia Rezende da Silva (Chair)

## **Education Committee**

This committee will propose the different means to make accessible education materials to HOT members and the Ibero-American community. The committee will coordinate efforts with the Communications Committee for posting these education materials in the HOT web page and with the Toxenlaces Editor for announcing events in the newsletter. Historically, a Councilor chairs the committee and recruit talented HOT members (often not Executive Members) to lead key initiatives. **Members:** Federico Sinche (Chair); Patricia Ruiz (Co-Chair); Isabel Alvarado (Volunteer); Jose Delgado (Volunteer); Aline de Conti (Volunteer); Julia Rezende da Silva (Volunteer); Teresa Palacios (Volunteer)

## **Finance Committee**

The main function of the Finance Committee is to ensure the long-term financial stability of the HOT through organizing fund-raising activities based on the Executive Committee's directions. This committee will be responsible for fund-raising for special programs, awards, and the annual HOT meeting/reception.

The committee will identify and seek sponsorship from individuals and business to support the annual HOT meeting and travel awards. Historically, the Treasurer or immediate Past President chairs this committee and recruits additional Past Presidents and other talented HOT members to lead key initiatives. **Members:** Kelly Salinas (Chair); Teresa Palacios (Co-Chair); Aline de Conti (Volunteer)

- **Sponsorship Subcommittee: Members:** Linval DePass (Chair); Robert P. Casillas (Assistant); Aline de Conti (Volunteer) and Enrique Fuentes-Mattei (Volunteer)

### **Global Outreach Committee**

The Global Outreach committee will search, identify, and establish collaborations with other societies, organizations, and universities involved in all areas of toxicology in Ibero-American countries (Latin-America, Brazil, Spain, and Portugal). Historically, the immediate Past President chairs this committee working closely with the Councilor to Sister Organizations. **Members:** Alexandra Maria Moita Antunes (Chair and Councilor to Sister Organizations); Julieta Martino (Co-Chair)

### **Graduate Committee**

This committee encourages involvement of Hispanic and Ibero-American graduate students in the HOT and the SOT, facilitates the scientific and professional development of Hispanic and Ibero-American graduate students through networking, scientific programs, and other SOT activities. The task of this committee includes the development of email and other communications directed toward informing and increasing the student base at the HOT-SIG and SOT. The student leadership provides important direction through representation on SOT committees and alignment of their programs with SOT national strategic objectives. Historically, the Student Representative chairs this committee and recruits other talented HOT student members for key initiatives. This committee works very closely with the Postdoctoral Committee. **Members:** Jose Delgado (Chair); Isabel Alvarado (Co-Chair)

### **Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee is in charge of proposing membership eligibility criteria, benefits, and other strategies to the Executive Committee with the goal of increasing membership levels. This committee will supply the updated HOT membership list to the Communications Committee for distribution of HOT Committee communications. Historically, a Councilor chairs this committee and recruits other talented HOT members for key initiatives. **Members:** Mercedes Salvador-Silva (Chair); Veronica Ramirez-Alcantara (Co-Chair)

### **Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee is responsible for annual elections. According to the Bylaws, a Nominating Committee consisting of not less than five members who are not seeking re-election or election for any positions in the Executive Committee, including the last two Past Presidents, shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Special Interest Group within two months following installation of officers. The Committee shall provide a slate of candidates for each election. Historically, the immediate past President is the Chair of this Committee. **Members:** Enrique Fuentes-Mattei (Chair); Patricia Ruiz (Volunteer); Alexandra Maria Moita Antunes (Volunteer)

## **Postdoctoral Committee**

This committee encourages involvement of Hispanic and Ibero-American postdoctoral fellows in the HOT and the SOT and facilitates the scientific and professional development of Hispanic postdoctoral fellows through networking, scientific programs, and other SOT activities. The task of this committee includes the development of email and other communications to serve as a great resource for HOT postdoctoral members. Historically, the Postdoctoral Representative chairs this committee and recruits other talented HOT postdoctoral members for key initiatives. This committee works very closely with the Graduate Committee. **Members:** Isabel Alvarado (Chair); Jose Delgado (Co-Chair)

## **Program Committee**

The Program Committee consists of several HOT members who are willing to serve as liaisons between the Executive Committee, members, and other program committees within the SOT. The Program committee focuses on service to the HOT members. Historically, the Vice President is the chair of this committee. The activities and responsibilities include, among others: Assisting the preparation of the HOT/SOT Annual Meeting; mentorship program; assisting HOT members to develop SOT Annual Meeting program proposals; HOT endorsement procedures and SOT program endorsement; International meetings in toxicology and related fields.

- Assisting the preparation of the HOT/SOT Annual Meeting
- Mentorship program
- Assisting HOT members to develop SOT Annual Meeting program proposals
- HOT endorsement procedures and SOT program endorsement
- International meetings in toxicology and related fields

**Members:** Teresa Palacios (Chair); Aline de Conti (Co-Chair); Julieta Martino (Volunteer); Federico Sinche (Volunteer)

## **Strategic Planning Committee**

The strategic planning committee will provide advice to the Executive Committee for developing the organizational plan and long-term financial plan. Members of the Advisory Committee will actively participate in this committee. Historically, the President is the committee chair. **Members:** Aline de Conti (Chair); Teresa Palacios and Veronica Ramirez Alcantara (Co-Chairs); Julieta Martino (Volunteer); Enrique Fuentes-Mattei (Volunteer)

## **Advisory Committee**

Per HOT Bylaws, this committee is made of all past presidents of HOT with the exception of the immediate Past President. They attend HOT Executive Committee meetings to provide relevant information, guidance and perspective in regards to HOT issues and activities. Each Past President serves in this committee at least for 5 years. **Members:** Ranulfo Lemus Olalde (Chair), Silvia Barros, Robert P. Casillas, Elena Hernández-Ramón, Minerva Mercado Feliciano, Linval DePass, Betina J. Lew, Leslie Recio, Ofelia A. Olivero, Pedro L. Del Valle, Braulio Jiménez-Veléz, Mari S. Stavanja.

## II. **2021 Membership total: 208**

HOT has members, both students and professionals, from 15 different countries representing academia, industry, government, and other sectors that employ toxicologists.

## III. **Key Outcomes in 2021–2022:**

- A. According to the latest Financials and General Ledger at the time of writing this report, the HOT Endowment Fund (HOT Award Fund) has a total of \$47,451. The fund will be used to provide awards based on scientific excellence and/or scientific progress to domestic or international Ibero-American students (undergraduate and/or graduate students) and/or postdoctoral fellows whose studies and/or research interests are in the toxicological sciences, or to those individuals with the objective of promoting global outreach by increasing research/academic excellence, or leadership. These awards will be given to support the development of students and postdoctoral fellows through various educational and scientific activities, including, but not limited to: attendance at international scientific meetings to support presenters at scientific programs, symposiums, workshops, courses, and internships, among others.
- B. Two HOT Past Presidents were nominated and elected for **SOT positions**: Betina J, Lew, PhD, DABT, ERT (Johnson & Johnson-Ethicon) as Councilor and Enrique Fuentes-Mattei, PhD (Lonza) will serve in the Awards Committee
- C. Several HOT Officers served as speakers in the International and Peruvian Congress of Toxicology organized Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (Lima, Peru), one of our sister organizations. This event highlights the importance of our sister organization network in fostering collaborations among toxicologists worldwide.

## IV. **Activities**

- A. SOT Annual Meeting Activities (e.g., courses, scientific sessions, receptions):

Annual Reception and Award Ceremony: HOT did not host an in-person annual award ceremony and reception. Instead, HOT released a virtual reception by using a video recording with the membership during the week of the SOT meeting. The video reception reviewed all the HOT accomplishments for the 2021-2022 year, updates to the Fundraising Campaign, in addition to the announcement of the 2022 Awardees.

- B. 2022 Awards Information: For the 2022 SOT Meeting, HOT awarded 1 Distinguished Toxicologist Award and 4 Travel Awards
  - 1. Distinguished Toxicologist Award, Betina Lew, PhD, DABT, ERT – Johnson and Johnson
  - 2. Undergraduate Student Award, Gisselle Soberanes Rodriquez – Arizona State University
  - 3. Graduate Student Travel Award, Brianna Rivera – Oregon State University
  - 4. Postdoctoral Travel Award, Amanda Armijo – Massachusetts Institute of Technology
  - 5. International Student Travel Award, Valerie Pihen – Universidad de las Americas Puebla, Mexico

#### 2022 Additional Awards Information:

SOT Education Award: Silvia Berlanga de Moraes Barros, Ph.D. Senior Professor of the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of São Paulo. Dr. Barros received the SOT Education Award for her influence on toxicology education in Brazil, Latin America, and Europe. HOT nominated Dr. Barros for this award.

#### C. Other Educational Activities Conducted (e.g., webinars, in-person meetings):

On April 28th 2022, HOT collaborated with the Women in Toxicology Special Interest Group to present the webinar, “Immigration journey of international students and early career post-doctorates in the United States.” This webinar focused on providing information about relevant immigration questions that arise for international toxicologists in the US while transitional to the job market. Maurice Goldman from Goldman & Goldman Law Firm introduced attendees to details pertaining to green cards and visas, covering student visas and when and how to transition from this of visa when trying to obtain a postdoctoral position or a job. Details and time frames for work visas as well as the different options for green card applications were included in the webinar. Maurice’s intervention provided a clear general overview about the different visa options for students and postdocs. Dr. Ahwini Phadnis-Moghe, (Associate Director, Preclinical and Translational Development at Bluebird Bio) and Dr. Agnes Karmaus (Senior Toxicologist, ILS an Inotiv Company) shared their personal experiences as non-US citizen toxicologists working for industry. Their experiences were enlightening because immigration requirements for visas are very particular depending on the nationality of origin. The last panelist, Dr. Carmen Rubio-Armendariz (Professor of Toxicology, Universidad de La Laguna, Spain, WIT-SIG Junior Councilor and HOT Vice-President elect) shared a remarkably interesting topic – Internationalization of PhD students. She encouraged PhD students to attend international meetings, to collaborate with toxicologists around the world, and perform international exchanges to expand their experiences abroad. Lastly, attendees were able to ask the panelists questions pertaining to green and student visas. HOT thanks the speakers, Women in Toxicology, and SOT for their support during this webinar.

#### D. Communication Activities:

1. Newsletter publication frequency: During this term, four quarterly *Toxenlaces* have been published (Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring Issues). The HOT newsletter includes a Trainee Section, short Scientific Articles by invited HOT members, HOT Professional Tips, News and Achievements from our members, and information on upcoming meetings and opportunities. This year we also included interviews with the Presidents of three of our sister organizations.
2. New or significant announcements/blogs: HOT welcomed a new *Toxenlaces* Editor, Julia Rezende da Silva, BSc, who is currently a doctoral student at the University of Sao Paolo, Brazil.
3. Highlights of website enhancements: The HOT Communications Committee successfully maintained updates on the HOT website and increased social media outreach to 1,248 followers. Regular website updates are performed as needed throughout the year to reflect initiatives from HOT, SOT, our Sister Organizations, and from other organizations that regularly share information with HOT.

#### E. Mentoring Activities:

During 2021-2022, HOT organized the mentoring webinar “Conflict Resolution Strategies in Academia, Government, and Industry.” This event was planned during 2021-2022 period but held until May 4th, 2022, however, we consider appropriate to report this activity for 2021-2022 period. The webinar was as follows:

The webinar was organized by the HOT Education Committee and was held virtually. The topic was chosen because conflict is a part of our everyday personal lives, as well as our professional lives. It has been estimated that managers and HR spend at least 25% of their time resolving workplace conflicts. Major impacts of unresolved conflicts may include lower performance and emotional stress of the parties involved. Thus, the goal of the webinar was to provide insights and simple strategies that can be implemented as part of the conflict resolution process by the parties involved across different workforce sectors. The organizers and moderators for this event were Dr. Federico Sinche Chele - Councilor and Education Chair, and Dr.(c) Jose Francisco Delgado-Jimenez – Graduate Student Representative and Education Committee Volunteer. Our speakers included Drs. Teresa Palacios-Hernandez from the US FDA and 2022-2023 HOT President, Peter L. Goering from the US FDA and Past President of SOT (2015-2016), Sasha Adkins from Loyola University Chicago, and Robert P. Casillas from Biopharma Group Latham and HOT Past President (2017-2018). Dr. Palacios-Hernandez provided an overview of the organization’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, mentoring and professional development of its members and the public at large. Dr. Palacios-Hernandez’s intervention highlighted the need for keeping open communication between the parties involved to solve conflicts at the workplace. Dr. Goering’s intervention focused on the common types of conflicts in the workplace. He mentioned the importance of an “Open Door Policy” as a means to reduce or avoid any perception of unfair allocation of resources among the members of the organization. Dr. Adkins’ intervention highlighted the importance of the interpersonal perspective as a strategy to address conflicts at the workplace. They point that conflicts can become opportunities to improve relationships and that any conflict can be eventually solved. Finally, Dr. Casillas provided a perspective on conflict resolution from private industry. He pointed out that conflicts could result into a monetary cost because excellent employees might eventually resign from workplaces where conflicts are not addressed properly. The discussion panel at the end of all interventions provided opportunity for the audience to interact and pose questions to all the panelists. This event was made possible with the support and assistance from the HOT Executive Committee, SOT, and the HOT Social Media Team.

## **V. Feedback and Ideas:**

- A. In what ways is your group fostering and maintaining an inclusive environment? Please give examples of any current practices used to support inclusion in processes such as 1) leadership selection and promotion, 2) award descriptions and selection, and 3) endorsement of proposals for the annual meetings.

The HOT fosters the belief that our organization will succeed if their members are successful. This is precisely why HOT annually offers webinars and workshops for professional development that are distributed to Ibero-American countries. Also, HOT spotlights its members by giving them visibility through invitations to contribute in specific sections of our newsletter *Toxenlaces* and by offering awards for their scientific contribution to the field of toxicology. Additionally, HOT has a vast network of toxicological sister organizations that belong to different Ibero-American countries, which serve as a catalyst for interaction, fellowship, networking, professional development and the sharing of ideas and knowledge among Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking toxicologists and members of the Society of Toxicology. Finally, in 2022 the HOT established the SOT Awards Nominating Committee to postulate HOT members as candidates for SOT awards nominations.

- B. How might SOT better support your group's activities (perhaps something the Society should be doing that we currently do not do, or do not do effectively, that would be of importance/benefit to the members of your component group?):

*Note: If funding is listed, please provide detail on the membership need that the funding would support.*

The HOT is interested in keeping with a hybrid SOT meeting format, online and in-person, in order to facilitate the attendance of toxicologists from developing countries. We would also like SOT to provide more funding towards the International ToxScholar Outreach Funding to cover the travel expenses. HOT hopes this this would encourage our members to apply for this grant.

- C. What is one thing that the Society is currently doing that impacts your component group that should be changed (e.g., stopped, modified, etc.)?

The HOT wants to suggest facilitating the process for the HOT-only membership application. Currently, to become a HOT-only member, the application and payment must be sent by postal mail. That implies that the application and payment will take several weeks to arrive at the SOT headquarter to be processed. The process is even slower for applicants from Ibero-American countries and unsafe, as it is not recommended to mail money or checks or credit card information in those countries. Therefore, we would like HOT-only membership applications able for online submission.

Also, the HOT proposes to make optional and only related to feedback the endorsement of Specialty Sections (SS) for scientific webinars non-related to the SOT Annual Meeting. The SS endorsement is currently mandatory to approve webinars proposed by SIGs. The HOT has found that such a need for endorsement delays the logistics related to webinar approval because the SIG depends on responses from SS to continue moving forward with the webinar preparation. Because we consider the opinion from SS very valuable, we consider that the collaborations of SS with the SIGs should be focused on improving the quality of the webinar and not conditioning the approval of the SIG's webinar with their endorsement. Therefore, we propose that SS participation in scientific webinars with SIGs would be after the SOT approval and for content improvement and feedback of the webinar. We also propose that the SOT establishes the connection with the contact person from each SS to accelerate the logistics for webinar feedback.

- D. What changes do your component group anticipate making in the way in which it operates in the coming year?

There will be new additions to the HOT committees to improve the process of proposal review and webinar preparations. Such updates will be added to the HOT's SOPs, website and bylaws during the period 2022-2023.