

FABIANS UPHOLD SPOOF TRADITION WITH AN HISTORIC VIRTUAL MEETING

For the first time in its 23-year history, FABI hosted a virtual Society for the Presentation of Outrageous Findings (SPOOF) event on 17 July. About 140 people, including friends of the Institute from South Africa and globally, signed in for the event. The FABI Social Club organised the night's "FABI Breaks the Internet" theme based on the Super Mario game series.



FABIans submitted nine pre-recorded videos, which in the spirit of the time, reflected the lighter moments of a nation under lockdown. The submissions included videos produced by FABI research groups including the Forest Molecular Genetics, Molecular Plant-Pathogen Interactions, Tree Protection Co-operative Programme as well as informal teams including a fifth floor Plant Sciences Complex group, Gene Jockeys, Fakenews Academy of Biotechnological Investigations (Dr Arista Fourie and Ariska van der Nest), Quentin Guignard and Darryl Herron's The Right Entertaining Enterprise. The curtain call for the evening was a COVID-19 Couch Concert with Dr Steven Hussey on piano, Alisa Postma on saxophone and Luki-Marie Scheepers on violin with their rendition of Louis Armstrong's "What a wonderful world".

The Gene Jockeys took the prize for the Best Abstract (with the subliminal message "Vote for us. We are not OK, send help") and Best Video awards for their "key to wearing a great top" and a guide to "life free of clothing cover worn from waist to ankles" for online meetings. PhD student Nam Pham was crowned best-dressed Male, breaking Quentin Guignard's four-year record of receiving this coveted prize! Nam also won the award for the Best Background. Daniella Kramer was awarded Best-dressed Female, while Dr Janneke Aylward and Dr Andi Wilson were respectively crowned the Bingo and Game champions.

FABI Director Prof. Bernard Slippers praised Dr Gerda Fourie (co-ordinator), Leandri Klynsmith (Chair) and all members of the FABI Social Club and everyone who participated for upholding what is now a 23-year-old tradition.