

São Paulo, February 17, 2020

Research Grants committee

International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT)

Reference letter to Sandra Reinales

Dear committee members,

I am pleased to support the application of my student Sandra Reinales to an IAPT Research Grant 2020. She concluded a Master dissertation in April 2019, at Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, under Dr. Carlos Parra advisory, dealing with Systematics of *Rhytidanthera*, a genus of Ochnaceae occurring in Colombia and Venezuela.

In January, the first article from Sandra's dissertation was accepted by the Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society. In this work she presents the phylogenetic placement of the genus, and discusses the evolution of some characters in tribe Sauvagesieae, as glandular structures.

She started a PhD Project here at IB-USP, under my guidance, in May 2019, supported by a CAPES fellowship (Process number 88887.360628/2019-00). The main goal of her thesis is to infer diversification patterns in tribe Sauvagesieae (Ochnaceae), and to test hypotheses about the relations between the diversification dynamics along the lineages, mainly those associated to the evolution of structural features. I recall that the members of the Graduate Program Committee were very impressed by Sandra's skills and by the high quality of her PhD project.

Sandra is currently developing several steps of the project of her thesis: field trips to look for natural populations of the group and to get material for morphological and molecular analysis; visits to Brazilian herbaria to gather specimens for the study; study in electronic libraries to get all the information on the group; establishing contact with three other Ochnaceae specialists, in Brazil and abroad, mainly for the phylogenetic component of her research. She needs to get additional funds to cover the costs of molecular analysis and to visit foreign herbaria.

Since her arrival to São Paulo and USP, I've had several opportunities to evaluate Sandra's intelligence and abilities, including a very good command in systematics and phylogenetics, R

programming and statistics, as well as her strong dedication to botanical research. She is also a very special co-worker under many circumstances in which I have seen her perform here at the Systematics Lab.

She is truly an outstanding candidate for a grant support of IAPT. This grant would be very helpful and productive for her research project, since she would have the opportunity to access and study an important amount of Ochnaceae specimens at US herbarium (Washington D.C.), which lack at Brazilian collections. At the same time Sandra would have the chance to discuss her research interests and preliminary results with the staff researchers at Smithsonian Museum. Short-term visits to the New York Botanical Garden and Missouri Botanical Garden could also be done.

I am sure that IAPT research grants have been stimulating young students like Sandra to keep working on taxonomy and systematics of the Neotropical flora, and I hope she is given the opportunity to take benefit for the grant she is applying for.

Sincerely,



Prof. Dr. José Rubens Pirani, **Advisor**

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