During the first week of April the Southern African Society for Microbiology (SASM) held its 20th conference at Misty Hills conference centre, near Johannesburg. The conference was hosted by the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology, University of Pretoria with the theme “Microbe: Livelihoods, economy and environment”. The conference was attended by 261 delegates of which 126 were students. Apart from the 10 keynote presentations there was also 70 oral presentation of which more than 60% was presented by MSc and PhD students. More than 90 posters presentations were also delivered by students as the primary authors.

The generous support and participation of ISME at the conference was highly appreciated. Not only was the African ISME Ambassadors meeting held during the conference but members of the ISME’s executive board also used the opportunity to interact and inspire South African microbiologists. ISME sponsored a very successful poster session and Mark Bailey facilitated an interactive discussion session “Getting published”. Both Colin Murrell and Nicole Webster delivered keynote presentations.

The society was fortunate that ISME also sponsored two prizes for the best student presentations. This provided an ideal opportunity to introduce ISME to the wider community of South African microbiologists, working in the field Microbial ecology. Sarah Potgieter from the University of Pretoria received the prize for the best student oral presentation and Eduvan Bisschoff from the University of the Free State, for the best poster presentation related to microbial ecology.

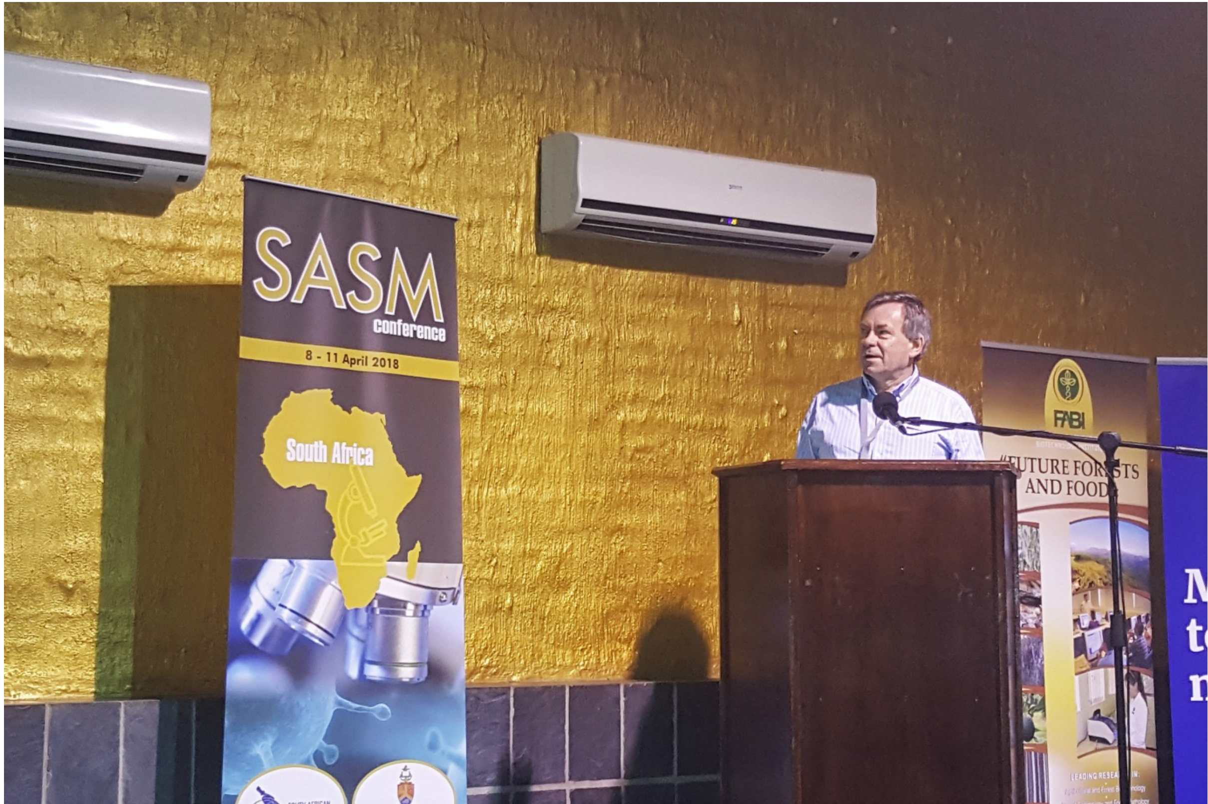

Photo 1: Keynote presentation by Colin Murrell

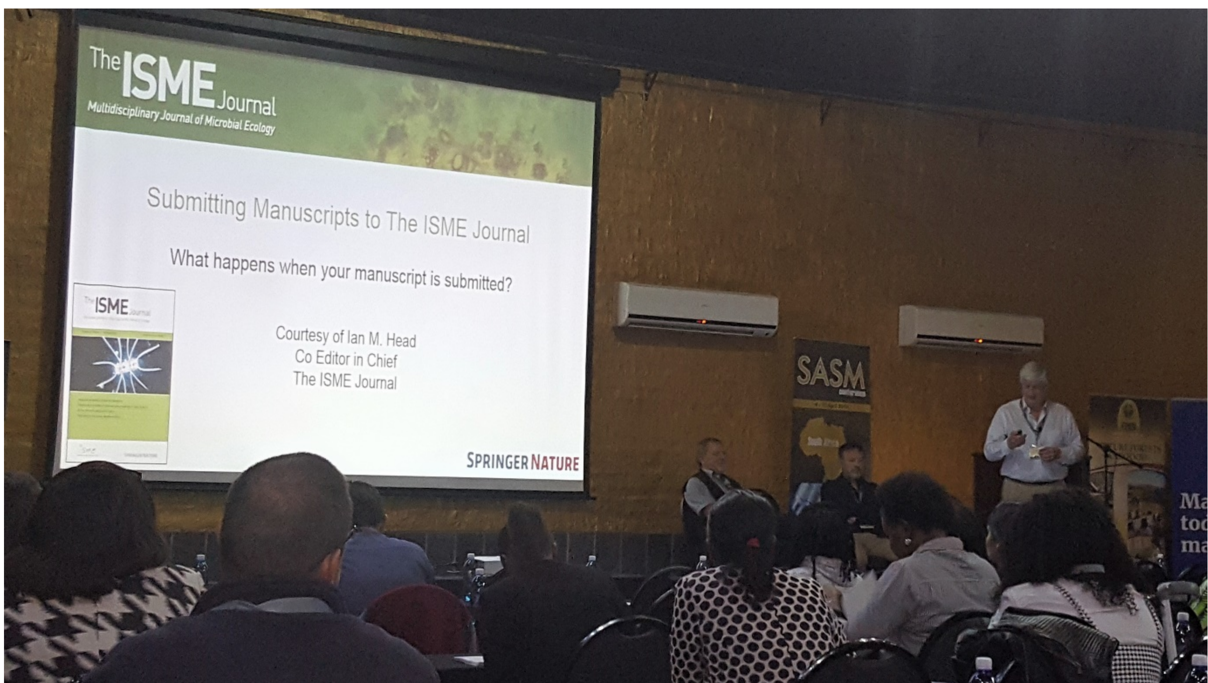

Photo 2: Interactive session on how to get published facilitated by Mark Bailey

Photo 3: Certificate of appreciation handed over to Colin Murrell by the conference organiser, Fanus Venter

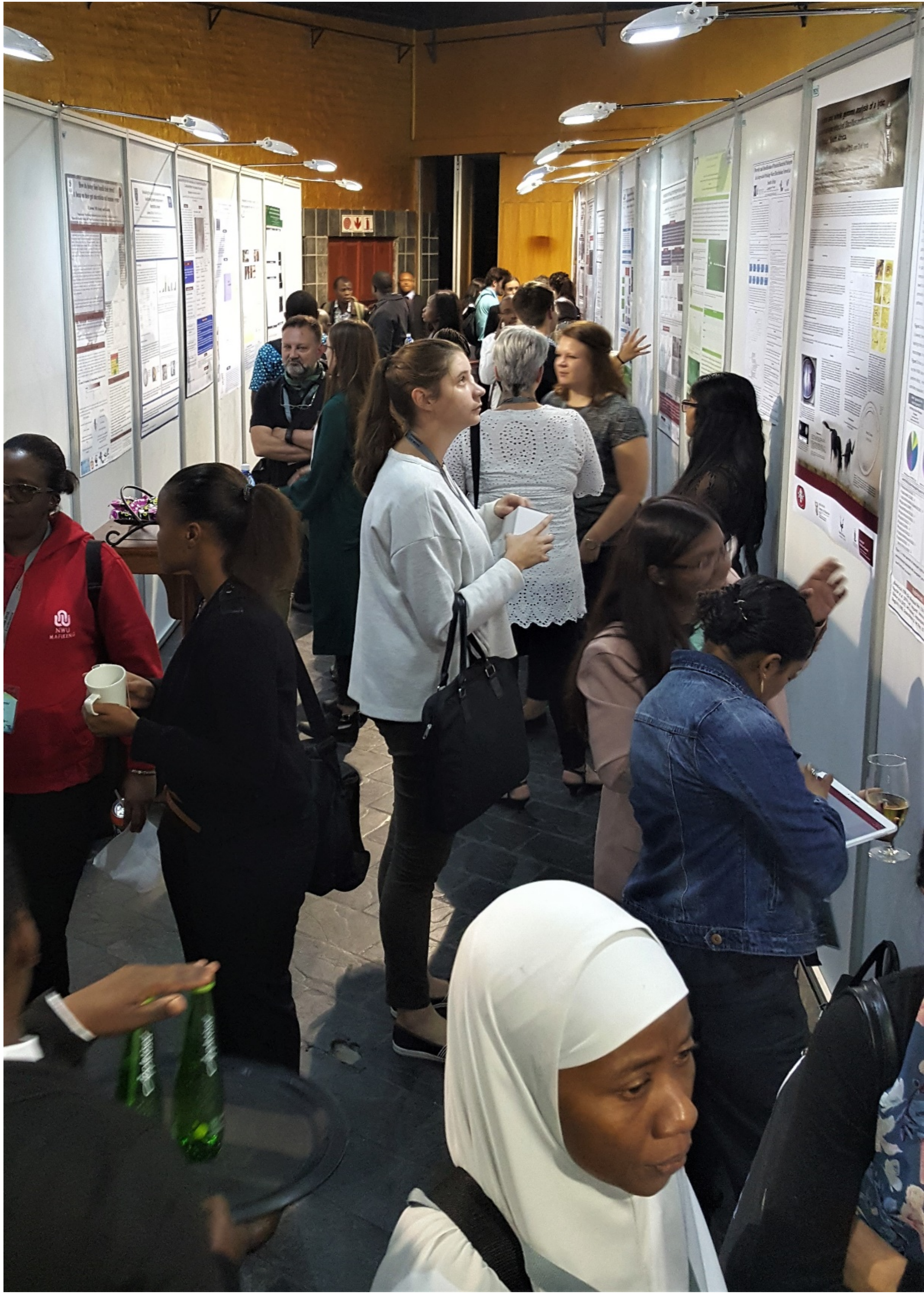

Photo 4: ISME sponsored poster session

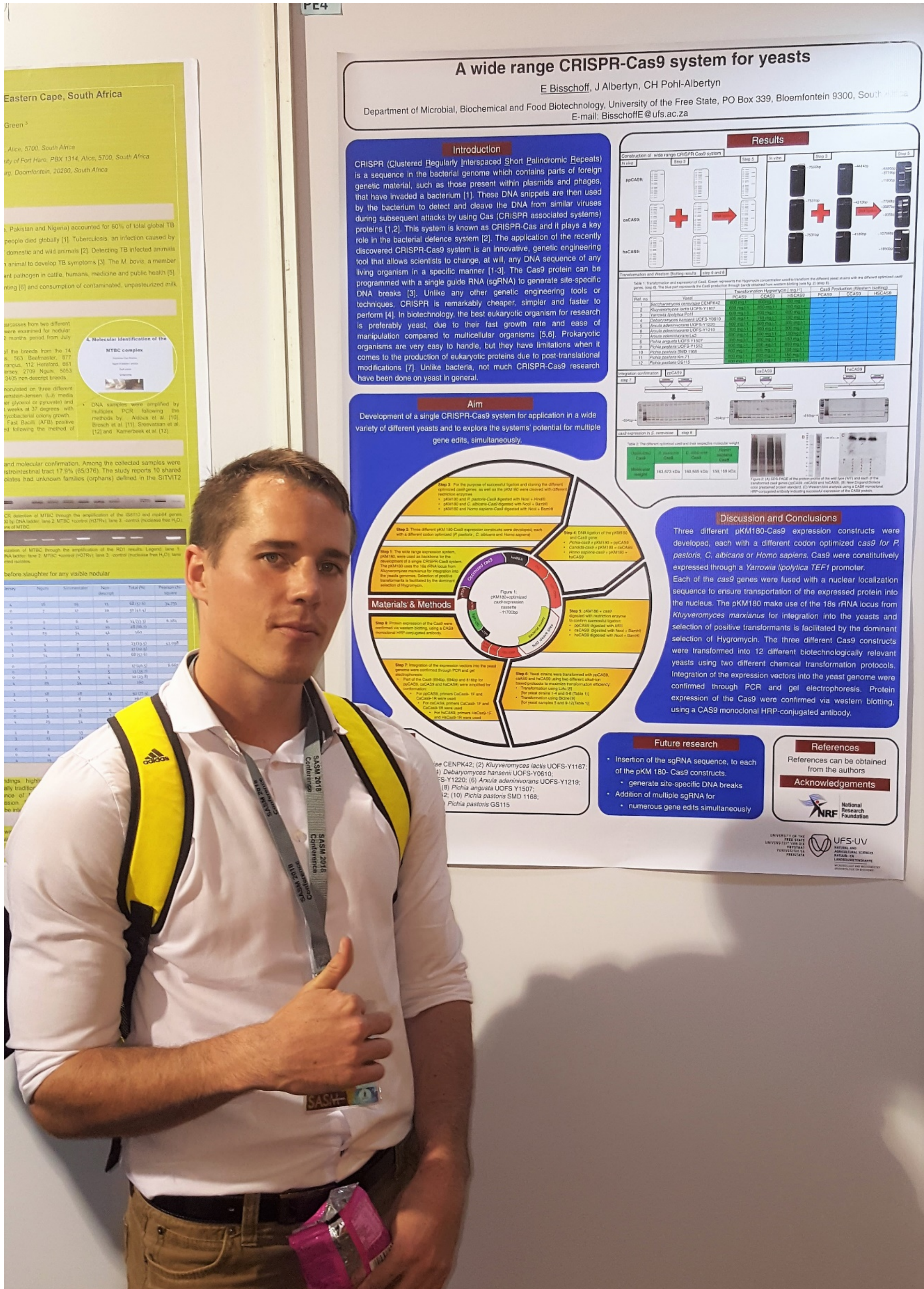

Photo 5: Winning poster presentation by Eduvan Bisschoff from the University of the Free State

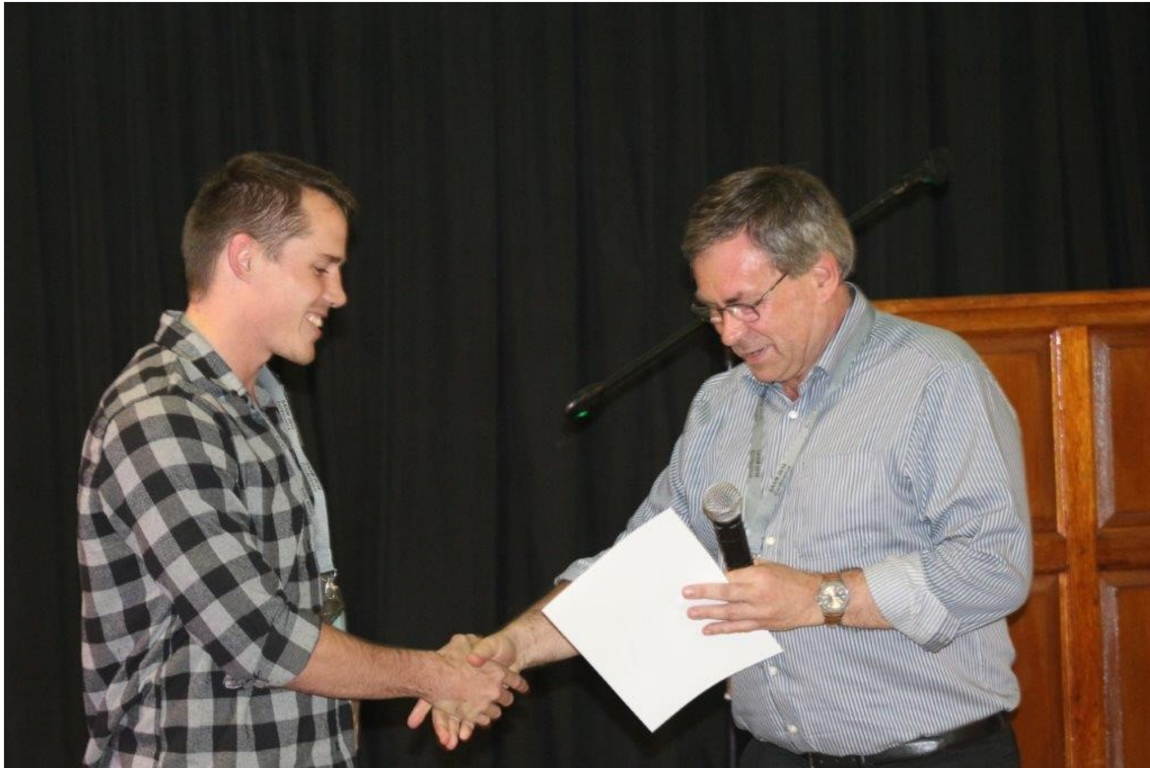

Photo 6: Eduvan Bisschoff receiving his prize from Colin Murrell

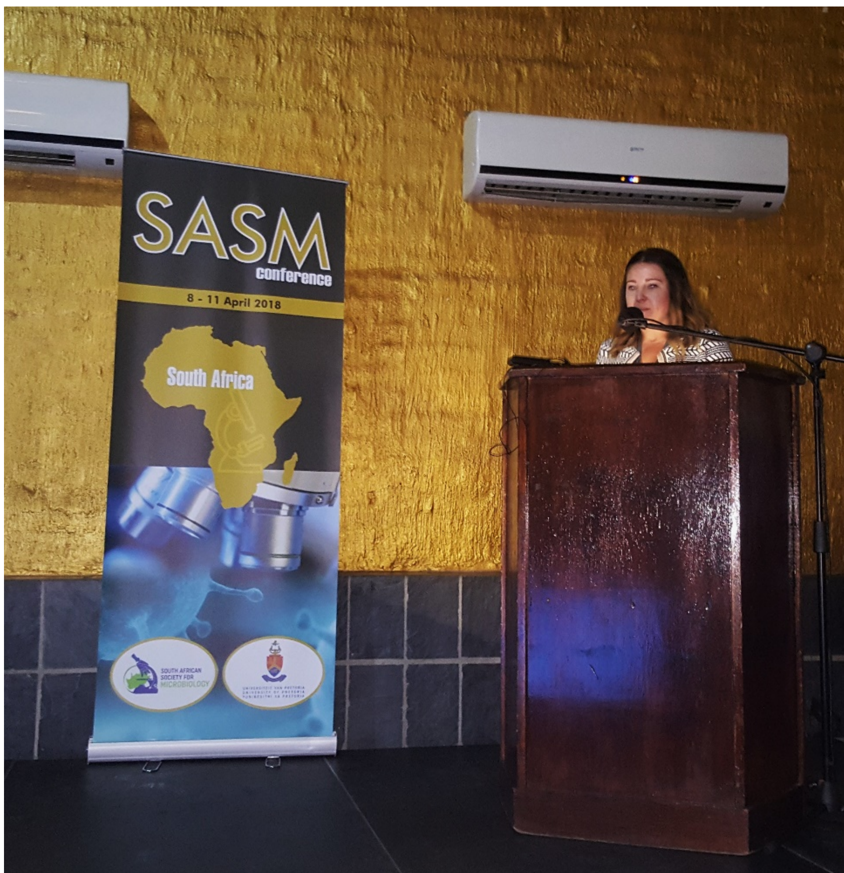

Photo 7: Winning oral presentation by Sarah Potgieter from the University of Pretoria

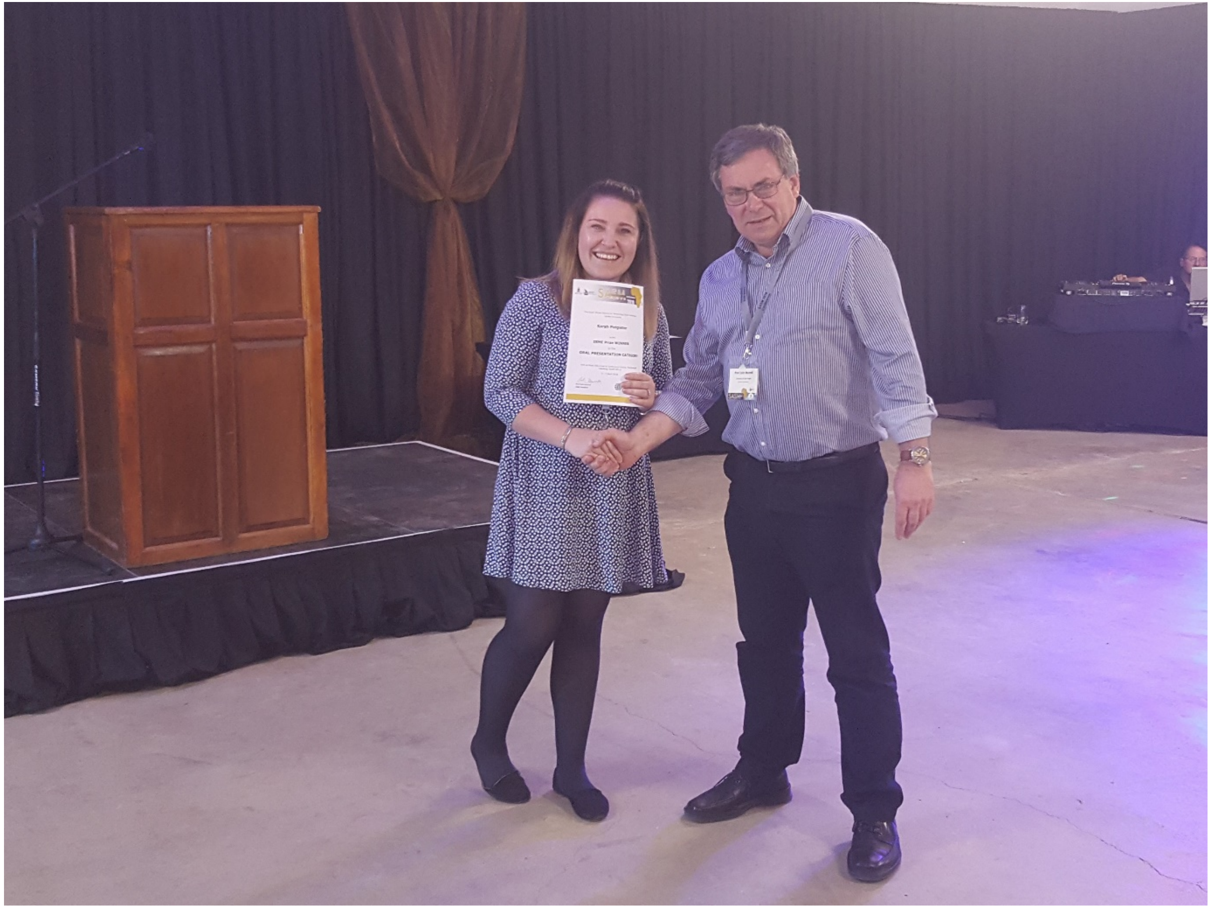

Photo 8: Sarah Potgieter receiving her prize from Colin Murrell