

## Poster Award Presented

*By Paul Dekker, Chair, ISTR Publications Committee*

The best poster award is smaller than the best dissertation and the best *Voluntas* paper award, and the poster jury needed to reach a decision in only a fraction of the time needed by the colleagues of the other two awards, but the poster award is actually the most important one. For let us be realistic: many people do not read dissertations, they hardly read articles. They might quote them if they are available on the internet, but that is it. We are going to shorter and shorter texts and infographics and other visualization tools are becoming more important to get attention. So posters are by far the best way to communicate research and research findings: you have to present everything in an attractive way on less than a square meter for consumption and consideration in less time than a TED talk.

The committee – Jacqueline Butcher (Mexico), Annette Zimmer (Germany) and Paul Dekker (Netherlands) – was impressed by the high quality of the seventeen posters at this conference. In different relations they all scored high on our criteria: scientific relevance, practical significance, visual attractiveness and a strong focus on the main issues, be it the results of finished research or the choices and questions for ongoing research.

The best combination of these we found in the poster, *Territorial Analysis of Associative Dynamics—Preliminary Thoughts*, by Iwanig Le Vaillant of Université de Nantes, France. It tells us about a recently started PhD research which focuses on the regional distribution of associations and the creation of associations in France.

The poster has nice maps of the distributions and it asks multidisciplinary and theory-founded questions about the reasons for regional differences. It is the result of hard empirical work (coming information from various resources) and the results in the coming years can be highly relevant for our understanding of the backgrounds of associational behaviour. What we like in particular is the focus on regions. Our field has a lot of single and small scale comparative case studies and more and more cross-national comparative research, but to our knowledge hardly any broad comparative research of units in countries. This regional research can tell us a lot about the combined impact of social, cultural and economic factors on the third sector and we are looking forward to the dissertation of Iwanig Le Vaillant. But so far congratulations on your superb poster!