



Sixth International Workshop on Biological Soil Crusts (Second Announcement)

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, we are delighted to announce that the official website for Biocrust6 (<https://biocrust6.meeting666.com/>) is now officially launched and open for registration.

Biocrust6 will serve as a comprehensive international forum advancing the frontiers of biological soil crust science. The workshop will feature cutting-edge presentations on biocrust biodiversity, physiology, and ecosystem functioning; facilitate assessments of biocrust-based strategies for land restoration and climate-change mitigation; and foster global collaboration among scientists, land managers, and policymakers. In addition to academic exchanges, the program will include specialized **CrustNet training** sessions on global sampling protocols and node establishment, as well as the "**Biocrust and Art**" program, providing opportunities for scientists and artists to showcase creative art works such as films, paintings, and poetry related to and celebrating biocrusts. Building upon the success of five previous international workshops, this gathering marks **the Third Biocrust Workshop of China**, representing the third time that the Chinese biocrust research community has convened to host this important international scientific event.

We cordially invite experts and scholars worldwide to visit our official website, complete your registration, submit abstracts, and prepare your presentations. We look forward to welcoming you to Yangling, Shaanxi, China, from September 14-20, 2026, for this landmark event in biological soil crust research.

I. Basic Information

- **Theme:** Towards a Healthy Ecosystem
- **Dates:** September 14-20, 2026

September 14: On-site registration (09:00-21:00)

September 15-18: Scientific sessions (plenary talk, standard presentation, poster presentation, and others)

September 19-20: Field excursions for biocrusts

- **Venue:** Yangling, Shaanxi Province, China

II. Organizational Structure

Hosts:

State Key Laboratory of Soil and Water Conservation and Desertification Control, Northwest A&F University

College of Soil and Water Conservation Science and Engineering, Northwest A&F University

Co-organizers:

National Field Scientific Observation and Research Station of Farmland Ecosystem in Ansai, Shaanxi.

Shapotou Desert Research and Experiment Station, Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources, Chinese Academy of Sciences

State Key Laboratory of Ecological Safety and Sustainable Development in Arid Lands, Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, Chinese Academy of Sciences

III. Conference Website and Online Services

Workshop Website: <https://biocrust6.meeting666.com/>

The website provides comprehensive information and online services including:

- *Online Registration System:* Now accepting registrations with secure payment options for international and domestic participants.
- *Abstract Submission Portal:* Open for oral and poster presentation.
- *Fieldtrip Registration:* Three options are available:
 - (1) to visit Ansai Research Station of Soil and Water Conservation (You will see amazing landscape of the Loess Plateau and also biocrusts & ecosystem restoration outcomes).
 - (2) to visit Shapotou Desert Research and Experimental Station (You will see a great scenery of the Tengger Desert and Yellow River, and also some biocrust resilience and ecosystem recovery experiments).
 - (3) to visit Louguantai Forest Park (You will see the ecological conservation efforts in the Qinling Mountain, but no biocrusts).
- *Accommodation:* Reserve rooms at negotiated rates (approximately USD 45 per night), We strongly recommend early booking to ensure availability.

IV. Important Dates:

Early Bird Registration Deadline: May 15, 2026

Abstract Submission Deadline: June 15, 2026

Workshop Dates: September 14-20, 2026

V. Scientific Topics

BIOCRUST6 will provide a global forum of biocrusts for presenting the cutting-edge research across, but not limited to, the following themes:

- (1) Taxonomy and Physiology of Biocrust Constituents
- (2) Diversity, Ecology, and Biogeography
- (3) Structure and Function in Ecosystems
- (4) Disturbance and Restoration
- (5) Interaction with Vascular Plants and Other Organisms
- (6) Landscape Function and Management
- (7) Effects of Global Environmental Change
- (8) Monitoring, Mapping, and Modelling
- (9) Ecosystem Services and Sustainable Development Goals
- (10) Biocrusts and Teaching/Outreach
- (11) Challenges in Biocrust Study
- (12) New Techniques or Methods for Biocrust Research
- (13) AI Applications or Interdisciplinary Convergence

VI. Special Programs

1. CrustNet Training

CrustNet (<https://crustnet.org>) is a globally distributed sampling network for biocrust ecology. The project implements a standard set of surveys and experiments in diverse biocrust habitats to understand global patterns of biodiversity, ecosystem function, and response to disturbance. We will offer two trainings during Biocrust6:

- **Training 1:** CrustNet node selection, experimental design, and general methods.
- **Training 2:** CrustNet surveys and data collection techniques.

2. Biocrust and Art

Biocrust6 will host the "Biocrust and Art" program. The program will feature dedicated exhibition time early during the Workshop week to allow attendees to view and appreciate these artistic contributions. At the end of the week, an award ceremony will be held to

recognize outstanding art contributions. We encourage all creative participants to share their work and bridge the gap between science and art.

VII. Transportation:

The nearest airport is Xi'an Xianyang International Airport (XLY), about a 1.5 hours' drive to Yangling. Complimentary airport pick-up service is available upon request during registration.

Participants arriving by high-speed rail should arrive at Yangling South Railway Station.

VIII. Contact Information:

For technical support regarding website registration, abstract submission, or general inquiries, please contact:

Email: biocrust6@nwafu.edu.cn

We eagerly anticipate your participation in Yangling this September to share groundbreaking research, foster global collaboration, and advance the frontiers of biocrust science. Join us as we work together toward a sustainable future for dryland ecosystems worldwide.

Biocrust6 Organizing Committee

State Key Laboratory of Soil and Water Conservation and Desertification Control,

Northwest A&F University

College of Soil and Water Conservation Science and Engineering,

Northwest A&F University

January 31, 2026

Please share this announcement with interested colleagues and students.