



IAHAIO Distinguished Scholar award

2016 Award Winner: Dr Andrea Beetz



Above: Andrea Beetz (on screen), Dennis Turner (seated)

The International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations, IAHAIO, awarded Andrea Beetz its Distinguished Scholar Award for 2016 at the IAHAIO international conference in Paris, 13 July 2016. In the past the award has been presented every three years to the most distinguished scholars from around the globe. Dr. Beetz is the first recipient from Germany and was unanimously selected by a jury of five international scholars from different countries who are independent of the IAHAIO board.

Dr. Beetz teaches at the Department for Special Education at the University of Rostock in Germany and at the Department of Behavioural Biology at the University of Vienna. Her 'habilitation' (Dr. habil) was on "Attachment and Caregiving towards Humans and Animals – their Significance for Special Education with a Focus on Children and Juveniles with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders." That knowledge also flowed into the well-known book that she second-authored with Henri Julius and others, already available in several languages: *Attachment to Pets* (Hogrefe). She has published over 40 papers in peer-reviewed journals and made some 25 chapter contributions in other books. Her research has helped to explain why companion animals can function as co-therapists for some youngsters, but less so for others. This is related to their different internal working models for social relationships and how an animal access those.

Andrea Beetz has contributed significantly to the development of the field of human-animal interactions, now called anthrozoology. She is president of the International Society for Animal Assisted Therapy (ISAAT, www.aat-

isaat.org), secretary of IAHAIO (www.iahaio.org, which is why no board members were involved in judging the competition), she serves as vice president of the Austrian Society for the Advancement of Research in Anthrozoology, is a board member of the International Society for Anthrozoology (www.isaz.net), and a Fellow of the Institute for Human-Animal Connections at the University of Denver, USA. Most recently she has been selected as the Editor-in-Chief of the new open-access journal of IAHAIO, combining both research and practice reports, which was announced at the 2016 Paris conference, *People and Animals: The International Journal of Research and Practice (PAIJ)*.