

AEA-Europe Council Meeting

15 January 2014

London Heathrow Airport

Attendees: Jo-Anne Baird
Sarah Maughan
Henk Moelands
Gabriella Agrusti
Antonella Poce
Chris Wheadon (agenda item 6)

Apologies: Sandra Johnson

Fiona has not submitted a marketing report due to family illness. She will submit it later.

1 Minutes of the Council meeting, 9 November, 2013

Henk mentioned that he has not yet notarised the constitution but will do this as soon as possible.

2 Minutes of the General Assembly, 9 November, 2013

Issues with membership of the Association need clarifying. This will need to be covered when we are making changes to the website; specifically when people register for membership, there will need to be feedback indicating that this has been accepted and a notification of the period of membership to which the fees apply.

Information about changes to the committees needs to be communicated to members on the website. Chairs of the committees to send Secretariat latest terms and conditions and current membership (including terms of membership).

ACTION: Gabriella and Antonella to send the information to the Secretariat. Secretariat to make changes to the website.

3 Matters arising from the meetings and not appearing elsewhere on the agenda

3.1 Revised expenses policy, following September 2013 Council meeting discussions

A number of minor amends were made and the policy was agreed. It will be finalised and shared with committees by the Secretariat.

ACTION: Sarah to finalise the policy and circulate.

4 Paris 2013 conference

4.1 Lessons learned report

The Council thanked Sandra for the report. This was the first lessons learned report and the format was considered. It was agreed that in future it could be shorter to reduce the burden on the person writing it. It should focus more on the key issues than the history (although there are particular reasons for the history being useful in this case). As the document names a number of people, it was not suitable for wider distribution. A number of factual corrections were noted, as Council members had access to additional information about certain parts of the process that were not necessarily known to the author. Indeed, the number of people involved in organising the annual conference presented a large management task in itself and this was one of the themes of the report.

Following discussion, the lessons to be learned included:

- Do not choose a secure venue.
- We need more administrative support.
- We need to keep the same team on conference administration as much as is possible. If changes are necessary, we need to ensure we hand over properly.
- We need a host who can hold contracts with providers.
- We should thank the local organisers on the website as they do have to do a lot of work. If they are named individually on the website they may also take more responsibility.
- We should plan the paper reviews in advance and have Fellows all set up. We should review the process for paper selection.
- The meeting that conducted a 'walk through' of the conference was a useful addition to the process, as it had been helpful in agreeing who is responsible for what at each stage. This should be added to the process for each year.
- We should add the amount of administrative time for CITO and NFER into the lessons learned report. This will allow us to monitor changes and efficiencies over time.

ACTION: Henk and Sarah to share this information with Sandra.

- As part of registration we should ask if people want to be part of the delegate list or not, and if they are prepared to share their email address on the list or not.
- This year we had only keynotes on the Saturday and no paper sessions. This worked well. The keynote was also good and left the delegates with ideas to take forward.

With reference to the recommendations in the report we agreed:

- Keep number 1 and 2.
- We do not agree with having competitive tenders for the conference. Hosts are not competing on a financial basis, so much as a well-organised, high quality conference. We need to carefully scrutinise plans and bids for future conferences and be willing to change plans if things are not progressing to plan.
- Addition to 3 – we should also ask for prospects for local sponsorship in the bid for the proposal.
- 5 – we are covering systems on the website later.
- 6 – we think it would be useful to have the historical figures, eg numbers attending, in the lessons learned report. It would also be useful to keep a list of who speaks at each conference and on what. This would need an amendment to the website.

ACTION: Gabriella to produce a report on trends on numbers over the conference. Sandra to incorporate into the lessons learned report.

ACTION: Henk to write up a process for paper reviewing and share with Gabriella and Sandra for their comments. This needs to be agreed for the 15 February when we plan to launch the call for papers for this year.

ACTION: for Tallinn, we should ask the keynote speakers if they are happy to be videoed and we should share these on the website. This would need to be discussed with Foundation Innove and incorporated into the conference budget.

4.2 Financial outcomes

Henk circulated a paper on this. As background information, he also had detailed expenditure for the conference. The conference did not deliver a surplus in the end. This is in part due to the number of visits we had to make to the venue to ensure progress that was being made. We also did not have local sponsorship this year. It is disappointing that we had so many people at the conference and still did not break even.

ACTION: Sandra to produce final budget for Paris for May Council meeting. This may also add to the lessons learned. It should be incorporated in the Lessons Learned report in the future.

4.3 Conference handbook - updating

We agreed that we will do this electronically, with each person making amendments using track changes. We agreed to pass this round with Jo-Anne making the first set of changes, then passing to Guri. This will then go to Henk and Henk will pass it to Sandra. We need to have it finished by 15 February or as soon as possible afterwards.

ACTION: all to make changes to the conference handbook.

5 Update reports on forthcoming conferences

5.1 Tallinn 2014

- Organising committee report

This has been going well. A key person has recently been ill, which slowed communication for a while. Guri raised a question of how we recognise the contributions.

ACTION: Guri to send the list of committee members to the Secretariat for addition to the website.

We need to finalise plans for submitting papers soon. It would be nice if this is done as a web form so that elements of it can be extracted remotely for review etc. Guri has started to write guidelines for submission.

ACTION: Sarah to share with Jo-Anne previous calls and details on this. Jo-Anne to draft the guidelines.

The PDC has discussed updating the guidelines for the poster award. This update needs to be finalised by the 15th February when the call for posters goes out. For Paris the posters were reviewed for the first time – in the past all of them were accepted. We need to agree criteria for poster selection, and also have the criteria for papers to ask if a rejected paper could be suitable as a poster.

The selection of workshops for the conference should be the role of the PDC. This should be done by targeting appropriate sessions, as well as putting out a call for proposals. The PDC will select the final workshops for the conference.

ACTION: PDC will draft a call for proposals for workshops for Tallinn. The deadline of end of February is on the website already so we need to get a call out as soon as possible.

Sponsorship policy – this now needs updating. Some sponsors were unclear that they needed to register.

ACTION: Sarah to update the policy for the May Council meeting. The Secretariat will manage the process for this year.

Tallinn sponsorship – the Ministry of Education has agreed to sponsor the conference for 14,000 Euro. The local hosts do not want to ask for further sponsorship. We should ask them if there are any commercial sponsors locally that we should ask, who are not normally on our list.

400 Euro is agreed as the conference fee.

The Council agreed that the Fellows event would not be continued. This should be changed to a social event, with a small fee. We may need to have an alternative way of thanking Fellows for their contribution, and for raising the profile of the accreditation.

ACTION: Jo-Anne and Henk to provide feedback on the budget for Tallinn to Guri.

- Scientific Programme Committee Report

As this is being run by an innovative organisation, it has been suggested to have a session where people can demonstrate innovative products. We agreed that this may end up being a commercial session, and we agreed that it would be better if these are done as paper presentations or as workshops for a more in-depth demo of software.

We agreed that it might be useful to have a 'meet with the editors' session.

ACTION: Jo-Anne to discuss this with the PDC and how we could have a 'meet the editors' session during the Tallinn conference.

- Programme schedule

The poster session needs to be at a different time according to the Tallinn hosts.

- Programme

A skeleton programme had been shared with a number of people and was a good basis for planning. It was agreed that this should be done each year. For example, we know in advance the number of papers that could be accepted.

- Budget

The budget looks likely to contribute a surplus to the Association in keeping with most years' conferences.

5.2 Glasgow 2015

The hosts have suggested a theme of 'Assessment for Social Justice'. This may not be clear for second language speakers but the full theme will explain this in more detail.

Jo-Anne had sent a draft outline budget to colleagues in the Organising Committee. Glasgow University need to sign this off before they agree to go ahead. We have provided everything that we can at the moment.

Jo-Anne has listed everyone involved in the organising committee, so we know who is involved. They represent all the different stakeholders.

Plans for the conference are well on-track.

Jo-Anne will not be President by the time the conference takes place and has been doing most of the work on this conference. It was noted that Antonella is also involved and will take this forward. Jo-Anne offered to stay involved in the Organising Committee. 2015 will be Henk's last year for involvement, so the review etc for this year will need to act as a handover period.

5.3 Proposal for 2016 – Cyprus

Iasonas has asked if he can shadow the conference team for Glasgow to inform his planning. We agreed this but he may also be asked to a Council meeting – it might be better if he telephones into the Glasgow update at the upcoming Council meetings.

ACTION: Jo-Anne to agree options with Iasonas.

We discussed changing the days of the conference to Tuesday to Friday rather than Wednesday to Saturday. This would mean people would be out at the conference for the majority of a week, which may have an impact for organisations. Iasonas is going to look at alternative hotels that could have five, or even six, parallel sessions.

The arrangements seem to be positive so far, although it is very early days.

Iasonas will produce a draft budget soon. Guri will plan to go and visit the venue some time this spring. Antonella is also involved in organising this conference and will aim to join the visit. We also need to consider the numbers for the pre-conference workshop. If we want these to grow then we may need to make larger spaces available.

6 Conference management software

We had an initial discussion about the need for separate software or whether we ought to ask for improvements to our website. Many of the issues we are trying to address were covered in the original specification for our website. We agreed that we would ideally have an integrated system, that links paper acceptance to registration – so we can check if all presenters have registered. We also need to link membership with registration, so that the right discounts can be given. We need to work out a costing for upgrading our website and work out if it is possible to do the things we need to do.

ACTION: Secretariat to discuss a plan for updating the website with Dave at BigPig.

There were issues with the student registrations and they were required to pay the full fee upfront. This needs resolving for this year. We would also like a data form for the submission of proposals so that we can extract information from separate parts automatically so they can be sent to reviewers. We also need reviewers to be able to submit their comments separately and the comments need to be collated automatically.

Chris Wheadon joined the meeting at this point.

6.1 Report and presentation on software options.

Chris Wheadon had conducted a review of software for the Association. Jo-Anne reported that we would like to focus on the proposal review and submission software for this year. For the next year we may either update our website or switch to a new system, but there is not time to do this for this year. In these circumstances, Chris

proposed that we look at using EasyChair for this year. It would not be possible to link this to our system.

6.2 Decide whether we will purchase the software and the timescales

ACTION: Jo-Anne, Henk, Sandra and Gabriella to review EasyChair to decide if it would be quick and easy to set up to use for this year's proposal review process. Chris to send an email of how to get into the EasyChair system and how to set it up. A decision to be taken by the end of January.

ACTION: Secretariat to specify a system to deal with membership and registration so we can decide if we need new software to do this or to update our website. We also need to evaluate the submissions software to decide whether to buy something going forward.

Options to consider:

- update existing website so have fully integrated system,
- buy fully integrated system,
- accept that we cannot have a fully functioning system and maximise the benefits of different low cost components, integrated with manual processes.

We need to have a new system in place by January 2015.

7 AEA-Europe Officer

7.1 Job descriptions

Three job descriptions drafted by the Secretariat were circulated, to try to distinguish between the three different roles that support the administration of the Association – the Executive Secretary, the Administrator and the new Coordinator role. We agreed that the three roles go together and if the Secretariat moves then the other roles may also move.

We agreed that it would also be useful to have Task Descriptions for the other members of the Council. The Secretary, in discussion with the Council, will appoint the Coordinator.

ACTION: Sarah to advertise the role to members. Sarah to amend NFER's contract with AEA, and to have a contract with the new coordinator as an RA. Jo-Anne and Guri to be involved in the selection process.

8 Marketing Matters

Fiona has produced some good marketing materials. These will be sent to NFER so we can amend these for the future.

Marketing the conference should be the role of the Scientific Programme Committee who will take this forward.

ACTION: Jo-Anne to ask Fiona for the marketing materials and send them on to Sarah.

9 Business Plan 2014 – 2017

Henk presented the figures that he had collated for the meeting. Income is based on membership numbers, interest and conference surpluses. The current figures predict a 5% growth each year in memberships and conference surpluses. In 2013 we do not have the budgeted £20k surplus. We need to consider how we can manage these conference surpluses going forward.

The current figures predict a return to breakeven in 2017. This includes a cost of 55,000 Euro each year for administration which can be reduced to 30,000 Euros which is the cost of the Administrator and the Coordinator.

Our financial policy states that we will hold enough money to run for two financial years from our surpluses. We need to have reserves of 150,000 Euro to comply with this. We currently have less than this, and theoretically we need to increase our reserves. We decided that we should change the policy to say we will have reserves to cover 18 months of activity because we would be able to cancel conferences and other commitments within this period and two years was too long for an Association of our kind.

ACTION: AEA Coordinator to produce a list of policies and when they are due a review. Henk to revise the Finance policy document.

10 Nominations Committee

We discussed the report from the committee, which proposed revisions to the Constitution. We agreed that this is not what is needed at this stage.

ACTION: Henk to respond to the committee saying we do not intend to revise the constitution at this stage and to ask them to approach potential candidates. Elections will take place in September but we will let them know in advance (in May or June) that we will be asking for nominations in September. We will ask the nominations committee to send us names for the Council meeting in May. We accepted their recommendation of one nomination for each vacant post. The election will take place at the start of September, to be finished by the Council meeting on the 16th September. Sarah to work out a timetable for the process.

We will announce at the start of the election, that we have one nomination from the committee (and name the person) and members will be invited to put themselves forward to stand against the nominated individual if they would like to do that. This process, arising from the Constitution, should ensure that high quality nominations were forthcoming. Putting oneself forward for elections without such a process could be daunting for members.

11 Committee Business

11.1 Report on the Publications Committee

The newly constituted committee has not yet met, but will try to meet in April. We will aim to have a copy of the newsletter for April. The plan is to include information about a new project at Roma Tre University which has been formed within the

Association. They also plan to contact the poster presenters to start the thematic element of the newsletter and to support the website by getting biographies and pictures of Fellows and keynote speakers. In the evaluation, only one member had found out about the conference using LinkedIn. We still need to do more using social media. We plan to do more at the conference in Tallinn.

They asked for advice about moving towards a journal. To do this they need to put together an editorial board. They need to find people who would be interested in coordinating the work. The Council asked the committee to come up with a plan for the development of a journal, outlining the various stages and when they might be feasible.

11.2 Report of the Professional Development Committee

The committee met the day before the Council meeting, with apologies only from Anastasia Voronia. A teleconferencing meeting had also taken place. There is a problem with teleconferencing – as an organisation must cover the costs. It is possible for the costs to be re-claimed. The PDC would like a short slot during the opening of the conference to promote their activities eg accreditation. They wondered if it could be shown on the programme where a presenter is a Fellow. They also plan to write an article for the April newsletter to present their work. The committee discussed the option of the PhD students producing a poster as part of one of the workshops. It is difficult to get students to come to the doctoral workshop. We need to agree on a topic that their supervisor would support.

The idea of re-starting online seminars was discussed. The PDC was asked to put together a proposal for this including costs and likely demand.

ACTION: PDC to produce a proposal for online seminars for the May Council meeting.

Accreditation

The criteria need reviewing. Antonella had made some revisions. This needs finalising and will be completed by May.

The PDC will make accreditation decisions and appeals will go to the Council.

For the New Assessment Researcher, the idea is to involve more Fellows. They could be used to agree each year's NAR. We need to have a new policy to decide on the process for reviewing the applications. Maybe we could use a panel of Association members, who may not be Fellows.

ACTION: Antonella and Jo-Anne to come up with a new process for agreeing the NAR winners.

The PDC have been discussing criteria for the poster award. We agreed that we ought to just have a straightforward vote for the winner. A process for counting the vote will be agreed.

We agreed the PDC do not have responsibility for revising the standards; that responsibility will fall to an ad hoc committee.

12 Papers for May Council meeting

- i) Benefits of Association membership (Sarah)
- ii) Association files and document sharing (Sarah)
- iii) Task document for coordinator and task descriptions of council members
- iv) Cost and spec for updating the website.

13 AOB

- AEA money is temporarily stored by Cito prior to the new bank account being set up. Claims cannot be paid in the meantime.
- Winner of the poster award - Cito have not been contacted. Jo-Anne will prompt Jeanne Ryan to contact Henk to arrange the visit.
- We need a new treasurer when Henk steps down. If we want Cito to be involved, Henk needs to do some work within the institution. We agreed that we would like him to do this.
- SQA have queried if we are registered with HMRC so they can claim back their membership fees.

ACTION: Sarah to look into this.

14 Dates of next meetings

Schipol, 8th May: 11.30 – 17.30 (***Henk to book a room***)

Rome, 16th September: (As it's Gabriella and Jo-Anne's last meeting, we will all plan to go the evening before and stay over.)