

AEA-Europe General Assembly

Friday 10th November 2017
Corinthia Hotel, Prague, Czech Republic

1. Welcome and Minutes

Thierry Rocher (TR) opened the meeting and welcomed members. No resolutions or issues had been raised by members in advance of the meeting. The minutes of the 2016 General Assembly in Limassol, Cyprus were approved with no changes.

2. Annual Report

a) Forthcoming Council vacancies and elections

TR noted that Iasonas Lamprianou (IL) and TR will step down next year. Jannette Elwood (JE) will become the President for 2 years. This year there will be elections for a new VP, ie, President elect and a new Council member.

b) Secretariat activities

Alex Scharaschkin (AS), AEA-Europe's Executive Secretariat reported:

- Membership numbers (see Annual Report). Membership is down slightly due to the new student renewal rules and a number of members were removed to eliminate bad debt for the association.
- Internal organisation – work has been carried out throughout the year to tighten up governance procedures and structures of committees including the Audit Committee. All committees are up and running and fully staffed and have improved their ways of working. There are more Skype meetings to help control the budget.
- New AEA-Europe website – this has been completed and launched prior to the conference and delivered on budget, as discussed at the last GA. Also, the mobile app was commissioned and launched. Printing of the big programme has now stopped to save costs. Very good progress has been made on various matters over the year.
- Policy & Procedure document – a lot of time has been taken to revise this document to make it more standardised and formal. This is work in progress and will be completed next year.
- AEA-Europe Handbook – this has been updated and is available for use by conference hosts and can be distributed to future conference proposers.

c) Publication Committee activities

Gill Stewart, Chair of PC, reported that it has been a very busy year for the PC and that there is now a good team in place to be able to focus on improving communications by engaging with our members, not just at the conference, but throughout the year. The PC is looking at how we can improve and give more value to members. We are starting to look at strategies to increase membership and especially by targeting those countries that are underrepresented, and also by targeting post doctoral students to involve them in the work of the Association. The AEA-Europe newsletter has improved by moving from 2 to 4 newsletters per year. We want to take it further by publishing a schedule of when newsletters go out so Members have a timeline of when to send items in. We would like to see more rich content and to target particular groups to focus on a particular theme or area of educational assessment. To do this we need more members to participate.

We are improving our Social media programme and are now established on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and have an E-assessment SIG Facebook page. We are seeing an increasing number of followers and views on posts. We can only be as good as members want to make it so contributions are essential. It has been proposed to have a blog on the website and cross post items from the newsletter into social media. It will be possible to sign up for the newsletter via website. These are small changes but will help with communications and engagement with the members.

The SIG E-assessment group was very well attended and therefore we are considering whether to run webinars in-between conferences to help keep interactions up between members throughout the year. A questionnaire was included in the conference pack to use to give a review of membership packages.

d) Professional Development Committee activities

Rolf Vegar Olsen, Chair of the Professional Development Committee reported that activities have consisted of the accreditation scheme for Practitioners, Associates and Fellows. We have had 2 successful applicants this year. However, we need more accredited members. We had successful PhD networks over the last 2 years and this year we invited those already accredited to join us. The PDC would like to use more of a support structure perhaps with those who are already Fellows encouraging students to apply?

Fazilat Siddiq was recognized as the winner of this year's Kathleen Tattersall New Researcher Award. Nominations for the 2018 New Researcher Award will be invited in the New Year.

For the awards in general we have received good candidates. For the Kathleen Tattersall New Researcher award, we would like encourage the young talent to apply to keep the awards at a good level. These are prestigious awards and we need to keep that status.

A discussion group, led by Bas Hemker and Paul Newton, was set up to decide if a revision needs to be made of the Standards book. It was a good discussion and more work will be done on this. Those who would like to engage in this are invited to take part.

Another idea for profession development is to provide a spring school with regular PhD courses on assessment related issues. The PDC will consider this further.

e) Report on Accounts

Cor Sluijter reported that the AEA-Europe finances are doing well. More specifically the operational budget for 2016 show the subscriptions income slightly down, as referred to by AS earlier. However, the numbers are now more valid due to the decision to write off uncollectable debts, ie, members who don't pay their fees in time.

AEA-Europe made a good profit of 16.600 euros from the Limassol conference in 2016.

The Council's expenses were slightly higher than normal due to full committee membership which incurred more travelling.

In 2016 the conference registration and organization was outsourced as last year. We can afford this again next year.

Sponsorship revenue went up a bit last year; we are hoping to increase this next year.

The Business Plan 2016-18 remains the same. The website has now been refurbished with a portion of the cost of this still to pay.

There will be some extra work from the Standards and Publications Committees which may incur some extra costs.

The Participation Fund was reinstated this year to enable those people who don't have the budget to attend the conference to apply to the Council to cover costs. The Council decided that as we are financially in good shape we have some extra budget to continue with this procedure again next year and it will be announced in the newsletter.

Graham Hudson reported on behalf of the Audit Committee that they have been through the process of receiving the budget information which is extremely well documented. Everything that Cor has reported in this meeting was endorsed. There is some work to do on outstanding debtors.

Graham recommended that the accounts be a true account of the Association's business.
ACCOUNTS ARE APPROVED.

It was agreed by the GA that membership and conference fees for the coming year the fees will remain the same.

We would like to thank Christina Wilkström, Graham Hudson and George MacBride for being on the Audit Committee and especially to Christina and George who have now finished their term of office.

TR thanked the Audit Committee and made a call for 2 new members.

3. Strategy to Increase Membership.

The aim is to increase membership in under-represented countries. An excellent report from Debbie Checuti from the PC shows the Association is not represented in all European countries. We have many ideas to help encourage this including seminars and networks etc. This will be discussed in the coming year and an action plan will be put together to propose a way to increase membership strategy. Members were encouraged to pass on any ideas on this, for example leveraging their own networks, to Council.

4. Proposal to GA on ResearchGate

Cor Sluijter put a proposal to the GA to use ResearchGate to improve on the number of AEA-Europe members. A lot of researchers refer to work on ResearchGate and there is a possibility to have specific target groups lured to the website or conference page. There is a small fee per 'click', ie, buy 300 clicks – 3900 euros. It is only administered when someone visits the website. This is a concrete way to improve the number of attendees/members which can be easily evaluated in conjunction with the investment. The Council proposes to try this out for 1 year and to see if it is successful.

AGREED

5. Participation Fund

As mentioned before, we are sufficiently healthy to be able to provide this service. Applications must be made before July.

AGREED

6. Future conferences

Thierry explained that we opened a call for expressions of interest at the beginning of last year and after discussion with the Council the chosen hosts are:
2019 – Portugal
2020 – Dublin.

AGREED

7. The Standards framework

Paul Newton proposed to work on the Standards Framework with Bas Hemker. There are no concrete plans yet but we are getting more ideas and plans together for this framework. Some people have expressed an interest to help take it forward to try and make some more out of this framework. The current one was read by less than 25% of the members with some not being aware of it. There will be more discussions in Arnhem to get the project moving.

8. Resolutions from Members

To consider any other resolutions received from members
No resolutions were voiced.

9. Any Other Business

Thierry thanked all the Council members and committed people who work for the Association.