

## Steering Committee and Task Force Chairs Joint Meeting

15 – 16 January 2015

Latvijas Universitāte

### MINUTES

- Present:** Sabine Pendl, President  
Milda Girdzijauskaitė, Staff Training Task Force  
Francesco Girotti, Steering Committee  
Alīna Gržibovska, Steering Committee  
Svend Poller, Summer Schools Task Force  
Petra Rabitsch, Student Mobility Task Force  
Monika Sprung, Researchers Mobility Task Force  
Ülle Tensing, Steering Committee  
Anne Vorpapel, Joint Programmes Task Force  
Fiona Miller, Secretary
- Apologies:** Patricia De Clopper, Steering Committee
- Welcome to the meeting** 1 Members of the Steering Committee and the Task Force Chairs were welcomed to the meeting. It was noted that Milda would be representing the Staff Training Task Force due to Ülle's dual role.
- 30 - 31 Jan 2014 minutes** 2 The 30-31 January 2014 minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting.
- Actions from the meeting** 3 The majority of items had either been completed or would be discussed elsewhere on the agenda. Items discussed were:
- Staff Training proposal from Utrecht University – Utrecht University had not re-submitted their Staff Training proposal regarding admissions and student recruitment. Therefore the matter was now closed. A call had been made to all members inviting proposals for future Staff Training topics.
- Changes to Young Researchers Grant criteria – Changes had not been necessary due to changes in eligibility relating to Erasmus+.
- 2014 Task Force reports and 2015 work programmes** 4 The 2014 reports and 2015 work programmes were discussed:
- Joint Programmes Task Force; The Task Force had held a meeting in Riga, 13 & 14 January. The main activity for the Task Force was the preparation of the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project proposal (deadline for submission 31 March 2015). The confirmed partners for

the project were Leipzig, Lille and Bologna. Utrecht and Ljubljana had declined and Bergen had not yet reached a decision. Other non-Network institutions which would be approached included Valencia, Ghent and Warwick.

It was noted that the project would concentrate on Humanities and Social Sciences, as areas with less knowledge or experience of engaging with enterprises. The need to ensure that employers/industry and HE institutions were aware of the terminology used by the other was stressed.

It was noted that if the project proposal was successful, the Task Force would like to organise the 2017 AGM Workshop to assist with information gathering and dissemination for the project. The possibility of a staff training event was also raised.

It was reported that the Task Force's €7k allocation would cover both meeting costs and staffing costs relating to writing the project proposal. Any additional funds needed would be requested during the year.

Researchers Mobility Task Force (AGM Workshop): The final details for the Workshop would be agreed at a Task Force meeting in Bochum in March. It was noted that, with the departure of Richard Burchill, it would be necessary to identify someone else to lead the managing expectations session. It was agreed that, in the first instance, an academic would be sought to lead the session.

M Sprung/  
U Tensing

It was noted that the Workshop was aimed at participants with different levels of knowledge and experience. Therefore the workshop sessions would differentiate between levels of experience. The possibility of extending the workshops and reducing the marketplace time was discussed.

It was expected that there would be 20-25 participants attending the workshop.

The invitation for the Workshop would be sent in parallel to the AGM invitation. There would not be a charge for attendance at the workshop. It was noted that the afternoon session on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day would need to be badged as a study visit or similar to comply with ST rules. For attendees of both the Workshop and AGM, the afternoon AGM session on 7 May would count as part of the Staff Training. Further details of presenters etc would be added to the programme to make it more attractive.

M Sprung

M Sprung

Staff Training Task Force: The Task Force had invited members to submit their staff training needs. These needs would be evaluated and future staff training events proposed as appropriate.

The Task Force, through the University of Bergen, was proposing a Staff Training event in Bergen in October 2015 on Erasmus+ (concentrating on Key Action 1). The ST event had the support of the Student Mobility Task Force.

The proposal was approved and it was suggested that, when the call was made for the ST week, it would be stated that the aim was to share creative ways that members had found to deal with issues – so not to focus on negativity. Any potential involvement of Brussels in the event should be carefully considered.

U Tensing

The importance of raising the international competencies of all staff, but in particular administrative staff, was highlighted. The possibility of actively offering to badge members' ST events as Utrecht Network events was raised.

Student Mobility Task Force: All 10 Young Researchers grants had been allocated. All the number one ranked applications from institutions had been successful. 16 institutions were involved in the 2015 scheme (sending and receiving).

In order to encourage the submission of 'fun facts' a newsletter article would be written giving examples. The possibility of the fun facts being published on the MAUI/AEN websites would be investigated.

P Rabitsch

The possibility of a 2016 AGM workshop on intercultural development of students was discussed. It was noted that there was expertise on the issue in Graz and Hull. It was agreed that the idea should be developed further by the Task Force as a potential 2016 AGM Workshop. The Summer Schools Task Force would also look at the issue for a potential workshop at a summer school.

P Rabitsch

S Poller

The Student Mobility statistics for 2013-14 would be circulated to the Group at the end of January.

P Rabitsch

A reminder would be sent out to those institutions who had not replied to the inter-institutional agreements survey, and the results of the survey would be presented at the AGM.

F Miller/P  
Rabitsch

It was agreed that if the Task Force invited MAUI/AEN representatives to their meetings then additional funding would be granted. If there was a need for further funding for meeting costs then a request would need to be made to the Steering Committee during the year.

Summer Schools Task Force: It was noted that the LEF and Professional English Summer Schools were being funded in 2015. Ideas for new schools were being considered by the Task Force.

Steering Committee: It was agreed that the portfolio of the individual Task Forces should be looked at and evaluated against the Strategic Plan. This would be added to the 2015 Work Programme.

F Miller

## Hospitality Fund

- 5 An evaluation of the first two years of the Hospitality Fund had been requested by the AGM. It was noted that more grants were allocated per year in the new scheme. It was noted that those institutions eligible for hospitality grants for their students under the old scheme still benefitted under the new scheme. Several other institutions now also benefitted from the scheme.

Hospitality funding was not available for those post-graduate students and staff eligible to apply for Erasmus ST funding at their home institution (where they were enrolled).

It was noted that the Joint meeting agreed with the recommendation of the Summer School Task Force, that the Hospitality Grant should continue in its current format.

## Changes to Task Force reporting

- 6 The proposed format for Task Force reports/workplans was discussed. It was reported that the format would enable mapping of activity against the Network's Strategic Plan.

It was agreed by the meeting that the format proposed would be too restrictive and difficult to read. A template for reports was suggested by the Task Force Chairs and agreed by the meeting. The template would include:

- Membership
- Meetings (dates & locations)
- Statistics (if available)
- Narrative report
- Finances

A short matrix would be included at the bottom of the report and workplan with three columns – Goals from the Plan (FORCES), Activities/achievements 2014 and Workplan 2015. There would be a short bullet point for each activity/achievement.

A template would be circulated for TF Chairs to complete the matrix for the 2015 AGM. This would enable mapping against the Strategic Plan.

F Miller/ TF Chairs

It was agreed that the Task Forces would no longer submit mid-year reports. Instead all Task Force minutes would be sent to the Secretariat to be placed on the intranet.

TF Chairs

## University of Valencia

- 7 Thanks were expressed to Francesco and Svend for undertaking the site visit to Valencia. The University had indicated that it wished to further its partnerships amongst Network members. Valencia had also indicated an interest in the Staff Training Task Force.

The meeting agreed with the recommendation from the site visit that a proposal should be put to the AGM to accept the University of Valencia as a member of the Network.

The need to ensure that an induction proposal was in place, if the University of Valencia was accepted as a member was highlighted. It was agreed that if Valencia was able to attend the Network's EAIE dinner, then a member of the Steering Committee and a representative from each Task Force should be present to introduce the University to the Network's activities.

Sabine, as President, would reply to Valencia's letter expressing the University's willingness to join the Network. The possibility of

S Pendl

Valencia students taking part in the 2015 Summer Schools would also be highlighted in the letter.

## Website

- 8 A report on progress to date with regard to the new website was given. It was agreed that there should only be one main editor (the Secretariat) with a deputy for the external pages. The external pages would be 'unfussy' and easy to maintain. The Utrecht Network video would also be included.

The following changes to the external section were agreed:

F Miller

About us – the organisational chart would be removed. A page 'partners' would be inserted which would cover MAUI and AEN.

Our members – it would not be necessary to have links giving info about each member, as on the current website. Instead a link to each University's website would be given. The AEN and MAUI pages would be taken out of this section.

Task Forces – Each Task Force page would follow a standard format – membership (including contact details and roles) and a brief description of the Task Forces main role and activities. There would be links to the relevant activity pages. A template would be sent to Task Force Chairs to complete.

F Miller/TF  
Chairs

Activities – Task Forces to inform the Secretariat of relevant activity to go under this section. No knowledge of internal structures should be necessary when looking for Network activities on the website. The pages would be reviewed regularly.

TF Chairs

Internal section (intranet) – each Task Force would have editing rights for their page (and control over the content) and reading rights for the rest of the intranet. All members would have reading rights.

The issue of archiving and any restriction on document size would be discussed during the contracting process.

F Miller

## Timing of AGM

- 9 The proposed changes to the timing of the AGM and subsequent changes to the Network's calendar were discussed. It was agreed that there were pros and cons to each option. The issue of the audited accounts being available at the AGM was discussed and it was considered that solutions could be found to this issue.

It was agreed that the proposals would be submitted to the AGM with an additional option of changing the financial year in line with the AGM. A vote would be taken at the AGM. The decision of the AGM would be implemented in 2017, which would allow for preparation time. Therefore the AGM in 2016 would be held in Belfast in April 2016 as already planned.

## Activity Reports

- 10 The proposed activity reports, which it was hoped would encourage active membership, were discussed. The possibility of producing the reports and sending a copy to the representative of each institution

and asking them to discuss with their Rector (or sending directly to the Rector) was considered inappropriate.

It was agreed that it is important to ensure that the Network's activities were appropriate and useful to members. However feedback on activities could be sought in other ways (an example of this being the AGM feedback questionnaire). Active membership should be encouraged, through direct approach and encouragement.

**2015 AGM –  
interactive  
elements**

- 11 A new faces session would be held from 10.30 – 11.45 am on Thursday 7 May. An overview of Network activities would be given by the Steering Committee and then Task Force Chairs would be invited to come and present their Task Forces. The posters from Utrecht would be updated and displayed during the session.

F Miller/TF  
Chairs

It was agreed that a session on Estonian language should be held during the afternoon on Thursday 7 May to encourage members to engage with each other.

A call had been made to members asking for proposals for presentations for the AGM – the feedback from the 2014 AGM had indicated that members had appreciated the presentations. Proposals had been received from Graz and Bergen. It was agreed that both presentations would be accepted but presenters asked to concentrate on the reasons for developing the activity, valued added elements and transferable competencies rather than a detailed description of the activity.

F Miller

The two members giving the presentations would also be asked to lead a dynamic working group discussing issues raised by their presentations. Members would also be asked when registering for the AGM to indicate if there are any challenges facing themselves or their institutions which they would appreciate a discussion about at the AGM. Two topics would be picked from the replies for two other dynamic working groups.

U Tensing

**Newsletter**

- 12 It was agreed that the following articles would be written for the Spring 2015 newsletter:

- Fun Facts
- Research Managers Network Staff Training event
- MAUI/AEN – if the Networks want to submit an article
- New website
- Summer Schools 2015
- AGM

**Network of  
Research  
Officers**

- 13 The programme for the June Staff Training event organised by University of Utrecht was noted.

**South  
American  
and South**

- 14 It was reported that meetings had been held at EAIE with representatives from a Chilean and a Brazilian Network. Letters had been sent to both Networks inviting potential collaboration with the

**African  
Associations**

Utrecht Network. The possibility of the Network attending the FAUBAI Conference had been raised.

It was noted that discussions with the Eurosa Network regarding the potential for collaboration with Western Cape Universities had not progressed further. It was noted that a representative from Stellenbosch University would be visiting Leipzig University in May.

The possibility of inviting representatives from Brazil, Chile and South Africa to the AGM would be discussed by the Steering Committee.

**Any other  
business**

- 15** The possibility of the Network using an Erasmus intern would be raised with the University of Hull.

F Miller