

# Minutes of SACLA 2006 AGM

Date: Tue 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006

Venue: Room S3, Lord Charles Hotel, Somerset-West

Chair: Jean-Paul Van Belle (UCT)

## ***Apologies***

None received

## ***Present***

Nhlanhla Mlitwa -- CPUT

Jean Greyling -- NMMU

Janse Tolme -- UFS

Udo Averweg -- EM and UKZN

Susan Benvenuti -- WITS

Linda Spark -- WITS

Scott Hazelhurst -- WITS

James Connan -- UWC

Ken Halland -- Unisa

Reg Dodds -- UWC

Bongazana Mahlangu -- UWC

Louis CH Fourie -- UWC

Faisel Mosoval -- UCT

Shun Pillay -- WITS

Aslam Safla -- UKZN

Nelishia Pillay -- UKZN

Carina America -- CPUT

Rinette Roets -- UFH

Vreda Pieterse -- UP

Lydia Palmer -- Rhodes

Lyrice Cohen -- WITS

Helen van de Haar -- NMMU

Mthulisi Velepini -- NUST

Joke van Niekerk -- NMMU-George

Wallace Chigona -- UCT

Hanlie Haroldt -- University of Stellenbosch

Jane Nash -- UCT

Tom Addison -- WITS

Irwin Brown -- UCT

Derek Smith -- UCT

Jean-Paul Van Belle -- UCT

## ***Opening and welcome***

The Chair opened the AGM at 12:25 and welcomed everyone present.

## ***Approval of minutes AGM SACLA 2005***

The minutes were approved (proposed Ken Holland; seconded Tom Addison)

## ***Approval of financial statements SACLA 2005***

Prof Ogwu presented the changes to the provisional statements.

- Additional sponsorship (P5000) from BOTECH was received.
- Bad debts remained – mainly due to the HoD and one sponsor delegate not paying their hotel bills
- Accommodation and meal expenses were slightly higher (P73513+P46951 instead of P71513+P44416)
- Secretarial services was P2130 instead of the projected P920.
- Thus the negative surplus initially anticipated resulted in a final conference surplus of P3796.06.

No proposal was tabled nor decision made on how to allocate the surplus.

## ***Report of the chair SACLA 2006 (Faisel Mosaval)***

*(to follow)*

## ***Provisional financial report SACLA 2006 (Faisel Mosaval)***

A provisional financial report was presented to the meeting. The final report will be submitted for approval at the 2007 AGM

## ***Host for SACLA 2007***

- Last year UP suggested that they may want to host SACLA 2008 to coincide with UP's celebrations. This was not confirmed nor denied at the AGM.
- M Velepini from announced that NUST (Zimbabwe) was keen to host SACLA 2007. The location could either be Bulawayo or another location.
- This resulted in a lively debate. In the end, the meeting indicated that they strongly supported the idea of regionalising the SACLA participation and many delegates would be keen to go to Zimbabwe and their proposal to host SACLA 2007 was accepted unanimously (Reg Dodds was outside the room at the time of the vote).
- Linda Spark indicated that future SACLA organisers should take care not to budget for too many participants since the declining trend in delegates was attributed last year to the distance and cost of travelling but the decline was similarly apparent for the 2006 conference.
- Jean-Paul Van Belle added that many universities insist on a peer-review process conforming to the DoE requirements before granting conference travel grants. However, a show of hands indicated that only about 4 delegates would NOT have been able to attend the 2006 conference had no peer-review stream been offered.
- However, the meeting (Ken Holland, Derek Smith, Jean-Paul Van Belle) also cautioned NUST that the current sponsors are unlikely to be able to support a conference outside their operations area (this applied especially to Microsoft and Oracle). Mr Velepini indicated that they had successfully hosted another conference and would use that expertise and sponsor contacts for SACLA. The meeting also indicated that the discontinuity of sponsorship also presents a problem for the 2008 Conference organisers who will have to contact the current longstanding sponsors early to ensure that a 2008 budget allocation is secured.

- It was also suggested that NUST carefully considers the cost of travel from various locations in South Africa when deciding on the final location/venue of the conference.

## ***Matters arising from Previous Minutes***

### **The Financial report of SACLA 2004**

This was not accepted at the 2005 AGM and referred back to UKZN for queries. No one from UKZN was attending the 2006 AGM and thus the matter has been referred to 2006 where hopefully the questions arising out of the 2005 minutes can be addressed adequately by a UKZN delegate.

### **Establish more permanent/formal SACLA body**

Tom Addison initiated this discussion by highlighting the problems with the current SACLA modus operandum. He mentioned that he had been observing problems with the organising of SACLA conferences over the last few years. Most of these were due to the lack of continuity when a new host university assumed the role of chairman and executive committee. Examples of these included:

- Delays of > 11 months in receiving the previous year's minutes and seed money.
- AGM talk about issues like TECLA delegates, and academics from neighbouring countries, followed by similar talk 12 months later, but no action in between.
- Inability to quantify the "neighbouring countries" fund.
- Gradual depletion of sponsorship from 2002 to date from the major sponsors. Enquiries to one sponsor in particular suggested that the allocated amount is depleted when academics privately request sponsorship for individual trips, and when other conferences in the same or related disciplines enter the "space."
- Ignorance of the (new) hosting organisation as to whom to approach at the sponsor organisation. (Resulted in severe underfunding of the previous conference.)
- No obligation on the hosts of SACLA 200[n] to attend / explain financial statements when raised at the 200[n+1] AGM.
- Absence of a forward plan for future hostings. There is usually a high risk that no university will offer to host the following conference.
- Every new host has to open a new bank account, and this is getting more difficult.

To begin to address some of the continuity problems, he proposed that the 3-person "executive committee" should not only include the incoming host, but a nominee of the outgoing committee, and one other member. Activities of the elected committee in the period ahead should include the drafting of a long term hosting plan, and preparation for next year's conference of proposed changes to the antiquated constitution.

Benefits of the suggestion include the prevention of some of the issues mentioned above, and the monitoring of any actions agreed at the AGM. It is perceived that sponsors would prefer this approach, and that the probability of ongoing commitment of sponsorship would be increased.

The meeting was informed that the constitution of SACLA stipulates a 3-person Exco but this has never been implemented. At the meeting it was agreed that an Exco be formed and the following members were elected unanimously: Tom Addison, Jean-Paul Van Belle (SACLA 2006) and Mthulisi Velimpini (SACLA 2007).

## **Inclusion of ex-Technikons now Universities**

Helen van de Haar (?) promised she would get someone to contact the Exco re possible email address list of TECLA

## **Travel Subvention of non-SA delegates**

Using conference surplus for travel subvention for non-SA Southern Africa delegates (this year one delegate received R2000 this year, agreed by John McNeill & the conference chair but maybe others would have applied if they had known of the possibility. The newly appointed Executive Committee will circulate a more formal proposal on the SACLA list.

## ***New Matters***

### **Standardized SACLA Logo**

Reg Dodds to organise a SACLA logo competition. Should this fail to produce an acceptable logo within one month, the meeting felt that it would help the SACLA brand to re-use the current SACLA logo (customized with the logo of the hosting institution) for future conferences.

Jane Nash suggested that a standard letter for SACLA be designed – possibly including the logo.

### **Permanent bank account for SACLA with annual changing of signatories**

There are many advantages to having a permanent account for SACLA. However there are issues in terms of personal liability and other onerous FICA requirements. The Executive will investigate the possibility of a permanent account.

## ***Matters tabled at the meeting***

### **Peer-review track**

Jean-Paul Van Belle explained the reasoning behind the introduction of the peer-review track. Basically it was to ensure that delegates would get a DoE accredited publication. However, the intention was not and should not be to preclude other position papers, research-in-progress and experience reports. No paper was turned away though the acceptance rate for the peer-review stream was 60%.

Delegates were generally very positive about this change and agreed on the need of DoE type peer-review for some of the papers. However, this would not be enforced on future SACLA conference organisers.

### **Thanks**

Udo Averweg thanked the organisers for the way in which the conference was organised and commended the organisers to the applause from the delegates.

## ***Closing of meeting***

The meeting was adjourned at 13:30.