

ISLP Advisory Board

Tuesday, July 18, 2017

Marrakech, Morocco

Attending:

Chair (acting): John Harraway

Reija Helenius

David Stern

James Nicholson

Gail Burrill

Steve MacFeely (ISLP Observer)

Pedro Campos (ISLP Observer)

Zaimiddin Ahmad (Representing Dr Mohd Uzir Bin Mahidin, Chief Statistician Of Malaysia, who is the IAOS representative on the ISLP Advisory Board)

Pim Bellinga (I hate Statistics) - present by invitation for Item 2

Apologies:

Adriana D'Amelio

Denny Garvis

Item 1: Opening and Adoption of Agenda

Agenda was adopted without amendment

Item 2: Progress on Competitions

Reija Helenius noted that over 12,000 students from 33 countries had participated in the most recent Poster Competition. The certificates were prepared and will be presented at the final awards ceremony at the closing ceremony of ISI. The next competition will open in January 2018, but there is a request from southern hemisphere countries to start the competition earlier, in Southern Hemisphere Summer 2017. This was generally felt to be a good idea as it would align better with the school calendar.

There was some discussion regarding the merits of introducing a new competition for universities. This might require something 'more modern' - perhaps videos, apps or other interactive technologies. An age limit might not be required - perhaps just leave it open. Reija will draft a concept note to tease out the proposal further. The meeting was broadly in favour. It was suggested that Reija consult with Peter Howley who would be a good person to join the Advisory Board given recent success with the Poster Competition in Australia.

[Subsequently Peter Howley has been approached to join the Advisory Board subject to becoming a member of IASE. Peter will be nominated as an Elected Member of ISI which will give him IASE membership.]

There was also some discussion regarding the merits of introducing 'sub-global' or regional competitions. It was agreed that ISLP should watch South America, as they are piloting a new competition along these lines.

Steve MacFeely gave a quick update on the most recent Best Cooperative Competition. He noted that again entries were low, and for the most part, from countries that enter regularly despite attempts to publicize widely.

Item 4: ISLP Website and Resources (this discussion preceded Item 3)

James Nicholson outlined the resources now available on the ISLP website. Professor Denny Garvis [Business Administration, Williams School, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA USA] helped to review the website and make many of the linkages functional again and delete out of date linkages. But there is a need to modernize the website: introduce more languages, resources for journalists and perhaps also special resources regarding official statistics. James noted that a focal point is required for each resource section. A focal point is required for 'official statistics'.

Pim Bellinga (I hate Statistics), joined the meeting at this stage. He outlined some thoughts and suggestions on how the ISLP website could be modernized, including by tagging content to improve search functionality. It was agreed that resource implications need to be carefully considered and whether costs can be shared with potential partners. It was stated that ASA and RSS are interested in similar architecture so perhaps there are opportunities to partner or collaborate. It was agreed that John Shanks should be consulted. Following this discussion Mr. Bellinga departed.

Item 3: Country Coordinators

Reija noted that ISLP has good coverage in Africa and Russia (but noted some language issues here) and weaker coverage in Asia and USA (only one coordinator for all of the USA). It was suggested it may be possible to leverage opportunities as the next ISI will be in Malaysia and the Chief Statistician of the Statistics Office of Malaysia has agreed to join the ISLP Advisory Board. A quick outline of developments in the ISLP newsletter was also provided. The Board put on record their appreciation of the work that Statistics Finland does in compiling the newsletter. It was suggested that the ISI President should write to Statistics Finland formally expressing gratitude.

Item 5: Chair of ISLP Advisory Board

It was unanimously agreed that James Nicholson should revert to the position as Chair of the ISLP Advisory Board. The board thanked John Harraway for having acted as chair while James was unavailable.

There was some debate as to whether it would be useful to broaden the geographic representation of the ISLP Executive. It was suggested that perhaps another deputy director post could be created. It was further suggested that Adriana D'Amelio might accept a position as a third Deputy Director with special responsibility for Latin America.

[Subsequently Adriana accepted the position offered on condition she take out membership of IASE which she has now done.]

Item 6: ASA Poster Competition

The negotiations with the ASA poster to harmonise competition rules were outlined. Some important differences regarding team size and number of age categories. Some concern was expressed that larger winning teams would enjoy smaller per-capita awards. But the counter argument that recognition was also an important incentive was also voiced. The board expressed support that negotiations continue with ASA executive.

Item 7: Potential Funding

Reija noted that Vulcracraft (SAS) might sponsor in the future. She also asked all board members to try and find a sponsor for the ISLP. To date sponsorship was been approximately Euro 26,000 over a 4 year period. But additional funds will be required in the future to cover new competitions and awards.

Item 8: Other items

The agenda for the forthcoming ISLP Open Meeting was quickly reviewed.

Steve MacFeely agreed to share a concept note he will develop for Ireland Aid on how the structure for the John Hooper Medal might be exported to Africa.

The Board acknowledged the work that Denny Garvis had done cleaning-up the links on the ISLP website.