

EASST General Meeting for all Members

EASST's Constitution specifies a meeting open to all members to be held at the Association's conference. This provides the opportunity for Council members to report on their activities and for members to ask questions. Below we provide the draft minutes of the meeting held at the recent EASST_4S Conference in Barcelona on 2nd September 2016.

Draft Minutes of General Meeting, 2 September 2016, Barcelona

In attendance: Maja Horst, Estrid Sørensen, Miquel Domènech, Marton Fabok, Harro van Lente, Marc Audétat, Attila Bruni, Meike Wolf, Nora Engel, Max Fochler, Regula Valérie Burri, Ulrike Felt, Peter Müller, Jochen Büchel, Ana Delicado, Pedro Cabello, James Fleck, Annamaria Orban, Alvise Mattozzi, Linda Russell, Rigas Arvantitis, Cristina Popescu, Nima Madjzubi, Govert Valkenburg, Frank Geels, Pierre-Benoit Joly, Salla Sariola, Lucy Suchman, Vicky Singleton, Janette Webb, Ronan Bolton, Mark Winskel, David Galbreath, Marija Brajdic Vukovic, Melanie Smallman, Stevienna de Saille, Esther de Wit-de Vries, Sigrid Schmitz, Sonia Liff, Fred Steward.

1. **Minutes** from Torun General Meeting for members, 2014 (previously circulated).
Agreed
2. **Report** on the main activities of the EASST council 2014 – 2016.

(a) EASST Review

EASST Review has had a new coordinating editor, Ignacio Farias, from 2015. Vicky Singleton (EASST Council member with responsibility for publications) explained that the Review is published four times a year in online form (pdf & via the website). As a new initiative the Review has also published a printed year-book for 2015, collecting the contributions of one year into a new layout. The printed version is sold as print-on-demand. Other recent changes are:

- A series of new sections to profile research groups, STS journals and to provide report backs on STS events;
- A new editorial board to support the editor, solicit and produce new submissions and in other ways support the Review's development;

The Review editorial group was interested in members' views on the way that they wanted to receive the Review. Each issue currently appears as both a pdf and as individual articles which can be viewed from the website. One suggestion is to just provide it via the website and only produce a pdf on an annual basis. Members were keen to continue to receive a regular email alert which outlined the content of each issue. There was enthusiasm for web links to individual articles and also for the pdf as an option. It was suggested that both could be available.

(b) Science and Technology Studies

S&TS coordinating editor Salla Sariola thanked Sampsa Hyysalo, who this year stepped down as the coordinating editor of the journal. His contribution to the journal is highly valued, including his efforts with the transition of the journal to become the journal of EASST in 2012. Since becoming the EASST journal S&TS has gone from 2 issues per year

to 4 issues per year. The journal continues to broaden its editorial board with new members recently joining from France and the Netherlands. A new editorial software platform has been developed which should increase efficiency for editors and authors. The journal aims to cover the entire field of science and technology studies. It is online and is becoming fully open access. It is developing an online-first pre-publication repository.

There were a number of questions for Salla. These included the language of the journal - currently English language only. There was a question about the relative benefits to the journal and EASST from its adoption as a house journal. This was said to be mutually beneficial with more interest in the journal as a publication outlet and more downloads. The average time from acceptance to publication for articles (for other than special issues) was said to be around 18 months, with an acceptance rate of below 20%. The acceptance rate was due to quality control rather than space.

(c) EASST annual fund.

EASST officer Sonia Liff reported that in 2015 4 awards were made to support workshops (in Greece, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria) and 2 to support launch meetings of national associations (in Austria & the UK). Full details are available from the website and reports have been published in EASST Review.

3. Financial report (for calendar years 2015 & 2016, previously circulated)

EASST Treasurer, Harro van Lente, went through the budget and spending, which had been accessible to members online before the meeting. EASST follows a conservative budgeting model (budgeting within current resources) and the finances are currently very healthy, with assets of almost 100,000 Euros. This amount is necessary because the income via conferences and membership is always uncertain. However, the healthy financial situation has allowed EASST to increase its activities and support for members in recent years.

A member asked about threats to the financial situation. These were said to be the possibility of conference problems leading to a deficit or to an adverse tax assessment. The meeting accepted the financial report.

4. Retiring President's reflections

Fred Steward has served as President of EASST since 2008 and is now retiring. He pointed to a range of challenges facing the STS community and the importance of trans-national scholarly associations, such as EASST, to address these. He highlighted a range of new opportunities and issues that a new President might address. His remarks are recorded more fully in a separate article in the Review.

5. Strategic options for future conferences and other activities

Council member Attila Bruni thanked Miquel Domènech and colleagues for their hard work to produce the current highly successful and enjoyable conference.

EASST Council has agreed that Lancaster University will host the 2018 EASST conference. The Lancaster team including Vicky Singleton and Richard Tutton were thanked for their offer to organize the conference.

EASST Council has had a number of discussions about how conferences can best support the growing European STS community. Council feels that intimate exchange, networking and community building have been possible at the EASST-only conferences whereas the scale of the EASST/4S joint conferences – the Barcelona Conference being the largest to date, with nearly 2,000 participants – makes this more difficult. As a result of this, Council has been considering changing the cycle of the EASST-only conferences. This could be to keep to the 2-year cycle but make this additional to the EASST/4S conferences. One way of putting this into practice would mean that cycle of the EASST-only conferences would change after the 2018 conference to being held in odd-years; 2019, 2021, 2023 etc., while the next EASST/4S conferences would continue as planned, in 2020, 2024, etc. This requires locations and local organising committees to come forward and would involve more administrative support. The current Council supports this development but feels the final decision needs to be left to the new Council that will be formed after the elections by the end of 2016.

Members were asked for their views on this proposal. There was some support but also some caution in terms of conflicts members would face with other conferences and priorities.

6. Arrangements for elections for new President and Council members

EASST Secretary, Estrid Sørensen, announced that 7 of the current 9 Council members are stepping down by the end of 2016. The 7 vacancies include a Student Representative and the President. Council has put a lot of work and resources into creating a solid organizational structure and financial situation over the last 8 years. EASST Council thus now offers an efficient platform for scholarly organizational politics which will support new Council members.

Members were encouraged to nominate themselves for Council positions including the Presidency and Student Representative. The call for nominations will be announced shortly after the Barcelona conference and when nominations close members will be contacted via email and invited to vote online.