

# EC Meeting Minutes – July 2021

## Call to order

A meeting of the MSA Executive Committee was held online on **July 22, 2021**

Attendees: **Jeffrey Olick, Jenny Wüstenberg, Joanna Wawrzyniak, Jelena Đureinović, Catherine Gilbert, Sang-Hyun Kim, Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska, Sarah Gensburger**

Assistants: **Angus Foster, Lorena Ortiz Cabrero**

## Agenda

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Call to order

Agenda

Decisions

1. Conference: impressions and lessons learned
2. Seoul conference update
3. Elections for ethics and finance committee
4. Division of labour within the EC

Portfolios

5. Diversity and inclusion
6. Institutional membership
7. Any other business

## Decisions

### 1. Conference: impressions and lessons learned

- Most feedback from the conference is very positive.
- Operationally:
  - Dryfta: worthwhile to work with them. Performance OK.

- Useful for two reasons:
  - conference platform.
  - if part of a hybrid conference, could be used for that.
- Overall, the Warsaw team was happy with the service that Dryfta provided, and it could be utilised in future to add online/hybrid aspects to conferences.

## 2. Seoul conference update

- Dryfta will not be used in Seoul as local company (Convene-In) already has a contract.
- Main issue facing the conference currently is twofold:
  - 1) the team working on everything is on the smaller side.
  - 2) Additional external funding is yet to be secured.
- The MSA or another party will need to process the payment and registration system for the conference as the institute/university in Korea is not able to process international payments.
- Advice received so far is to plan for an online conference and then add in-person elements if conditions allow, rather than the other way around. Timing for final decision would be mid-end November.
- Need to think creatively about securing volunteers.
  - E.g. travel grants for junior members of the association.
- Convene-In have said they can offer same type of service as Dryfta.
- Is it the responsibility of the research institute to pay for the entire budget?
  - Around 50% of Warsaw budget was funded by external contributions.
  - Anticipation that MSA would offer something from main budget.
  - Have applied for conference grant, failed first time. Will apply for it again next year.
- Expectation amongst participants for part of the conference to be organised online.
- **Decision:** have a separate meeting next week to further discuss.

## 3. Elections for Ethics and Finance Committees

- Ethics Committee:
  - Already received one email post-conference from someone who would like to run.
  - Ethics committee should represent various parts of the world.
  - Could approach some of those present at the members meeting who were interested in this.
- **Decision:** aim to hold elections in September.
- Finance Committee suggestions:
  - Members of the EC will ask contacts for suggestions.
- A call for interested people will be included in the next newsletter, and other information will be added to the MSA website when ready.

- We could also ask members of the AB if they would like to be part of the Finance Committee.
- Nominations and Regulations Committee will be asked to help with this process.

#### 4. Division of labour within the EC

##### Portfolios

- Idea for Scholarship Programme; one early-career scholar per year.
  - Should be possible to find sponsors for such a scheme.
- **Decision:** division of tasks for the following roles to be confirmed at a later date:
  - ❖ WG/RG/NN
  - ❖ Diversity/Inclusion
  - ❖ dMSA
  - ❖ Centres liaison
  - ❖ Book & paper awards
  - ❖ Website
  - ❖ Mentorship/scholarship
  - ❖ Languages and translation

#### 5. Diversity and inclusion

##### Relating to membership

- Membership fees; struggle to ensure all people are members.
- Need to be more strict next year.
  - Should have software to tackle both fees together at the same time.
  - Try to ensure registration for conference is only practically possible with membership.
  - We could also limit acceptance of proposals for panels to members only.
- Some members are not registering with fees appropriate to their career stage.
  - Ethics committee should deal with this.
- One proposal was enlarging AB to include people from a more diverse group of countries.
- We can always offer sponsored memberships if we want people on the board.
- If we invite people to the AB we could give them leeway (e.g until the next conference).
- Could move membership “year” to coincide with conference fee collection, e.g have membership last between April and April.
  - This has financial implications in terms of budgetary planning - one of the main reasons calendar year was chosen in the first place.

## Relating to current proposals

- Ruramisai Charumbira submitted to the EC a proposal to further diversity and inclusivity at the MSA, and we will continue to work with her.
- We need to make things more concrete.
- Start with an audit of what we think MSA could do better for diversity and inclusion.
  - How are we doing so far? Are we inclusive enough? What areas can we improve.
  - Compare to other organisations. What best practises exist elsewhere? Can the MSA take onboard some of these ideas?
- Involve the ethics committee in this.
- Should not be subsumed to the ethics committee. A broad mandate; something different from ethics itself.
- Need a process, but it should not just be performative.
- “Radical inclusiveness”.
- Should also recognise there are realities that we cannot change, e.g where memory studies as a discipline takes place.
- Need to make sure we keep the core identity of the association.
  - Depending on your point of view, a scholarly association rather than an activist association.
- We are an organisation of scholars, and precisely because of that we can try and be a place that creates new ways or working within academia in a more inclusive style.
- Much research that is conducted around the world that we do not know about because of various barriers. How can we reach out to them and create these connections?
- AB could be an institution that translates between different areas of research/different parts of the world
- We need to get people who are not as involved as the EC to gain different perspectives. How do we reach out to them?
- Will try and draft some ideas to do with language inclusion.
  - Book club.
  - Page on website for reviews of non-English language books.
  - Contact editors of *Memory Studies* to include more reviews of non-English books.
- We were not able to save the chat from the Members Meeting, but we do have notes and the recording to go over again.

## 6. Institutional membership

- We will come back to it in the next meeting.

## 7. Any other business

- Newcastle conference: roughly how many people should be on a local organising committee?

- Important to have at least 3 people who have (job) security and clout.
  - Important in case of emergencies.
  - Make sure team also meets local needs.
- Three main institutions collaborated in Warsaw - helpful in terms of funding.
- Other local centres in Newcastle who could be brought onboard.