

# **First EALTA Annual General Meeting**

## **Saturday, 15 May 2004 - 14.00**

### **Hotel Larix, Kranjska Gora**

Present: All conference participants who are individual members of EALTA.

#### Agenda

1. Approval of temporary Chair
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Nomination of candidates for office
4. Brief statements by candidates
5. Election of officers
6. Change of Chair
7. Categories of membership
8. Membership Committee rules and regulations
9. Content of website
10. Appointment of auditors
11. A.O.B.
12. Date of next Annual General Meeting

The meeting was called to order by J. Charles Alderson (Co-ordinator of the ENLTA project team)

#### **1. Approval of temporary Chair**

Charles Alderson (JCA), in his capacity as the co-ordinator of the ENLTA project team, was approved as the temporary Chair. He announced that the EALTA constitution had been approved by acclamation on 23 April 2004. He reminded the meeting that suggestions for changes to the constitution would have to be received before the Annual General Meeting. Any suggestions received during this AGM would be discussed at the 2005 AGM (6.a of the EALTA Constitution refers).

#### **2. Approval of Agenda**

JCA called for suggestions under A.O.B. The following items were suggested:

- i. Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- ii. Training events
- iii. Links with other associations

JCA also announced the agenda for the ENLTA project meeting (scheduled for Sunday, 16 May 2004). At the request of the meeting, he introduced the ENLTA project team.

The agenda (listed above) was approved.

#### **3. Nomination of candidates for office**

JCA announced the ex-officio members of the EALTA Executive Committee: Karmen Pizorn (current conference chair) and Angela Hasselgreen (conference chair 2005).

JCA then presented the nominations for President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Chair of the Membership Committee as follows:

President: Neus Figueras (nominated by Angela Hasselgreen and Ari Huhta)

Secretary/Treasurer: Jayanti Banerjee (nominated by Egyud Gyorgyi and Gudrun Eriksson)

Chair of the Membership Committee: Sauli Takala (nominated by Norman Verhelst and Barbara Czarnecka-Chicha)

No other nominations were received in advance of the AGM.

#### 4. Brief statements by candidates

Each candidate made a brief statement to the meeting

#### 5. Election of officers

JCA called for objections to the election of the nominees. None being received, all three were declared elected.

#### 6. Change of Chair

The first President of EALTA, Neus Figueras (NF) took over as Chair of the remainder of the meeting.

#### 7. Categories of membership

i. Individual members (4.1 of the Constitution refers)  
Issues were raised with respect to the eligibility criteria and also whether individual membership was free.

It was noted that the eligibility criteria had only been questioned by two people, both of whom have since found themselves eligible to be individual members. It was also noted that people could be associate members if they did not meet the criteria for individual membership.

The meeting was reminded that individual and associate membership are free as a point of principle so that people are not discouraged from joining because of the cost.

Since there is an annual fee for Institutional and Expert membership, this policy is not expected to adversely affect EALTA's finances.

ii. Institutional members (4.3 of the Constitution refers)

It was suggested that institutions be charged according to their ability to pay.

This was dismissed as adding unnecessarily to EALTA's bureaucracy. Additionally, it was pointed out that most applications for institutional membership are coming from departments within institutions rather than the institutions themselves. Therefore, higher fees might discourage applications for institutional membership.

iii. Expert members (4.4 of the Constitution refers)

Issues were raised with respect to how the first Expert members would be approved, the stringency of the requirements, what was meant by the term 'related field', and why there was a need for tiered membership.

The first Expert members (who will be appointed to the membership committee) will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Once formed, the membership committee will review all aspects of this category, particularly the criteria.

However, two points were noted. First, most professional organisations have tiers as this provides transparency. Indeed, there is a clear need for transparency when discussing expertise in language testing. Second, it is important to have stringent criteria as this sets the standards for the community and the profession.

**Action: Sauli Takala**

iv. Associate members (4.2 of the Constitution refers)

It was suggested that Associate members should be allowed to attend the EALTA Annual General Meeting but should have no voting rights. It was argued further that Associate Members would probably have a lot to contribute to the Association.

This issue (and any necessary amendment to the EALTA constitution) will be tabled at the 2005 AGM.

**Action: Neus Figueras & Jayanti Banerjee**

## **8. Membership Committee rules and regulations**

A number of concerns were raised with respect to the criteria presented in the guidance provided to referees, the operationalisation of the criteria for expert membership, and the requirement that all members of the Membership Committee agree before an application for Expert membership can be approved.

It was further suggested that decisions about termination of Membership should be taken by the AGM (on the advice of the Membership Committee).

The meeting agreed that the criteria and procedures for Expert Membership and for Termination of Membership should be reviewed by the Membership Committee.

**Action: Membership Committee**

## **9. Content of website**

Jayanti Banerjee (JB) presented a list of suggestions for additions and changes to the content of the website. She called for suggestions from the members (either during the conference or afterwards).

It was agreed that the programme and PowerPoint slides from the 2004 EALTA conference should be available on the Association, website. It was also suggested that the website should publish a short report of the conference.

**Action: Jayanti Banerjee**

## **10. Appointment of auditors**

JB described the practice of other similar associations. She re-iterated the need to keep costs down while maintaining standards. The meeting approved the appointment of Steve Fligelstone as the auditor for the first year.

## **11. A.O.B.**

### **i. Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**

A number of suggestions were made for SIGs (Classroom-based Assessment, University Level, LSP, Young Learners, National Exam Providers, Spoken English, Relating Scales)

Concern was raised at the potential divisiveness of SIGs. It was agreed that guidelines would need to be drawn up that established the minimum requirements that would need to be in place before a SIG could be set up (list of members, a leader, in-house rules – approved by the Association).

EALTA will learn from the experiences of TESOL, IATEFL and BALEAP.

In the meantime, the EALTA discussion list can be used for discussion of members' special interests.

**Action: EALTA Executive Committee**

### **ii. Links with associations**

It was suggested that EALTA should consider how it might establish links with other European associations such as the Association of European Assessors (AEA) and the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI).

**Action: EALTA Executive Committee**

### **iii. Training events**

Training events based on the findings of the European Survey of Language Testing and Assessment Needs will be designed and piloted over the next year. It was suggested that EALTA should apply for funding from the International Language Testing Association (ILTA) for a training event to be held at the 2005 EALTA Conference.

The meeting was also reminded that language testing experts should take every opportunity to educate test users about the limitations/constraints of language tests.

**Action: EALTA Executive Committee**

**12. Date of next Annual General Meeting**

The next AGM will be held at the 2005 EALTA conference in Voss, Norway.

The meeting agreed that the organisers of the 2005 conference would issue a call for proposals and that papers should be shorter, allowing for more discussion.

Members were told that they could give feedback about the 2004 conference in a book at the conference desk. Sauli Takala will be writing an evaluation on behalf of ENLTA for the European Commission.