

**14th EALTA Annual General Meeting**  
**Held on Friday 2nd June 2017, 14:00 at the**  
**Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques, Sèvres**

**Present:** Conference participants; only those who are members of EALTA – European Association for Language Testing and Assessment have voting rights.

**AGENDA**

1. Approval of minutes from the 2016 AGM
2. Reports on EALTA activities since the last AGM including:
  - a. Events,
  - b. Membership,
  - c. Finances
3. Appointment of the auditor for 2017
4. Constitution (see Appendix 1)
5. Election of the Chair of the membership committee
6. New coordinator for webinars
7. Expert membership fees
8. 2018 Conference venue and date
9. 2018 Winter School venue and date
10. Date of the next AGM
11. AOB

The meeting was called to order by Claudia Harsch (CH), President of EALTA, who welcomed all participants. No other suggestions for AOBs.

**1. Approval of minutes from the 2016 AGM**

Since no changes were requested, the minutes from the Annual General Meeting 2016 were approved.

**2. President's and Executive Committee's report on EALTA activities and progress in 2016 including events, membership, and finances.**

CH commented on the 2017 conference and thanked Sébastien Georges and his team at the CIEP for excellent preparation and hosting of the event, which had gathered 209 participants from 41 countries, 19 of which outside Europe. She also expressed EALTA's gratitude to the sponsors for their support. Moreover, CH acknowledged the generous contributions of the

pre-conference workshop leaders, the participants in the C-test kick-off event, the keynote speakers and invited symposium participants, and the SIG leaders.

## *2.a Events*

The reports for the 2016 EALTA funded events are available online.

The following funded events will take place during 2017:

1. Workshop on Sign Language testing research, organised by Maria Tagarelli de Monte, Elizabeth van den Bogaerde, Tobias Haug and Felipe Venancio Barbosa;
2. The inaugurating meeting of the Spanish Testing and Assessment Interest Group, organised by Cristina Rodriguez and Neus Figueras;
3. A series of workshops to improve classroom-based language assessment of foreign languages in lower secondary schools in Lithuania, organised by Benjamin Kremmel, Monique Yoder and Laura Vilkaitė;
4. A workshop on “Language Assessment of Immigrants and Refugees” in Greece, organised by Marina Mattheoudakis

SIG Signed Languages: Tobias Haugg presented the SIG via video. The Signed Languages SIG will have its first event in autumn 2017. The event will be a workshop funded by EALTA (see above, WS nr. 1).

Webinars: Peter Holt and Norman Verhelst reported on the first two webinars. A third webinar is lined up, but more themes and speakers are needed. Members are invited to let the Executive committee know their interests.

CH reminded the membership of the ‘Call for future conference organization’ and the ‘Call for future Summer/Winter Schools’. Volunteers were encouraged to get in touch with the Executive committee.

To honour Sauli Takala, an online Festschrift is planned. Gudrun Erickson, Neus Figueras, Ari Huhta, Kathryn Brennan and Elizabeth Guerin (from Italy), volunteered to edit it. In the first phase, they will send out a call for articles.

CH then presented the kick-off meeting for the C-test project (a description can be found on the conference homepage at [www.ciep.fr/en/ealta2017/c-test-event](http://www.ciep.fr/en/ealta2017/c-test-event)). The meeting was held in parallel with the pre-conference workshops. She then asked the membership to vote whether it accepts to support the project by 1,000 euros. The sum would be used for the server, web page, and to develop the online platform. The proposal was accepted, as no one was against, nor abstained.

## *2. b Membership*

The EALTA membership numbers at the time of the conference had increased, Individual members by 178 and Associate members by 26, and institutional members by 5. Expert members had increased by 2. On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017 the 2016 AGM, the EALTA membership numbers were the following:

**Individual members: 1 702 / 43 countries** **Associate members: 209 / 42 countries**

**Institutional members: 56 / 22 countries** **Expert members: 26 / 12 countries**

- the top 10 countries in terms of individual membership numbers being UK, Turkey, Sweden, Spain, Germany, Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Austria, France.

The chair of the Membership Committee, Norman Verhelst (NV), reported that all the other members of the Committee except himself will continue, i.e., Jayanti Banerjee, Monica Barni and Dina Tsagari. The activity during the year had been 5 applications for Institutional membership, all of which successful, and 2 for expert membership. One new institutional member will be registered after the conference.

### **2.c Finances**

The Treasurer Jamie Dunlea (JD) presented the accounts for 2016, which had been audited by Karin Vogt. There has been a slight increase in expenditure this year because of the workshops, attended events, and the webinar software. Income from the Copenhagen Conference 2015 came in only last year. From 2015 onwards, all expenses for invited speakers are paid by the conference organisers, so there will be fewer surplus of the conferences to be expected, but this does not change the overall expenses. The accounts showed a very good, positive balance (audited balance sheet included in the AGM papers). The accounts were approved by the AGM. JD also reported that revenues from the 2016 Valencia conference, as well as expenses for 2017 workshops are not yet included in the accounts.

The reason for having accounts in two different currencies is for practical reasons because the account has to be connected with the home country of the treasurer (UK for now).

### **3. Appointment of the auditor for 2017**

CH thanked Karin Vogt for auditing the financial year 2016. Barbara Blair, University of Bergen has accepted to be the auditor for the year 2017.

### **4. Changes to the Constitution**

- a. Modification to reflect the role of Upcoming President (Constitution 3.f) as discussed and agreed at the AGM in 2014 and 2015:

Current text in constitution:

3 f. The President will be elected for a three-year term and is not eligible for immediate reelection in the same capacity.

Amended text in constitution:

3 f. The President will serve a three-year term, which is preceded by a one-year term as Upcoming President. There will only be one presidential election, i.e., that as Upcoming President, which takes place at the beginning of the third year of the current Presidency. After the President's three-year term is completed, he or she is not eligible for immediate re-election in the same capacity, but she or he remains available for informal consultation during the first year of the following Presidency.

The amendment was accepted.

- b. Proposal to change the time period within which candidates for the Executive Committee can be nominated (in Constitution 3.i)  
=> vote by hand raising (against – abstain – for)

Current text in constitution:

3.i. Candidates for the Executive Committee should be nominated and seconded at or before the Annual General Meeting when the election is to take place. Their term of office commences immediately after the Annual General Meeting at which they have been elected or not later than the beginning of the next calendar year.

Amended text proposed by the executive committee:

3.i Candidates for the Executive Committee should be nominated and seconded **at the latest two weeks before** the Annual General Meeting when the election is to take place. **If by then no candidates have been nominated by the membership, the executive committee has the right to find a candidate, and to nominate and second him/her at the latest at the Annual General Meeting.** The term of office of the elected candidates commences immediately after the Annual General Meeting at which they have been elected or not later than the beginning of the next calendar year.

NV informed the members about the background of the proposal, as in the past, nominations came in very late and it was difficult to prepare the votes and the AGM last minute.

In order to encourage nominations, it was then discussed and decided that more information of the tasks of the different Executive committee members would be added on the EALTA website to encourage members to stand for elections. It was also decided to send out calls for upcoming elections earlier, i.e. by the end of the preceding summer.

There was then a vote on the proposal. Five members abstained, but the majority voted for accepting the change in bold.

#### **5. Election of the Chair of the membership committee**

CH suggested as a new responsibility of the Chair to keep an eye on the list and if necessary remind people of respectful behavior. This is not to suggest that the list is not a place to express opposing views and disagreement, but postings have to adhere to rules of professional and respectful communication.

Members discussed whether it would be better to have an independent person for this task, as the chair of the membership committee might face a conflict of interest at some point. Members agreed that the task would not be linked to the chair of the membership but a volunteer was needed to take care of it. Members were invited to contact the Executive Committee for volunteering.

#### *Election of the Chair of the membership committee*

NV explained the voting procedures (anonymously by paper) and presented Eli Moe who had sent out the information concerning the elections. Two persons had been nominated for the Chair of the membership committee: Slobodanka Dimova (University of Copenhagen), proposed by Karin Vogt and seconded by Ildikó Csepes and Voula Kanistra (Trinity College), proposed by Cathy Taylor and seconded by Claudia Beccheroni.

SD and VK presented themselves and then the voting took place.

The results of the vote: We received a total of 68 voting slips. 2 abstained, 20 for VK, 46 for SD. SD was elected as the new chair of the membership committee.

#### **6. New coordinator for Webinars**

Peter Holt gave a brief outline of the tasks and duties of the coordinator and asked for volunteers for stepping in as a coordinator.

## **7. Expert membership fees**

Jamie Dunlea suggested new expectations and obligations for expert members:

- Suggestion: to drop expert member fees
- AGM to vote about dropping fees by hand-raising (against, abstain, for)

The process of application, criteria for approval, and vetting process will remain unchanged but:

- Expert Members will be recognized and listed on the website on the understanding that they are willing to provide a contribution to the EALTA community.
- As a minimum, it is expected that Expert Members will participate in one or more of the following kinds of activities (the list is not intended to be exhaustive and other kinds of contribution are possible):
  - Be open to receiving requests for information from EALTA members on areas relevant to the Expert Member's field of expertise. Such requests should be reasonable, and an Expert Member's ability to respond will always depend on their availability. (Members should not expect Expert Members to provide detailed expert consultancy for free.)
  - Participate in the review of proposals for annual EALTA conferences
  - Act as a bank of expertise for EALTA, SIGs, and event organizers to approach for possible contributions to webinars, SIG events, and events supported by EALTA
  - Be willing, subject to availability, to participate in ad-hoc task forces set up to investigate issues relevant to EALTA at the invitation of the Executive Committee
  - Attend EALTA conferences and AGMs and make a contribution to paper Q&A sessions and discussions, etc.
  - It is important to note that in the event of an Expert Member agreeing to take part in a special event such as those supported by EALTA outside the annual conference, associated costs for participation would normally be covered by the event (something to be agreed between the Expert Member and the event organizers separately).
  - In the case that an Expert Member does not take part in any such activities for 2 years or more, the Membership Committee may approach the Expert Member to confirm their interest in remaining listed. The Membership Committee can take a decision to remove Expert Membership if an Expert Member remains inactive and does not indicate an intention to be active in the future.

The proposal was discussed and voted. A total of 61 members voted. 9 members were against abolishing the fee, 25 abstained, and 27 voted for abolishing it.

Decision: The expert member fee was accepted to be abolished.

## **8. 2018 Conference venue and dates; date of the next AGM**

The 2018 EALTA Conference will take place in Bochum, Germany at the TestDaF Institut from Tuesday, 22 of May to Sunday, 27 of May 2018, with pre-conference workshops and SIG meetings running before the conference as usual. The conference will be organised by Sonja Zimmermann and colleagues.

Conference Theme: Technology-Based Language Assessment: Benefits and Challenges.

Keynote speakers: Carol Chapelle and Torsten Zesch, University of Duisburg. Further information about the conference will be given in due course via the EALTA website and electronic membership list.

The next AGM will be held during the 2018 EALTA conference in Bochum on Saturday 26th of May 2018.

### **9. 2018 Winter School venue and date**

Benjamin Kremmel presented the 1<sup>st</sup> EALTA Winter School, which will be hosted by the Language Testing Research Group Innsbruck, January 6-10, 2018. The theme is assessing vocabulary in/for/through language skills.

### **10. AOB**

- a. Membership renewal will be done during summer 2017 to update the membership numbers.
- b. There will be a membership survey, which will be sent out before summer.
- c. CH suggested to take up the momentum of this conference and encouraged the forming of a new SIG for Integration. The EALTA SIG could cooperate with the LAMI and LIAM groups.
- d. CH reported about a dinner with EALTA and ALTE executive members the evening before the AGM regarding a closer cooperation between the two organisations. The two executive committees had discussed to continue with the great work and cross-fertilization we have seen at this conference on the topic of integration and issues of test usage, justice and fairness. The Executive members from each organization agreed to explore organizing joint events such as panel discussions etc at both EALTA and ALTE conferences. This was suggested as a small, but concrete step to enhance communication between members of both organizations.

It was then discussed what the nature of such events could be and what benefits there would be. CH and other EALTA members stressed that the two organisations have very different starting points, serve different audiences and purposes and will remain two independent organisations.

- e. The AGM ended with flowers and thanks to the chair of the membership committee, Norman Verhelst, as well as the organizer of the Valencia 2016 conference, Cristina Perez, and Peter Holt, the organizer of the first webinars.

### **Executive Committee**

Between the 2017 and 2018 AGMs, the EALTA Executive Committee will have the following members:

Claudia Harsch – *President*  
Marita Härmälä – *Secretary*  
Jamie Dunlea – *Treasurer*  
Slobodanka Dimova – *Chair of the Membership Committee*  
Sébastien Georges – *2017 Conference organiser*  
Sonja Zimmermann – *2018 Conference organiser*