

Minutes of the EERA Council Meeting

**Ibis Amsterdam Airport Hotel
Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th June 2005**

Present:

Ingrid Gogolin, President
Margaret Kirkwood, Secretary General
Wim Jochems, Treasurer

Denis Bates, Sarah Brown, Kyriaki Doumas, Edwin Keiner, Elina Lahelma, Martin Lawn, Lejf Moos, Fran Payne

Apologies:

Tomas Escudero, Dr Benedicte Gendron, Prof. Zoran Pavlovic, Teresa Romana, Stefan Wolter.

1. Welcome

The President opened the Meeting by thanking everyone for coming and welcoming Fran Payne from Aberdeen who has replaced Donald Christie as the SERA representative on the Council and Sarah Brown, the new temporary secretary from the EERA office.

2. Confirmation of Minutes of 22nd – 23rd January 2005

- A change was made on page 3 which now reads: “ECER 2007 – the status of Torino remains unclear, since Francesca Gobbo who had made the proposal may be moving to a different university.”

The minutes were approved.

(i) Matters Arising from Minutes of 22nd - 23rd January 2005 Council Meeting

Report of recruitment of new members to EERA – Denis Bates

Acting on information provided by Margaret Kirkwood and Lesley Morrison, Denis had contacted Professor Dr. Ali Yildirim of the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey. The Professor seems keen for his Institute to be involved but has not yet managed to process his application. Denis hopes that over time Professor Yildirim might be able to start a National Association.

Denis had also contacted Professor Roberto Muscati in Italy and Professor Adrian Stoica in Romania but as yet has had no replies. Massimiliano Tarozzi in Italy has referred Denis to another organisation that might be interested in joining EERA, IPRASE (<http://www.iprase.tn.it/>)

Denis tabled a list of the current EU and Non-EU states and details of their National Associations and Institutions involved in educational research.

Ingrid Gogolin had received a letter from the Austrian Association. It had decided not to join because they felt they were too small.

Martin reminded the Council that any national association has a right to have a member sitting on Council and that where there is no national association, an institution can be a de facto association.

Ingrid had had an email from Zoran Pavlovic to say he was standing down from the Council. It was agreed that Denis would write to Zoran to ask who would replace him on the Council.

Towards a solution to English comprehension problems

Denis reported that the LOC in Dublin was quite hostile to the idea of the “red card/traffic light” system for alerting speakers to comprehension problems. It was felt a more sensitive mechanism was required and that clear briefing for presenters and for those chairing sessions was essential.

It was pointed out that the request for a solution to the problems of comprehension had not come from the Council but in feedback from the delegates themselves. Nor were the problems confined to presenters speaking in English - the same problems occurred with foreign language presenters. Finding a suitable mechanism would help empower delegates and if Chairs raised the issue in an open way at the start of every session it need not be seen as confrontational.

Following some discussion it was agreed that Denis would draw up a protocol on alerting speakers to comprehension problems by the middle of June and pass it to Margaret who would liaise with the Network Convenors on the matter.

Ingrid requested that time reminders should also be included in the packs for those chairing sessions ensuring fairness for all the speakers and allowing time for questions.

Insurance Cover

The application forms for Directors and Officers Liability cover have been completed by John Queen and were submitted in May 2005. Details on the progress of the application will be forwarded to Wim Jochems. If any problems arise with the application, these will be raised at the Dublin Council meeting.

History Educators International Research Network

Edwin should engage in discussion at Dublin with the proposers. Part of this discussion would focus on the possibility of their proposed network forming part of a broader teaching and learning network

Ingrid reported there was considerable enthusiasm for a network on didactics but no-one seemed to have the desire to lead it. This could form part of a teaching and learning network.

Following discussion on this, it was agreed that Martin and Margaret would write

an abstract for an informal roundtable discussion in Dublin and send it to Ingrid to distribute. The following people were proposed as possible invitees.

Michael Uljens, Abo University, Finland	Hannele Niemi, Helsinki University
Kirsti Klette, Oslo	Ingrid Carlgren, Stockholm
Andrew Pollard, London	Brian Hudson, Sheffield Hallam
Jan van Damme, University of Leuven	
Karsten Schnack, Danish University of Education	

Prof. Dr. Koeno Gravemeyer, Freudenthal Institute, Utrecht University, NL
Prof. Dr. Hetty Dekkers/Dechers, Faculty of Social Sciences, Radband University,
Nymegen

Prof. Dr. H. Bayrhuber, University of Kiel
Prof. Dr. L-H. Schoen, Humboldt University, Berlin

The EERA office is to check which of those listed are registered to attend ECER Dublin 2005.

2.3 Constitution

Margaret Kirkwood reported that following a change to Charity Law in Scotland, where EERA is registered, it would be necessary to review the EERA Constitution to ensure that it complies with the new legislation in order to maintain its charitable status.

As SERA has already reviewed its constitution for this purpose, Fran Payne was asked to review EERA's constitution on the same basis working with John Queen and to bring a report on any possible problems with the Constitution to the next Council Meeting in Dublin.

Any changes to the Constitution that might be required could only be made at the AGA.

3. Reports by Office Bearers

i) President's report

Ingrid began by expressing her appreciation to Margaret, Wim, Edwin and the office staff for the co-operation and support she has received in the first 9 months of her term. She feels very positive that the Council and office operate well as a team.

She is keen to raise the Association's European profile and to see EERA move towards becoming a more serious player in educational research but realises this will only be possible if the office can be freed up to support such activity.

Margaret reminded her that the conference had doubled in size during Margaret's term in office thanks to a stable and effective office team. She is confident that the academic/research work of EERA can blossom but that the Council will need to formulate how best to effect that change in emphasis.

As one means of raising public awareness of EERA's work, Ingrid proposed that a brief electronic newsletter might be produced about once every 6 weeks and mailed to members consisting of a single page of information containing a few items of news about relevant forthcoming events, news from the EU and on the latest educational research etc. with their URLs to give further information.

Both of these ideas - to develop a higher academic/research profile for EERA and the possible newsletter - stimulated further discussion. Wim was keen for any such change of direction to give due consideration to the needs of the countries from the former Eastern block now in the EU. Margaret saw such a newsletter as a potentially viable and valuable means of outreach to our membership organisations as well as mobilising ideas but that consideration would need to be given both to how such a change of direction might properly be achieved by EERA and by what procedure. Decisions would also be required on who would undertake the production and distribution of the proposed newsletter.

It was agreed that Ingrid should bring a proposal on this matter and a sample newsletter for discussion to the Dublin Council Meeting.

ii) Secretary General's Report

Although many of the issues raised in her report were being covered elsewhere in the Council Meeting, Margaret believed it was good practice for all the office bearers to give regular formal reports to the Council.

The four years of her term as Secretary General have provided stability, growth and continuity for EERA.

Since the last Council meeting she had been involved in the arrangements for Geneva, working with Lesley and Edwin on the Open Network and in designing and implementing improved procedures for reviewing proposals as well as instigating an investigation into the defects of the new website. Although this resulted in a postponement of its going live, it has helped ensure that it will have all the necessary functionality when it is launched.

In the office she has been involved in the selection/appointment of a new secretary to replace Terri and in working with Lesley and Nan to see how the office might accommodate new developments. Wim now has financial oversight for the office and responsibility for the development of the new website currently.

Martin expressed his concern about the apparent inactivity of AIDIPE and SEP and asked Margaret whether she had any information about Tomas Escudero of AIDIPE who has not attended any recent Council Meeting.

iii) Treasurer's report

The Treasurer tabled his financial report for ECER 2004 showing a balance in unrestricted funds (i.e. the balance with all bills paid) at 31/12/2004 of €88, 871). He emphasised that the figures are provisional and have still to be audited.

This positive result is the consequence of two things. Firstly, the introduction of a financial model based on the number of paying participants which enables him to manage the ECER costs from the very beginning of each year; secondly, the large number of delegates who attended the conference in Crete, around 1150.

He would like to achieve a targeted balance of around €150,000 in order to cope with annual fluctuations in ECER attendance year on year. In order to achieve this he has already taken steps to reduce the banking and Council costs. He has also set up two Dutch Euro accounts which should enable payments to be made online thus reducing bank charges and transfer costs.

He expects there to be a surplus for the 2005 ECER in Dublin of around €25,200 on the basis of the financial model developed last year.

His proposal on Membership fees would be discussed later on the agenda and the options of reducing office costs and increasing ECER delegate fees were still to be discussed.

4. Secretary General

(i) Role and remit

Margaret tabled her report on the role and remit of the Secretary General in the light of her 4 years experience. She had tried to look at the role in broad terms in order to provide useful guidance for her successor. A key role was to maintain an overview of the whole function and operation of EERA in order to identify significant opportunities and problems. She also sees a need for the Secretary General to design and develop effective systems to monitor and evaluate EERA's performance in relation to its policies and goals.

In carrying out this role she works closely with the other office bearers and the Administrator, office staff, and Strathclyde University in respect of both internal and external communications, the database and website.

Wim was concerned by her reference to developing sound procedures in relation to financial transactions mentioned in item 3 of her **Specific Responsibilities** which he regards primarily as part of the Treasurer's remit. Margaret agreed to reword that section to indicate that the Secretary General's locus in this is to ensure that any financial procedures devised by the Treasurer are compatible overall with the administration.

Ingrid asked whether a package of information about the Secretary General's role could be made available to her successor. Margaret assured her that such a package would be available though it was doubtful whether all her knowledge and experience could be distilled in this way. She is very willing to meet with her successor in Glasgow for a handover and briefing session.

(ii) Replacement during ECER 2005

Ingrid reported that she had produced a shortlist for the role of Secretary General following discussion with Council members and some Convenors. After further consultation she has invited Lisbeth Lundahl (about whom she tabled some information) to take over as Secretary General when Margaret's term of office ends. Professor Lundahl is currently Vice-President of her own University and a leading Swedish researcher in the field. Although she was unable to attend the Council Meeting today she is well known to Edwin, Martin and Wim who have spoken with/or worked with her on various projects and believe she would make an excellent addition to the EERA team in the role of Secretary General. She is currently one of the Convenors of Network 23. Ingrid asked for the Council's approval to proceed with the appointment.

It was agreed that Professor Lundahl's appointment should be endorsed at the AGA. The AGA should be appraised of the open invitation made to the Council to seek a successor for Margaret and its endorsement of Lisbeth Lundahl as the next Secretary General.

5. Report by the Convenor's representative

Thanks to the Open Network and discussion with Margaret and Lesley, Edwin reported there had been fewer problems for Convenors this year except for the delay in returning papers.

He felt that the criteria for quality were less varied between Networks than previously and believed that it was now more important than ever to hold a mirror up to the Network Convenors in reflecting on how we proceed. The Convenors are working to examine issues of quality and Edwin believes a slow organic development on this front is the best way forward. Martin believed a top down approach from Council to the Convenors would not be well received by them. Margaret endorsed the importance of proper academic discourse in developing an understanding of quality issues.

Edwin was concerned that in many proposals the European perspective, set out as one of the five criteria in the call for proposals, was not clear and that it was hard to see how they contributed to European educational research.

A lengthy discussion on the meaning of "European" in the EERA context ensued. Whilst some felt that the European perspective was a crucial part of the ECER conference others believed that national papers could still contribute to the debate on European educational research without being explicitly "European" in their focus and that applying the "European" criteria too rigidly might restrict the number of proposals received and appear very provincial.

Other issues raised during the Convenors' representative's report were

- the names of some of the Networks are not clear enough. Delegates are unclear about what kind of proposals would be welcomed by them.
- the need to think about proposals from the new Eastern EU members states where the level and quality of research varies from those in Western Europe
- the need to find ways of easing papers on classroom research, teaching and learning and methodology into the existing networks.

6. Report on the Postgraduate Network

Kyriaki reported that:

- i) the network had received 67 proposals at Crete of which 21 had required some revision. She had had help in reviewing them from a number of people including the Network mentors.
- ii) it was felt tight deadlines this year had made the job quite difficult
- iii) a total of 13 papers had been submitted for the EERA award for the best Postgraduate paper at ECER Crete. The winners are Elma Nap-Kohloff and Roel van Steensel for their paper: "Second language acquisition in preschool playgroups and its relation to later school success".
- iv) Kyriaki was also concerned about what she felt was the poor "visibility" of the Postgraduate network on the website. She had done some work on this, forwarding suggestions for improvements to the website and text for the new website to the office.
- v) The Postgraduate network programme for this year has now been finalised. Kyriaki proposed that EERA might consider giving free entrance to the conference to the mentors and others who give generously of their time and effort to the PG Network and the Pre-Conference.

Responding to Kyriaki's report, Margaret said that the tight timescale this year resulted from the conference having doubled in size which in turn put additional pressure on the office staff in meeting their deadlines. She hoped it would be possible in future to start the process earlier to give more time. She also emphasised that Kyriaki must make it absolutely clear to the Postgraduate Network that any papers submitted for the PG Award must not be co-authored with any supervisor.

At present the PG Award comprises free admission to the conference and publication in EERJ. It was agreed that Kyriaki would give a suitable wording for a formal certificate for the PG Award to Margaret and she will have it printed up in appropriate style in-house at Strathclyde University.

Wim did not favour the idea of giving free entry to ECER as a way of thanking the Network mentors but there was general agreement that their contribution should be formally recognised. Margaret suggested that this be done at the AGA, and also with respect to Council members and Convenors of Networks when those standing down should be thanked for their service and the names of those taking up office recorded and included in the AGA papers. Edwin agreed to give her the names of those involved.

Ingrid thanked Kyriaki for her work with the PG Network and the Pre-conference over the last five years. With regard to a successor, Kyriaki was asked to prepare the procedure for electing her successor for the Dublin Council Meeting.

Margaret expressed concern that there appears to be some confusion at present about how Convenors refresh themselves. There are currently no rules nor any consistent practice on a Convenor's term of office nor on the procedures for appointing or electing them. It was

agreed that Council should try to clarify procedures on this in Dublin. The issue of PG representation on the Council was a separate issue.

7. Financial proposals

Wim tabled a paper outlining his suggestions on new membership fees.

Current fees scales

- i) At present bank charges for processing cheques are expensive. He would therefore propose a penalty being imposed on those who choose to pay by cheque. This would offset the additional bank charges which at present EERA absorbs. This proposal was accepted.
- ii) The category of individual membership currently costs EERA money. The fees involved are low, the bank handling and admin costs are high and those who are individual members are entitled to pay lower ECER fees which further reduces EERA's income. If the category of individual membership is to continue a substantial rise in the fee should be considered. His preference would be to scrap individual fees altogether as they raise so little money.
- iii) An overhaul of the high and low GDP categories of membership fees is also required. Currently Spain, Portugal, Greece and New Zealand are classed as low GDP countries. He plans to upgrade them to high GDP countries and to class Malta, Cyprus, Eastern Europe, Africa, South America and Asia as low GDP. The same classification of high and low GDP countries would apply to the ECER conference fees.
- iv) He supports the Council's efforts to promote membership amongst new Associations.

He thinks a general increase in fees should be considered but he would prefer to start by trying to reduce costs by streamlining the current payment and administrative procedures initially.

The Euro accounts he has set up will not come into operation until after Dublin. As credit card costs appear to vary over the EU countries he will double check that credit card transactions are the cheapest payment method for the EERA office to use.

New annual membership fees

This table demonstrated how the membership fees would look with higher rates for those in both high and low GDP countries choosing to pay by cheque – a difference of some £20 (€30).

Experience indicates there is substantial confusion among delegates about the whole issue of membership which greatly increases the workload of the office staff. A lengthy discussion on the relevance and value of membership from both a fiscal and a policy perspective followed.

Wim proposed that by the time Geneva comes round we should:

- list on the web-site all the Associations who have paid their fees and whose delegates are entitled to the reduced rate
- Institutes representing countries without national associations would have a maximum of 3 years of Accession membership
- Individual membership should be abolished.

It was agreed to abolish individual membership.

Margaret proposed that a new category of Friend or Supporter of EERA be created to cover Institutes and other organisations, like publishers or sponsors who might be willing to support us financially and that membership would then only be for member Associations (or in the absence of an Association an Institute) which would simplify and clarify the issue.

Wim agreed to include a proposal for this new category of supporter/friend in the proposal for membership fees etc he would bring to the September Council meeting in Dublin.

The Council decided that responsibility for checking delegates' membership lay with the national associations. It was proposed that national associations be given a list of delegates after the ECER so they can check if delegates who claimed to be their members are their members.

New ECER fees

Wim favoured an annual increase in the rate of the Conference fee at or around the rate of inflation. He felt there should be a general discussion on the benefits of membership and non-membership before he brings any proposal on any fee increases

Council Meeting continued on Sunday 5th June 2005

8. Ingrid welcomed Marcel Crahay from the Geneva LOC to the Meeting.

9. ECER Geneva 2006

9.1 The conference theme

The proposed theme for ECER Geneva - Transforming Knowledge was well received. The title was thought relevant, interesting and broad enough to encompass a wide range of topics and attract a good variety of proposals. Some feedback suggested that the European context was understated; EERA is concerned not just with transforming knowledge but also transforming Europe.

Elina Lahelma was concerned that transforming knowledge also involved addressing inequalities in education. Bernard agreed to reword the sentence in the second paragraph, "The shapes which knowledge takes on make it more or less accessible." to make the issue of inequalities in education more explicit.

9.2 The LOC Committee's report [Bernard Schneuwly was welcomed to the meeting]

1. How to give the conference theme a place in the ECER 2006

Bernard said the organising committee is working on the basis of having the keynotes devoted to the theme in parallel with invited symposia and roundtables. He explained that Geneva LOC has funding to have 4 keynotes and budget for translation of one of the keynotes. He therefore proposed that the four keynotes should be spread across the programme in three time slots together with symposia and roundtables on the same theme. These would not conflict with the Network schedules.

A number of possible topics for the lectures, symposia and round tables were outlined and discussed including:

- Transformation of universities/hautes ecoles as institutions of knowledge transformation/the Bologna process
- Transformation of knowledge in educational science in a historical and comparative perspective
- Questions of teaching and learning/didactics
- Educational systems and questions of curricula etc
- Adult education work, learning and knowledge

Other possible topics for inclusion of particular relevance in the Swiss context were the neurosciences, Piaget and issues of multilingual education. Margaret suggested that this year's conference theme might also be carried forward as a thread through the Geneva conference.

The timescale for the reviewing of proposals was felt to be too tight and it was agreed that Margaret, Bernard and Lesley would discuss and finalise appropriate deadlines for ECER 2006.

2. Progress with practical planning

i) Flyer

Marcel circulated a mock up of the conference poster and it was agreed that LOC will produce a small flyer on these lines for distribution in delegate packs at Dublin.

ii) Call for proposals

Margaret stressed the importance of having at least the keynotes finalised so that the call for proposals could be made available on the website and the flyers put in delegates packs at Dublin. It was agreed that further discussion to finalise details of the keynotes would be done by e-mail with Ingrid and the Council selecting two of the keynotes and Bernard, Marcel and LOC Geneva selecting the other two in accordance with normal practice.

No second call for proposals would be made. The office normally circulates an email reminder well before the deadline but no formal second call is made.

iii) Programme and abstract book

Geneva LOC is keen to have a book of abstracts and is willing to produce one and put it on the website. Further discussion on the topic was postponed until the next Council meeting.

The production of a multilingual programme is not seen as practicable given current resources. The language of the presentation is indicated in the programme but abstracts are always in English.

iv) Website

The website was being organised in two sections the first relating to all academic aspects of the conference programme and facilities; the second with general tourist information about Geneva itself.

3. Provisional Budget

Bernard reported that substantial financial support for the event was being made available by several Swiss organisations and institutions and that all the AV facilities and rooms at the University would be free of charge.

Responding to the provisional budget outlined Wim said he was very happy to see that there was already substantial sponsorship/financial support. The projected costs of CHF186,900 (approx. €125,000) equated well with his budget estimate. He indicated that the budget available will be about €85,000 based on 750 participants, or about €95,000 based on 950 participants. After inspecting the provisional budget he thought costs were marginally high but believed it would be possible to bridge the financial gap.

Ingrid thanked Bernard, Marcel and the LOC Geneva for all their preparations to date.

10. ECER Dublin progress

10.1 Office report

Following the retirement of Terri Freeman, Sarah Brown has joined the office staff as a part-time secretary until the end of October 2005.

Dublin

The main points of the office report were:

- A total of 888 proposals were submitted for ECER 2005 of which 831 were accepted for presentation, 35 were rejected and 22 have been cancelled.
- Out of the 1496 people entered on the ECER 2005 database, the maximum number of delegates expected is 1364.
- By the end of May some 612 delegates had registered. The registration deadline is 30th June.
- Apart from one network all network programmes have been returned to the office and are being cross-checked to avoid overlaps for presenters or Chairs/Discussants.
- Following advice from the office bearers it had been agreed that requests for a change in time and date of presentation from presenters will not normally be considered except in the most compelling circumstances. A new wording reflecting this had been included in the email sent to presenters confirming acceptance of their proposal.

10.2 Local Organising Committee's Report

Denis presented the LOC's report on progress to date in Dublin.

- A bank account has been opened in AIB for the duration of the conference.
- Some sponsorship money has been received. The Faculty of Human Sciences at UCD has contributed €3000 towards the conference.
- Two receptions have been organised
- UCD's Public Liability Policy covers all conferences and events organised by or on behalf of the college. Full cover is provided in respect of ECER's conference.
- All necessary rooms have been booked likewise poster boards and AV equipment. The number of projectors /beamers has been increased to 20.
- The location of all tea and coffee breaks has been decided.
- Services will arrange for external signage and internal signage will be taken care of by the LOC
- Student helpers are being recruited and will be trained the week before the conference.
- There are wireless areas within the arts block concourse which delegates can use and LOC is working with Computing Services to see how internet access can be arranged in the basement.
- LOC will set up press contacts as take responsibility for the press release.
- The website will be constantly updated and there will be continuous liaison between Denis and Lesley.

Finance

A revised amount of €150 for each additional paying delegate above the 950 expected was requested together with some €600 for the setting up and maintenance of the website.

Wim said that only an additional €50 per delegate above 950 could be made available to LOC. €600 for the website was acceptable and that the following amounts would be transferred to LOC bank account:

€50, 000	at the end of June
€57, 000	at the end of August

Denis asked if some €30,000 could be transferred to Dublin immediately and this was also agreed.

Wim advised that it would be best for the LOC to set up the catering contract locally rather than through EERA.

Ingrid expressed the Council's appreciation of the progress made to date and asked Denis to convey their thanks to the LOC.

Denis asked that the LOC are told immediately about any problems arising with the website.

Press release

It was agreed that Ingrid, Margaret and Denis would work on the press release and that Edwin and the Open Network Convenors would trawl the papers to identify any topics that might be of interest to the press in general.

The office will establish whether the TES will be represented at the conference and whether they would wish delegates to deposit their papers. If so this information would be put on the website

Margaret said that it was important that the Convenors meeting at Dublin should be formally minuted but that thought needs to be given to how that can be done when releasing one of the EERA office staff to do so would leave only one person on the registration desk.

10.3 Keynotes and roundtables

Ingrid reported that both the keynotes details are finalised but that the UNESCO roundtable will not take place as the Institute is likely to be wound up in the near future. Martin reported that the EERJ roundtable will take place based around four recent reports from OECD.

Ingrid wondered whether the new teaching and learning meeting could be a roundtable but it was felt that those invited to that meeting would prefer an informal exploratory meeting rather than a public formal gathering.

Once the main programme is finalised it may be possible to accommodate additional subjects of interest e.g. the European Educational Research Database, teaching and learning discussion etc at twilight or lunchtime meetings.

10.4 Experience with the new reviewing procedures

Margaret tabled two papers, the first produced following discussions with Lesley and Edwin to develop a new system of reviewing papers which balances both academic and administrative considerations, the second contained feedback from the office and the network Convenors on how the system has worked for Dublin.

The main points regarding the new procedure were:

- Convenors receiving proposals assess them first of all on grounds of relevance to their network and then on grounds of quality. If not relevant then the paper is redirected via the office. If relevant but inadequate on grounds of quality it is rejected.
- papers redirected by Convenors are sent first to the second network named on their proposal form or, if no second network is indicated, to the Open Network.
- papers sent to a second Network are assessed as normal for relevance and quality and accepted or rejected on that basis.

- if not relevant they are then redirected to the Open Network. There will be no further redirection.
- all proposals received by the Open Network are assessed for quality and if accepted are grouped where possible in compatible strands.
- the Open Network programme should be reviewed at the Convenors meeting each year.

The feedback paper indicated that the system had worked well on the whole.

The office would still like proposals redirected to be returned to the office sooner and for Convenors to indicate clearly the grounds for their rejections.

The individual networks had not reported any difficulties except for Network 19 which was unhappy that proposals they rejected had been returned by the Open Network to them. They resented the implication that the Open Network could override decisions made by experienced Network Convenors. They also felt there needs to be further discussion of how to deal with posters.

With regard to the timing of the return of redirected or rejected papers, Ingrid pointed out that Network Convenors like to have an overview of all the proposals submitted before deciding which to reject or redirect. Margaret accepted that this might be the case and will advise the office that the timing of the redirections might be changed from the beginning to the middle of the review timetable.

11. ECER 2007

Two possible venues for ECER 2007 have been identified - the University of Granada in Spain, contacted by Ingrid Gogolin and the University of Ghent through Wim Jochems contact with the Flemish Forum for Educational Research. Both have already agreed to host the Conference and Ghent is aware that the University of Granada is in the frame.

There was some discussion on how best to resolve this dilemma without causing offence to either venue both of which had much to recommend them. EERA is keen to ensure balance between North, South and East in the venues from year to year but the Council was not inclined to set aside the current plans for Gothenburg in 2008 and the offer from Estonia for 2009 in order to accommodate whichever venue is not selected this year.

Although Council members had good previous experience of academic events organised at Granada, concern was expressed about the current confusion surrounding the situation of the two Spanish associations. Co-operation between the LOC and the national Association is absolutely vital to the smooth and successful running of the conference.

A decision was postponed until Dublin. It was hoped by then that the Council would have firm undertakings from both venues that they could match our specification and that there would be greater clarity about the situation with the Spanish Association.

12. EERA developments

(i) Summer School

Ingrid indicated that the programme for the Summer School in Germany has been finalised. The focus is on research methodology and there are 4 keynote speakers (2 from the UK and 2 from Germany). It is planned to have a link to the site from the EERA website.

Martin queried how the school has been initiated. Ingrid explained that there is a formal collaboration between EERA and the German Association; EERA are providing support by paying for one of the presenters to attend. Ingrid expressed the hope that the notion of a Summer School will continue in future years, but it is dependent on funding from the European Union. The school this year is a pilot. Martin said he had no recollection of a Summer School coming to the Council for discussion. Ingrid explained that it had been discussed and agreed by Council in Crete to support the pilot in Germany. Wim suggested that the Council would need information about the School, i.e. an evaluation, for the next meeting to decide whether to continue supporting such an activity.

Elina suggested that in future, depending on the evaluation results, the member association could organise a summer school. Kyriaki recommended that it would be helpful to have the main language of a Summer School in English. It was agreed that if the pilot is successful the format would be that associations would organise a Summer School and EERA would support it. Ingrid agreed to circulate the programme once the translation into English was confirmed as accurate. It would be possible to have a model of the Pre-conference one year, and alternate this with the Summer School in the other year.

(ii) Collaborations with international associations

Martin reported that journal publishing in Europe is changing rapidly in response to the American Citation Index. He believed that some publishers are planning to meet in Dublin and may form themselves into an Association of European Educational Journal Publishers which would be a European first if they can overcome the problems of commercial competition.

Martin also raised the necessity for EERA to have a policy for charging members from international associations. He cited the situation where two delegates from Australia (President and Past President) were being charged at different rates. This had caused resentment. Wim agreed to make contact with the person via the office and ask to have a formal meeting at ECER to discuss this. Wim also asked Ingrid to write a letter inviting Trevor Gale to this year's conference.

(iii) European Education Index - European Educational Research Database Proposal (The European Education Index is now known as the European Educational Research Database.)

Ingrid reported on the progress to date on this proposal which had been previously circulated. The subject had been discussed with the PERINE project. She believed the publishers were interested but the full text option had been rejected.

It was felt that the strength of any proposal would depend in large part on the expertise of the researchers involved and that that should be a priority.

In order to progress matters further and meet the deadlines proposed for the 7th Framework Infrastructure Call (probably spring 2006) it would be necessary to draw up a funding proposal by August 2005. Ingrid reported that Diann Rusch-Feja would be willing to prepare a funding application for this but finance would need to be found to fund her to undertake this work.

Suggestions as to possible sources of funding were put forward and after further discussion it was agreed that Ingrid would approach Herr Weingartner of Springer Science and Business Media and that she and Margaret would draft a letter to be circulated to the national associations seeking financial support which should also be copied to all Council members.

Further discussion of this item was deferred until the next meeting.

13. Communications

i) EERJ

Martin reported that currently 2500 subscribers and 40 libraries access EERJ. The publishers want to change the way the journal is accessed, so there is an incentive for money from the universities to increase. It was suggested that a small amount, 15 Euros, could be charged to access the journal in 2006 onwards. This amount could be integrated with the conference fee. Alternatively, subscribers could pay and the fee would entitle them to have a password to access the journal for one year. It was agreed that following a meeting of office bearers, Martin and the publishers, a paper would be prepared to bring to the Council for further discussion.

(ii) Website

Wim has now taken over responsibility for the new “blue” website. Reports instigated by himself and Margaret had identified significant technical problems. These problems were now being addressed and the new website would, as a result, offer added functionality e.g. online payments option. It was hoped to test the new site during the summer but its launch had been delayed until after ECER Dublin in September in order to avoid any confusion.

Ingrid asked everyone to look again at their texts on the current green website and update them.

The impact of recent disability legislation was also raised as a matter for consideration in updating the website.

14. AOCB

Dates of next Council Meetings:

6th and 10th September, UCD Dublin

14th-15th January 2005 in Geneva. Bernard and Lesley to liaise on arrangements nearer the time.