

## **Annual report of the IASPM Executive Committee (July 2017-August 2018)**

In accordance with the relevant clause in the IASPM Statutes, this report by the Executive Committee (Franco Fabbri, Chair, Sílvia Martínez, General Secretary, Marta García Quiñones, Treasurer, Jacopo Conti, Membership Secretary, Kimi Kärki, Web/Publications Representative, Ann Werner and Antti-Ville Kärjä, Members-at-Large) presents a summary of work carried out during its first full year. The document outlines the Committee's main actions on issues relating to the membership Secretariat, the Treasury, the website, and preparation for the conference taking place in Canberra in June, 2019. For subsequent details of the Executive Committee's regular activity, all minutes of meetings held to date can be found in the usual website link <http://www.iaspm.net/minutes-reports/>

### **Treasury and Tax Report**

Throughout this year, most of the Treasurer's time has been devoted to solving two pressing issues that have taken an inordinate amount of hours: the changing of bank signatories, and solving problems with PayPal.

The procedure to change the signatories to our bank account with the Co-Operative Bank was initiated in July 2017, when the Treasurer sent the documentation about the three new signatories (Julio Mendivil, Chair; Sílvia Martínez, General Secretary; and Marta García Quiñones, Treasurer). Far from proving a simple procedure, the bank complicated and lengthened the process by requesting the details of at least one IASPM officer residing in the UK (details were kindly provided by Sarah Hill, Chair of the UK & Ireland branch), and more documentation on the three new signatories, including certified copies of our identity cards and proofs of residence, translated into English by certified translators. We finally managed to get the signatories approved on April 11, 2018.

The IASPM PayPal account had been subjected to limitations for years, as reported by former Treasurer, Emilia Barna, to the General Assembly in Kassel. Apparently these limitations were the consequence of changes in PayPal regulations, and they meant that we could receive money in our PayPal account but could not make payments from it or transfer money to our bank account. The fact that IASPM is registered in Sweden seemed the cause of particular concern for PayPal, even though this circumstance has remained the same since the opening of the PayPal account in 2012. By mid-April 2018, after Marta Garcia Quiñones had been recognised as a signatory to our Co-Operative bank account, she could also be linked to the PayPal account as contact person. In the following month the Treasurer repeatedly contacted PayPal by email and telephone, and sent all the documents that they requested each time. However, around May 2018, PayPal started to request documentation that we had already provided, while the PayPal account funds remained blocked. The Treasurer and the EC considered the possibility of taking legal action against PayPal, but luckily PayPal finally lifted the limitations on our account on June 27 2018, so no legal expenses were incurred.

In addition, in Autumn 2017 the Co-Operative Bank informed us that they would be closing our USD account in mid-December, since they were discontinuing this service. This closure came into effect on December 12, 2017, when USD funds were transferred to our main account and converted to GBP sterling. Thus, IASPM now has only one bank account (the GBP sterling one we have had for years—the

closed USD account was linked to this), and a PayPal account. Logically, the unexpected closure of our USD account increased the urgency to find banking alternatives in order to open a bank account outside the UK, thus also following the mandate from the General Assembly held in Kassel. Since the IASPM is registered in Sweden, it seemed logical to look for a Swedish bank, ideally one with high ethical standards (as suggested also by the General Assembly) that could offer USD accounts. The Treasurer worked together with Ann Werner, Swedish Member-at-Large on the EC, in starting a search for Swedish banking options, and in considering options such as Handelsbanken (although it is not exactly an ethical bank) and other Swedish banks. Ethical Swedish bank Ekobanken was discussed as an open option, but they could not provide a USD account. None of the banks proved viable, however, since our Society's customer profile and our needs do not seem to fit easily into the current banking system. In trying to solve this issue, it was thought that a practical solution might be to at least have an official IASPM address in Sweden, since our official address there has always been the personal address of the Swedish Member-at-Large, which may not seem very professional to bankers. To this end, we contacted the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Gothenburg and asked them to sign an agreement allowing us to hold our official address there, an agreement that did not come to fruition.

In respect of fiscal questions, it is to be noted that on September 15, 2017, the Swedish tax agency granted IASPM the right not to declare income or pay taxes until 2022. This means that before the end of 2021 the IASPM must apply again for exemption from declaring income and paying taxes in Sweden, the country where the IASPM is registered. Up to that date, the IASPM does not have to declare any income or pay any taxes.

During this first year the Treasurer has appreciated the cooperation of former Treasurer, Emilia Barna, who has always been ready to deal with our questions and offer practical and moral support. We cannot thank her enough.

## **Branches, membership and mailing list**

During the first months of the year, the Membership Secretary worked on the registration (and removal) of members to the international mailing list, as in the previous year. We would like to underline that, despite the mailing list being hosted by the server of the University of Liverpool, the implied presence of someone from that institution being among those who can act on the mailing list has never been officially acknowledged. We are currently working to solve this question at the earliest opportunity.

The Treasurer and the Membership Secretary have worked together in managing new memberships, especially with the newly-created branch of South-East Asia and the Japan branch. Although more local ECs contacted the Membership Secretary to let him know about new membership applications and closures of memberships, many of them had not done so by the end of August 2018, which left a large number of members off the international mailing list. Since changes made to the website message about joining, the amount of people asking to join as international members while bypassing their local branches has dramatically decreased, allowing for more regular flow to membership processing.

In February 2018, all regional branch Membership Secretaries were contacted to request their updated membership lists for 2017 and to invoice them

for 2017 fees, as normal. In August 2018 almost all of them sent their updated lists and paid their dues, either by bank transfer or through PayPal.

### **Next IASPM Biennial Conference**

At the first EC meeting for the current EC (October 25, 2017), it was agreed that a member of the EC take on the post as liaison officer between the EC and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the 2019 IASPM Biennial Conference in Canberra. This main duty was delegated to the Member at Large, Antti-Ville Kärjä. In this capacity, Kärjä has maintained active email correspondence with LOC Chair, Samantha Bennett, and IASPM-ANZ Chair, Catherine Strong. He has also been actively involved in drafting the Call for Presentations for the conference, as well as in co-ordinating the make-up of the Academic Committee.

### **Web/Publications report**

In autumn 2017, the Web/Publications Representative gradually got hold of most of the passwords required to carry out his duties. Unfortunately, due to the passing of previous officer, Ed Montano, part of the information was never transmitted. The new year, 2018, also started with a challenge, as the IASPM main website was hacked. After several unsuccessful attempts to clean up the infected parts of the Wordpress code personally by Kärki, a company (WP Fix It) was hired to do it. After two weeks of additional measures, the site was back up and the web activity has been running normally since the end of March 2018.

The web and publications representative is in contact with the new editor of the IASPM@Journal, Koos Zwaan, and his team, to co-ordinate joint work between the EC and the editorial team, and to offer any help needed with the journal website.

Under the new European data protection law, the IASPM is obliged to publicly declare through a data protection document how it manages its members' data. To fulfil this mandate, we have established that, during the second half of 2018, the IASPM Data Protection Policy will be drafted and subsequently published via the website and the Society's mailing list, in order to reach all its members.

### **Motions to Change the Statutes and Rules of Procedure**

A recurring issue at EC meetings and in email exchanges is the need to revise both the IASPM Statutes and its Rules of Procedure. Given the urgency of other matters directly related to the day-to-day running of the EC, and the organisation of the coming conference, this task will be attended to during the second year of the EC's term.

### **EC composition changes**

In July 2018, the IASPM Chair elected in Kassel, Julio Mendívil, announced his resignation due to personal and health problems. In order not to delay all pending tasks, particularly those related to the Canberra conference, the Executive

Committee followed the procedure established in the Statutes by appointing a new Chair, pending the next General Meeting. After much consideration, the Executive Committee decided to appoint Franco Fabbri as Chair from August 2018 until the Canberra conference, in June 2019, where an election will take place.