



2014 Annual General Meeting, Guangzhou, China

Chair: TIES President (Bronwyn Harch) and for Special Business Item 6 – Erin Peterson

Minute Secretary: TIES Secretary (Rosalba Ignaccolo)

Meeting opened at 3.35pm

Attendees: Bronwyn Harch, Rosalba Ignaccolo, Yulia Gel, Quanxi Shao, Erin Peterson, Elena Naumova, Abdel El-Shaarawi, Sylvia Esterby, Ivanka Horova, John Taylor, Warren Paul, Dan Gladish, Zhengyuan Zhu, Hao Zhang, Murali Haran, Sudipto Banerjee, John Braun, *et al.*

Members attending: 21

Via Skype: Alexandra Schmidt, Ron Smith (as observers)

Proxy Votes: 23 received.

1. No apologies were identified. Minutes of previous AGM: Minutes for 2013 AGM were not recorded.
2. **President's report**: President outlined activities of the Society during the past 15 months and outlined upcoming events and issues for the Society. She re-iterated the TIES mission and objectives, and presented the 3-pillar strategy for the Society. For further details see President's report/presentation on the website. There were no questions from the assembly.
3. **Secretary's report**: Secretary outlined membership statistics [current year and trends; membership by country] and highlighted that an email list has been created to strengthen connections within TIES community [strengthening-TIES] and to reach to others interested in TIES activity. For further details see Secretary's report/presentation on the website. There were no questions from the assembly.
4. **Treasurer's report**: the Treasurer summarized the financial state of the Society and outlined the main revenue sources and expenses. She highlighted that changes to the new Canadian non-for-Profit Act will mean that the future annual review engagement could be 0\$, instead of USD\$3500. Financial statements and report of the Auditor can be found in the Treasurer's report on the website. For further details see the presentation on the website too.

Discussion followed the Treasurer's report, starting with questions about finances and then transitioned into discussion on the Special Business item 6 [TIES being a Full Association with ISI].

A summarized account of the discussion is provided below.

- **Revenue generation, expenses and the financial sustainability of the Society** – in the context of its current scenario and possible futures scenarios were discussed. Scenarios based on the current arrangements with ISI; with aspirations and actions underway for enhancing membership; conferences covering all expenses (including awards, speaker expenses); short course revenues; lack of specific details on overhead and administration details from ISI; ability to negotiate down the overhead and administration rates from 2010 to 2014 and into the future.
- **Clarity on ISI expenses** as they relate to overheads, membership fees and other charges (if any) were discussed. It was noted that the ISI – in response to the Board's report to the recent ISI Executive Committee (EC) meeting [Nov 2014] – expressed a willingness to negotiate liabilities from 2010 to 2014 with TIES. Some members were disappointed with the ISI letter – noting the lack of detail on a potential reduction in the liabilities and the request to resolve issues by a specific date [Jan 20th, 2014].

- **Society sustainability - including financial sustainability.** Some members (including one of the Board) expressed the decision to be Full Association in ISI should not be solely based on financial sustainability, but the attractiveness of the Society to attract future members and retain current members, and also the influence the Society could have internationally noting the 3rd pillar of the TIES strategy. Others felt that financial sustainability was the core issue for the decision on TIES being a Full Association.
- **Voting “in good faith”.** Some members felt that without ISI giving specific details and figures for liability “discounts” and the overhead and membership fees – it was hard for them to vote on “good faith” alone and the recommendation provided for the Assembly to consider. Other members looked to the President and Board to provide their views on voting “in good faith”. The President outlined explicitly from her personal perspective the high degree of confidence held for the negotiations (based on her recent discussions with ISI PO and ISI President and VP) and to vote “in good faith”. Noting that the discussion went into other dimensions post the President’s comment - the other Board members present did not explicitly outline their views.
- **Annual TIES Conferences.** A member asked for clarification on TIES continuing to hold annual conferences; and not have conferences within the World Statistical Congress. It was confirmed that TIES will continue to have annual conference, and if a Full Association of ISI the annual conferences would occur as satellite conferences of the WSC.
- **Electronic Voting.** The opportunity to use electronic voting procedures for the AGM and this Special Business decision was discussed as an option. It was confirmed that electronic voting was an option under the TIES By-Laws, but this had only been confirmed post discussion at the Board meetings held on December 15-16th and hence had not been part of the Board deliberations to date re this Special Business item. The Board used the By-Laws to inform the establishment of proxy voting – as was usual practice. Concerns were expressed about the number (23) and distribution of proxy votes to attending TIES members (across 4 individuals: 18, 3, 1, 1). It was noted that TIES has a precedence of conducting an electronic vote – for its elections of Board of Directors in 2013.
- **Extended period of negotiation.** A number of members, including members of the current and previous Boards, outlined their disappointment in negotiations extending over a seven-year period without resolution.
- **Membership structure.** An update on membership options going forward were outlined, noting ISI and its Associations will be restructured in the near future. ISI has indicated that going forward they will not offer a free association in their membership – allowing Associations to set their own membership structure and fees. Some members indicated they thought this was a positive step.
- **Previous benefits from ISI. A question on ISI benefits** included discussion on funding from international agencies to assist people from less developed countries attend TIES conferences (eg Venezuela, India, Alaska). TIES2014 and TIES2015 were not able to access these funding opportunities from ISI.
- **Liabilities to ISI.** A member highlighted TIES must consider paying its liabilities to ISI. This issue must be resolved noting the large amount of funds owing.
- **ISI involvement in environmental applications.** A member highlighted a possibility of ISI establishing an Association focused on environmental applications. Some members felt this was not a reason to reconsider TIES approach or questions of ISI.
- **Management of membership database.** A number of members felt management of the membership list for TIES has been mis-managed by ISI. The TIES Board members commented that they have been very active in the past 3 months to rectify these inaccuracies.

The President summarised the discussion by putting forward a proposal for next steps:

The Assembly is not prepared to take a vote on “TIES being a Full Association of ISI” at this AGM. The Assembly has requested the Board obtain specific information from ISI on the discount on 2010-2014 liabilities and going forward the rate TIES will need to pay for overheads, membership admin and any other fees and a contract outlining services to be provided by ISI to TIES. Once the Board has obtained and communicated this information – to proceed with an electronic vote using the motion – as outlined above. The Assembly acknowledged the consequent incorporation impacts if TIES was a Full Association in ISI.

5. **Other reports [Regions, Standing Committees, and Other Committees]** were not discussed and were left for noting. For further details see reports on the website.
6. **The following motions** were considered by the assembly:

Motion: *[That Members, acknowledge the effort undertaken by the TIES Board to reimagine and revitalize activities of TIES for growth in membership and impact]* was moved by Sylvia Esterby and seconded by Elena Naumova. The motion was passed by the assembly.

Motion: *[That Members, acknowledge through a vote of thanks the effort of the TIES-ISI taskforce]* was moved by Erin Peterson and seconded by Elena Naumova. The motion was passed by the assembly.

The meeting closed at 4.55pm.