

AGS Business Meeting Minutes
2-2.45pm Thursday 3 September 2020
Microsoft Teams

1. Welcome and Address by Ambassador Andreas Michaelis (President Prof. Margaret Littler)

ML welcomes members to first online conference and BM.
ML extends sincere welcome to AM to meeting.

AM pledges support for Anglo-German relations, German language teaching and the endeavours of colleagues.

AM notes that despite the current challenges presented by Brexit and Brexit negotiations, the Embassy will renew its commitment to bilateral relations, especially cultural and linguistic.

AM thanks ML for her leadership of the AGS. He wishes Nicola McClelland all the best in her new role as President and congratulates NM on her recent award of the 2020 Jacob- und Wilhelm-Grimm-Preis.

2. Committee Business (ML)

Members' news

Conference dates (updates following Covid disruption)

2021 Swansea - in situ

2022 Lancaster

2023 TCD

3. Committee Reports

Vice-President (Prof. Nicola McLelland)

NM thanks speakers for their congratulations on her award, and thanks colleagues for their fascinating and important first virtual panel.

NM reports 3 applications to AGS funding schemes:

Travel: 3

Publication: 1

Workshop: 0

NM notes that all applications were awarded funding and encourages applications, especially to the latter. There will be 2 deadlines for funding schemes going forward.

ML thanks NM for her work as Vice President and wishes her all the best in her new role. ML announces that Prof. Peter Davies has been elected new VP and welcomes him to the role and the committee.

Treasurer (Dr Steffan Davies)

SD shares accounts for 2019 with members and notes that these are healthy. SD encourages members to apply for available funding schemes and notes the AGS's commitment to supporting ECRs PGs through these schemes and conference subsidies

SD noted that AGS had a small surplus at the end of the year.

SD offers clarification of eligibility for ECR rate and for those on precarious contracts. It is agreed that the committee should provide further clarification. SD thanks colleagues and committee members for their support, especially Christiane Schönfeld for her help with the Euro account.

SD explains that the CUTG/AGS can offset tax for members, but that the organisation's change in name needs to be documented. SD notes that CUTG changed to AGS in 2009.

ML thanks SD for his work as Treasurer; her thanks are seconded by NM.

The meeting elected Dr Sarah Pogoda to serve as Treasurer with immediate effect, replacing SD. SD thanks SP.

The meeting resolved that Prof. Peter Davies be designated the authorised signatory for the AGS accounts held with Lloyds Bank.

The meeting confirmed Dr Sara Pogoda and Christiane Schönfeld as joint signatories of the AGS Bank of Ireland Euro account, with each signatory authorised to instruct the bank on their own.

Secretary (Dr Dora Osborne)

DO notes good number of new members, especially PGs although usual pre-conference applications are down due to reduced programme. DO encourages colleagues to promote PG membership and asks members to check their standing orders to make sure these reflect revised rates.

Publicity (Dr Seán Williams)

SW thanks Louis Cptgrove for his technical assistance with website and online events.

SW reports that AGS website is up and working and he welcomes contributions and feedback. SW notes the possibility of using AGS funds to revamp the website and welcomes discussion of this.

Conference (Sascha Stollhans)

SS reports that some conference events were in place and happening virtually but it hadn't been possible to run these in person because of Covid restrictions.

SS thanks his predecessor Dr Frauke Matthes and other committee members for their help and support in his first year as Conference Secretary, and those who have contributed to the online conference.

ML thanks SW, SS, and LC for their help in organising and running the online conference.

Postgraduate/ECR (Louis Cotgrove)

LC reports that he has been working with Dr Hilary Potter (UCML Early Career rep) to support PGs and ECRs.

Schools liaison and networks (Prof. Stefan Manz)

SM is to meet with the German History Society's Schools liaison officer at the Embassy to discuss possible ways of collaborating, e.g. with a series of webinars. A meeting was planned for May. This was cancelled but discussions are ongoing but SM will update committee in due course

4. External Reports

German Embassy (Susanne Frane)

SF echoes AM's thanks to colleagues for their work, especially in the face of Brexit and Covid. She hopes to continue the Embassy's good working relationship with the AGS.

SF reports that the German Teaching Award has been postponed due to Covid. The competition remains open and SF invites colleagues to propose nominees.

SF reports Careers Fair has also been cancelled, but will be rescheduled. Funds are still available for outreach through the Thinking German initiative and SF encouraged applications.

SF reports that a programme of university visits has been planned with AM.

SF congratulates NM on her prize and thanks ML and members.

DAAD (Ruth Krahe)

RK also notes her congratulations to NM.

RK reports that the DAAD-University of Cambridge Research Hub for German Studies has secured further funding until 2025 following a very positive evaluation. The current Promoting German Studies programme has been extended and the new round postponed until 2021.

DAAD Lektor/Sprachassistent*innenprogramm (Sandra Deichsel)

SD notes that Brexit and Covid pose challenges to the Assistant programme but the current competition is still open.

SD announces a new German writing competition.

Questions were invited on the written reports submitted on behalf of:

Goethe-Institut, IMLR, WIGS, UCML, FGLS, GSSN, and the GSAI

5. President's Business (Margaret Littler)

ML notes the challenges of past year, in particular Covid.

ML reports that she has sent a letter on behalf of the AGS to Dundee to protest their proposed actions.

Despite these challenges, ML emphasises signs of hope, for example developments in blended learning and resource sharing. The launch of a number of new initiatives (e.g. SHAPE and the British Academy language strategy) are also to be welcomed.

ML also notes the continued work with the Think German network and the Association for Teachers of German.

ML announces the Swansea Centre for Contemporary German Literature exhibition and encourages members to look at the online preview.

ML thanks colleagues and the committee.

NM invites members to express their gratitude to ML and thanks her on behalf of the committee and members for her tireless advocacy and celebration of German Studies.

6. AOB