



Royal College of Science Union

Minutes of the 1st meeting of the Operations Board

Held at 16:00 on 17th June 2016 in the RCSU Office

Present – Polina Yankova (HJT), Sinziana Giju (AAO), Rani Mehta (Science Challenge), Zack Xiang (Web Comms), Sam Robinson (VPA), Lloyd James (Pres., Interim Chair), Michael Edwards (HS, Clerk)

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It was noted, given the withdrawal of our VPO-elect, that LJ will be the Interim Chair of the Operations Board, and the process of selecting a new VPO will be folded into the Union Rep and Council Elections in October. In the meantime, the role will be appropriately divided within the General Committee.

Science Challenge X

- Given that SC is now in its 10th year, the need to hold a top-class event is vital for the future of SC.
 - However, in previous years we have seen various challenges, including low participation from schools, low interest from students, and mismanagement of certain stakeholder relationships.
 - **The following themes will be used this year**
 - There will be entries for photos, videos, podcasts, as well as the traditional essay.
 - We need to check the level of entries this year to see how much interest there was this year to gauge what needs to change next year.
 - LJ will be meeting with Lord Winston, who has been involved heavily with the SC in the past, in September. The initial intention was to consult on improvements, but with the time constraint and not meeting until September, this may be informing rather than consulting.
 - There is a list of potential judges on the Dropbox (access to be granted?).
 - **We need high profile names to attract interest.**
 - LJ offered the idea that the BAHfest judges from last year could be invited – they seemed eager and interested.
 - A google doc to chart judge invites will be set up to make sure no-one is double-contacted.
 - For publicity, we need to get in touch with Felix (Lef, the new Felix editor, has SciComm course contacts that could also be useful.)

- For traction, work needs to start soon (next week) on general aspects of the event (venue, judges)
 - LJ to book SAF G16 for Launch.
- RM suggested the Royal Observatory in Greenwich for the Final – fairly high-profile, RM to look further into for catering, accessibility, etc.
- The **provisional date for the Launch** has been set as **5th December**.
- The **provisional date for the Final** has been set as **23rd March**.
- To get more schools participation, we need to get in touch with Outreach, since their engagement with education in London is strong (re. Reach Out Lab) and getting them on side will be a strong endorsement.
 - ME has some contacts with Chemistry Outreach, and other contacts can be found.
- **The budget is £10 k, a raise from last year, and this includes prize monies.**
 - The cost for venue and catering for the Launch and Final was set at £6 k, with £500 for the Launch (catering and publicity) and the remainder on the Final (venue, catering, etc)
 - RM to look up quotes for venues and catering for the Final.

Website Management

- The quality of the current website was noted to be lacking.
 - ZX is familiar with the framework and should be able to work with it.
 - The current PhySoc website was shown as an exemplar that should be aspired to; we could even scavenge the code and adapt it to our needs.
 - With regards to access to the code – LJ to get in touch with the current President about this.
 - Access will be guaranteed from August 1st.

Academic Affairs

- Nothing to report following Monday's meeting – following today's budget process the mentioned £500, £100 for each Dep Rep and departmental rep team, will come under 'Other' and likely absorb the extra Grant from Union.
 - SG voiced concern that the money might not be necessary and that the expenditure might not be justified. LJ stated that the funding would be there if the Dep Reps needed it and was not required spending.
 - A suggestion was to have all AAO spending go past SG to make sure the spending is justified.

AOB

None

Meeting closed – next physical meeting will be of the General Committee, on Tuesday 21st. Thank you for your attendance.

Summary of Actions

<i>Area</i>	Action	Person (if applicable)
<i>Science Challenge X</i>	Check the last SC entries for demographic (student – schools, what was popular?)	LJ/RM
	Meet with Lord Winston to discuss SC changes	LJ and RM
	Google Doc for Judge invite charting	LJ
	Get in touch with Lef (SciComm graduate and Felix editor)	-
	Book Room for Launch (SAF G16)	LJ
	Research venues and catering options for the Final – keeping in mind budget	RM
<i>Website Management</i>	Get in touch with current Pres. Regarding access to website code and editor	LJ
<i>AAO</i>	Discuss utility of the funding for dept. rep teams	GenCom