

IAIA

Training and Professional Development Committee (TPDC)

Six months report

This report covers the period from May 2008 to October 2008.

Activities during this period, all of which are based entirely on volunteer work, have progressed unevenly as should be expected.

The present 15 members of the TPDC are:

- Arne Dalfelt, Norway, Chair;
- Jonathan Allotey, Ghana, Board Liaison;
- Olivia Bina, Portugal;
- Ainhoa Gonzalez, Spain;
- John Boyle, Canada;
- Juan Carlos Garcia de Brigard, Colombia;
- Matthew Cashmore; United Kingdom, p.t. Sweden;
- Wes Fisher, USA;
- Gene Owens, USA;
- Bobbi Schijf, The Netherlands;
- Lee Wilson, USA;
- Ausra Jurkeviciute, Hungary;
- Lone Kørnøv; Denmark;
- John Fry, Ireland;
- Petrie van Gent, The Netherlands, p.t. Vietnam.

The following issues and activities have been “on the table” during the period:

The 09 training course proposals. Sixteen training course proposals were received this year for IAIA’09 in Accra, Ghana. The overall quality of the proposals was very good, and there was considerable consensus in the entire review group as course evaluations goes. Ten members of TPDC participated in the review which is a bit more than last year and reflects a healthy upward trend. Twelve courses were judged by the TPDC to be of sufficient quality to be offered, based on the average score received, and nine courses were given priority.

Ten training course proposals were approved by the Board for IAIA’09 based on the list of priority proposals as recommended by the TPDC members.

The good quality of the proposals this year is assumed to be the results of the new and much improved guidelines for the proponents as developed by Lee Wilson and the TPDC last year. This also makes it easier to reach a consensus on recommendations to the Board. A separate report was sent to the Board detailing the review work and recommendations given.

The review and evaluation of training course proposals continue to be the main task for the TPDC.

Post-training course evaluations. A proposal by Olivia Bina to include a matrix with quantitative scores was accepted by the TPDC, and this matrix will be included in future course evaluation for participants to fill in.

As for the reliability of the trainers, it has been a concern that quite often the original trainers as evaluated by the committee are changed or replaced by alternative trainers before the course is given. This was discussed at the meeting in Perth and it was agreed that the TPDC will place an expression of concern in the upcoming calls for proposals about this issue. Wes will reword the Call for Proposal text to include this.

Capacity building stipends. This year an impressive total of 66 stipends for conference participants from developing countries were provided through IAIA. Sweden and Norway were the major stipend providers, but also other countries participated with stipends. The Scandinavian supporting institutions have so far developed their own national language proposals, but in the longer run IAIA should be less dependent on individuals to make the system more sustainable. The current IAIA stipend proposal is quite long, and TPDC thinks there should be a brief two-page version. The amount of stipends affects pre-conference course quality and participation, as well as IAIA's overall economy. It was agreed in Perth that Bridget would send the present IAIA proposal to John, Lone and Wes for further discussion and revision.

The Marrakech Action Plan, is a plan for global capacity building for impact assessment. The initiative and its progress were briefly discussed at the TPDC meeting in Perth. The proposal has not had any takers, and members had suggested to remove the whole initiative from the TPDC workplan. It was however decided to lift out a more practical component of the Action Plan and try to develop this into a separate proposal. It was agreed that Wes and Bobbi will review the mentoring component of the plan and try to develop it as a separate proposal. Lee will be kept in the loop.

Capacity building theme forum recommendations. At IAIA 2007 in Seoul, two Theme Forums were held on the subject of IAIA and capacity building. One dealt specifically with IAIA's activities; and the other with Capacity Development in general. In both forums, participants were asked to identify "Do's and don'ts" for capacity development. The capacity building suggestions were quite general and ambitious. One of the ideas was that IAIA should develop a standard curriculum for training. IAIA HQ has collected information on different models for training, and one of these was taken from the public participation association (IEP2) which had developed a P2 curriculum, and now has 20 licensed trainers providing the training. At the Perth meeting it was agreed that Bridget would remind Charlotte and Alan that they were to discuss the topic with the most successful trainers to see if there is interest in developing this proposal further.

The IAIA Website collaboration with UNU. The website subcommittee has made e-learning a relative priority and there has been a discussion going on with the United Nations University (UNU) which perhaps is the institution most advanced in actually doing e-training, about joining forces. A review of the UNU e-course by Lee did however show that there is a need for some additional work in order to make them as effective as IAIA would like. Lee has proposed to work with UNU on e-learning and to contribute to the SEA Wikipedia which was welcomed by the TPDC. Lone will contact Lee to agree on actions, and Lone, Lee and Bobbi will subsequently work together on this.

International registry of IA professionals. The discussions on this topic have gone back and forth. The Australian and New Zealand Institute for Environment have registry schemes going, and so do some other developed countries. There is now an interest in extending such a registry scheme into the global space with particular focus on developing countries (Asia, Africa). A proposal was developed for IAIA to manage or endorse such registration.

However, there have been a number of discussions about this over the last couple of years without IAIA being able to bring this to a consensus conclusion. Part of the reason may be that there seem to be legal risks attached to such certification and registry.

The registry was again discussed in Perth, and subsequent discussions have led to the following recommendations to IAIA, which particularly focus on making the system simple and income generating.:

- 1) Any Individual Member (IM) of IAIA should be able to apply to be a "Globally Registered Professional" (GRP) anytime, even when they first join IAIA, for an extra annual fee, as long as they meet the standard, are successfully peer reviewed, and sign the Code of conduct.
- 2) There should be 2 standards (practitioner and administrator) and 2 levels (regular and "lead", the latter being already in existence).
- 3) There should be an application fee. People who don't meet the standard (e.g. students, academics, researchers) aren't eligible -- this is not intended or designed for everyone (only for practitioners and administrators). Other categories may be added later once IAIA has a few years of experience with the system.
- 4) A panel of 30-40 senior IAIA members would constitute the peer reviewers, and 3-4 people would review each candidate, based on CVs, work done and references.
- 5) There will be application deadlines each year in order to be able to review the candidates at or just before the IAIA conference when many of the senior members are together.
- 6) Continuation as a GRP should be contingent on (a) continuation as an IM with the extra annual fee, (b) a peer review of qualifications every five years, and (c) no serious complaints that they've violated the Code of conduct.
- 7) An adjudication process for the likely very, very few complaints IAIA might possibly get, and this should be relatively simple like the peer review.
- 8) IAIA will need to develop, perhaps with legal advice, a "disclaimer" that being a GRP carries with it absolutely no legal liability on IAIA's part for the professional work of the registered member.
- 9) It doesn't matter if there are other national systems for similar registration, certification, etc. IMs can have as many such affiliations as they want. If the IAIA GRP is of no use to them, they don't have to get it.

- 10) The IAIA GRP registration should be completely independent, especially so that IAIA does not have to decide which of the other affiliations are "recognised" as meeting the GRP standards. The IAIA GRP will be mostly useful to IMs that haven't access to other schemes, especially developing country members.
- 11) Whether or not an IAIA GRP will be entitled to add a designation after their name -- e.g. Jane Doe, IAIA GRP (Lead) -- should be subject to a separate review including legal considerations.
- 12) The M-IAIA category (being an IAIA member for 4 years or more) should be independent of the GRP membership category. The M-IAIA category is open for all.

Arne Dalfelt
TPDC Chair