



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SOCIETY FOR LEARNING ANALYTICS RESEARCH

Date: July 16, 2020, 5.00 pm New York Time
Location: ZOOM
SoLAR Members attending: 21
SoLAR Executive attending: Abelardo Pardo, Oleksandra Poquet, Vitomir Kovanovic, Craig Thompson, Maren Scheffel, Simon Buckingham-Shum, Yi-Shan Tsai, Shibani Antonette, Anouschka van Leeuwen, Bodong Chen, Isabel Hilliger and Grace Lynch

AGENDA

1 PRESIDENT WELCOME – PROFESSOR ABELARDO PARDO

Professor Pardo opened AGM, welcoming everyone to the first virtual AGM meeting due to the COVID-19 crisis. Professor Pardo expressed gratitude to the LAK20 team for managing such a difficult situation and transitioning to a fully virtual conference at short notice.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Motion: Approve AGM Minutes from 2019 moved by Phil Winne and seconded by Craig Thompson. **MOTION: PASSED***

3 PRESIDENT’S REPORT – PROFESSOR ABELARDO PARDO

Professor Pardo started with brief highlights from 2019 that would be expanded during the reports from the different areas. Key achievements included:

2020 Google Scholar Rankings, top 10	JLA accepted for indexing
Strong membership and increased regional	Working group involvement increased
Strong financial position	New Special Interest Groups
New communication initiatives	Learning Analytics recognised as Field of Research
Record 31 students received LASI scholarships	New strategic plan developed

3.1 SOLAR MEMBERSHIP

Professor Pardo provided information about current SoLAR membership. Currently, there are:

Individual Members	312	Newsletter	721
Student Members	179	Institutional	16

- Geographic representation of SoLAR members improving, especially into 2020
- North America, Australia and Europe strongest in representation

3.2 EXECUTIVE TEAM

Professor Pardo highlighted the new Executive team for 2020 that was announced earlier during LAK: 2020 Office Bearers are:

- **President:** Abelardo Pardo, University of South Australia
- **President Elect:** Maren Scheffel, Open University of the Netherlands
- **Vice-president:** Oleksandra Poquet, University of South Australia
- **Secretary:** Vitomir Kovanovic, University of South Australia
- **Treasurer:** Craig Thompson, University of British Columbia

2020 Members at Large are:

- Simon Buckingham-Shum, University of Technology, Sydney
- Yi-Shan Tsai, The University of Edinburgh

- Anouschka van Leeuwen, Utrecht University
- Bodong Chen, University of Minnesota
- Isabel Hilliger, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
- Nia Dowell, University of California, Irvine
- Shibani Antonette, University of Technology Sydney, Australia (student member)

3.3 OVERVIEW OF SoLAR FINANCIAL POSITION

Professor Pardo referred to the financial report that had been previously circulated to members in March and June. This new format provides more detail and includes a statement of financial position as of 31 December 2019. It is important for the Society to maintain strong cash reserves as highlighted this year with the COVID-19 crisis and impact on the conference.

Summary from 2019 Financial Information presented as of 31 December 2019 in CAD:

- Net assets \$235,076
 - Revenue: \$406,475
 - Expenses: \$358,274
- Balance from 2018: \$145,836
Total Available Funds: \$194,037 (+\$41,039 GIC)

He then discussed the overall events budget from LAK18, LAK19 and LAK20 which highlighted that the conference operates very closely to a breakeven budget with a revenue over expenditures ranging from 14,712 to 20,623 USD over these years. The critical point from LAK20 is that there were committed expenses of \$143,175 USD and due to the virtual nature of the conference \$158,464 USD was refunded to participants. If the conference had to have been fully cancelled that would have been a complete loss and eliminated the cash reserves. Professor Pardo emphasized SoLAR's strong commitment to supporting students:

- Eric Duval scholarship: \$84,000 USD provided to support 97 students to date
- Doctoral Consortium scholarships: \$90,000 provided to support 71 students
- LAK conference scholarships: 34 applications received, and 4 scholarships awarded 2 from SoLAR and 2 from Jacobs Foundation

*Motion: Approve 2019 Financial Report moved by Abelardo Pardo and seconded by Phil Winne. **MOTION: PASSED***

3.4 ALLIANCE

The Alliance continues to work together, and a new MOU has been signed with ASCILITE, an Australian, Asia, New Zealand group to foster strong collaboration and increase impact

4 STRATEGIC PLAN

The SoLAR Executive have developed a new Strategic Plan based on feedback from members which can be found on the SoLAR website. The 4 goals are:

- Increase the diversity and inclusivity of the SoLAR Community
- Expand impact and increase understanding of learning analytics
- Communicate the value of membership to all members
- Increase overall engagement with the SoLAR Community

There are priorities, actions, measures, targets and enablers detailed against each goal.

5 WORKING GROUPS

- The Journal continues to grow and has been accepted for indexing in Scopus and Web of Science.
- Inclusion group is maintaining a repository for distributing resources on how the community can support, gain knowledge and take action. Conference scholarships were created.
- Education continues to review and approve submissions of new educational resources and is assisting with the 2nd Edition of the learning analytics handbook
- Membership changed the membership cycle to rolling annual for individual and students members, prepared briefs for institutional members and is focusing on early to mid-career researcher development.
- Events has approved number of regional and local learning analytics events and is streamlining the in-cooperation process.
- Special Interest Groups has approved establishment of 5 new groups this year
- Communication created new webinar and podcast series to disseminate learning analytics related research and practice.
- Website was redeveloped and included improved membership portal and LAK conference websites brought in-house.

6 LAK21

As previously announced LAK21 will be held in Newport Beach California and the team is carefully monitoring the COVID-19 evolving situation. The theme is **“The impact we make: the contributions of learning analytics to learning”**.

7 OPEN DISCUSSION

Reminder that nominations for the Executive open in November 2020 and a new pulse survey will be sent shortly and your feedback is crucial.

- 1) Question: Can you say a bit more about what funding to the SIGs will be spent on?

Response: They can use funding to bring in speakers for events, organize catering for meetings, scholarships to support members attend larger events

- 2) Question: What do you think about the financial challenges in Higher Ed, what commitment will come from Institutional Members? And hints?

Response: We are heading into a delicate time and SoLAR will not be exempt. We anticipate a reduction in membership and sponsorship and there will be significant changes ahead for all of us. The financial hit has not been immediate but will be felt as a delay over the next 6 to 12 months. We are carefully considering how attendance will be impacted for events and will be prudent, it will be a difficult time ahead for the whole sector.

- 3) Comment: I'd like to note how impressive all the activities are. Huge congratulations and thanks to the SoLAR exec and other contributors for sustaining an amazing growth of the field and for continuing to innovate and lead.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 5.56 pm