MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SOCIETY FOR LEARNING ANALYTICS RESEARCH

Date: April 30 2026, 12.30 pm
Location: Scandic Bergen City, Bergen, Norway
SoLAR Members attending: 100
SoLAR Executive attending: Bart Rienties, Blazenka Divjak, Mohammad Khalil, Abhinava Barthakur, Namrata Srivastava, Catherine Manly, Mladen Rakovic, Guanliang Chen, Conrad Borchers, Lixiang Yan, Grace Lynch and Nicole Hoover

Agenda

1 President Welcome – Professor Bart Rienties

Professor Rienties opened the AGM, thanking everyone for attending the conference, and acknowledging the efforts of the hosts and organizing committee for LAK26, particularly in light of the challenges faced this year.

2 Approval of minutes

Motion: Approve AGM Minutes from 2025 as circulated moved by Bart Rienties and seconded by Blazenka Divjak. ***MOTION: PASSED***

3 President's report – Professor Bart Rienties

Professor Rienties thanked the SoLAR community, authors and reviewers before presenting the Annual Report for 2025.

3.1 Progress on Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027

Professor Rienties reviewed the strategic goals from the previous year. While many of the 2025 goals have been achieved, one outstanding issue remains regarding the action plan for the Journal of Learning Analytics, which was scheduled as a separate item for discussion during this meeting.

The Learning Analytics Taskforce will present an update on progress at the Friday Plenary session.

A call was also made for volunteers to contribute to the position paper.

3.2 Membership overview

Professor Rienties provided an overview of current SoLAR membership, which has remained stable. Currently, there are:

Individual Members	300	Newsletter	Around 5,700
Student Members	161	Institutional	16

- Three new Institutional members joined in 2025/2026: Universidad Autonoma de Chile (Chile), University of Zagreb (Croatia) and FernUniversität in Hagen (Germany)

3.3 Overview of SoLAR financial position

Professor Rienties referred to the financial report that had been previously circulated to members as of 31 December 2025 in USD.

Key financial highlights included:

- Net assets overall: **$152,039**
  - Revenue 2025: $360,841 (budgeted: $345,304; projected budget 2025: 311,212)
  - Expenses 2025: $305,426 (budgeted: $372,600; projected budget 2025: 341,895)

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- Net result 2025: **$55,415**

Additional financial observations included:

- Reserves have declined by approximately 40% ($102,899 USD) since 2021 due to ongoing financial challenges following COVID-19 and the loss of major LAK sponsors.
- Financials for LAK26 required adjustments due to the conference hotel shutting down during a hospitality worker strike.
- Revenue over expenditures remained positive for LAK23 through LAK25.
- The projected budget for 2026 currently estimates a deficit of approximately $32,753 USD, though the budget remains under review.

Since 2013 SoLAR has provided more than **$403,000 USD** in financial support through the following:

- 149 LASI Erik Duval student scholarships,
- 128 Doctoral Consortium Scholarships,
- 121 LAK Conference Scholarships,
- 118 SoLAR Membership Scholarships,
- 36 Developing Nations LAK discounts and
- 4 Early Career Researchers Grants.

The projected budget for 2026 has taken into consideration the actuals from 2025 in estimating expected revenues from memberships, conference and sponsorships. Professor Rienties emphasized that SoLAR must be sustainable in the longer term and we need support from the community such as sponsorships for major events and the long-term sustainability of JLA.

> ***Motion:*** *To accept the 2025 Financial Report as circulated and presented moved by Bart Rienties and seconded by Abhinava Barthakur.* ***MOTION: PASSED***

3.4 Executive team 2026

Professor Rienties introduced the 2026 Office Bearers:

- **President:** Blaženka Divjak, University of Zagreb, Croatia
- **Vice President:** Guanliang Chen, Monash University, Australia
- **Vice President:** Mohammad Khalil, University of Bergen, Norway
- **Treasurer:** Abhinava Barthakur, Adelaide University, Australia
- **Secretary:** Catherine Manly, Fairleigh Dickinson University, USA

2026 Members at Large are:

- Kathryn Bartimote, University of Sydney, Australia
- Mladen Raković, Monash University, Australia
- Andrew Zamecnik, Adelaide University, Australia
- Elizabeth Cloude, Michigan State University, USA
- Jionghao Lin, University of Hong Kong, HK
- Lixiang Yan, Tsinghua University, China
- Conrad Borchers, Carnegie Mellon University, USA (Student Representative)

Professor Rienties then handed over proceedings to incoming President Blaženka Divjak for the Journal of Learning Analytics Discussion.

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4 Sustainability for Journal of learning analytics

As outlined in the options paper circulated prior to the AGM, a long-term financial solution is required to ensure the Journal of Learning Analytics continues to operate as a high-quality research publication.

It was noted that:

- Publication costs increased from $19,907 USD in 2023 to $34,997 USD in 2025.
- Approximately 90% of JLA authors are not SoLAR members.
- Current SoLAR membership fees effectively subsidize publication and production costs, estimated at approximately $600 USD per paper.
- A backlog of accepted papers currently exists due to limited publication funding.
- Paper submissions have increased, while editorial costs have been reduced over the past six months.

Options outlined in the paper included a) maintaining the current model which limits the number of articles able to be published per year, b) charge APCs fees to authors based on a sliding scale of membership/non/membership status and/or c) begin formal exploration with a select number of external Academic Publishers.

Discussion points raised by members included:

- External Academic Publishers charge much higher APC fees, up to $3000 USD which will place a burden on authors and reduce submissions
- Option B, charging approximately $600 USD per paper, would likely generate only around $6,000 USD annually based on previous publication levels and would not fully address the budget challenge.
- Inclusion, accessibility, and community autonomy concerns would need careful consideration if pursuing external publishing partnerships.
- SoLAR membership could potentially be required or provide deductions or other benefits for JLA submission and publication.
- Increasing membership fees was suggested as another possibility, though concerns were raised regarding who should bear additional costs.
- Members questioned whether full copyediting services remain necessary and suggested considering models similar to LAK conference proceedings.
- Members discussed potential positive and negative impacts on JLA rankings and impact factors if a large number of conference papers were added but it was noted that LAK publications are currently cited more frequently than JLA in some metrics and full papers are often competitive for journal publication.
- LAK conference ranking has been dropping and LAK authors are paying APC fees to ACM. It is getting increasingly difficult for academics to receive travel approval for conferences as journal publication is more highly valued than conference proceedings. In addition, journal publication counts higher as promotion criteria vs conference publication. It is time to invest in the Society and for LAK proceedings to be published as special JLA edition, this will

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- Increase conference submissions
- Increase ranking of the LAK Conference
- Support Academics in their careers and promotion
- Increase visibility and exposure of JLA

President Divjak stated that deeper exploration of available options would take place over the coming year, with an update at the next AGM.

5 Awards Committee

The Awards Committee works from LAK to LAK, sets-up awards and corresponding nomination processes and eligibility criteria. The 2025/2026 award winners were:

Emerging Scholars:

- Lisa-Angelique Lim for Australasia
- Kamila Misiejuk for Europe
- Shan Li for North America
- Isabel Hilliger for South America

Outstanding Community Work

- Hendrik Drachsler
- Srecko Joksimovic

Reviewer Awards from LAK PC Chairs:

- Best Senior Reviewer Award: Rebecca Ferguson
- Best Senior Reviewer Award: Stephen Fanscali
- Best Program Committee Reviewer: Charles Lang

5.1 Executive team Retirements 2026

Professor Divjak presented Certificates of Appreciation and Recognition for Excellence in Service to Retiring Members –Bart Rienties, Maurice Boothe Jr and Namrata Srivastava. Next Nominations are in November 2026. Interested members are encouraged to approach current Executive Committee members.

Meeting Adjourned at 1.30 pm

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