

Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting of members of the Academia Europaea.
Held at the LMU, Munich, on 9th October 2023. 17:00 – 19:00 (Munich time)

Present [in the room] - The President and 72 members.

The President, Professor Marja Makarow welcomed members to Munich and thanked the local organisers (Professor Don Dingwell and Dr Friederike Brandthaus).

1. The draft agenda [previously published on the AE website]. The announcement of the AGM had been published on the AE website and made known to all members by E-newsletter more than 21 days in advance. A series of online ballots had been announced and taken (between 20 – 30 September) on specific items of business (adoption of the annual accounts, annual activity report, re-appointment of examiners and recommended membership subscriptions for 2024). The draft agenda and all papers associated to the AGM were available on the website in advance and had been tabled for delegates in the room. No motions or resolutions from the membership had been received in advance, as set out in the notice for the AGM. **The motion to approve the draft agenda was adopted by the members present.**

2. The minutes of the AGM of 2022. The President called for any objections to adoption of the draft minutes of 2022. There were no objections and the note was duly adopted and signed. The President invited questions. None was forthcoming.

3 Transaction of Ordinary Business

3.1 The President then gave a short report of the activities and highlights from the 2022 Trustees (activity) report that had been tabled in advance of the AGM. The President took the opportunity to thank Professor Lars Engwall the chair of the HERCuLES (Higher Education, Research and Culture in European Society) standing group, for their continuing programme of high-level symposia, held in collaboration with the Wenner Gren Foundations (Sweden) including. A symposium entitled “The Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions” had taken place in Uppsala during May. A further event had also taken place this year (2023) and would be described in the next annual report. In addition, members were informed about a recent tenth anniversary event held at the Wroclaw Hub. The President thanked the Heinz-Nixdorf Foundation for their continuing sponsorship of the Erasmus Medal and lecture and recorded thanks to Professor Gulyas as the organiser of the new inaugural ‘Sydney Brenner’ Prize. This would be presented during the Munich 2023 conference. A note of thanks was recorded in the minutes, to recognise the staff at the Regional Knowledge Hubs, who continued to develop a wide ranging and highly attractive range of activities. Individual Hub reports were given later in the AGM. The President reported that the AE had been a successful participant in the second SAPEA (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies) project and that planning for a third (SAPEA) project was now underway. The President reported that the 2022 nominations round had resulted in the election of 466 new members – a 9% increase. The President reported on the continuing strengthening of the European Review Journal and on the establishing of a Task Force for Environmental sustainability. The outputs of the group’s initial event would be reported at the conference. Members present were invited to ask questions. None was

forthcoming. The President reported that an online ballot on the motion: **“That the AGM adopt the 2022 Trustees report”**, had been approved by those members voting, in advance (174 in favour, 1 vote against).

3.2 The chair invited the Honorary Treasurer Professor Stephen Evans to present the 2022 annual accounts and financial report. The accounts and associated supporting data had been tabled in advance. These had been accompanied by a summary report from the treasurer. The treasurer described the governance and financial management of the AE and then summarised the outcomes as: total 2022 income of 316,117 GBP (362,401 Euros), with member subscriptions contributing 242,894 GBP (278,476 Euros) of that total. Total expenditures were 343,891 GBP (394,275 Euros). The release of the AE from the constraints of COVID had affected AE activity and expenditure. This resulted in an increase in costs associated with a return to more physical meetings (78,754 GBP in 2022). The treasurer, reported that the finances of the AE were reasonably stable and showing a good positive progression. There had been no immediate, unforeseen risks on entering the new financial year (2023). The treasurer did raise a note of caution, that the non-member revenue base was now very weak and that the AE depended almost entirely on member donations/subscriptions income for general running costs. He emphasised that future effort must go into identifying possible new sponsors and supporters. An online motion to approve the accounts had been put to an e- ballot of all members, in advance. The motion: **“That members adopt the 2022 accounts”** had been approved by 170 votes to zero.

The treasurer invited members to contact him with any suggestions of potential new external sources of sponsorship and financial support and invited any members with experience of fund raising to join the sponsorship network and/or the Finance subcommittee.

A note of thanks was recorded for sponsors as follows: For the Heinz-Nixdorf Foundation (Erasmus prize and lecture), the sponsors of the Brenner Prize. Professor Eva Kondorosi for the Adam Kondorosi Plant Sciences awards, To the Swedish Riksbankens Jubileumsfonds for their support to Wroclaw Hub activities in 2021/22 and to the Wenner Gren Foundations for their continuing support to HERCuLES group activity.

3.2.1 An online ballot to **re-appoint the AE examiners Messrs Keith Vaudrey and Co Ltd, London** - had been approved by 168 votes to one.

3.2.2 An online ballot of members **to approve the ‘recommended’ subscription rates for 2023** - had been approved by 159 votes to 12, as follows.

The rates adopted were:

Members up to and including 65 years of age – 150 Euros

Members 66 – 75 years of age – 85 Euros

Foreign members – 85 Euros

Members over 75 years of age voluntary donations would be welcomed, but were optional.

Members also approved an establishment fee for all new (2023) members of 150 Euros, irrespective of age at the time of their acceptance of membership. This motion was also further confirmed by a room vote, of 70 for and 2 against.

The Treasurer invited questions from the members attending. No questions were forthcoming.

Other business, Reports.

4. Future Developments. The President reported on two recent developments.

4.1 The creation of a new AE Munich legal entity.

Professor Makarow reported that as of 20th September 2023, and new AE Munich legal entity (Academia Europaea e.V¹.) had been formally established. This development had been strongly endorsed by the AE Independent Advisory Group in 2022. All members of the AE had been informed of the plans at the AGM of 2022 and the strategic plan refers to the Board of trustees keeping the post-BREXIT situation under review. The background and motivation for this development was that the AE has its legal base in the UK and is a UK registered company and not-for-profit charity. None of the current Hubs is, in themselves, legal entities. Until Brexit, the UK was a full member of the Horizon programmes and our original SAPEA funding came through the EU to London and Cardiff. Post-Brexit, the AE was still a member of the consortium of SAPEA Plus, but unable to be a beneficiary of EU funds. Current SAPEA plus funds that flow~~s~~ to the AE and Cardiff comes via the UK Research Funding Agency under UK-EU post-Brexit arrangements. This situation was a risk and was not guaranteed to be available for future SAPEA/Horizon programmes with the potential of exclusion of the AE from future EU funding streams. The Board and the IAG therefore agreed that the establishing of a separate legal entity at Munich (in an EU member state) would guarantee future AE participation, not only in SAPEA, but also in other possible EU funded projects. Since the creation of the new legal entity, the UK government has agreed to re-associate to the Horizon Europe programme that ends in 2027. However, this does not alter the current funding arrangements for SAPEA plus and the AE. Therefore, the intention is that the new Munich entity will become the AE HQ for all dealings with the EU and facilitate access for all members of the AE. The President then reported, that planning for SAPEA three is underway and is anticipated to cover five years, the period from 2025 to 2029. The call will open in 2024. The President also reported that the establishing of the new legal entity would not affect members. Both entities would continue for the foreseeable future and would co-administer aspects of the AE on behalf of all members. Members are de facto, members in common of both entities. These will still be a single identity for the AE, as far as external audiences are concerned.

4.2 The CoARA [[Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment](#)] initiative and impacts on the AE.

The President reported that AE had signed the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, laid down by CoARA (Coalition on Advancing Research Assessment), together with over 600 European universities, academies and research funding organizations (national ones and the ERC). According to the CoARA principles,

¹ eingetragener Verein

assessment of Principal Investigators and their research proposals should focus on qualitative indicators, for which peer review is essential, while using quantitative indicators responsibly. The Board had reviewed our own guidelines for the assessment of candidates for election to membership. The new nominations cycle (opening on 10th October – 31st January) would incorporate aspects of the CoARA approach, placing less emphasis on metrics as dominant measures of excellence.

5. Professor Ole Petersen (Academic Director of the Cardiff Hub and AE deputy representative of the AE board on the SAPEA Board, gave a presentation to members on the results from SAPEA plus (ending in 2024) and the activity of the Cardiff Hub in 2022/3. The 2022 Hub report is available as an annex to the 2022 trustees report and via the Cardiff Hub website [<https://aecardiffknowledgehub.wales/>]. The SAPEA reports and Cardiff engagement can be found via the Cardiff website and at the SAPEA website [<https://scientificadvice.eu/>]. Specific Cardiff Hub activities reported included:

A series of Cardiff-AE briefing series of interviews. The EU funded ‘CALIPER’ project [[on gender equality in STEM](#)]. The 30th anniversary workshop for the European Review (2023). A Pathophysiology meeting was held at the Leopoldina (2023) and an AE event held at the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome (2023). Cardiff had also organised an AE Sustainability Task Force meeting (2023). Prof Petersen reported that the Cardiff Hub had taken over as the lead centre to coordinate AE corporate communications work during the year.

The President thanked Professor Petersen for his presentation and reported to the AGM that he would step down as a trustee at the end of 2022. Prof. Petersen had over many years of service, covered many functions on behalf of the AE and had in recognition, received the Gold award of the Academy in 2021. He would remain as Director of the Cardiff Hub, but would step down as the SAPEA Board alternate for the AE. Professor Don Dingwell as AE Vice president and Director of the new Munich legal entity and Hub would take up that position.

6. There followed a series of short presentations on past and future activity, by the Knowledge Hubs, as follows:

Professor Jaume Bertranpetit –Academic Director of the Barcelona Hub. Main points were:

The Hub was re-located from the Insitute of Catalan Studies to the building of the FCRI (The Catalan Foundation for Research and Innovation) and a new three-year Hub agreement signed with the AE. A new steering committee would be created with representatives drawn from all four AE classes. The HYPATIA prize (Hypatia European Science Prize)² will issue a call for nominations on 10th October – the fourth cycle will focus on candidates from Science & Technology, including Mathematics. It will be awarded in 2024 together with the Barcelona City Council. There will be a new programme of high-level scientific debates, conducted in English and a programme of wider interest (Agora debates) targeted at the general public and young people in Spanish. These will take place at the Academy of Barcelona (RACAB) on Wednesdays. The 2023 ‘Disputatio’ topic will address Innovation and Creativity: for

² See <https://www.barcelona.cat/barcelonaciencia/en/research/research-city/hypatia-european-science-prize#:~:text=The%20prize%20has%20a%20monetary,Life%20and%20health%20sciences>

science to art. A new Hub focus will be developed on Science and Art and could be the theme of a future Building Bridges AE annual conference.

Professor Eystein Jansen Academic Director of the Bergen Hub. Main points were a focus on issues of relevance to the Baltic region including Arctic issues. A closer cooperation with the Nordic Academies and development of a new podcast series.

Professor Andras Baldi – representing the Budapest Hub. The main points were that the Hub had launched a new activity on the frontiers of urban conservation and restoration; a series of events with the Moldovan Academy and a programme of ERC starting grant mentoring events. In addition, there had been a specific scientific event on Neonicotinoids.

Professor David Prangishvili Academic Director of the Tbilisi Hub. Reported on a reorganisation of the Hub and the introduction of a rotating series of Academic Directors. A programme of public understanding of Microbiology lectures had been introduced in addition to the continuation of the existing Hub programmes.

Professor Arkadiusz Wójs – Academic Director of the Wroclaw Hub. Reminded the AGM that the Hub provides a range of administrative support services for the corporate centre (assisting London and Graz with support for new members, undertaking the drafting and publication of the member directory and general AE leaflets). In addition to a comprehensive activity programme he reported on an upcoming symposium on the Anthropocene.

Dr Helmut Leitner - Manager of the Graz data Centre presented slides outlining the operation of a new online-only nominations process and demonstrated several other functionalities of the ae-info website including the member-only pages that allowed members to update their own data and access the European review journal free of charge.

7. European Review. The editor-in-chief of the AE Journal Professor Alban Kellerbauer, reported on developments. He announced that from 2025, the journal would become fully open access (Gold). AE Members would not be limited in their ability to publish, as Cambridge University press had agreed to waive (cover) publishing fees for any members who did not have access to institutional funding or access to other publishing agreement relationships with the press. This development would benefit the journal by widening visibility and access to published papers. The impact on the AE finances would be neutral. The journal would still publish six issues per year and up to two additional [sponsored] supplements.

8. The President then reminded members that the new call for nominations for election to membership would open on 10th October and close on 31st January. The dates and place for the 2024 annual conference would be announced as soon as possible.

There were no other interventions or questions from the floor and the President declared the 35th Annual general meeting of members closed at 19:30pm

Minutes signed at Wroclaw on 26th November 2024

Marja Makarow, President