To: RAISE Members From: Jill LeBihan

Date: 2nd September 2021 1-2pm (UK time)

RAISE Annual General Meeting 2021

Location: Teams

In Attendance:

Committee: Stephen McVeigh (Chair), Jill LeBihan (Acting Secretary), Tania Struetzel (Treasurer), Jenny Marie (Special Interest Group Coordinator) Clare Cotton (Conference Coordinator), Kiu Sum (Student Officer), Madalene George (Ordinary Committee Member), Ellie Mayo-Ward (Ordinary Committee Member), Ella Dyer (RAISE Administrator) Rachel Forsyth (Journal Editor in Chief), Laura Callaghan (Communications Officer), Eugenie Johnson (Student Member), Meerav Shah (Student Member)

Members: Colin Bryson, Pamela Calabrese, Francis Charis, Ruta Furmonaviciene, Lia Green, Beatrice Hayes, Grace Nguyen, Matina Rassias, Daniel Tinkler, Rob Traynor, Nina Walker, Kathryn Woods

Apologies: Tom Lowe (Acting Vice-Chair)

MINUTES

Item		Lead
1		Steve McVeigh (Chair)
	SMV welcomed all to the AGM and covered housekeeping points.	
	All committee members were present except for Tom Lowe, who sent his apologies. The committee wished Tom a happy birthday.	
2	Minutes and matters arising from previous AGM	Jill LeBihan
	The minutes from the previous AGM, 3 rd September 2020, which took place online, were unanimously accepted and approved as a fair and accurate record of the meeting.	(Acting Secretary)
	Minutes from the 2020 AGM are available on the RAISE website at https://www.raise-network.com/agm-minutes	
	There were no matters arising. All the standing items on the agenda, such as the elections and updates of RAISE activities will be covered in items below.	

	There were no outstanding actions from the 2020 AGM meeting that needed to be revisited.	
3	Review of the 2020/21 Extraordinary Circumstances Committee operations and online elections for 2021/22:	Steve McVeigh (Chair)
	The below roles were extended by one year at the 2020 AGM and are currently open for election via online voting system: Tom Lowe – Acting Vice Chair until Sep 2021 Tor Jill LeBihan – Acting Secretary until Sep 2021 Tor Jenny Marie –SIG Coordinator until Sep 2021 Ellie Mayo-Ward – Acting Ordinary Committee Member until September 2021 Madalene George – Acting Ordinary Committee Member until September 2021 Notice of co-option of student committee members:	
	Eugenie Johnson and Meerav Shah RAISE members were invited to submit a self-nomination for the roles listed below. • The roles that will be elected to are: • Vice Chair • Secretary • SIG Co-ordinator • Communications Officer • Marketing Officer • Ordinary Committee Members (2) • Student Committee Members (2) For the first time in the history of RAISE, the elections were held online via the Choice Voting platform and the elections were open for the duration of the conference.	
	No one commented on this item.	Chave BAN/sigh
4	Constitution: review and approve changes The RAISE constitution was refreshed and revised and circulated with the information email sent out to delegates. TS provided an overview of the amendments, which were in large to bring the document up to date. For example, the slightly outdated aims and objectives were tidied up and wording was added to accommodate the need for the option of online committee meetings. The committee roles/positions were updated to include the role of marketing officer and an appointed Ordinary Committee Member.	Steve McVeigh (Chair)
	More detail was provided on the election process, namely, that	

the option to 'reopen for nomination' would be added as an option for any role with only one candidate standing.

SMV welcomed comments or queries about the amended constitution.

DT questioned what system was being used for the election and suggested it could be made clearer in the constitution as it was currently left open for interpretation. In response, the committee would take this feedback onboard when reviewing the online voting system this year, and would be clearer about how rankings would dealt with in future.

The amendments to the constitution were unanimously approved and the revised constitution will be published online in due course.

Actions

All – review and discuss the online election process and voting system at the next committee meeting in November

EJ – Publish the amended constitution on the RAISE website

5 Review of RAISE activities for 2020-21: Committee Report

- Finances

TS shared the budget spreadsheet via screen-share and thanked ED for managing the spreadsheet.

The financial year reporting now runs from July-August, which was approved at the last AGM. The starting were assets healthy thanks to past conferences.

The budget/spending was stripped down at the last AGM as a result of the pandemic, as there was no conference income in 2020 and TS wanted to ensure financial stability in the face of uncertainty about what the impact the pandemic would have.

In 2020 the budget was around £17k but just under £10k was spent. The main expenditure was for the administrator, the journal and liability insurance. A small amount was also invested into relaunching the RAISE website.

Many of the usual costs (e.g. travel expenses) did not happen, which has left RAISE with a healthy bank account for the forthcoming year.

TS updated those present about the current arrangement of having two bank accounts and why it is the way it is.

RAISE Committee

Tania Struetzel (Treasurer)

TS welcomed questions but no issues were raised. SMV thanked TS for hr careful stewardship, especially over the past uncertain years

Communications and networking

EJ provided an overview of the website relaunch, including the process of gaining committee approval to move from Wordpress to Wix. The main aim was to improve the user experience by creating a more accessible and easier to navigate space for SIGs and activities, as well as ensuring the website was more user-friendly for the committee to update. EJ gave an update on the plan to introduce student blogs over the coming year.

EJ provided an overview of how RAISE has been more active on social media over the past year, using Twitter to great effect to promote tickets and the self-nomination process for elections. RAISE now has an Instagram account with the hope of reaching students, in particular, and growing this over the next year. EJ shared future plans to create a RAISE signature for committee members to use on their email.

The committee gave their thanks to EJ and MS for their hard work relaunching the website. The way the conference, in particular, was communicated, was thanks to the fantastic new website and social media posts.

- Journal

Two issues had been published as normal. There has been a huge response to the call for articles for a pandemic-themed edition, with a really good range of both staff and student opinion pieces. Two special-editions may be required to accommodate all of the submissions.

The editorial board has been expanded over the past year with five new members, who have found the developmental support really helpful.

RF reminded everyone that the journal is always keen to welcome new reviewers – it's easy to sign up on the website.

SMV thanked RF and team, and especially Katrina Ingram for all their hard work.

NW commented on how useful the journal session was – especially for encouraging people to apply to become a reviewer even though no experience in the past

- SIGS

Eugenie Johnson, Meerav Shah (Student Members)

Rachel Forsyth (Editor in Chief)

Jenny Marie (Acting SIG Coordinator) JM provided an update of the past year. The pandemic has been hard for the SIGs, but a number of events have run online, including the sessions that ran in place of the 2020 conference.

The difficult decision was made to close the PG practice SIG, which had been struggling for a while, however, a new 'Early Career Researchers (ECR) SIG was established by KS in September and ran a successful event in April.

The partnership SIG has an event planned for 9th September 2021.

SMV thanked JM for the update and for overseeing the coordination of the SIGs over the past few years, and acknowledged how the SIGs are an integral part of RAISE, and help to create the sense of community and knowledge-sharing, which is at the heart of what RAISE does.

- Student engagement

KS provided a brief overview of the ECR group and the importance of establishing and keeping connections with those in the transition mode between staff and student.

MS provided an update on the progress of the student blogs. There would be a dedicated space on the website for students to submit 500-word pieces on an area of interest, with the intention of channelling some of the submissions into journal articles.

Some submissions had already been received, although the website page was yet to be launched, but plans were in place to launch and promote on social media (Twitter and Instagram) and JISCmail in the coming months.

SMV thanked both KS and MS and commented that both the ECR group and student blogs were a great development.

Buddy scheme

After a successful pilot, the buddying scheme ran properly last year. There were 65 sign-ups and 33 match-ups (compared to 70 last year)

The buddies came from 45 institution across 3 countries (Australia, USA and a good spread across the UK)

Feedback was recently requested and was overwhelmingly positive – 95% had been in touch with their buddy, 75% had met at least once. In general, participants had really enjoyed it and would rate their match highly (4/5 stars) for the relevant discussions that they gained something from. 73% would stay in touch long-term.

Kiu Sum (Student Officer), Meerav Shah (Student Member)

Madalene George (Ordinary Committee Member) MG planned to relaunch the buddy scheme at some point between September and Christmas.

SMV thanked MG for all her hard work and how well-received the buddying scheme was by those who had participated

Jill LeBihan (Acting Secretary)

- RAISE Reading Group

JLB provided an update on the RAISE reading group, which is usually held on the first Tuesday of month on the Advance HE website.

There have been 9 reading groups between September 2020 – August 2021, with breaks in January, April and August.

The reading group is a warm and friendly space for participants to chat, with a varied and lively turnout, usually consisting of about 6-10 attendees (from 12-17 registrants). The reading group on Chatbots proved to be extremely popular, with 68 registrants.

Jill LeBihan (Acting Secretary)

- RAISE Membership

Anyone who is signed up to the RAISE JISCmail list is considered a member of RAISE. Membership had increased by 151 in the past year, from 1096 to 1205 members. Members tended to join in a slow trickle, rather than after a push.

There were 130 registered on the RAISE Advance HE Connect site, most of whom were also members on the JISCmail list. The Advance HE Connect site is used almost exclusively for the operation of the reading group.

JLB provided an update of plans to understand the RAISE membership better (JISCmail vs Social Media) in the coming year once the Secretary and Marketing Officer roles were confirmed in the 2021 elections.

5 Finances and budget of RAISE for 2021/22

- to approve, the finances and budget of the RAISE organisation.

TS proposed a budget for forthcoming year of £23k. The proposed budget was higher than the previous year because the committee was hoping to have some more in-person activities this year. For example, the January retreat was back in the budget, which would mean there would be student committee member expenses to pay.

Other expenditure included the liability insurance, SIG expenses, RAISE bidding fund, admin pay, website costs and marketing, committee sponsorship to attend conference and publicity and

Tania Struetzel (Treasurer)

	the journal.	
	TS highlighted that the 2021 online conference was not a money-making event, and that all surplus would go into the bidding fund.	
	The budget was unanimously approved by all present.	
7	RAISE Conference 2022 at University of Lincoln Update	Clare Cotton (Conf. Coord.)
	CC confirmed plans for an In-person conference hosted by Lincoln University 7-8 th September 2022.	
	The theme remained the same — "student as producer" and would reflect where we have come from and where we go next, and especially how Higher Education has moved on rapidly in the past couple of years.	
	The conference was originally a 10 year celebration of RAISE, but would now be 10+2 years!	
	There will be a refreshed call for contributions sent out early 2022 (Jan/Feb), which will close in April for a review by panel. Presenters will be confirmed April/May.	
	CC reiterated how much the committee was looking forward to welcoming everyone to Lincoln in Sept 2022	
8	Thanks to committee members standing down SMV thanked Jenny Marie and Meerav Shah on behalf of the committee and wider RAISE network for their valuable contribution and dedication to the RAISE committee. They had been a huge boon to the committee and would be missed greatly. SMV wished them well with their future endeavours and the committee hopes to see them at future events.	Steve McVeigh (Chair)
9	Any other business	Steve McVeigh (Chair)
10	There was no other business. Date of next general meeting – 8 th September 2022 at University of Lincoln (times TBC)	