



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SOCIETY FOR LEARNING ANALYTICS RESEARCH

Date: March 16, 2023, 12.30 pm CDT
Location: ZOOM
SoLAR Members attending: 123
SoLAR Executive attending: Maren Scheffel, Bart Rienties, Yi-Shan Tsai, Blazenska Divjak, Nia Nixon, Isabel Hilliger, Ioana Jivet, Shibani Antonette, Anouschka van Leeuwen, Rogers Kaliisa, Paul Prinsloo, Roger Azevedo, Mohammad Khalil and Grace Lynch

AGENDA

1 PRESIDENT WELCOME – PROFESSOR MAREN SCHEFFEL

Professor Scheffel opened AGM, welcoming everyone to the first hybrid AGM meeting. Professor Scheffel expressed gratitude to everyone for attending.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Motion: Approve AGM Minutes from 2022 as circulated moved by Maren Scheffel and seconded by Ioana Jivet. **MOTION: PASSED***

3 PRESIDENT’S REPORT – PROFESSOR MAREN SCHEFFEL

Professor Scheffel started with thank you to the hosts and organizing committee for LAK23, the SoLAR community, authors and reviewers and then proceeded to details for the Annual Report for 2022. Highlights from 2022 to be expanded during the reports from the different areas included:

2022 Google Scholar Rankings, top 15, only conference	Extensive financial support for students and scholarships
CORE Ranking A for LAK	Reduced LAK registration fees for individuals from underdeveloped nations
Increased communication avenues (Nexus Blog, Webinars, Podcasts)	Created and awarded Early Career Research Grant

3.1 DETAILS ON INCREASED COMMUNICATION AVENUES

- The Nexus blog started in October 2020 and really saw a lot of activity throughout 2021 and 2022 with almost 2000 unique reads from the website.
- The podcast series saw 4 episodes in 2021 and 5 in 2022 with listeners from over 50 countries.
- 19 Webinars in total since started; with 6 of them in 2021 and 4 more in 2022 and one earlier this year. Almost 3500 have registered for the webinars and over 4000 views on YouTube in the pasts 2 years.

3.2 SOLAR MEMBERSHIP

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

Individual Members	319	Newsletter	Around 5,600
Student Members	191	Institutional	16

- Geographic representation of SoLAR members increasing with 46 countries represented
- North America, Europe and Australia strongest in representation and slowly increasing numbers in Africa/Middle East, and South- and Central America.
- Two new Institutional members: University of Wisconsin - Madison (USA) and Technische Universität München (GER)



3.3 OVERVIEW OF SoLAR FINANCIAL POSITION

Professor Scheffel referred to the financial report that had been previously circulated to members. Summary from 2022 Financial Information presented as of 31 December 2022 in CAD:

- Net assets overall: \$337,007
 - Revenue 2022: \$244,805 (budgeted: \$165,500)
 - Expenses 2022: \$192,646 (budgeted: \$210,000)
 - Net result 2022: \$52,160

SoLAR is continuing to navigate the financial impact of COVID very well. While we projected a loss when looking at “excess of revenue over expenditures”, there was actually a win of \$52,160 CAD. This is due in large part to the support of our Community Members who continued with memberships from our institutional, individual and student members. There were strong registrations for both LAK and LASI which were both fully virtual.

The projected budget for 2023 has taken into consideration ongoing financial impacts from COVID and has reduced expected revenues from memberships, conference and sponsorships. In addition, we were projecting for the first time a loss from LAK at the time this financial statement was prepared due to the uncertainty of overall registration for the first hybrid conference.

As we just saw, SoLAR is prepared to manage a deficit budget due to its strong reserves rather than reduce critical expenditures on scholarships, events, handbook, journal and working groups.

Professor Scheffel emphasized SoLAR’s strong commitment to supporting students to date with a total of \$266,758 USD:

- LASI Eric Duval scholarship: \$105,958 USD provided to support 133 students to date
- Doctoral Consortium scholarships: \$130,250 USD provided to support 105 students
- LAK conference scholarships: \$24,750 to support 110 recipients
- SoLAR membership scholarships: 113 recipients for a total of \$5,800 USD

This year:

- 19 Conference scholarships awarded - with 2 fully supported including travel, accommodation and registration to attend in person from Morocco and Uganda, 17 online participants from South Korea, Brazil, Kenya, Hungary, Portugal
- 9 DC student scholarships with 4 others supported by NSF
- Early Career Research Grant

Motion: To accept the 2022 Financial Report as circulated and presented moved by Maren Scheffel and seconded by Isabel Hilliger. **MOTION: PASSED**

4 WORKING GROUPS

Summary of activities from the Working Group included:

- The Journal has published 4 volumes this year with an overall acceptance rate of 19% in 2022. Starting in the summer of 2023, the journal will welcome paper abstracts that will be opened for peer commentary to promote cross-community dialogue. There is an ongoing consultation to change the CC license to CCBY as required by many funders.
- Inclusion group has implemented a number of initiatives aimed to promote, elevate and foster an open inclusive environment including open access LAK proceedings, tracking LAK papers

- with an inclusion focus, recruiting a balanced and diverse membership, hosting an Inclusion Panel at LAK since LAK21 and offered a new LAK registration discount for developing nations.
- Education updated the ethics requirements for *In Cooperation* status, launched the LA PhD Thesis Hub with Students SIG, and collated 4 free OERs 4Educators to learn about LA.
 - Membership established Institutional Members Google Group, started workshop series for Institutional Members and increased the number of student, individual and institutional members.
 - Events approved in cooperation status events and SoLAR LASI Locals for ALASI (8-9 Dec. 2022) and Empowering Learners in the age of AI (6-8 Dec. 2022).
 - Special Interest Groups approved the establishment of two new SoLAR SIGs in 2022: African Network for LA Research (ANLAR) & Responsible Learning Analytics (RELA). Currently oversees 9 SoLAR SIGs and supports with funding if required.
 - Communication expanded working group and produced in 2022 5 podcasts, 4 webinars and bi-monthly newsletters. Curates a LA expertise database to increase diversity and inclusion.
 - Website continued redevelopment with LAK conference websites now incorporated into main SoLAR website, improved membership portal and enhanced social media presence.
 - ECR Research Grant launched the inaugural ECR research grant in March 2022 and funded an early career researcher (Dr Catherine Manly) in June 2022.
 - IAALDE continuing with the best paper exchange between societies and joint writing of papers on role of technology in education.

4.1 AWARDS COMMITTEE

Awards Committee works from LAK to LAK, sets-up awards and corresponding nomination processes and eligibility criteria. For 2022/2023 awarded Emerging Scholar Award, one per geographical region: Mohammed Saqr (Europe), Renzhe Yu (North America) and Yizhou Fan (Australasia). The Community Work Award hasn't been awarded this year due to limited nominations.

4.2 EXECUTIVE TEAM 2023

Professor Scheffel thanked everyone for their support over the past two years as President and handed over to Professor Bart Rienties as President. Professor Rienties thanked Maren for her many years of service and introduced the 2023 Office Bearers:

- **President:** Bart Rienties, The Open University, UK
- **Vice President:** Blaženka Divjak, University of Zagreb, Croatia
- **Vice President:** Nia Nixon, University of California (Irvine), USA
- **Treasurer:** Isabel Hilliger, Pontificia Universidad Catholica de Chile, Chile
- **Secretary:** Ioana Jivet, Goethe University Frankfurt/DIPF, Germany

2023 Members at Large are:

- Rogers Kaliisa, University of Oslo, Norway
- Paul Prinsloo, University of South Africa (Unisa) in Pretoria, South Africa
- Olga Viberg, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
- Lisa-Angelique Lim, University of Technology Sydney, Australia
- Mohammad Khalil, University of Bergen, Norway
- Kathryn Bartimote, University of Sydney, Australia
- Adele Smolansky, Cornell University, USA

Professor Rienties announced the new Chairs of all the Working Groups and highlighted with thanks all the community members who have been assisting across the various groups. Professor Rienties



presented Certificates of Appreciation and Recognition for Excellence in Service to Retiring Members – Yi-Shan Tsai, Shibani Antonette, Anouschka van Leeuwen, Roger Azevedo and Maren Scheffel.

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Professor Rienties announced events and calls planned for 2023.

- Application for the SoLAR ECR Research Grant 2023 will be open until May 3rd. The theme for 2023 is *Enhancing Learning with Learning Analytics in an AI Powered World*.
- This year LASI will take place in person June 6-8, 2023 at the National University of Singapore. The program includes 10 Workshops and 10 Tutorials. Erik Duval Scholarships are available, and applications must be submitted before March 31st.
- LAK2024 will take place March 18-22, 2024 in Kyoto, Japan.
- Nominations for the Executive will open in November 2023.

6 OPEN DISCUSSION

A suggestion raised was to seek industry partnerships with the EdTech space so that SoLAR can influence software development.

The editors of JLA flagged they are considering changing the creative commons license 3.0 of JLA -> “things can’t be used commercially” to CC-BY. Several grant-giving bodies demand CC-BY (e.g., HORIZON). Nothing will be changed retroactively. Please contact the editors for input, comments and suggestions. While there is support for CC-BY a former JLA editor will reach out directly to the new editors to explain why it has been considered and rejected in the past.

JLA will make a LAK special section, more information to follow.

Reminder to vote for the best poster and best demo.

Professor Rienties thanked everyone for attending in person and virtually and closed the meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 1.30 pm CDT