

Minutes of the European Forum Meeting

Saturday 27 July 2019

Reykjavik, Iceland

Welcome and words of inspiration

European Forum chair Elisabeth Stärner welcomed the 112 members present and introduced the current members of the European Forum committee .

She then set the tone for the meeting by reading a poem, written by her daughter Maria, entitled *Future*. The main aims for the meeting are to unite European members and to discuss matters relevant to our region.

The meeting has been allocated a shorter session than has previously been the case since the whole conference has been shortened by one day.

There were no suggestions for items to be included under Any Other Business.

Minutes of Austin 2018

There were no comments to the minutes.

Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

Elisabeth reported discussion of a suggestion that the Forum refrains from having a business meeting at convention when there are very few European members present. Perhaps it would be possible to have a meeting with the aid of technology in the year when there is no regional conference.

Financial review

The Treasurer, Ria Logtenburg, went through the accounts which show that there is money to be carried forward. She explained that in addition to the subsidy from HQ the member states in Europe contribute an amount per capita towards travel expenses for the Regional Director and towards the achievement award. The previous Regional Director, Bjørg Nakling had returned €340 which she had not used for travel expenses. It was also discussed that while committee members make every effort to travel as cheaply as possible to the annual Forum committee meeting, there are a number of variable factors that affect the level of travel expenses for the different members.

Strategic Action Plan and exchange programme

The Action Plan updated at the Forum meeting in Rastede in November 2018 was included in the booklet of papers for the meeting and is on the website.

Daniela von Essen presented her proposals for an exchange programme for serving teachers. She herself has visited a school in Finland and observed lessons, she will shortly be hosting a return visit. The intention is for the programme to facilitate contact between interested parties. A form is available on the website, Daniela will undertake to match people. There has already been some interest from Canadian delegates at the conference.

European website: suggestions for development

The website was started in 2010 with the intention that national webmasters should send articles for publication on a regular basis. The Forum is in charge of the website and content, the role of the webmaster was to be related to the technical publication. There are a number of challenges and questions that need to be addressed. So far Eyglo has carried the whole responsibility on her own. Moving the webpage to the Weebly provider was a major undertaking, it is difficult to get material. Do we want a page with more content than just raw information? It was proposed that the Forum committee organize a development team who can discuss improvements and content. They should also take responsibility for decisions on material and contacting countries for contributions. The EF chair asked that delegates discuss this issue and give input to their EF committee representatives. It was also noted that several countries also have challenges with their own national webpages.

Euforia: results of survey, future?

A survey was carried out twice, very little participation the first time, a little better response the second time. It was noted that there could have been some incorrect email addresses. 230 responses, 60% knew of Euforia, 46% replied that they read it and 95% said that they either would, or might, read it in the future.

Articles in Euforia are published in English in contrast to articles on national webpages. Google translate can be used to read these latter, but there are limitations.

Further points made:

- one in each chapter to have responsibility for European Forum,
- Euforia and the webpage should be on the agenda at all chapter meetings, ensure that the websites are checked in advance and then discussed for a few minutes.
- using Euforia/the website it helps to bring in the international aspect in meetings.
- We need to reflect on what is important for us in Europe/sharpen the discussion – also so we can ‘teach’ the US.
- There were differences of opinion as to alternative platforms for information sharing.

The Forum meeting felt that Euforia should be continued. Guidelines for content and length of articles should be established. Riet is standing down as editor. A request for a volunteer to take over after her got no response. This issue and the future of Euforia should be on the agenda for the November committee meeting.

Any other business

Björg Nakling appealed to those present to engage internationally and to encourage younger members to get involved immediately after they join. We need Europeans to take roles on international committees and to help keep Europe strong.

Forum Chair, Elisabeth Stärner, thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The meeting closed at 09.15.