

Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme (SAAAP) Programme Board
Minutes: Thursday 13th December 2018 (Meeting 35)

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| Membership | Dr Tamsyn Barton | Chair |
| | Professor Shane McCausland | Head of Department (School of Arts) |
| | Dr Heather Elgood | Course Director (Diploma in Asian Art) |
| | Dr Ben Murtagh | Head of School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics |
| | Baroness Valerie Amos | SOAS Director |
| | Julia Race (representing Ruth O'Hanlon) | Director EEPA |
| | Liam Roberts Chloe Osborne (Secretary) | Programme Manager Programme Administrator |

Purpose: To manage and oversee the delivery of the Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme (SAAAP) funded by the Alphawood Foundation.

| Agenda item. | Agenda Item and Notes |
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| 1 | <p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>The minutes from the previous meeting (October 19th 2018) were agreed as accurate.</p> <p>All Action Points from the previous meeting had been completed.</p> <p>Minutes were approved by all.</p> |

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| 2 | <p>Chair's Report (TB)</p> <p>TB noted the extensiveness of the agenda, with the Scholarships proposal and Graduation event of particular importance. She welcomed JR to the Programme Board representing EEPA. It was confirmed that Ruth O'Hanlon would normally continue to serve as EEPA's representative to the Board in future.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Director's Report (VA)</p> <p>VA summarised recent conversations with Alphawood, which had briefly covered the outline of the new Scholarships proposal. The Foundation had seemed pleased that the School were looking for ways to continue supporting scholars. VA noted that she might be able to meet with the donor in Chicago in February. VA added that it would be helpful to have a summary of the programme's achievements so far included with the Scholarships proposal, ahead of her next conversation with JD. (See below, 6)</p> <p>TB noted that this all sounded positive and commented that the proposal highlighted SOAS' commitment to furthering the work of the programme.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Academic Support Fund: Updates, Reports and Applications</p> <p>a. UPDATE: SAAAP031 – Pratu (BM)</p> <p>BM discussed progress with Pratu and noted that the editors were slightly behind schedule with finalising the first edition, due in part to peer-review processes. The editors continued to learn about the online journal publication process as opposed to print, and articles were beginning to appear. A template designer had been engaged and his work was underway.</p> <p>b. UPDATE: SAAAP037 – PG Internships (BM)</p> <p>BM had met with the PG Interns undertaking placements at the British Museum and Royal Asiatic Society towards the end of their placements and was pleased to report that both had found the experience very positive. Both Interns had been very pleased to be able to add this experience to their skillset. TB noted that placements of this type were very competitive, and that it was a real achievement that SAAAP had been able to set up these connections. She thanked BM and LR for their work on organising the placements. LR added that interns and hosts had been asked to submit post-placement reports which might be used to formulate future proposals as well as to encourage other institutions to become hosts in the coming years. BM suggested it would be good to capitalise on the relationships between institutions, furthering the legacy of the programme as a whole.</p> <p>c. UPDATE: SAAAP039 – NMCP Critical History (BM)</p> <p>LR summarised the project and explained that the annual report from the project lead had been deferred to January, owing to further research work needing to be conducted. So far, one quarterly invoice had been submitted but the team hoped to submit another alongside the annual project report. LR would provide a further update at the next Board.</p> <p>d. REPORT: SAAAP051 – Singapore Summer Programme 2018 (SM) – Appendix 1</p> <p>SM discussed the report from the Programme organised by Peter Sharrock in July 2018. The Summer Programme had been jointly hosted between SOAS, the Freer Sackler Galleries and the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore, and had covered a range of topics including controversial issues around repatriation and roles in heritage in Southeast Asia. The event had been attended by a number of SAAAP alumni and current students, as well as the donor who had remarked on how positive it was to see Alphawood Scholars giving academic papers. LR added that the project had come in well under budget.</p> <p>e. REPORT: SAAAP053 – IPPA Myanmar Alumni Panel (SM) – Appendix 2</p> |

SM summarised both this report and the following one (f) which were for applications from Elizabeth Moore and Ashley Thompson to hold two panels at the recent IPPA conference in Hue. This conference takes place every four years, and SOAS had been well represented with Ashley Thompson's panel covering de-coloniality and Elizabeth Moore's panel covering new research in Myanmar. SM noted that this had been money well spent, allowing alumni to engage with vital networks and develop presentation skills. SM further noted that AT's project had come in slightly under budget, and that the event had also underscored the complexity of undertaking this type of work in the region as regards obtaining travel permissions for Myanmar delegates.

f. REPORT: SAAAP054 – IPPA SEA Art History Panel (SM) – Appendix 3

Discussed above.

g. REPORT: Ayutthaya-Sukhothai Research Trip (BM) - Appendix 4

BM spoke about this report on AT's research trip in September. The trip had gone well in that the findings were important, and were intended to feature in a planned upcoming research publication. It had also gone well in terms of budget utilisation. TB noted that it was positive to see fieldwork projects being funded, and encouraged further applications to the Academic Support Fund for original research

h. APPLICATION: SAAAP061 – SEAMEO SPAFA Conference Panel (SM) - Appendix 5

SM discussed this application from EM, who planned to present a joint paper with an Alphawood alumni from Mandalay University at the SEAMEO SPAFA conference next June in Bangkok. The application included a modest budget and all agreed that it was a worthy project.

The application was approved.

i. APPLICATION: SAAAP062 – Ho Chi Minh City Museum Catalogue (SM) Appendix 6

SM summarised the project and its development from a first proposal. After discussions surrounding the budget between the project lead, SM and LR, the application included clarifications on timelines, editorial functions and proposed project spend.

BM also noted that a planned Vietnamese language version was envisaged by the proposal, but was not a part of the proposal, and would emerge independently in due course. All agreed that the River Books quote provided best value for money.

Regarding the planned launch events, SM questioned whether the planned pre-launch event at the Ho Chi Minh City Museum fell directly within the remit of the project, as it would be scheduled prior to the publication of the physical catalogue, and would constitute part of scheduled museum events outside the SAAAP remit. The Board decided that funding support for the project should be granted, while recommending looking at alternatives to the pre-launch event proposed.

SM also recommended that all SOAS academic staff proposing to lead projects with a research component complete the online SOAS Research Integrity Online Programme, and that this course should be completed by the project lead as well.

Finally, BM discussed the possibility of turning the catalogue into an app which would work as an interactive guide.

The application was approved, with conditions on looking for an alternative launch event in Vietnam and on research integrity training.

j. APPLICATION: SAAAP063 – Pre-Ayutthaya Archaeological Excavation (BM) - Appendix 7

BM summarised this application from an Alphawood MA and current PhD student for financing part of his fieldwork excavation in Thailand. The Research and Publications Sub-board endorsed the application, while noting that certain risks would need resolving, especially in relation to employing local people to undertake

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| | <p>fieldwork. The applicant was however experienced in this type of work and had worked with local organisations experienced in managing this form of labour. The applicant would need to put in place appropriate safeguards.</p> <p>It was suggested that AT, as PhD supervisor, and the applicant should also be recommended to do the ethics training course, and that the project should go through the Worktribe research management platform. Increased costs resulting from all revisions would need to be included in the budget.</p> <p>TB summarised that the project should go through quality assurance and be revised as necessary before approval. However as this project was very much in line with the objectives of the programme, if these steps could be taken quickly then the project could be approved by email in advance of the next planned Programme Board meeting.</p> <p>Action #158 SM, BM, LR and REO to support quality assurance and research ethics processes. LR to contact REO as soon as possible and feed back to the applicant. Board approval of revised proposal to be sought by email.</p> <p>k. APPLICATION: SAAAP064 – European Study Trip 2019 (BM) - Appendix 8</p> <p>BM introduced this application, endorsed by the Research & Publications Sub-board. This was the second year in which an Amsterdam and Leiden component would be included, in addition to site visits in Paris. In response to questions about the number of academic staff participating, SM explained that participating SOAS staff on the Study Trip, as well as an Alphawood PhD student, each offered unique perspectives on the exhibitions and libraries to be engaged with. The academic investment sent a positive signal to MA students, involving non-Alphawood students as well.</p> <p>The application was approved.</p> <p>l. APPLICATION: SAAAP065 – Singapore Alumni Event (LR) - Appendix 9</p> <p>Julia Race was introduced as the new Director of EEPA, and spoke about plans for the Alumni event being organised by Suzy Rushforth and LR. They had had many discussions around the integration of the Master Classes event with the graduation ceremony, particularly looking at cost-sharing and co-organisation between EEPA and SAAAP for events across the weekend of 12 to 14 April 2019. LR noted that all indications from SOAS Registry were that a formal SOAS Degree-conferring ceremony for past graduating cohorts would not be permitted. VA raised the importance of having formal gowns for the Scholars nevertheless, even if not through a formal degree-conferring ceremony, as symbols of the achievement. JR will look into this further with a view to securing rental gowns in Singapore.</p> <p>In terms of the Master Classes component of the weekend (which is chiefly being organised, and funded, outside this project application), LR noted that Suzy and the working group in Singapore have been liaising on the expectations and focus, and that the ACM has indicated they will gratefully receive SOAS guidance on themes, in consideration of the collections and the preferred focus areas of the museum. LR added that several academics have now been approached to give talks and the endowed academics have been included in planning around the Master Classes and participation in the Graduation Event. A working group meeting in January will be where the final schedule will be decided, including the final programme for the Gradation Event itself.</p> <p>The application was approved.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Finance Update (LR/TB) – Appendix 10</p> <p>LR summarised the financial position of the Programme, noting that investment movements over the past six months had been currently overall negative. The overall value of the endowments underpinning EAL1 to 4 have nevertheless increased in value over this period, owing to carried-forward revenues and the rate of expenditure over this same period. Advice from SOAS Finance was that while investment movements might oscillate quarter on quarter, this did not necessarily indicate future trends. All the same, the oscillation seen this financial year was a reminder to consider prudent approaches to grant making through EAL4, including as regards the planned new Scholarships scheme.</p> |

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| | <p>In other cost centres, the CAL3 (Related Costs and Outreach) currently stood at approximately £56k. LR also reminded the Board that, since this fund was time limited and not endowed, this should also be taken into account when considering new projects relating to alumni engagement. The proposed flight subsidy (rather than full airfare reimbursement) proposed in SAAAP065, for example, was one measure to manage funds in this cost centre prudently.</p> <p>On Scholarships, the balance to date stood at approximately £1.317 million, and was on track to continue spending down in support of existing (and, in time, deferring) Scholars' costs. The next stipend tranche this fund would be on track to spend down the surplus by new year. The forecast for a 2022 surplus in this cost centre of slightly under £60k still held. Although new costs for in-session English support had been incurred this term, there had also been two cancellations of award from prospective PG Certificate Scholars in 2019, who had been unable to travel due to new work commitments.</p> <p>LR confirmed that a new contract for Elizabeth Moore's in-region consultancy was in train, adjusted for the change in student recruitment activity going forward. The contract was currently with SOAS HR for their approval. LR also confirmed that staff costs for LR, CO and PDS were drawn from distinct cost centres and with distinct contracts, which will be running down over the course of 2019 and into early 2020.</p> <p>SM queried whether the makeup of the Scholarships Selection Panel might need to be reviewed to account for the proposed new PhD Scholarships plan, in particular to align to Doctoral admissions processes in the School of Arts. It was suggested that the makeup of the panel should be decided at Board level if the PhD Scholarships proposal was agreed. TB asked SM to write a proposal for this to come to the next Board.</p> <p>Action #159 - SM to draft a proposal on the new makeup of the Scholarships sub-board for the new awards.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Alphawood Scholarships 2019-2024: Proposal v5 (LR) - Appendix 11</p> <p>TB endorsed the proposal as it stood, noting that there remained a question as to how many Scholars would in fact be selected to commence in September 2019 (either one or two, as different scenarios in the proposal set out). It was agreed that, should Alphawood advise SAAAP to proceed with the plan, SAAAP should make this determination upon reviewing the calibre of scholarship applications in April, and in consideration of the financial position of the Programme overall. HE noted that this scheme would differ from previous rounds of Alphawood Scholarships in that English-language qualifications were to be submitted at the point of application, and English-language training costs would thus not be borne by this scheme. If further English-language training were needed, SM noted that the Doctoral School can be called on. SM suggested budgeting for 4 week pre-sessionals per Scholar in case this were to be needed before starting, and LR confirmed that this was factored into the proposal and budgeted.</p> <p>BM raised the issue of the loss of the SAAAP office, which might send a sign to the Alphawood and other donors that SOAS were not committed to continuing the investment on the programme. BM added that PDS had raised the issue of losing the MA Scholarships and the impact this would have on administrative needs in relation to Outreach, but that, with planning, redistribution of Office functions within SOAS was foreseeable. LR noted that contractually the Office would remain until end of 2019 but that on current plans, budget existed for its continuation until early-2020. Beyond this point, further resources would be needed to maintain the office's functions. TB noted that at this stage the focus should be on implementing the next stage of awards, but that sustainability plans should be developed over the course of the academic year.</p> <p>VA agreed to raise the proposal in a planned upcoming call with Jim McDonough, followed by submission of the proposal to Alphawood in short order. LR noted that it would be most useful to be in position to launch the scheme and advertise it from mid-January in order to allow for SOAS and Doctoral School selection processes.</p> <p>Action: LR to write a précis of the programme's achievement so far in addition to the main proposal for submission to Alphawood.</p> |

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Date of Next Meeting – February 20th, 10.00-12.00

SAAAP Project Board Actions 2018/2019

| | Agenda Item | Added | Action Points | Deadline | Owner | Complete? |
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| #159 | 4 j. APPLICATION: SAAAP063 – Pre-Ayutthaya Archaeological Excavation (BM) - <i>Appendix 7</i> | 13/12/18 | SM, BM, LR and REO to look into quality assurance and research ethics processes for this project. LR will contact REO as soon as possible and feed back to the applicant. Board approval to be sought by email. | ASAP | BM/LR/SM/REO | |
| #158 | 5 Finance Update (LR/TB) – <i>Appendix 10</i> | 13/12/18 | SM to draft a proposal on the new makeup of the Scholarships sub-board for the new round of PhD awards | Next meeting | SM | |
| # 159 | 6 Alphawood Scholarships proposal | 13/12/18 | Action: Produce précis of the programme's achievements so far in addition to the main proposal for submission to Alphawood. | ASAP | LR | |