

SOAS**EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Friday 18 October 2013, Room 116, 1.15pm - 3.15pm

AGENDA

- | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| I | Membership, Terms of Reference and Conduct of Meetings
To note: Membership and ToR for ERCC
To note: Procedures for Conduct of Meetings | Appendix A
Appendix B |
| II | Minutes
To approve: minutes of the ERCC meeting held on 17 May 2013 | Attached |
| III | Matters Arising | |
| IV | External Relations Strategy 2013-15
To receive: Oral update on External Relations Strategy 2013-15 - Director of External Relations and Development | |
| V | Development and Alumni Relations
To receive: Progress report and future engagement plans re Centenary Fundraising Campaign and Alumni Relations activities – Deputy Head, Alumni Relations and Annual Fund and Deputy Head, Development | Appendix C |
| VI | Marketing and Student Recruitment
To receive: Progress report on Marketing and Student Recruitment activities and future plans –Interim Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment | Appendix D |
| VII | Communications and Media Relations
To receive: Progress report on internal communications, media relations and digital media (including website development project) – Head of Communications | Appendix E |
| VIII | Brunei Gallery Advisory Panel (BGAP)
To approve: ToR for BGAP
To note: Minutes of BGAP meeting held in July 2013
To receive: Oral update on Brunei Gallery activities and future plans - Galleries and Exhibitions and Manager | Appendix F
Appendix G |
| IX | Dates of next meetings - 2014
To note: Friday 28 February Room 116 at 1.15pm
Friday 23 May Room 116 at 1.15pm | |

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE****MINUTES**

Friday 18 October 2013 - 1.15pm in Room 116

Chair: Mr Graeme Appleby

Members: Professor Nadjé Al Ali
Mr Johann Barbé*
Professor Richard Black
Mr David Christmas
Dr Christopher Gerteis
Mr Evan Hancock*
Mr John Hollingworth
Dr Friederike Lüpke*
Dr Dina Matar*
Ms Fiona McWilliams
Professor Anne Pauwels
Mr John Robinson
Lord Michael Williams*

In attendance: Ms Marva de la Coudray
Ms Catriona Finlayson*
Ms Madeleine McGowan*
Ms Katie Price
Ms Clare Rhodes
Ms Zeba Salman
Mr Jamie Wells
Ms Alison Woolley

*Those members and attendees whose names are marked with an asterisk were unable to be present.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Mr Johann Barbé, Mr Evan Hancock, Ms Catriona Finlayson, Dr Friederike Lüpke, Dr Dina Matar, Ms Madeleine McGowan, and Lord Williams.

2. Membership, Terms of Reference and Conduct of Meetings

The Membership and Terms of Reference and Procedure for the Conduct of Meetings for the Committee were **noted**.

The Committee member nominated by the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences (Professor Nadjé Al Ali) queried whether it would be possible to have a union representative on the Committee as its remit includes internal communications. The Chair and the Director of External Relations and Development (ERD) said that they will look into whether such representation on the Committee is appropriate and will report back at the next meeting (**action**).

3. ERCC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2013 were **approved**.

4. Matters Arising

The Action Points from the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2013 were discussed:-

Action Point relating to minute number 3 - the Director of Library and Information Services (LIS) gave an update on the SOAS Alumni "email for life".

The service will be available to 2014 graduates and will be 'opt-in' - ie alumni will have to opt in to be moved to the new alumni account as the transfer cannot be done automatically. If alumni sign up within three months of graduating all their SOAS emails can be moved over to the SOAS alumni account. It is envisaged that LIS will provide the technical element of the service whilst Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) will be responsible for delivery to alumni. The service is in addition to the current ongoing provision of the online shared digital library of academic journals, JSTOR. SOAS is currently undertaking a trial period of the service for a year linking to JSTOR and will then reassess.

Action Point relating to minute number 9 – the Director of ERD reported on the discussions with the Secretariat Manager and the Chair with regard to holding meetings at a day/time other than Friday afternoons. Scheduling School committee meetings is a very complex process which must take into account the dates and times of other School committee meetings and the reporting structure (ie meetings must take place in such an order to enable committees to report up to their parent committees). Having reviewed the Schoolwide committees timetable in light of this it was just not possible to change the date and time of the Committee.

There were no other matters arising.

5. External Relations Strategy 2012-15

The Director of ERD reported that ERD was rolling out activities in year two of the External Relations Strategy Action Plan and was revising performance indicators to make them more meaningful. A great deal of work was going on in the background in relation to the Centenary Celebrations and Centenary Fundraising Campaign (CFC)

6. Development and Alumni Relations

The Deputy Head, Alumni Relations and Annual Fund and the Deputy Head, Development gave a powerpoint presentation and spoke to the report at Appendix C.

Centenary campaign planning was well underway and More Partnership are working on the over-arching theme and identity of the CFC. The themes from the 2011 brainstorming session attended by academic and professional services colleagues have been captured and will be taken forward. Scholarships and the North Block were just two examples of what the fundraising would support. The DAR team invited suggestions from Committee members as to ways in which DAR can capture ideas to suggest to potential donors.

It was agreed that SOAS' Institutes and Centres had a very important role to play in the CFC. The SOAS China Institute (SCI) is building up their alumni network and Governing Body member, David Skinner (who is Country Director, Pakistan for Save the Children) is assisting with raising SOAS' and the Centre for Pakistan Studies profile as he is out in Pakistan for three years.

An update on alumni numbers was given; SOAS has 56,000 alumni worldwide and is in email contact with 56% and in postal contact with 44%.

Alumni Relations are building up profiles of what professions alumni are in and the team is working with academics who are travelling on research trips or sabbaticals to spread the word about the value and role of the alumni community.

A number of development events are planned including; the annual Alumni & Friends Fund reception, Scholarships reception and the WC Beasley lecture in December, hosted by the Japan Research Centre and Governing Body member Sir Graham Fry.

It was reported that the first payment under a significant new £1million gift from the MBI Al Jaber Foundation was due in early November. The donation will enable the LMEI to move to 21 Russell Square and support the Senate House North Block project. The entire £1million donation will count towards the Centenary Fundraising Campaign target. Proposals have been submitted to the Wolfson Foundation and the Garfield Weston Foundation for £250k-500k donations towards Senate House North Block (SHNB). It was noted that the original business case for SOAS acquiring a long lease of SHNB was not predicated on the School obtaining any philanthropic funding so any such funding may be used to reduce the loan financing requirement or alternatively enable SOAS to invest in further improvements across the campus.

It was noted that it was vital for SOAS to have a robust due diligence procedure for the acceptance of philanthropic donations. This was even more important in light of the Woolf Report (which came out of the 2011 independent external inquiry into LSE's links with Libya following its acceptance of donations from the Gaddafi family). The Director of ERD reported that SOAS has such robust procedures in place and she would bring SOAS' Gift Acceptance Procedure to the next meeting (**action**).

7. Marketing and Student Recruitment

The Marketing Manager spoke to the report at Appendix D and reported that after consultation with students, (Student Ambassadors and via the Students' Union executive) and academic staff SOAS had launched its first major promotional campaign; 'Meet the World at SOAS'. It would be a two year campaign aimed at the UK undergraduate market, (the international market would be targeted in due course). Sample visuals were presented, (including two images from the SOAS Photography Competition), which received a number of extremely positive comments from members.

In response to a query that not all SOAS' regions were represented, (for example North East Asia), it was noted that the sample visuals would be added to and the SOAS Photography Competition would be run again and any appropriate visuals from that would be used. It was agreed that the detailed copy for the campaign should support the breadth and exoticism of the languages the School offers. It may also be possible to extend the campaign to Post graduate recruitment.

The Director of LIS confirmed that due to technical reasons it was not possible embed the 'Meet the World and SOAS' strapline as a graphic in staff email sign offs.

In response to a question about how SOAS' conversion rates compare with other institutions, the Director of Student and Registry Services confirmed that communications with offer holders and the time taken for offers to be made had improved considerably thereby improving the conversion rate.

8. Communications/Media Relations

The Communications Manager spoke to the report at Appendix D.

It was reported that in many cases there was a significant time lag between staff receiving the SOAS News Bulletin on a Friday and reading it. The Communications team are addressing this and will also look at the format of the Bulletin so that it can be read easily on Smartphones and similar devices.

Members agreed that the News Bulletin's reports from Executive Board could be more engaging and ideally should link to the current week's Executive Board meeting's minutes. The Chair will

speak to the Deputy Secretary about this (**action**). The pilot of the MySOAS intranet was due to be launched in early 2014 and some activities would be highlighted on MySOAS instead of just being included in the News Bulletin.

The SOAS website templates are being redesigned (and would be implemented in early 2014) and the interim redevelopment of the website was going well. Social media activity has increased with the University Challenge broadcast reaching 16,000 through Twitter and Facebook. It was agreed that this was a very positive development but questions were raised on how to deal with misleading or incorrect posts on Social media from students and whether SOAS should counteract these entries. Responses are made via the Students' Union (as it would be inappropriate for SOAS staff to post replies) and Twitter feeds are monitored by the Communications team. Discussion topics included whether SOAS should have an App and make use of iTunesU. The Pro-Director for Research and Enterprise made the point that the research community was an important web audience and it was noted that members of the Research Excellence Framework sub-panels will be looking at applicant universities' websites early in 2014 to see if claims made in submissions are backed up on the websites.

Communications were scheduling media training sessions with academics (particularly early career researchers) and the Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination exhibition had had widespread publicity helping to secure better opportunities and responses in the media.

The Chair reported that the School should receive planning permission for the redevelopment of SHNB in November and as soon as this had been confirmed the School would push ahead with the Communications plan (including for example unique opportunities such as advertising on the hoardings used whilst work is ongoing at SHNB).

9. Update on Brunei Gallery activities from the Galleries and Exhibitions Manager and Brunei Gallery Advisory Panel (BGAP) Minutes

The minutes of the BGAP meetings held in July 2013 were **noted**.

The Galleries and Exhibitions Manager reported that the BGAP are awaiting details from the Library about the existing procedures for putting on exhibitions at the Wolfson Gallery and will review these at the next BGAP meeting in November. SOAS Centenary exhibition has been moved to October-December 1916 to coincide with the launch of Professor Ian Brown's history of SOAS book. It was also noted that negotiations were on going regarding the return of Percival David Collection materials to 53 Gordon Square.

With regard to recent and forthcoming exhibitions:-

- The Sanctuary: Home, Away, Common Ground exhibition received 7,500+ visitors over the summer which for a normally quiet period are very good numbers;
- The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination exhibition had a very successful opening on 10 October and excellent press coverage, high profile PR and a large number of visitors – it is likely to be the best attended exhibition in recent times though the exhibition highlighted strains on resources;
- The Life and Afterlife of David Livingstone: exploring missionary archives will open on 22 October – it has attracted mainstream press interest (such as Timeout) and a day symposium is being held on 5 November and should prove an excellent opportunity to highlight the School's Archives and Special Collections;
- Professor Trevor Marchand has withdrawn his proposal for an exhibition - Mali Masons – African Voices;
- The Sikhs and World War One: Empire, Faith and War Project, Exhibition marking the First World War centenary next year has secured Heritage Lottery funding so will be proceeding as a high profile exhibition with an accompanying events programme.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee **noted** that the date of the next meeting is 28 February 2014.

It was noted that School committees should not, unless absolutely necessary, conduct 'Any Other Business', however, the Director of ERD (as Secretary to the Committee) had been asked to raise the question of Committee effectiveness and thanked those members who responded to the Committee Effectiveness Questionnaire which had been issued to Committee members as part of the overall School review of the effectiveness of School Committees. There were a number of members who had not responded and the Director of ERD asked if any members had any comments or issues they wished to raise. The only issue raised was the question of union membership of the Committee as noted at minute 2 above.