



Minutes of the EPSIG Executive Committee Meeting (via Skype) on 7 September 2021

Attendants (alphabetically):

Riadh Abed (RA, finance officer), Agnes Ayton, David Geaney, Adam Hunt (AH), Muzaffer Kaser, Geoff Lawrence-Smith (GLS), Paul St John-Smith (PSJS, chair), Annie Swanepoel (AS, newsletter editor), Derek Tracy

Apologies:

Nikhil Chaudhary

1. PSJS opened the meeting and welcomed those present.
2. Finance Report: RA explained that EPSIG has not had any income generating activities during the pandemic. Our first income-generating activity is the forthcoming 4th International EP Symposium due on 29 October to be held via Zoom. This is the first time we hold a full day event virtually. Our lecture webinar at the AGM was unfortunately poorly attended (less than 15 registrations) in contrast to the 'Attachment' half-day free webinar where we had around 400 registrations. RA emphasised the need to try to advertise the symposium through our professional networks (through NHS trusts, deaneries etc.). Our reserves were around £10.5K at the beginning of the year and our outgoings include £500 for 2 essay prizes and around £2500 to CALC for organising the virtual International Symposium. We hope to break even with the virtual symposium but we have to wait and see.
3. AS was pleased to announce a very successful response to the Charles Darwin EP Essay Prize. We had 7 entries from Specialist and Core Trainees. The 2 winning entries (one for ST and one for CT) were of a pleasingly high standard. All entrants have been informed of the outcome and certificates of achievement have been posted to the winners. All entrants have been offered free registration at the 29 October EPSIG symposium in recognition of their efforts and interest. We agreed that the panel for the next round in 2022 will consist of: Adam Hunt, Muzaffer Kaser and Derek Tracy and for the year after (2023) will be: David Geaney, Agnes Ayton and PSJS and that AS will oversee the whole process. The rating grid used in this year's competition will be shared with the panels in due course.
4. RA and PSJS informed the meeting that the term of the current trainee member on the executive committee (BJ) has come to an end and we need to look to recruit new trainee members. It was proposed that we invite the 2 essay prize winners to join the committee for a term of 2 years and this was unanimously agreed. PSJS agreed to write to the trainees accordingly.

5. All members of the committee agreed to help advertise the symposium through our CPD and other professional networks (see para 2 above). The issue on the new college restrictions on making recorded lectures freely available was discussed. Currently the college makes recordings of conferences available on a paid basis only. The committee agreed unanimously with the proposal of a compromise solution whereby the recordings can be made available free after a period of time (e.g. 6-9 months after the live event). We have been informed that this item is due to be discussed by the senior management team at the college and we should expect a response from the college soon. We will plan our next steps in the light of the college response as the EPSIG YouTube channel is an important evolutionary educational resource available to mental health professionals worldwide and we are keen to continue to maintain and enhance this.
6. AS provided an update on the forthcoming newsletter due to be published early October and invited ideas and contributions from members.
7. GLS updated the committee on the progress of the evolutionary podcast that he and PSJS are producing. The podcast has been submitted and they are awaiting feedback from reviewers.
8. RA reported on a free webinar lecture series organised by the WPA EP Section. This is planned to be bi-monthly (last Thursday of the month starting November 2021 and running to May 2022). Four speakers have confirmed so far (Matt Zefferman (on PTSD), Robin Dunbar (on friendship and its health consequences), Henry O'Connell (on clinical application of evolutionary thinking), Randolph Nesse (title to be confirmed). These will be delivered via Zoom. (Thanks to AH who has kindly offered to provide the technical support).
9. RA and PSJS updated the committee on the progress with the edited volume. This has now been approved for publication by the RCPsych and CUP and expected to be launched in June/July 2022 at the college annual congress. The reviewer's feedback was extremely positive. We have 7 eminent psychiatrists/evolutionists who have agreed (in principle) to consider endorsing the volume and we are working closely with CUP to deal with practicalities. We also discussed ideas for the launch of the volume including submitting proposals for an evolutionary symposium at the college congress as well as a whole event at the RSM with invited speakers.
10. The committee spent some time discussing ideas for speakers for our 2022 International symposium. A number of excellent suggestions were made and this will be considered and taken forward by the core group (PSJS, RA and AS).
11. AOB: the next committee meeting will be on 11/1/2022 7pm via Skype

