

**The Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research  
CSEAR Council**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CSEAR COUNCIL HELD ON 23 APRIL 2013**

**1. Present**

CSEAR Council Members present:

Ian Thomson (Chair), Lorna Stevenson (Co-Director), Jan Bebbington (Co-director) John Ferguson, Colin Dey and  
CSEAR Council Members present via WebEx:

Charles Cho, Nola Buhr, Robin Roberts, Massimo Contrafatto and Carmen Correa Ruiz

Also present:

Lynn Christie

**2. Apologies for Absence:**

Matias Laine, Jesse Dillard

**3. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minutes of the 26 February were approved by the Council, subject to an amendment to 4 (a) Matters Arising: ACCA.

**4. Matters Arising; and all other agenda items except for items 8 and 12:**

These matters were all considered together:

(a) CSEAR Library:

2 volunteers to help with the library have been identified: John and Massimo. Rob also volunteered to go through the library to see if it was possible to cull any more material. Rob's offer was accepted with thanks but prior to this Jan, John and Massimo will go through the library to (i) familiarise themselves with the content and (ii) identify what should be maintained physically, what can be digitised (and then archives), what should be archived and what can be integrated into other collections for maximum accessibility. **ACTION POINT**

(b) Reg Mathews Prize:

The prize has now been awarded and it was agreed that it would be appropriate if we could do a formal presentation to the winner if they are attending any of the CSEAR conferences this year. John agreed to contact the winner to see if this could be arranged. **ACTION POINT**

(c) SEAJ Board/Journal:

All of the actions under this point are in hand and Jan will progress them further once teaching finishes. It was agreed that Jeffrey should become chair of the Board once he ceases to be editor.

(d) Increasing submissions to SEAJ and SEAJ on ABS list:

Unfortunately the numbers of submission to SEAJ are still very low. Suggestions to resolve this issue were: at BAFA encourage submissions by circulating fliers during streams; invite responses to papers; pick a theme and invite papers from specific individuals (different to special issues); link journal to special CSEAR conference; approach the Brazilian IA's for country context papers (eg Brazil as a carbon market supplier); SEAJ to sponsor symposiums and workshops; Charles, Ian and Jan are the panel EAA and have agreed to write a paper from this for the journal; copy from Rob's conference day may be generated. All of these points were accepted and Jan agreed to take these points to the Board for consideration/action.

With respect to getting SEAJ onto the ABS list the Council agreed not to fixate simply on the UK ranking but rather approach (in parallel) the IA's to get the SEAJ ranked higher in their countries and this would in turn help push SEAJ up the ABS list once it has been revised/updated. Approaches will be made to the ABS also. **ACTION POINT**

(e) Celebration Workshop for Rob at conference:

All the invited speakers except for Roger Adams have confirmed that they are able to come to the event. Roger will be able to confirm or not in late July. It was agreed to canvass the Council and IA's for ideas for how the event should look. Also a working document is required from Brendan to give an indication of how he sees the day taking form. Lynn will contact Brendan about this. **ACTION POINT**

(f) Council of International Associates:

Charles circulated an email outlining the roles of the IA's as defined by the IA's themselves. All the points on the document were agreed in principal but Charles was asked to flesh out the points to produce a more formal document and then circulate it to the Council for further review. In addition to the roles already identified IA's should actively promote SEAJ in country rankings and also as a journal to submit papers to. It was also decided that a date for a formal IA meeting should be identified at the earliest opportunity, possibly to coincide with one of the CSEAR conferences taking place this year. Charles agreed to action all these points. **ACTION POINT**

(g) SEAJ Board:

John Ferguson is the member of the Council that will/does sit on the SEAJ Board.

(h) Vision/Values/Mission of CSEAR:

As this point is a long term goal action on it is on-going.

(i) Finances:

Sue retires at the end of this month and a thank you book has been produced for her. Her permanent post with the School will then be vacant and needs to be advertised with permission of the University / Work Force Planning. Jan is dealing with this as part of a package of other positions being proposed for the School. When this matter is complete the deficit on accounts will go.

The Research Centre Grant is being applied for to help build funds (please see agenda item 8 below).

Ian was also successful in securing an initial £5000 sponsorship from CIMA for this year's St Andrews CSEAR conference. CIMA have also expressed an interest in funding a partnership with CSEAR (similar to the previous arrangement with the ACCA). A document from CSEAR to CIMA is under development with regards to engagement and can be circulated to those that wish to see it. The document can also be used to help secure funding from other sources and will form one of the core CSEAR documents / mission statements, and will therefore be uploaded to the website once complete.

Jan has had discussions with Rachel Jackson at ACCA. Whilst Jan didn't request funding from them it was offered and this may be revisited in the future but not for conference funding. The ACCA have agreed for us to hold the digital repository of their Research Reports. Access will be given to the reports soon so that we can download and then host on our website. Rachel also offered help when we begin to define our vision.

One immediate priority of the Council and the IA's is to build up grant income (eg the ESRC Centre funding application) and have numerous funding sources for each activity eg for the conferences it could be CIMA and CPA Australia. **ACTION POINT**

(j) Membership Numbers:

The numbers are increasing this year mainly as a result of new members coming on board via the Conferences, especially the French Conference. After the French Conference Jan, Lynn, Lorna and Charles will have a debrief about what did and did not work. This information can then be passed onto other organisers. It was agreed that:

- a forum of conference organisers would be a good idea
- a planning calendar of conferences may help new conferences identify the best time to hold

conferences

- a list of actions to pass onto each new organiser would be helpful, this way there can be some commonality in website design and layout for each country's conference ie what to do, when and how. A document like this may already exist. Lynn will approach Rob to see if he has it.

**ACTION POINT**

(k) Website:

It was unanimously agreed that the main thing lacking from the website at present is a clear message on what we have achieved and what we are planning to do. There is no information about members and no information about achievements also. Volunteers were sought to consider annual reporting of successes etc so we account for what we do and have done. Ian agreed to circulate something about this in the near future and will put the call through to IA's as well as the Council. This information/document will also work well for the ESRC Centre application as well as other funding applications. The information should definitely also say what the network has achieved over the timeframe that Rob has driven it and this can be used as a springboard for Rob's celebration day. The Council agreed that this would be a good consolidation exercise making ourselves accountable. **ACTION POINT**

8. Funding and Research Grants: ESRC UK Centres Competition (appendix 1)

Jan submitted a paper for Council consideration re applying to the ESRC UK Centres Competition. As it takes quite a time to write an application permission was being sought now to go into the next round. The funding will be for capacity and resource building and we have had advanced notification that the 8<sup>th</sup> programme is on the way (thanks to Carlos Larrinaga). Jeffrey Unerman has agreed to host the 3 workshops but Jan needs £500 per workshop for sundries except for travel expenses – people will have to self-fund this. The workshops can be used to work out visions, activities and programmes etc., for CSEAR It was unanimously agreed to go ahead with this activity and funding was approved. **ACTION POINT**

12. Building Research Capacity in SEAR: workshop to be held in CICSMA Spain (appendix 2)

The Council again unanimously agreed that this should go ahead and to look at this as a potential model for other centres to do. Full support is given to this and help with funding / resourcing would be considered.

AOCB/ Final Comments:

- Mission statement for CSEAR is a must and should be a major part of the next meeting
- Annual reporting is a very high priority as it is needed if we are to be a Centre devoted to accountability and transparency
- The website should be used as a platform to project our identity.

**Lynn Christie May 2013**

## APPENDIX 1

Dear Council Members,

I should like your encouragement and support to start a process (that will take approximately a year) to develop a grant proposal that will allow us to enter the ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) of the UK's Centres competition. This is an annual competition and the current year call can be found here (<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/funding-opportunities/3672/carousel-centres-and-large-grants-competition.aspx>). I would intend (with support from CSEAR colleagues) to submit a grant for CSEAR core funding in about a year's time. Likewise, it is anticipated that the EU's 8<sup>th</sup> Programme will be published later in the year and will include opportunities to develop research grant applications and for which we might wish to be prepared.

To assist in this aspiration I would like to run three day long workshops over the next year to develop themes and theoretical framings for these grant opportunities. The best location for this would be London (as it is easy and cheap for everyone to get to) and Jeffery (at Royal Holloway – which is by Heathrow) has offered to host us and cover any meeting room costs. The work of the workshop would be to provide a space for in-depth interaction in order to develop the base from which a grant can be written. I anticipate a great deal of work happening outside of the workshops too. I would plan to invite many council members and international associates to these events (if they wished) in order to have a broad perspective on what might be done. I also hope that this process might also provide the base from which members could develop grant proposals in their own countries. I anticipate we will be talking about specific projects; what sort of activities CSEAR would like to do if it had the funding; researcher development activities and theoretical (re)framing of the sustainability accounting project.

What I am seeking is some seed corn support from CSEAR for running these workshops (in terms of covering food costs and subsidise travel if people did not have their own funds to attend). I am looking for £1,500 in total to support this work. I am anticipating that many attendees might have their own funds for covering travel to the workshops but that some might also need some help with costs.

Best wishes,

Jan

## APPENDIX 2

Dear all,

I am writing you to let you know about an initiative that Carlos Larrinaga and I are trying to develop in Spain that we will like to discuss with you in the next CSEAR Council meeting. Further details are provided below:

"Building research capacity in SEAR – workshop to be held in CICSMA Spain

A proposal to run a one day workshop in CICSMA (CSEAR- Spain) intending to foster the learning of research abilities and capabilities in regard to methods, theoretical development and publishing. The idea is to have an opened forum for both –young and more senior researchers- to learn and discuss about the different research approaches without the time restrictions we use to have in traditional conferences and workshops. In this first edition, we would like to pay special attention to the adoption of quantitative and qualitative strategies of inquiry, and also publishing. Carlos and I will be involved in the organization of this workshop and we will like to get involved one quantitative oriented researcher and one qualitative researcher from CSEAR network to participate in this workshop.

Carlos and I have thought to run this as a collaboration initiative between CICSMA in Spain and CSEAR-UK. That is why I am sending this to the Executive Council for consideration.

Best regards,

Carmen