

Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme Project Board: Extraordinary Meeting of the SAAAP Board to Discuss the Banteay Chhmar Project

Minutes: 15 November 2016 (Meeting 21)

Present: Dr Tamsyn Barton (TB)
 Baroness Valerie Amos
 Professor Anna Contadini (AC)
 Dr Heather Elgood (HE)
 Matt Gorman (MG)
 Dr Ben Murtagh (BM)
 Simone Green (SG) (Secretary)

In attendance: Alice Green
 Dr Christian Luczanits
 Dr Peter Sharrock
 Professor Ashley Thompson
 Dr Louise Tythacott

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
1.	<p><i>Update on discussions with Alphawood Foundation (MG):</i></p> <p>MG noted that he had been asked to get a sense what the Alphawood Foundation were expecting in terms of scale of the project and next steps. He reported that Alphawood were open to having a conversation on the BC project, but anxious about the context. In the current climate SOAS could not go to the foundation with a formal proposal until spring/summer 2017. He noted that it was important to get the donor enthused and the trip in January with PDS would be key to this.</p> <p>MG advised that the Board and the Banteay Chhmar (BC) working group should aim to submit to Alphawood a simpler positioning proposal outlining options for smaller scale projects which would allow Alphawood to work with SOAS on the options if interested. It would be advisable to conceive of an initial 1-year project that could be scaled-up but that could stand alone (with minimal negative impact if no further funding could be found).</p> <p>MG also noted that the penultimate cohort of scholars (Y4) was currently being recruited. The Development team would submit the Annual Review by the end of the year and in this Alphawood had asked us to summarise the impact so far. This would be the first step in the consideration of further</p>

	<p>funding for the scholarships programme. AT noted that the Field School component of the BC project could be integrated into the next scholarship funding proposal.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p><i>Discussion of concept paper (appendix A):</i></p> <p>a. AT summarised the revised proposal and reported that two working group meetings had taken place so far in the new academic session:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Field School: the principles remained the same; a field school grounded in the active conservation programme, which would address the issue of capacity building in the region, a key aim of the SAAAP, as well as linking to institutions. AT noted that the proposal had been cut back from a 5-year plan to a 1-year foundation programme, the principle being that each of the 5 interlinked components (as detailed in the budget) could stand alone or act as a foundation to the larger programme. AT noted that further analysis of cross-over could result in a significant reduction in scale that represented a 200k reduction in costs. This could be re-visited after clear steer from the Board on expectations. <p>AT also noted that the administrative support was not budgeted for due to the question of whether this post would be employed by SOAS or through one of the partner organisations in Cambodia.</p> <p>CL noted that based on his previous experience it would be preferable to work through the Ministry rather than UNESCO in regards to the administrative management of the project.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> II. Ministry training programme; budget needed final review to obtain cross-over with conservation component. III. Conservation elements: the proposed work would serve as the foundational work for the project a whole, however it was noted that due to an estimated set-up period of 3 months for the administrative element this would reduce the work of the project to 9 months, significantly cutting-down the time for the preparatory work leading up to dismantlement, documentation, community relations etc. <p>Three elements of the original proposal had been removed; all museum work, work placements and the object restitution element.</p> <p>It was noted that the Field School could link to new MA that starts in September 2017, with a second year in Cambodia, and if scaled up to the full 5-year project would develop students' professional skills in-situ.</p> <p>The Board agreed that SOAS had to consider the conservation priorities of the Ministry.</p> <p>It was noted by the working group that MCFA had been involved since the project's inception and expectations had been raised.</p> <p>b. Three main areas of concern were raised by the Board;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainability of the programme; would the project be sustainable were it to be scaled-down to meet initial expectations. Consideration needed to be given to the return on investment of the areas which were to be funded initially. What would be the SOAS position if the project were not to find further funding? AT responded that the project had been designed with that in mind, it could be discontinued after one year with no negative impact on the work already carried out; the field school did not involve any major infrastructure and the work carried out as a result of the conservation project would support future work (would be focused on documentation and would include only digital reconstructions) 2. Operational oversight and administrative costs; timing of field school should be considered (could be adjusted from 12 months to 9 months to fit into the academic year), concerns that if the foundation year was scaled-down even further (to 9 months due to timing), then the

return on investment in the administrative resource would be minimal. A vital consideration was the nature of management arrangements for the project in-region. The involvement of partners needed to be thought through (MCFA, NGOs etc).

3. The Board would like the working group to consider additional funding streams for the project (options should include the US Ambassador's Fund in Cambodia, the Global Challenges Research Fund, and funding from NGOs). If funding were found for the foundation year and it was successful a larger-scale project could be funded by Alphawood.

c. Conclusion:

VA noted that at this stage the most we could say to partners is that we had no definite prospect of finding the funding, and did not know whether we would be able to in the foreseeable future.

TB thanked the working group for bringing the project to its current state; however more work needed to be done on management and financial structures, and on providing more robust budgeting for each option including deferring components such as the Ministry training or the Bas-reliefs. Options to take to other funders should also be outlined.

The following actions were agreed:

ACTION 123 (working group): think about other options for funding, where the different elements could be funded by different donors to make it sustainable.

ACTION 124 (working group): Consider 3 further options for scale (based on funding streams available e.g. 200k, 500k, 1m), with the inclusion of different components, to result in a series of pared-down projects that potentially have separate funding sources.

Actions from the

No.	Agenda Item	Added	Action Points	Deadline	Owner	Complete?
124	2.c Discussion of concept paper	15/11/2016	Consider 3 further options for scale (based on funding streams available e.g. 200k, 500k, 1m), with the inclusion of different components, to result in a series of pared-down projects that potentially have separate funding sources.	Next meeting	BC working group	
123	2.c Discussion of concept paper	15/11/2016	Think about other options for funding, where the different elements could be funded by different donors to make it sustainable.	Next meeting	BC working group	