



MINUTES

Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme (SAAAP) Programme Board

Meeting 46 (2020-21)

10.00-12.00 | 6th May 2021 | Virtual Meeting

Membership	
Tamsyn Barton (TB)	Chair of Programme Board
Shane McCausland (SM)	Head of School of Arts/Interim Liaison with Alphawood
Heather Elgood (HE)	Course Director, Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art
Ashley Thompson (AT)	Hiram W. Woodward Chair in Southeast Asian Art, Chair SAAAP Research and Publications Sub-board
Peter Sharrock (PS)	SAAAP Outreach and Communications Manager
Suzanne Rushforth (SR)	Philanthropy Manager (Art & Collections)
Programme staff	
Alan Goulbourne (AG)	Programme Manager
Apologies	
Adam Habib	SOAS Director
Mulaika Hijjas (MH)	Senior Lecturer in South East Asian Studies
Olivia Burt (OB)	Project Administrator

Agenda item.	Agenda Item and Notes
1	<p>Welcome and Chair's Report</p> <p>TB welcomed the Programme Board members.</p>
2	<p>Liaison with Alphawood Foundation (SM)</p> <p>SM updated the board. He continues to liaise with the Foundation at fortnightly meetings. He has kept them up to date with the investigation into Adam Habib's actions and the resulting outcome. He explained that Alphawood had expressed satisfaction with the selection process for the next round of scholarships and had welcomed the first award for an applicant from Laos. Also SM had kept Jim apprised of the ongoing development of approaches to pedagogy in the School. Alphawood shared SAAAP's concern with the ongoing situation in Myanmar, especially for alumni and those connected to the programme.</p>
3	<p>Previous minutes and actions (TB)</p> <p>176, 177, 179, 180, 181 were complete.</p>

	<p>On 179, AG explained that Olivia Burt's contract would be extended for 14 months at a reduced rate of 2 days per week (and position then reviewed). SM explained that 173 is ongoing as the Board of Trustees will discuss TRA in July and make a decision. Item 8 - Delete "AT confirmed individual chapters would be available for purchase online". Item 10 – Replace UBM with UGM.</p>
4	<p>SAAAP - Finances 2020/21 (AG) - Appendix 01</p> <p>AG updated the board that the financial position had not changed greatly since February and remained healthy. Total capital value of the endowments at end of March 2021 was £14.4m, compared to £12.6 million in August 2020 (a 12.4% increase). The increase was ahead of the FTSE100 which grew by 11.1% in the same period.</p> <p>Some spending on the Academic Support Fund had slipped into 2021-22 because of Covid – and some spending was less than forecast because of the shift to online provision (European Study Tour, Research Series). Time-limited funds were on track.</p>
5	<p>SAAAP – Strategy Revisit (TB) Appendix 02</p> <p>TB introduced the item saying that although the strategy was finalised in 2015 much of the content had stood the test of time and was still germane. She noted that some elements had not been taken forward, such as the External Advisory Board, but that subsequent changes to the governance arrangements had superseded the original justification. Future development of the SAAAP strategy should examine financial sustainability but there were other areas to consider. She invited members to contribute their ideas.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made:</p> <p>SM provided the institutional context for revisiting the SAAAP strategy explaining that SOAS was in the process of defining a new 3 year strategy for the School and that consultation with the various Departments was underway. The aim was for the Board of Trustees to sign off the new strategy in July 2021, so it would be ideal if revisions to the SAAAP strategy could be aligned both with the general direction of travel in SOAS and the timeline. One of the five pillars of the new SoA strategy was to improve employability which is an area that could be incorporated into the SAAAP revision, for instance.</p> <p>PDS explained that the original SAAAP strategy was led by the Department with Alphawood given the opportunity to comment. He agreed that improving employability should be a priority in the next iteration of the strategy. SAAAP had made a significant difference to the career development of many scholars in many countries. Further efforts to enhance the skills and experience of scholars and alumni would be of great benefit. Activities might include more master classes and internships, for example.</p> <p>AT agreed that the acquisition of PG qualifications made a difference to the career prospects of alumni and that there were many examples of rapid advancement in administrative and management positions as a result of SAAAP. Perhaps more priority this time round could be given to support the development of academic leadership. Internships could be a valuable focus here – possibly with alumni hosting interns following the example of Jean Heng this year.</p> <p>AT also thought online provision would be worth revisiting both as a means of generating revenue and extending the reach of both SAAAP and the Department. This might align with the strategic developments within SOAS and there may be new opportunities in the pipeline here.</p>

SM agreed that employability and online provision should be explored in the new strategy. On the former, he thought that there would be a need for resource to manage and co-ordinate efforts. This might fall to an enhanced regional liaison role, for instance.

HE commented that although the emphasis in recruitment was on quality over quantity Board members should bear in mind the intention of the fund was to help improve students' lives and that poor English Language skills at the outset should be addressed through support. AT thought there was a fine balance between providing opportunities and taking excessive risks with scholarships. There was no easy resolution.

PS thought the issue of financial sustainability was easier than in the past. The foundations of the programme were in place with the teaching positions provided by the endowments and the support afforded by the Academic Support Fund. More work was needed to finance discrete packages, such as future scholarships, but this was manageable.

SR observed that if other donors were approached, consideration should be given to how the focus and remit of the support might differ from that of Alphawood, and ensuring continued attention to appropriate use of Alphawood funds.

Action 182: SM to circulate the latest SoA strategy discussion papers to inform the debate on SAAAP.

Action 183: AG to consult members of the various sub-boards on revisions to the SAAAP strategy – with aims and various options to stimulate debate.

Action 184: AG to aim for having a revised SAAAP strategy in place in July 2021.

6 Academic Support Fund: Updates, Reports and Applications

The board reviewed the following Updates, Reports and Applications across the Research and Publications, Outreach, and Scholarships sub-boards.

a. UPDATE - Ongoing Projects (AG) - **Appendix 05**

AG highlighted the following:

Alphawood Scholarships 2021-22

IFCELS' initial assessment of the English Language skills of the next cohort showed a range of results, with three scholars at the low end of the scale. More written assignments would be available in May and a fuller assessment of their standard will be available. IFCELS would report the results to the Programme Office and the options available for further support. Use of the reserve list would be a last resort.

Action 185: AG to discuss results and options with SM in due course.

SAAAP087 CSEAS-SAAAP Research Seminar Series

Two online webinars had taken place in 2021. Both had attracted very good attendance and many subsequent views via YouTube. It was an encouraging development. Two more webinars were planned for May 2021.

European Study Tour

Virtual activities took place at a variety of institutions including: Tropenmuseum; Museum Volkenkunde; Rijksmuseum and Cernuschi; V&A; EFEO in Paris; BnF and the Bangkok National Museum. Feedback from students and institutions had been very positive.

	<p>UPDATE – SAAAP091 – Pilot In-region Liaison for Alumni in Cambodia – Appendix 04</p> <p>PDS explained that a very strong candidate had been selected – Dr Menghong Chhum. He was the Deputy Secretary for the Unesco office in Cambodia and was well connected to a range of institutions in the country. Once SOAS’ recruitment panel had approved the role, then the Programme Office would offer him the contract.</p> <p>APPLICATION – Professional Development of Alumni Programme – Appendix 05</p> <p>AT introduced the application which seeks approval for a programme of new regional activity to support the development of alumni. Activities in the first year include: Master Classes; Lecture Series; Publishing Workshop; and Pratu Translations.</p> <p>PDS welcomed the programme and thought it would be helpful if the application could be shared with the Outreach Sub-board to identify synergies. He asked about the need for the translations mentioned, given Alphawood’s focus on improving scholars’ ability to communicate in English.</p> <p>AT explained that the translations were of a series of technical documents aimed at improving the publishing skills of alumni and others. This would help increase the number of publications in English and the 5 languages as it would enable technical barriers to be overcome in all these languages.</p> <p>AT confirmed that the SAAAP funding would be used only for activities within the remit. ACM would fund the activity dealing with contemporary issues.</p> <p>HE suggested the title be generic to avoid any misunderstandings about remit. AT agreed.</p> <p>Action 186 – SM to chair an extraordinary meeting of the Outreach Sub-Board to explore synergies.</p> <p>APPROVED</p>
7	<p>Hnin Oo Hlaing – Note</p> <p>TB explained that the note was for transparency and that she hoped Members agreed with the action taken to provide Hnin with an additional term’s worth of support, given the unfortunate set of circumstances she faced. Members welcomed the additional support.</p>
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>
9	<p>Date of Next Meeting – to follow</p>

Action	Added	Action Points	Deadline	Owner	Complete?
173	05/11/2020	SR to raise the issue of TRA with Adam Habib in due course.	2021	SR	Ongoing
178	18/02/2021	Programme Office to arrange intensive English Language training for the Laos scholar, should she accept the offer.	ASAP	AG	Ongoing
182	06/05/2021	SM to circulate the latest SoA strategy discussion papers to inform the debate on SAAAP.	ASAP	AG	Ongoing
183	06/05/2021	AG to consult members of the various sub-boards on revisions to the SAAAP strategy – with aims and various options to stimulate debate.	ASAP	AG	Ongoing
184	06/05/2021	AG to aim for a revised SAAAP strategy in place in July 2021.	ASAP	AG	Ongoing
185	06/05/2021	AG to discuss IFCELS results and options with SM in due course.	ASAP	AG	Ongoing
186	06/05/2021	SM to chair an extraordinary meeting of the Outreach Sub-Board to explore synergies.	ASAP	AG	Ongoing