



## **Minutes of the EPSIG Executive Committee Meeting (via Skype) on**

**11 January 2022**

Attendants (alphabetically):

Riadh Abed (RA, finance officer), Tom Carpenter, Nikhil Chaudhary, David Geaney, Adam Hunt (AH), Muzaffer Kaser, , Paul St John-Smith (PSJS, chair), Annie Swanepoel (AS, newsletter editor).

Apologies:

Geoff Lawrence-Smith, Agnes Ayton

1. PSJS opened the meeting and welcomed those present with a special welcome for Tom Carpenter, our new trainee executive committee member. He gave a brief update on EPSIG's activities and informed those present that our membership number is now 1912.
2. Finance Report: RA explained that the EPSIG finances were in a healthy state with our 4<sup>th</sup> International symposium netting a surplus of around £2K. Our reserves are around £12K. Our only expenditures during the pandemic have been paying the college for running the zoom lecture in May, paying CALC (part of the college) for running our 4<sup>th</sup> symposium via zoom and paying our 2 essay prize winners.
3. The feedback by those present for the 4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium in October 2021 was positive with regard to both content and scope and the technical side also went very smoothly. The event also netted us a surplus as above.
4. The committee discussed plans for this year's AGM and decided that this would be held virtually on Friday 10 June 1pm. The meeting would be supported by the college admin staff and this will be followed by a lecture by Paul St John-Smith titled 'Covid, Conspiracies and Evolution' 2pm-3:30pm. This will be held via zoom and run by the college.
5. The committee spent the bulk of the meeting discussing options for speakers for the 5<sup>th</sup> International EPSIG conference scheduled to be held face to face and held at the college HQ in London on Friday 10 March 2023. We provisionally identified 7 potential speakers and we agreed a plan for various members of the committee to approach them. We can continue with the planning process by email in the meantime.

AS reported to the committee the outcome of the application process for symposia at the college International Congress in June 2022 in Edinburgh. Three proposals were submitted but only one was accepted: "What studies about maternal abuse, prenatal stress, childhood trauma and insights from hunter-gatherers can teach us about normal and abnormal child development". This will be held on 23 June. The committee commended AS for her initiative in coordinating the applications and for achieving a first ever approval of an evolutionary symposium at the international college congress.

6. RA reported to the committee plans to submit proposals for 3 evolutionary symposia for the WPA International Conference due to be held in Malta 10-12 November 2022. The draft titles of the symposia are: 'Evolution and Neurodevelopmental Disorders', 'An Introduction to Recent Developments in Evolutionary Psychiatry' and 'An Introduction to Clinical Applications of Evolutionary Thinking in Psychiatry'. Each symposium should include 4 speakers (15 minutes each followed by 5 minutes for discussion) and a chair. Proposals and suggestions should be sent to RA who is coordinating the applications.
7. An outline plan was discussed for the Charles Darwin Essay competition for psychiatric trainees/students. The 2022 judges will be: Adam Hunt, Muzaffer Kaser and Derek Tracy. Tom Carpenter will assist/advise in updating the terms of reference and advertising and AS will provide oversight of the process. The timings and deadlines are to be determined.
8. AS informed the committee that 4 newsletters had been published over the previous 12 months and the plan was to maintain this level of output. The next newsletter is due to be published shortly. She invited committee members to submit material for the newsletters and to encourage other colleagues outside the committee to consider doing so.
9. Geoff L-S had given his apologies. His update regarding the progress of the evolutionary educational podcast is that there had been delays on the college side and that he had submitted the material and is awaiting a response to take it to the next step.
10. RA reminded the group that registration is still open for the forthcoming WPA EP free webinar by Robin Dunbar on Evolutionary Aspects on Friendship. The other 2 webinars will be by Henry O'Connell in March and Randy Nesse in May. RA also invited suggestions for future webinars.
11. RA and PSJS updated the group regarding progress with CUP edited volume. This is now with the copy-editor and we are on course for launch in June, hopefully at the college International Congress in Edinburgh.
12. AOB:  
There were 3 items under AOB. These were:
  - a. Increased trainee involvement: Tom C outlined his thoughts about the opportunities and challenges in increasing trainee involvement and interest in EPSIG activities and in evolution generally. This may require specific initiatives aimed at trainees e.g. educational material, whether electronic or in print; CPD events etc. Further discussion on this will be necessary.

- b. EPSIG YouTube channel: Adam H raised the question of whether to create a new evolutionary channel for WPA or keep it all under one roof. The decision was made to keep it all under one channel at the present time.
- c. Collaboration with English Heritage on Evolutionary Material for the general public. AS suggested some ideas to take this forward and there were suggestions by many other committee members. However, the plans require further clarification with regard to scope and content. We need to identify a member of the group to lead on this.

The next committee meeting will be at the AGM on 10/6/2022 at 1pm and will be an open public meeting.

