



# **PDS Executive Committee**

## **Minutes of the Meeting**

**21 February 2020**

**Old Facilities Management Building, room 1015**

**14h00 to 16h00**

### **Running themes of the meeting**

- Year Planner
- Commitment to strengthening cohesion within PDS
- Clarification of objectives and tasks of the PDS exec

## **1. Welcome and Election of “meeting” Chairperson**

The Chairperson of the Committee gave the members an opportunity to volunteer to chair the meeting for that day. It was unanimously agreed that the Chairperson of the Committee Tando will chair the meeting.

## **2. Absent**

- a. Vikas was attending his wedding in India. He emailed his excuse well in advance.
- b. Olubenga had travel constraints.

3. **In attendance:** Tando, Priscilla, Martina, Kim, Mzingaye, Maaike, Marg. The Chairperson advised the Secretary to provide an attendance register in the next meeting. The meeting had to continue because according to the Constitution Article 16.2 Quorum for a meeting of the Postdoctoral Society is four members.

4. **Overview of Agenda by meeting chairperson:** The agenda items were confirmed.

5. **Any Other Business:** The agenda had the addition of the item “Research funding/fellowship”.

## **6. Revision of minutes from 24 January 2020**

- a. The minutes were adopted as a correct record.

## **7. Matters arising from the minutes**

The Chairperson commended Martina for producing a document that was circulated with tasks for the portfolios and duties for the members. The tasks were based on the Constitution.

The suggestions and proposals for the Postdoc Conference will be sent to Prof Cloete for his comments.

The issue of the mentorship programme keeps on arising in the meetings. There were plans to have a workshop on the mentorship to be integrated into the Postdoc programme. The suggestions ranged from invitations to academics in the early

and mid careers to conduct informal lectures and share their career journey for about 10 minutes each.

The Welcome Pack was still an ongoing programme. The suggestions were to have a bag with the following contents inside it: a booklet and IT information. Natasha was working on the programme.

## **8. Feedback from administration**

### **a. Loss of 2 members of the executive (Bianke and Caitlin)**

- i. A summary of their parting remarks and reasons for leaving were highlighted by the Chairperson. Both could not cope with the responsibilities that were assigned to them. They opted to step down. Bianke stated that her ill health caused her failure to cope with the work whilst Caitlin mentioned that she had so many extra duties.
- ii. Olubenga will be leaving soon due to the end of the contract.

All members were encouraged to take their duties seriously and respond to emails and Slack especially on issue that needed urgent attention.

IT members were encouraged to arrange Whatsapp group chat and the mailing list for members. Maiake and Vikas promised to do the task.

### **b. Feedback from Communications**

- i. Video to introduce executive (Tando)  
The idea to have a video where members introduce themselves was suggested by Tando and she gave other members to come up with suggestions. Other members suggested the production of a photo and a short bio data. All members were encouraged to email their suggestions by Tuesday to Tando.
- ii. Year planner on website (Maaike)  
The Chairperson encouraged the responsible members to work on the year planner. She had shared on the Slack channel the template

on the website for members to send feedback. Only Martina responded. All the members were encouraged to visit Slack then send their contributions.

- iii. Website/FB/Instagram with 'How to...' instructions/videos (Maaïke)  
Members are send suggestions on registration issues and parking information to Maaïke. IT and Maaïke will update all communication channels of Face Book, Instagram, Tweeter, etc.

**c. Venues and dates for following meetings (Priscilla)**

- i. The Chairperson acknowledged that Priscilla had prepared a table with suggested dates for meetings and venues in liaison with Prof Cloete's Personal Assistant. However, there was need to make suggestions on the schedule as per the committee's recommendations. The committee recommended that all meetings should be scheduled for every last Friday of the month until the conference time in October. The amended schedule will be circulated to members.

**d. Agenda for Prof Cloete's meeting (4 March 2020)**

- i. The Chairperson had drafted and sent to members the agenda for a meeting with Prof Cloete. She invited the members to suggest any other items to discuss, edit, include or remove from the agenda. The members noted that the mentorship programme was also an item on the agenda to discuss with Prof Cloete.
- ii. Overview of the agenda  
Further discussion on the item was made followed with a suggestion of having a round table with the Chairperson, Professors, industrialists, Postdocs and representatives with diverse experiences.

**Postdoc Workshop & Meet and Greet with Prof Cloete (23 March 2020)**

- iii. Agenda overview and amendment (if necessary)  
The members discussed on the invites for the meet and greet. A list will be compiled. The members were encouraged to respond further

and suggest any additions on the agenda. They were encouraged to make suggestions on the Slack by weekend and Tando will create a link by Tuesday when members will be able to suggest a name of person to be invited and say where the person was from.

- iv. PIs and Deans will be invited.
- v. Questionnaire for PDS society will be circulated.
  - 1. Monthly meetings were encouraged.
  - 2. Expectations from PDS executives and the overall society need to be addressed.
  - 3. Feedback on the Meet and Greet will be considered.

## **9. Overview of exec portfolio and responsibilities**

The item has been discussed with reference to the document produced by Martina that was circulated with tasks for the portfolios and duties for the members.

- a. Chairperson and Vice-Chairs
- b. Secretary – Priscilla
- c. Communications - Maaike
- d. Events and Socials – Wiets (assisted by Martina)
- e. Finance and Treasury – Kim, Daniel
- f. IT – Vikas, Olubenga, Mzingaye

## **10. Constitution**

The members had read through the document and the following observations were made:

The Treasurer (Kim) and Communications and IT personnel portfolios were not included in the Constitution. A suggestion was made that these positions be added after a discussion with Prof Cloete on 4 March 2020. In order to amend the Constitution a call will be made for a special whole society meeting. The Society will be asked to vote.

A Postdoc representative to attend any relative meetings should be selected in the departments. The representatives will help in bridging a gap between the PDS and each department.

## **11. Postdoc Conference**

The members agreed to select delegates (Kim, Martina) to apply to NRF for funding for the conference.

- a. Agenda will be drafted.
- b. Guests to invite – members were to send suggestions of names on email by Tuesday.
- c. Symposia
- d. Themes
- e. Marketing and deadlines for (e.g.) registration, abstract submissions
- f. NRF application (NRF/KFD) Members to consult Riana Coetzee.

## **12. Feedback on Bag collection for Outreach**

- i. An annual conference bag collection initiative was set for primary schools in Khayamandi, Idas Valley and Cloetesville.

## **13. Research Funding/Fellowship**

Members were concerned about the funding for Postdocs. Postdocs write a lot of papers but there seems to be no reward for that. Members were requesting for an entitlement to discuss issues.

14. Suggestions for next meeting.

15. The Schedule of new meetings will be circulated to all members.

There being no other item, the meeting ended at 1630 hours.