

Steering Committee Meeting - 17th September 2015

The meeting was attended by Toby Mendel, Carole Excell, Toby MacIntosh, Alexander Kashumov, Andreas Pavlou. Apologies from Taranath Dahal, Gilbert Sendugwa and Adam Foldes.

Secretariat issue

The steering committee was updated on the current situation with the Secretariat, and asked to think about possible solutions.

It was noted that up until recently, there has been no urgency for the Secretariat to fundraise beyond the OSF granting that has been the sole funder and maintained the FOIANet thus far. It was also confirmed that there was definitely no possibility of getting more funds from OSF as they have stated, after many years of funding, that they will not continue to fund the network.

It was confirmed there is not a formal process for passing over Secretariat responsibilities, as this only happened once before between AIP and Access Info, but during a time where the FOIANet procedures and structures were more fluid.

With only a small amount of money left over that could be passed onto a new Secretariat, the SC discussed the possibility of significantly reducing the short term spending of the network to minimal activities to help lower costs. Measures could include eventually discarding the website, whilst core costs such as maintaining the discussion list would of course be maintained. It was confirmed that donations were not a desirable option.

In any case, there are minimum costs that are needed to secure the functioning of a minimum Secretariat. Access Info confirmed that at a minimum-minimum, this could be between 500 and 700 euros a month, if continued with the current Secretariat.

The SC confirmed they need to have a clear process by which they move the Secretariat of the FOIANet with criteria for possible organisations that could take it on, that may lead to reaching out to the membership.

The SC said it would draw up a list of possible organisations that might be interested in the FOIANet Secretariat role and approach them about it. If there are no organisations interested at that stage, the SC would reach out to the general membership.

The SC members present at the meeting stated their organisations were unable to take on the responsibility of the Secretariat. Others not present would also be asked if any or their organisations were interested.

In a worst case scenario, the organisation of the Chair of the SC would take on the responsibility of taking on this minimum running cost and maintenance.

The SC suggested that the FOIANet could or should operate in the same way as others such as UNCAC, and therefore it is essential that the next organisation is aware of these responsibilities.

A longer term solution is needed and a plan in place to solve funding issue. Whilst recognising it is not an easy task, the SC agreed that the FOIANet needs a Secretariat that will lead on funding, with guidance from the SC.

ACTIONS

Create list of pre-selected organisations

Write up and send 'proposal' email for selected organisations

RTKD 2015

Create poster and hashtag

CLD to generate AMA on Reddit – more contributors to the AMA are welcome.

Promoting RTKD via the list

Possibly launch impact stories project, or via social media – to continue discussing