

**ISTS Board Retreat Condensed Minutes**  
**27-31 August 2018, National Conservation and Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV, USA**

**ISTS Minutes:**

Minutes from the 2017 Board retreat, Kobe Board meeting, the Kobe Plenary, and condensed minutes of the retreat and Kobe Board meeting were discussed and accepted. There was discussion and agreement to provide a more extensive version of the condensed minutes to ISTS members in order to provide greater information on the discussions and decisions of the Board. Richard Reina and Andrea Phillott agreed to develop a draft for consideration.

**Finances:**

The Treasurer reported that the Kobe symposium made a small profit and complimented Past President Matsuzawa's accounting. The Society has cash reserves held in several funds and there was discussion about how much was necessary to ensure the financial security of the Society and how much could be drawn upon to support Society activities. The discussions focused on finding a balance between holding a conservative financial position and using surplus funds to advance the goals of the Society through support to members. It was decided that the Society needs to seek expert advice to develop a business plan, seek external funding and maintain a responsible financial position. A taskforce was formed of Reina, Amorocho, Balazs, Paladino and Wyneken to develop an ISTS Business proposal/strategy

The Treasurer proposed that a Treasurer's Assistant be appointed to assist with the increasing workload associated with the position, particularly in bookkeeping. He suggested a model whereby an assistant be employed for a small cost to the Society and that the current Treasurer forgo that honorarium associated with the position and that this money be used to partly cover the cost of the assistant. There was extensive discussion about the need for the assistant and associated remuneration. The Treasurer agreed to develop this proposal further, to more clearly identify the role of the assistant, develop Terms of Reference and identify an appropriate cost for the Board to consider.

**2019 Symposium plans:**

President Lohmann provided an update on the planning for the 2019 Symposium. Attendance of 800-1000 people is expected and the budget for the symposium is based on that expectation. Attendees will be strongly encouraged to stay at the host venue in order to ensure that the Symposium meets its room, food and beverage targets. Failure to meet this target will increase the cost of the venue. Registration fees for students, high-income and low-income attendees were discussed and agreed upon. The provisional budget for the Symposium was balanced and approved.

There was discussion of Society membership fees and it was agreed to increase the fee for non-student from high-income economies to \$35 per year because the fee had remained unchanged for many years and represents a significant portion of the Symposium budget.

The format of the banquet and auction were discussed with the view to providing Symposium attendees value for money and for the Symposium to meet its food and beverage obligations to the venue. A number of options were considered for subsidising drinks and the President will investigate further before finalising the budget.

It was decided to increase travel grants from about \$17,650 to \$34,650 using cash reserves if external fundraising cannot cover the difference.

The President outlined plans for greening the Symposium to reduce its environmental impact, including lighting, housekeeping policies and reduced use of plastics.

**Grant writing:**

In addition to the current ISTS grant writer/Program Officer, there was discussion and agreement to appoint a professional grant writer to assist the Society raise larger, more long-term external funding. \$6K over three years was allocated from reserve funds. The President, President-Elect and Past-President will be the Points of Contact.

**IT Liaison Position:**

Aliki Panagopoulou was reappointed as IT Liaison to work with Blue Salamander Solutions on the ISTS website.

**Membership survey:**

The results of the membership survey were discussed. One topic raised by some members was regarding the size, structure and role of the Board of Directors of the ISTS. Task force was created to look into the model of how other Societies work and investigate alternate Board structures, consisting of Reina (Chair), Wyneken, Estrades, Prosdocimi, and Moncada. There was discussion of providing a detailed survey results to the membership and it was decided that specific comments and detailed results could not be provided publicly because permission to do so had not been requested at the time the survey was taken, so a summary will be provided. A committee (Phillott, Past, Current and Elected Presidents) was formed to review responses and respond to the members.

**Symposium auction:**

There was discussion of the format of the auction and the roles of auctioneer and assistant. The possibility of a revised auction format to cater to a wider audience was considered, while maintaining the high-energy, lively current format. Tiwari will share auction guidelines with new Board members.

**Membership period:**

The period of annual membership was reviewed by the Board, which decided upon 01 October to 30 September of the following year. This period encompasses the nominations period for ISTS Offices, and should reduce confusion about whether nominators and nominees are members.

**Authorship guidelines and Automatic nomination of student presentations at Symposia for Archie Carr Award**

1. Authorship guidelines- concerns have been expressed about changes in the order and inclusion of authors of presentations at the annual Symposia, so the Board discussed whether authorship guidelines should be flexible or strict. After discussing the advantages of a system that allowed changes in authorship while ensuring the policy could not be abused to exclude authors after submission, it was decided to leave authorship flexible on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Program Committee.
2. Student awards- While the suggestion that all student presentations be automatically eligible for the Archie Carr Awards was considered, the Board decided to retain the current system by which

students self-nominate for the Award at Abstract submission. Students will be asked to provide the name of their advising professor and university at registration.

**Hall of Fame:**

A 'Hall of Fame' on the ISTS website was proposed to honor those who have passed away in the course of sea turtle activities. As a first step, names, photos and bio's of those known to Board members are being shared with George Balazs.

**Program Officer's Report:**

The Program Officer's Report, describing their activities in the prior year and including the suggestion for a funding proposal to develop an ISTS Business Plan, was accepted.

A motion to renew Ingrid Yanez's position as ISTS Program Officer for another year also passed.

**Travel Committee Report:**

The Travel Committee report and recommendations were reviewed, and the Board agreed on the following: 1) Lohmann to invite Mark Hamann to be a Regional Chair; 2) Reinitiate the airlines miles account of the ISTS; 3) Encourage the Travel Committee to develop a selection criteria spread sheet; 4) Logos on grantee presentations will be left to the discretion of the President.

Having Board members on the Travel Committee was also extensively discussed. Overall there were no objections to Board members overlapping with other Committees, and it was felt that in the case of the Travel Committee, the process would be more transparent through the development of the criteria spreadsheet.

**Nominations Committee Report:**

This report described several issues that had arisen in the past year, and the Board discussed how to best resolve them. Board members themselves should be proactive in encouraging ISTS members to both nominate and be nominated. Nomination packages should include letters of support dated for the specific year of nomination, and letters from previous years should not be 'recycled' by the nominee. Nominators and nominees must be an ISTS member at the time of nomination and election, and guidelines will be updated to communicate that those from under-represented regions experiencing financial hardship may contact the Chair of the Nominations Committee for assistance; the Chair will then share the request with the President. The nominations timeline was reviewed and edited. The Board identified several strategies to increase voting, including a computer at registration and frequent reminders to the Members.

**Proposed Code of Conduct:**

The Board reviewed the most recent version of the Code of Conduct (CoC) and all comments submitted during the review period prior to the 2019 Symposium in Kobe. The content and language in the CoC was discussed by the Board in this context, and it was determined that several versions would be prepared for further consideration by the Board and the Membership.

**Board Member's recusing themselves:**

As there is a potential conflict of interest in Board Member's contributing to conversations about persons they have nominated for ISTS Offices or awards, a motion was passed that Board members must absent themselves from such discussions.

**Board representatives on Award and Nominations Committee:**

Laura Prosdocimi will be the Board representative on the Awards Committee, and Andres Estrades on the Nominations Committee.

**Resolutions:**

Frank Paladino will be the Resolutions Committee Chair.

**Symposia Program Manuals:**

Manjula Tiwari will provide the old draft of the Program Manual to the current Program Committee; Alfaro will send updated edits from the 2016 Symposium.

**Membership benefits:**

Following Board discussions on the previous day, a list of benefits of ISTS membership was compiled; most of the reasons related to the Symposia and nominations/voting in the election of ISTS Offices. These are to be highlighted on the ISTS website and social media accounts.

**Other business discussed:**

- a) Proceedings of the 32<sup>nd</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> Symposia should be available soon.
- b) The Board discussed ways of adding value to being a member of the ISTS and these included several software/web services that would simplify data management and reporting of a member's own research data.
- c) Need to provide more detailed condensed minutes to ISTS Members as requested in responses to survey after Kobe symposium.

**2020 Symposium**

The 2020 Symposium will take place in Cartagena, Colombia!

**Board members in attendance:** Ken Lohmann (28 & 29 August), George Balazs, Manjula Tiwari, Diego Amorocho, Richard Reina, Joanna Alfaro (28 (5.50 pm) – 31 August), Laura Prosdocimi, Felix Moncada, Frank Paladino (30 August), Alan Rees, Andrea Phillott, Marc Girondot, Andres Estrades, Jeanette Wyneken, Yoshi Matsuzawa