



**ASSITEJ Executive Committee Meeting:
Online
30-31 January 2024**

Present:

Sue Giles, *President*, Australia (SG)
Louis Valente Sørensen, *Secretary General*, Denmark (LV)
Bebe de Soares, *Vice President*, Chile (BS)
Seok-hong Kim, *Vice President*, South Korea (SK)
Yannick Boudeau, Belgium (YB)
Emilie Robert, France (ER)
Julia Dina Heße, Germany (JH)
Jon Dafydd-Kid, UK (JDK)
Cristina Cazzola, Italy (CC)
Selloane Lalu Mokuku, South Africa (LM)
Minoovash Rahimian, Iran (MR)
Tatiana Bobrova, Russia (TB)
Paulo Merisio, *Counselor*, Brazil (PM)
Roberto Frabetti, *Staff Member*, Italy (RF)
Christopher Blois-Brooke, *Staff Member*, UK (CBB)
Marissa Garay, *Staff Member*, Mexico (MG)

Absent:

Pamela Udoka, *Vice President*, Nigeria (PU)
Shoaib Iqbal, Pakistan (SI)



Agenda

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Access Needs**
- 3. Apologies** (Present, absent, number of voters)
- 4. Approval of Agenda**
- 5. Conflicts of Interest**
- 6. Proposal for New Structure of Membership Fees**
Objective: Discuss and improve.
Decide if we send the proposal in a hearing to members.
- 7. Budget Request from Small Size Network**
Objective: Make a final decision and vote on the EC response.
- 8. Proposal ENLIGHTENS-EU**
Objective: Present proposal and decide whether ASSITEJ should be a partner in the application.
- 9. Congress Registration Fees and Budget**
Objective: Make a final decision and vote.
- 10. Regional Development Programme**
Objective: Discussion and EC approval to include in EU application.
- 11. Artistic Gathering 2026. Does the EC decide not to have AAG in 2026?**
Objective: Discussion & vote.
- 12. Constitution Amendments Approval to Present to General Assembly**
- 13. EU Application**
Objective: Give input and approve content headlines.
Define timeline further.



1. Welcome

2. Access Needs

3. Apologies (Present, absent, number of voters)

Jan. 30: 13 present, 5 absent, 9 voters

Jan. 31: 16 present, 2 absent, 12 voters

4. Approval of Agenda

SG went over the proposed agenda for EC approval.

5. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were presented.

6. Proposal for New Structure of Membership Fees

LV explained it is important to have feedback from members to see if the new structure is realistic and, in their interest, so it can be included as income in the next EU application.

SG read the [proposal for new structure of membership fees](#).

EN mentioned it wasn't clear what "turnover" meant here and what we are asking for from National Centres (auditing report, financial statement?). He suggested a change of words and talking about an operating budget of the individual Centre instead. YB also suggested using the word "income" as another option and considering saying, during the next General Assembly, that every three years, we will revisit fees according to inflation so that 15 years from now, we don't come up with a new gap in fees.

CC asked if a realistic assessment had been made of who could, beyond the actual declared budget, afford to spend this money. LV said this was more of an estimated guess, but we will ask with this hearing that each Centre inform what their real turnover is to have a more precise indication.

VOTE:

Does the ASSITEJ EC approve taking this proposal to a hearing with members, with the provider that language will be changed?

Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC)

7. Budget Request from Small Size Network

SG read the [Small Size Network budget revision request](#).

LV mentioned that within the current budget, we only allocated the amount we are certain to have co-financing for. There is an amount in the grant we are not planning to spend in case we don't get enough co-financing. Matching funds from Small Size could release some of the funding we are currently unable to finance. It will not cost ASSITEJ International to make this budget extension, only in the case that we get the full amount.

BS proposed the EC to agree in order to get the co-funding.

RF explained that part of this difference will be used for expenses of ASSITEJ.

VOTE:

Does the ASSITEJ EC approve the adjustment to the Small Size Network budget?

Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC)

8. Proposal ENLIGHTENS-EU

SG explained that an academic at the University of Valencia reached out to talk about a project with the Horizons stream of EU funding, and they want ASSITEJ to come on board as a partner of the project called Enlightens. SG read the *Enlightens – EU partnership document*. She explained that being a partner will give us 300.000 EUR to lead Work Package 5. They are also open to us just doing a couple of tasks or at least being a stakeholder community.

JDK mentioned it is important to be clear on what the intended outcomes would be because it's a huge piece of work but also a very interesting one.

SG expressed that this project would help ASSITEJ move forward in an area that we want to work on already, and to make a difference in the sector.

JH expressed that she was surprised by the focus on hiring and the job market since this is not really our area of expertise in preparing children with disabilities for the job market. SG explained that the project talks about micro credentials



and different frames of learning and training, and how people absorb information. It's about a huge shift in language and approach in expertise or skill.

JDK expressed that maybe there is something about learning from the industry by proxy with some of our projects; we could be more intentional in terms of how we develop those, especially thinking about inclusivity in those offering points. SG added that it is a great way of bringing in IIAN, providing more structure and supporting the network to do the work it could be doing.

YB asked if there is a need for co-financing and what the stakeholder's community entails. CBB responded that there is no need for co-financing, and the stakeholders are looking at getting organisations and individuals who have the expertise and don't have the capacity to get involved in the project (ex., Office of the Historian in Havana). In terms of the amount of work, they have sent the draft of the application and are happy to change it; we've said we don't have time to work on it, so they will do the application process. Workload would be relatively minimal over the next week; it will be more about giving comments and feedback. No budget would come from ASSITEJ budgets; the staffing budget would be from Horizon Europe funding. The project is framed in a European context for purposes of funding, but they want to be more global and are very interested in involving the global south; it would work similar to our BCR project. SG added that part of the process over the three years would be finding people and researchers to work on this.

JH asked if creating structures in workplaces could also be part of the Work Package because ASSITEJ Germany has a project where they are trying to do this.

BS asked if it would be the current staff working on this and SG said the staff could come from anywhere. BS mentioned IIAN could also work on this.

SG explained that the relationship between arts and education is very central to this.

The application is due in February and the project goes for three years.

VOTE:

Does the EC approve of ASSITEJ taking part as a partner in the Enlightens project and leading the Work Package 5?

Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC)

9. Congress Registration Fees and Budget

LV went over the document of [registration fees for the 27th ASSITEJ World Congress](#) and different proposals for fees.

CBB reminded the EC that there are some countries where we can't charge through normal channels (Iran, Russia); we haven't advertised that those passes are free, but that's because there is no international system that allows us to collect that money.

JH shared that ASSITEJ Germany is thinking of doing a package, but more than half of them are freelancers, so they need to calculate who goes as an individual and who does a package with the Centre. If freelancers go on their own, then it becomes too expensive for the rest. BS explained the rationale about freelancers was that we should get money from those who get their packages paid, so those who aren't freelancers will get it paid by an institution so they can pay the higher fee. This way we accommodate both and we get some people that can pay full price.

PM shared that in Japan the Ibero-American group asked for a package, and it was very hard for Chilean artists to pay so we should think of that because artists of Chile don't have same level of money to participate, and Chile shouldn't be considered a high-income country. LV suggested including all Central and South American countries to that list to have all Latin Americans on equal terms and able to access the Congress in their region.

PM asked if people who present in the Professional Exchange Programme and ITYARN all needed to pay registration. LV responded they do because the number of people is so high that we would lose a lot of income if they don't pay. There are some very long workshops with several days so we would like to give a discount to those leaders. BS added that we will have many spaces to host this programme, so it's easier for people in many places to ask for funding if they are presenting something so we want to invite as many people as possible to the Professional Exchange Programme because this can help to pay for their flights. If they were to all get free passes, we wouldn't be able to pay the companies.

RF went over the balance of the budget proposal and explained that there is a new system of ticketing, and we can produce electronic invoices for those buying passes.



BS suggested that, since we already have about 40% of travel costs with ASSITEJ money, maybe we can already tell companies we can guarantee 40% because plane tickets are still low, and they will go up a lot so that they can buy now.

VOTE:

***Does the EC approve the registration costs as they are in this document?
Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC)***

10. Regional Development Programme

SG went over the [ASSITEJ International Regional Development Programme 2025-2027 document](#). She explained the idea is the development of a regional workshop in a way that our members can invent themselves and adapt what works best for their region.

The budget is an estimate for now.

LV mentioned the initial idea started in Johannesburg, talking to Gertrude from Zimbabwe and Yvette Hardie, who mentioned it would be great to create a path of development for National Centres in African countries. This idea also comes out of the movement in Ibero-American countries and conversations with Iberescena, where they want to support the development of Centres in these countries and maybe fund them. It feels like the workshops we've had are the beginning of something, but they need more money, time and strategic thinking to make a real long-term difference; this would be good in terms of sustainability as well. If we say we do up to three applications, we can have smaller proposals; we have some freedom in choosing the workshops. The initial idea was to have a bid at the Congress because it kind of replaces an AAG but it makes the timeline very short, so maybe we just have an expression of interest there, and it can inspire others. This gives us time to have more clarity.

YB asked what exactly regional means here and if it can be scattered around the world. SG explained this should come more from an idea of a gap that needs to be filled regionally. LV mentioned it could be defined in terms of commonalities and needs that people want to address. If there are clear common things that would make sense to develop, we could be flexible.

SG shared that SI had a question about the economy, who would receive money and what the percentage for each Centre would look like. LV said that needed to be solved with specific proposals. Maybe one centre can be a financial administrator that can pay for activities in other countries, but it is always difficult

to finance across borders. JH suggested talking to other institutes that finance projects across borders to get ideas.

YB asked if there is mention in EU regulations about a limit, and CBB said there was a limit on how much to spend outside of Europe, but that was removed.

PM asked if EC meetings would be held within these regional gatherings. SG and BS agreed this would make sense and a good way for the hosts to make use of the EC in these events.

VOTE:

Does the EC approve of including this programme within the new EU application?

Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC, LM, MR, TB)

11. Artistic Gathering 2026. Does the EC decide not to have AAG in 2026?

SG shared that there has been a feeling of burnout from running an AAG every year from an ASSITEJ International perspective as well as from the hosts, who are not always coping well; there has been a noticeable effect on the economy and people's resilience. LM expressed that it makes sense not to have an AAG because these imply many expenses, and it can be seen as exclusion because not everyone can afford it. JH added that from a sustainability point of view, it's fantastic. If we have 2-3 regional events, people can still travel but not so far and enjoy those events, and maybe we can have regional groups of EC travelling to those.

SK shared that ASSITEJ Korea is preparing to host an AAG26. We need to think of reconstructing this whole system of AAGs and AWCs, not just to skip them. SG asked that Korea think of doing a World Congress instead, and SK agreed that they could consider it. He also added that ASSITEJ Korea would understand if we don't have an AAG, and will think of a regional programme because they want something to work on developing the Asian TYA community.

BS expressed that meetings in person bring 1000% more for the association and its members. Regional development meetings are brilliant, but what happens in AAGs and World Congresses is unique and if we don't have them the association would look very different. SG added that we need to think of making access to those as broad as possible so as not to have the same people always.

EN agreed not to have an AAG26 and to have regional programmes instead. He asked if there would be any budget ramifications and if it changes the budget application. LV explained this would currently not really influence us because until now, the finance has been mostly on the host side. ASSITEJ contributes digitally and gives some support to specific programmes, but this hasn't been an economic factor in our own budget. It is difficult to use it as a mechanism of co-financing because money really goes to the host.

EN shared that TYA/USA always sees a spike in membership right before an event, so it is something to think about. Even with ASSITEJ, everyone usually pays right before the Congress because they want to participate.

PM raised the question of how to manage communications with the community because maybe people are already thinking of 2026 bids; how do we communicate this before the Congress? In terms of communication, LV said it could be hearing like the fees, or we will soon send the call for the General Assembly, and we can have a section there explaining our rationale. JH shared that there is an Umbrella Session planned for March, and it might be helpful to inform of these changes then.

JH said this shouldn't be seen as cancelling, but we can tell the story we are creating more events for more people to access. She also asked what happens if we don't get funding and can't do the regional programme and have already decided not to have an AAG. LV responded that if we don't get funding, it would be possible to do something and have a smaller gathering; we could have an emergency plan.

JDK said it is not really a question of either or, and there are many positives to the regional programme, but we need to think of real gaps that would happen if we don't have an AAG. Online is good, but trying to connect with people is much more difficult; we need to explore the losses to our outcomes as an organisation. SG reminded everyone there would still be one AAG and the World Congress. LV said it would be interesting to call this a test, that we try for one year to do something different, and we evaluate it in the next General Assembly. In addition, we have a real burnout issue because we have so much transition at the moment and it would be good for EC and staff to have a break.

BS shared that when the AAG was created, there was a level of real artistic interchange that was really precious. We only met once a year, but now it has become something like a Congress.



VOTE:

Does the EC agree not to have an ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering in 2026?

Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC, LM, MR, TB)

12. Constitution Amendments Approval to Present to General Assembly

SG shared the [document with proposed amendments to the Constitution](#).

VOTE:

Does the EC approve the presentation of the amendments to the General Assembly in Cuba?

Unanimous vote in favour. (SG, LV, BS, SK, ER, YB, JDK, JH, CC, LM, MR, TB)

13. EU Application

LV stated that the next EU application is due on 7 March 2024. We will have a reply in September, and the project will start in January 2025 and will continue for four years. He went over notes from [Jamboard](#).

LV explained there is a potential for a specific sustainability Work Package but suggested using sustainability as a cross-cutting priority, something that relates to how we work. SG added that it is better to have this across all Working Packages and embedded in the organisation rather than as isolated tasks. JH said it had been interesting from the SHIFT experience, to see that if you have a reflection it is still a plus, even if you are not doing something about it. It is important to communicate that this is something we are really implementing in our organisation.

SG mentioned that among the activities that will not be included is Voices of Children. This was a project trying to bring the participation of children to activities of ASSITEJ, but it hasn't been very effective or visible. This is the time to look at what we've been doing and what is really going to work strongly with support and make a difference.

JH asked if the activities that are not included will still be done, and SG asked everyone to think if they still have the same impact and reasoning behind them (like Coffee Sessions and the Magazine).

ER suggested maybe not saying we never do any Coffee Sessions, but we do it related to a bigger issue or occasion and have it when really needed.

SK mentioned the magazine needs to change to a new format and keep it online, but publishing once a year is not working. Maybe a webzine that works together



with a newsletter and maybe publishes 1-2 times a month. At the moment, readership is not so good.

JH commented that it feels we lost the reason and who we are addressing. When it was printed, it was clear we gave it out at events, and online is not really attached to the event and feels different. It may be best to combine it with the newsletter and have magazine articles in each issue. Maybe ask other centres and what they are doing and TYARN and include people who already write articles.

PM said the Communications Working Group did a survey about two years ago and had positive answers about the magazines but even more about the newsletters. The idea of combining is good; no need to have lots of dense articles, and it would be good to add research dissemination.

BS said the newsletter has a very different function from the magazine; even if we include magazine articles, people won't see them; they are very different; the magazine has a role as the ASSITEJ Germany magazine YZX.

TB added that there are not enough articles to publish a magazine twice a month, and maybe one idea is to ask National Centres to send articles for the magazine each month and also have articles from ITYARN.

SG shared that trying to do hybrid events after the World Congress in Tokyo has been difficult. CBB said hybrid events need a rethink, but also, we've never given hybrid really a chance. There hasn't been enough time or staff capacity to do real promotion around digital, so we need to evaluate based on what it could be and not on what it has been. How do we engage members and find out what people really want and need? For the last two years, it has only had two weeks of advance publicity, which is too late for people to take time out of their work schedules.

MR mentioned not everyone is able to travel, so it's a gift to have an online option. On the ground is special and different, but online is a good option when people can't travel, so a hybrid option is great. LV asked MR to write what specifically she attended from Serbia and what worked and what didn't, to understand better. LV added that it is also a cost assessment; we spend money, and currently, very few people attend.