

Annual General Meeting 2013

Date: Friday 3rd May 2013

Time: 12:23

Venue: LT 2

Attendance:

Chair: Michael Buhagiar

On the table: Eman Mifsud, Elena Schembri, Martina Mizzi, Marija Cini, Anna Pulo, Timothy Debono, Johann Galdies, Ryan Sultana

Agenda:

- i. Reading of the AGM 2012 minutes.
- ii. Matters arising from (i) above.
- iii. Committee's administrative report.
- iv. Annual financial report.
- v. Appointment of an electoral commission, if necessary.
- vi. Amendments to the Statute.
- vii. General motions and other matters arising.
- viii. "Wanna be part of it?" - Is this message still meaningful?
- ix. Nominations/Presentation of the new committee.

Minutes:

Michael started by saying that the quorum (of 20 people) was reached, as there were 26 students present. He started off by reading the Agenda. The Agenda was approved *nem com.*

i. Reading of the AGM 2012 minutes

Michael said that the minutes of the previous year's AGM were online. He read the important points, the matters that arose during the meeting and also the motions which were presented during the meeting, especially the removal of the Vice-President.

Roderick Micallef (BSc. Biology and Chemistry) and Mark Farrugia (MSc Biomedical Science) joined the meeting at 12:34. Mark did not have a vote due to the fact that he

was not a Faculty of Science student, however he was an Honorary Member and could attend the AGM as stated in the Statute.

A vote was taken and the minutes were approved *nem com*.

ii. Matters arising from (i) above

There were no matters arising from (i).

iii. Committee's Administrative Report

Michael said that Chris Desira could not be present during the AGM due to medical reasons. In the name of the executive he wished him to get well soon.

Each executive member presented his or her work as in the Administrative Report.

Michael said that this year S-Cubed was registered as a Voluntary Organisation. He added that an international trip was organised and for the trip the Society was affiliated with the Embassy of France and the CNRS. He added that on a national basis S-Cubed organised events with various students' organisations and also started a couple of innovative ideas like ShareIt, Science Communication and Video Tutorials. He concluded by saying that for the future, the Society should contribute more on both national and international level, and widen the outreach with the help of the Science Communication.

Eman thanked the present people for their attendance. He said that S-Cubed ranked 4th in the Room Allocation Report, amongst the best organisation on campus SDM, Pulse and MMSA. He added that one of the aims was to re-do the noticeboards within the Faculty of Science. He continued to say that the office was refurbished during summer. He said that the 3rd international trip of the organisation was S-Cubed va a Paris. He thanked Dr Arnold Lalo and Eduard Michel, from CNRS, and the sub-committee, Elena, Marija and Antonella, for their help. He continued by saying that the website was revamped. He concluded by proposing science communication for sixth forms students.

Elena started off by thanking the present people for attending the meeting. She said that in the beginning the executive was made up of 12 people and throughout the year Antonella and Eric resigned from their posts due to personal commitment. She thanked

them for their contribution. She continued by saying that 24 minuted meetings were held. She added that it was important to have a work plan for the year, and a Planning Weekend was held in the beginning of the term to plan events and activities. She added that it was important that throughout the year the records would be held organised and up-to-date, and said that it was her duty to do so. She concluded by thanking the executive members for their help and the students for their support.

Martina started by saying that her role was to maintain a good relationship between the organisation and the students. She continued by saying that Freshers' Week was one of the most important events, and during this week informative leaflets were distributed together with the In Touch issue, and for the first time, an event aimed for first year students to get to know their classmates and other first year students was organised and was called 'Meet the Freshers'.

James Ciarlo left the meeting 12:56.

She continued by saying that several PRs were issued. She said that two issues of In Touch were published, were the last issue was dedicated to the 10th Anniversary. Martina concluded encourage the students to attend the events.

Timothy said that he was going to speak in his and Chris's name, as the later could not attend. He said that the year started by the 8th Annual Seminar where two social events were organised, 'Karaoke and Wine Night' and 'Tight & Bright'. He continued by saying that the annual events like 'The Annual Science Gathering' and 'On the Trail' took place late November and early December with a high turnout. He added that later in December, S-Cubed together with UESA, JEF and ASCS organised 'Santa's A-List'.

David Rueben Grech (BSc Maths and Physics) joined the meeting at 13:02.

Timothy concluded by saying that a new social event was organised, with the name of 'The Laboratory', were drinks were all included in the price. He proposed that this party could take place in future years as well.

Johann said that he wished to focus on science outreach. He added that they did science outreach on three levels. They started at Science in the City, and afterwards the Saint James Cavalier contacted them, where the sub-committee did some demonstrations aimed for students attending the primary school, and also through the refurbished website, where there were the online video tutorials, which was a new initiative and

were about the use of certain equipment in the lab. He concluded by saying that during these initiatives the Society focused on two main things amongst which there was the quality of the videos, as they were of a high quality. He wished that the amount of sub-committees would increase.

Thomas Bajada left the meeting at 13:04

Tomas Bajada joined the meeting 13:05.

Michael added a comment that he put various copies of the In Touch and of the Financial Report, which had to be approved later on.

Ryan said that as an International Officer he had the duty to keep in touch with foreign affiliations, which included SOB, IOPS, RSC and IAPS. He said that S-Cubed was also affiliated with the KSU, from where the Society used several resources that they offered. He said that the KSU International Office organised several events for international students. He added that another affiliation was Agenzija Zghazagh, who also helped S-Cubed with resources. He concluded by encouraging the future International Officers to maintain good relation with the Society's

Maria Attard (BSc Biology and Chemistry) and Brandon Seychell (BSc Biology and Chemistry) joined the meeting at 13:12.

Anna started by saying that she attended 14 KPS meetings held by the KPS Office within the KSU. She said that during these meetings various reports were issued and could be found on the KPS Portal. She said that two KE/KPS Seminars were held during the year. She added that S-Cubed took part in 2 major events organised by the KSU, which were the KSU Business Forum and KSU Environmental Fair.

Marija said that her role was that of maintaining transparent financial records. She said that this year she started to do the Financial Monthly updates and did a template for a future reference.

Michael asked whether there were any comments.

Faisal Sadegh (BSc Biology and Chemistry, Year 1) asked Ryan which regarded to the deadlines of the Youth In Action programmes. Ryan answered by saying that the EUPA had funds open for different various programmes and said that it required a lot of work and had to see who would be part of it, to take care of it. The problem was that, taking in consideration to organise a students' exchange, was that there had to be a team to look after the students, and there was an amount of time, for example 1 year that the project had to be completed. Faisal asked what was Ryan's advice for the next executive. Michael replied that in February he attended a course in the name of S-Cubed about the application of Youth Exchange programme. He said that the constraint was that due to the fact that the exchange needed a team to stay with the people throughout the exchange, if the exchange took place during the academic year, students had to miss lectures, and the only possible time was to do it during summer, however it was unethical to put a load of work on the next executive.

John Gabarretta (MSc Chemistry) joined the meeting 13:22.

Michael suggested in doing a project rather than an exchange and forming a sub-committee to take care of it. Ryan added that as a Society, the executive wished to do the exchange themselves, however science students who wished to organise and exchange, could approach the executive and the latter would help the students, as in the executive could present the project to the Youth In Action Programme to get funds for the student to realise the project.

There were no other comments.

A vote was taken and the Administrative Report was approved *nem com*.

iv. Annual Financial Report

Marija read the Financial Report and said that there was a loss from the events of €526.21, loss from Administrative of €374.45, form Publication of loss of €2,154.99, and Bank charges there was a loss of €56.95. She added that in total there was a loss of €274.48. There was no cash at the moment. She added that they did not receive the payment from the Degree Plus of €400, a refund from the science communication and the invoice for the magazine had to be paid.

Michael added that Michael and Marija changed the way of working the Financial Report. They started to take into account the payments that had to be received and paid and include them in the final sum. He said that they included the payment of In Touch 6, which was paid during this term

Marija said that they wished to keep the template in future years.

Aidan asked whether the election was going to incur any cost. Michael said that no cost was going to be incurred as the election would consist of printing the ballots and other materials, and so the Electoral Commission would use the Papier Plus Sponsorship.

John commented that the report was very clear and transparent. He added that taking in consideration the free events, the executive manage to keep a low loss. He said that he wished that more organisations did a similar thing. John wanted Michael to clear the no cash issue. Michael said that the money in the cash box was put in the bank account, as he preferred to keep the cash box for events and also there would be less money running around. John asked how there was a loss and the bank account had a value higher than the loss. Michael said that the loss included the payments that still had to be done, and once the payments would be paid the bank account would have €274.48 less.

Becky suggested in setting up a fixed account. Marija said that the executive thought about it as they had some money, however the international trip and the Anniversary needed a considerable amount of money that had to be paid in advance and did not make sense to have a fixed account when the money was needed.

A vote was taken and the Financial Report was approved *nem com*.

v. Appointment of an electoral commission, if necessary.

Michael said that it was the first year where an election was going to be held. He suggested that there would be more than one person to form the Electoral Commission.

John asked what the election involved. Michael said that the Commission had to set a date, book a room, and prepare the ballots of the election and had to see that they do an adequate amount promotion of the election. He added that the electoral commission had to ask the outgoing executive to stay and act as a caretaker committee of the organisation. Michael read Article 8 of the Statute, which regards the Elections. He

explained the system of the election, were the voters had to vote for 12 people to elect the executive.

James Ciarlo joined the meeting 13:42.

Jonathan Schembri (BSc Biology and Chemistry) was nominated by John Gabarretta (MSc Chemistry) and seconded by Rachelle Zammit (BSc Chemistry).

Rachelle Zammit was nominated by Jonathan Schembri and seconded by John Gabarretta.

Julian Bonella (MSc Physics) was nominated by Marie Claire Gatt (BSc Biology and Chemistry) and seconded by Roderick Micallef (BSc Biology and Chemistry).

Brandon Seychell (BSc Biology and Chemistry) was nominated by Thomas Bajada (BSc Biology and Chemistry) and seconded by Rebecca Camilleri (BSc Chemistry).

James Ciarlo (Phd Physics) was nominated by William Hicklin (MSc Physics) and seconded by Stephen Vella (MSc Physics).

A vote was taken and the Electoral Commission was approved *nem com*.

vi. Amendments to the Statute

Michael said that the general amendments included the Maltese translation of the Society's name, with the purpose of using it when writing a newspaper article in Maltese. Another amendment was to include the VO number. Another article was added, Article 2.4.3, where a student could opt-out from the organisation.

John said that the VO number had to be written on every publication of the organisation. Michael said that they were going to look in it.

Thomas left the meeting 13:50.

Michael said that after receiving feedback from the Statute's Office, the executive decided to add an opt-out clause due to the freedom of joining an organisation. Michael said that it would be demeaning to the purpose of the organisation. He said that one could dis-associate from the organisation by writing an official letter to the Secretary General, and the rights of the member would be none.

Apart from the above matters there were some typos.

There were no comments and a vote was taken.

The motion passed *nem com*.

vii. General motions other matters arising

Michael said that the following motion, which was proposed by Michael and seconded by Elena involved a clarification in Article 8.3.1. He read the article as stated in the Statute amended on 11th May 2012, and how the article was going to change if the motion passed. He said that it was appropriate to leave it as: 12 and only 12, as the voters were going to elect a whole team, i.e. of 12 people, and if no election was going to be held all the 12 members would be elected immediately.

Faisal Sadegh asked what happens when more or less than 12 candidates are chosen on the ballot. Michael answered that the vote would be invalid.

William Hicklin left the meeting at 13:58.

James Ciarlo said that it was important for the voter to check the number of 12 checked.

The motion was passed *nem com*.

Another motion, which was proposed by Michael and Martina, was to list Debbie Vella, Matthew Mifsud and Vincent Marmara under Honorary President.

The motion passed *nem com*.

Another motion was to list Michael Buhagiar as Honorary President. It was proposed by Elena and seconded by Ryan. Michael left the room for this vote. David Reuben Gauici asked what was the difference between Honorary President and President. Mark Farrugia explained the difference.

The motion was passed *nem com*.

The next motion was to list Eman Mifsud proposed by Johann and seconded by Chris. Ryan asked whether the last 2 motions could be voted together. The last motion was to list Roderick Micallef as Honorary Member, it was proposed by Eman and seconded by Martina. A point of information by Marie Claire Gatt, as Roderick helped S-Cubed for 5 and not 4 years.

The first motion was passed *nem com*.

The second motion was passed *nem com*.

Aidan Micallef (BSc Maths and SOR) and David Reuben Gauci left the meeting at 14:10.

viii. “Wanna be part of it?” - Is this message still meaningful?

Michael wished for an interactive debate. He started by saying that he chose this title, as it was the phrase that was used 10 years ago by the founding members to attract students to join the organisation. Michael asked what the present members thought of the present organisation and asked whether the students were happy with it.

Jonathan Schembri (BSc Biology and Chemistry) left the meeting at 14:13.

Maria Attard (BSc Biology and Chem, Year 1) said that the fact that there was a student organisation was very helpful, because as students they did not enjoy campus life and the Society did their university life more enjoyable.

Jonathan Schembri joined the meeting at 14:13.

Alex Hili (BSc Biology and Chemistry Year 2), said that not ‘wanna be part of it’ but participate more in the events and activities. He said that he imagined that life on campus was just studying and he was like that at the beginning of first year. He added that during his first year the contribution from fellow students was very low, but the first years of 2012/2013 were very active especially the Biology and Chemistry ones.

Michael said that the actual message was not by being members but by helping out the Society.

Marie Claire Gatt (BSc Biology and Chemistry, Year 4) said that she understood what Michael meant as she was part of the executive. She added that the fact that they were there for the students who even attended an event once, it made S-Cubed be there. She said that she was happy with the attendance of the AGM and the Society was moving in the right direction.

Faisal Sadegh left the meeting at 14:16.

James Ciarlo (Phd Physics) said that it was true that every science student was a member but when he was first year there wasn't that much interest of being part of it by attending the events. He said that he saw a difference from then and now.

Faisal Sadegh joined the meeting 14:19.

James said that the Society should also focus more on post-graduates as they lacked from help from the Society's part, were it could have helped them in problems that arose.

Roderick Micallef (BSc Biology and Chemistry, Year 4), said that the message was still meaningful and throughout his stay at University he saw a change in the events of S-Cubed. He said that the message was more of an experience and the feeling of being recognised for the work. He proposed to the next executive to send the message of 'Wanna be part of this experience?'.

Rachelle Zammit (BSc Chemistry, Year 2) agreed with what was being said, and she said to change 'Wanna' with 'How to be part of it', as certain students are scared to make commitment, she suggested one-to-one meetings or information session for students, especially for those who did not attend to the AGM.

Anna said that to attend an event had nothing to do with commitments. Michael said that he wished to formulate a list on how the executive could actually involve the students in the Society and be proud to be part of the organisation.

Rebecca Camilleri (BSc Chemistry, Year 1) said that to add with what the previous attendees said to start targeting the students, she said that one can not be proud of S-Cubed if he/she was not proud to be part of his/her course, as most of her friends did not know what they want to do in their future. Anna said that the course of BSc was vague in itself. Rebecca added that as they were not studying for a particular profession some students might not feel happy to be in the course. Anna said that it was not to be proud of the course but not being part of S-Cubed. James Ciarlo said that a lot of University courses had a warrant with their course but science courses did not.

John Gabarretta said that the warrant case was a valid point and said that it was a long process, and could limit what students could do after graduating. He said that it affects their role in the work environment. He continued by saying that something they focused on last year was to exploit their diversity of the faculty, and during this year various talents were pointed out such as video editing for the video tutorial. John suggested to organise a band/jamming night, and proposed to engage such people throughout the year. He suggested that the executive start to think outside the box. He added with Rebecca's point on the students' science outreach that it could start from before entering University and said that there was a lack of knowledge especially at 6th forms like Saint Aloysius and De La Salle. He concluded by proposing the next executive to expand the video tutorial and to formalise a system of Class Reps, appointed or elected through academic process and there could be a link between the Class Reps, S-Cubed Education

Officer, and between S-Cubed Education Officer to Faculty Reps, who at the moment were himself, Julian Bonello and Jonathan Muscat. Michael asked on what stage it would be. John said that it could be exploited in two ways mainly academic, and it could be used as point of contact between S-Cubed and the students. Johann agreed with what John said. He said that amongst the present members there were six people who were in a sub-committee. On another note, which regarded to the Class Reps Johann thought that it was a good idea. John said that the role of Class Reps had to be clearly defined, that it had to be a point of reference of the class linked with S-Cubed which then S-Cubed would be linked with the Students Reps. He thought that it was better to have a more defined system, and extend the Society's outreach, and it would be involving him/herself without commitments.

Alex said that they were doing their course because they had a passion for the subject. He suggested, having a better communication with guidance teachers to suggest the course to sixth forms and to fifth formers. Maria Attard added that the real meaning of BSc was that it was core of Science. Michael asked about the idea of past executive members, which could give talks about their jobs and what they were doing. He wished to create an Alumni Society, which could give their contribution. Rebecca proposed site visits. Michael and Anna said that they were held this year. Rebecca said that the problem was to seed the pride at 6th form stage. Michael asked whether the class reps could help the distinction between the students and the class reps. Julian Bonello proposed that when the executive would feel the need to speak to students they could do so and the Class Reps could introduce the executive member to the rest of the class.

Ryan concluded the discussion by saying that Class Reps could help in encouraging other students to attend events, tours and could promote S-Cubed materials. Rebecca said that the students may feel intimidated as there were no 1st year students within the executive.

John Gabarretta left meeting 14:50.

Steve proposed to organise a site visit for students who were going to enter University, after their A-Levels.

John Gabarretta joined the meeting 14:51

Michael said that the aim of this discussion was reached.

x. Nominations/Presentation of the new committee

Michael said that Elena Schembri receive a total of 15 nominations and therefore an election was going to be held. The nominations were the following:

Steve Vella, Anna Pulo, Rebecca Camilleri, Elena Schembri, Martina Mizzi, John Paul Mizzi, Donatella Bongailas, Maria Cuschieri, Marija Cini, Johann Galdies, Ryan Sultana, Daniel Vella , Chris Desira, Aidan Micallef.

Michael thanked the executive especially Eman as he helped him a lot throughout the year, especially when he was abroad. He thanked the KSU executive for their help, Lucianne and Rita, and the students.

Meeting adjourned 14:56.

Johann Galdies
President

Martina Mizzi
Vice-President

Elena Schembri
Secretary General