

Executive Committee Meeting Notes

10:30 a.m. on 10 February 2023

Association of Hong Kong Language Centres

Present:

Melinda Whong (HKUST) President
Mable Chan (Baptist) Treasurer
Simon Wang (Baptist) Secretary
Martin Ma (Events Officer)
Rita Singh (Baptist U) representing Baptist
Lillian Wong, representing HKU
Stephen Bolton, representing CityU
Doreen Chong, representing HKUST
Adam Forrester, representing PolyU
Neil Hunt, representing Lingnan

Apologies: N/A

Agenda Items

Updates on STiLE project (MW)

- Platform development
- Promotional events
- Launch Event (MM)
- <http://hkust-stile-prod.pilottest.site/index.php/osp>

Melinda gave an update on the progress of the STiLE project. She provided a link to the site for attendees to view, but asked them not to forward it as it was an active production site. They were very close to the formal UAT testing phase and had faced challenges due to technical issues. Their new Project Assistant, Althea, had been amazing and helped catch them up. Financial processes at the university had slowed them down, but they had learned from the experience. The technical side of the project, particularly allowing embedded video within the text, had also been challenging, but they had now corrected it entirely.

Adam asked where the videos will be hosted. Melinda explained that the project would be run by AHKLC, independently from HKUST as much as possible. Server space was rented from HKUST to host the videos. Simon added that third-party platforms such as YouTube were not used because readers from some parts of the world such as the Mainland could not access YouTube.

Adam also asked about the login option of the site. Melinda explained that STiLE is open access. Readers do not have to register to access the materials. Simon added that login is for reviewers, editors and contributors. Adam wondered if there was a mechanism against spammers. Melinda was not sure and asked Simon to follow up with the Pilot team.

During the meeting, Melinda discussed the promotional events for STiLE. The first promotional event was not well attended, but Melinda was not overly concerned as the project is still new, and the concept of a platform for practitioners, by practitioners, oriented around scholarship is different from what people understand. The promotional events lead up to the launch event, and each event will have a slightly different focus. The launch event is planned for May 31st, and the current plan includes a plenary session followed by concurrent sessions, which will take place in four classrooms. The launch event is expected to have around 100 to 120 participants. The call for papers will start early next week, and the registration system is being tested. The registration fee is set at \$150, which covers lunch and the symposium. There is a possibility of bulk registration for institutions and calls the event a symposium. The lecture hall where the event will take place can host 300 people.

Martin discussed the plan for the launch event of STiLE, which is expected to have 170-200 attendees with a registration fee of \$150. The event will be held on May 31st at USC and will consist of plenary sessions, concurrent sessions, and a lunch break. The promotion materials are being finalized and the registration system is being set up, with the call for papers expected to start early next week. Martin also mentioned the possibility of bulk registrations for colleagues from the same institution and a maximum capacity of 300 attendees based on the lecture hall.

Simon asked about the ticket price of \$150 for the STiLE launch event and whether it could be considered as a registration fee for a conference, which could potentially be reimbursed by some institutions. He also asked if there was a maximum number of attendees that could be accommodated, given that some institutions may have more colleagues who want to join. Melinda agreed with Simon's suggestions and asked Martin to look into the possibility of bulk registrations and to make sure that the promotional material clearly states that it is an association symposium.

Updates on Association Website (SW)

<http://hkust-ahklc-prod.pilottest.site/>

- Via the link above we can see the current version of the AHKLC website (not yet live)
- The exact date for the website to be live at **ahklc.hk** is TBA (probably before the launch of STiLE - 31 May)
- The backend CMS (Content Management System) is functional but not yet finalised- still negotiating with Pilot team on some issues
- Simon as the secretary will maintain the website once the CMS is ready
- Martin as the events officer will provide input on how the website can be used to promote events and reach out the community
 - discuss email address options (Martin?)
 - email addresses that end with @ahklc.hk can be set up (not yet finalise the list with the vendor)
- Exco members are invited to
 - comment on the overall layout and content of the website
 - suggest ideas on how the website can be used to better engage the community

In the meeting, the group discussed the Association website, which is currently in production and not yet live. The website will have a CMS (Content Management System) that will allow for easy updating of content. The website is a major upgrade from the current Google site, and the group is currently updating the content and migrating it to the new site. The group also discussed the possibility of using the ahklc email addresses and the pros and cons of email forwarding versus using the ahklc email addresses. The group welcomed feedback on the website and encouraged members to suggest projects that could be added to the Projects tab on the website.

Leadership Forum (MW)

- took place 1 December, hosted by HKBU
- Topic: Prospects and Constraints of Career Development, including
 - 1)Staff rankings at Language Centres
 - 2)Career progression and promotion track
 - 3)Turnover rate and retention strategies
 - 4)Part-time/full-time staff ratio
 - 5)Role of TAs
 - 6)Initiatives for staff development
 - 7)Mentorship and support

- attended by 6 UGC-funded LC Directors, 2 of which also brought Associate Directors with directly relevant remit
- **Item suggested for today's Agenda:** Part-time teachers' status and contracts (NH, Lingnan)
- Spring Leadership Forum: TBC
 - Please encourage your Head to offer to host

The leadership forum was held on December 1st and was focused on career development, conditions, and challenges for language center directors. Six directors and some associate directors attended. Neil brought up the issue of part-time teachers and their contracts, and asked if other centers have an allowance for them to attend meetings. Other representatives said that their centers only pay for actual teaching hours and not attendance at meetings or training. Melinda suggested putting part-time teachers on fractional proper contracts so they are expected to do other tasks around teaching. There was no institution that volunteered to host the next leadership forum, so an email will be sent out asking for hosts. Melinda invited anyone with questions or concerns about the leadership forum to ask.

Membership applications for individuals (SW)

[AHKLC constitution](#)

Institutional Associate Members

Language centres and language centre organisations and associations outside Hong Kong are eligible.

To follow.

Individual Associate Memberships

Members of non-member institutions such as NET teachers and staff of non-member academic language centres are eligible.

To follow.

we need to decide what details to add here (to replace *to follow*)

Main issues to consider

- procedures for individuals not from the institutional members to join the association
- whether we'll charge membership fees (which would incur admin costs)
- a simple application form?
- Incentives and benefits for prospective members?

The group discusses the possibility of allowing individual teachers to become members of the association. They agree that there is no urgent concern to establish a formal procedure for membership, but they do want to welcome teachers to join the association. They discuss the possibility of charging membership fees, but ultimately decide to leave the money side for later discussion. They plan to work

on procedurally how someone would become an individual member, and to start with a simple sign-up or registration process. The group recognizes that they are still defining themselves as an association and that they want to feel the void for individual membership.

Terms of references for Institutional Representatives (MW)

- It would be good for us to formalise this for clarity as the Association evolves
- Your input welcome
- Note: buy-out not expected, so input needs to be limited

Items for list of Duties

- To publicise AHKLC events
- Attend AHKLC meetings: about 3 a year
- To encourage their institution to consider hosting an event
- Participate in AHKLC events
- Suggest perhaps a small group (2-3) to draft for circulation: Adam, Stephen

During the meeting, the participants discussed the role of representatives and the need for them to host events and seminars at their universities. They also discussed the possibility of the reps helping out with the STiLE launch symposium. The group decided to draft the terms of reference for the association and circulate it among the members for feedback. They also planned to put the terms of reference on the Association website under "Association business". The group discussed a talk by Ursula Wingate and Richard Andrew and agreed to promote it on the website. The group also discussed an exchange student from Chung Chan who was collecting data for her doctoral studies and wanted to observe classes at other centers. Neil Hunt suggested that the group could forward her details to other language centers. Finally, they discussed whether submitting articles to the style platform would count as scholarly publications, and Simon Wang explained that they were working towards getting recognition for the platform. The group ended the meeting by thanking each other and agreeing to meet again before the launch event.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:35am and the next meeting will be held in late April.