

ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH GROUP

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, Thursday 2nd September 2010, RGS-IBG London 1.10pm, Skempton Building Lecture Theatre Room 201

1. Apologies for absence were received from John Harrison, Laura James, John Bryson, Neil Wrigley, Maria Prieto-Carron, and Henry Yeung.

2. The minutes of the 2009 AGM were approved and are available on the EGRG website

3. The EGRG committee:

Chair: Andrew Jones (Birkbeck, University of London)

Secretary: Al James (Queen Mary University of London)

Treasurer: Martin Hess (University of Manchester)

Events Officer: Sarah Hall (University of Nottingham)

Events Officer: Laura James (University of Birmingham)

Working papers and book reviews: Kim Ward (University of Exeter)

Conference Manager: Steve Musson (University of Reading)

a) Martin Hess is due to step down after three years of excellent service and hard work as Treasurer of the EGRG. The Chair invited expressions of interest for a replacement – a call for nominations would also be put out to the EGRG email list.

b) James Faulconbridge and John Harrison stood down after three (plus) years work as Book Review / Working Papers Editors. Kim Ward has since taken over these roles.

c) New for 2010, Steve Musson joins the committee as Conference Manager, to coordinate organisation of the EGRG-sponsored sessions and guests at the annual RGS-IBG conference.

4. Last year's activities:

a. It was noted that the EGRG compiled and successfully submitted 12 sessions (of which 6 were co-sponsored with other research groups):

3 x The geography of creativity and its links to local development: issues and challenges.

3 x The economic geography and management science interface: building opportunities for knowledge sharing?

3 x Global Production Networks, Labour and Development (joint with DARG)

2 x Theorising the production and reproduction of city economies (joint with UGRG)

1 x Migration and migrants in a time of crisis and thereafter: economic repercussions, strategies to cope and beyond (Joint with PGRG)

Overall, it was felt the EGRG continues to demonstrate a very strong presence at the RGS-IBG conference through a wide range of high-profile sessions, and through co-sponsorship of sessions with other research groups.

b. EGRG sponsored guests at the 2010 RGS-IBG Conference – none to report. The groups' allocation was surrendered to other groups looking to support higher than usual numbers of guests.

c. A report was received from Andrew Jones on the launch of the new EGRG textbook '*Reading the Economy: the UK in the 21st Century*', edited by Neil Coe (Manchester) and Andrew Jones (Birkbeck). The Sage-sponsored wine reception / launch event was very successful, with over 50 people (the majority of whom were undergraduate lecturers intending to use the book in their teaching) attending a panel presentation and discussion by four of the contributors. The book replaces the previous (1997) EGRG textbook '*Geographies of Economies*' edited by Roger Lee and Jane Wills, and has received some attention in the national press. All funds generated from the sale of the new textbook will go to the EGRG in support of bursaries for postgraduate students in economic geography. It was also noted that Sage are willing to publish a second edition.

d. A report was received from Sarah Hall on the successful 2010 EGRG Annual Postgraduate Symposium, held on May 18th at the University of Nottingham. The event was attended by 20 EGRG members, with 8 postgraduate students presenting exciting high quality papers in two sessions: (i) the changing nature of work and consumption (topics included the geography of sex shopping and temporary staffing and the links between innovation and inequality); and (ii) regional economies and the geography of finance (topics included challenges to the role of the current monetary systems, the geographical impact of public expenditures and the consequences of migration of high-skilled individuals). It was decided to repeat the timing of the postgraduate symposium for May 2011, given the success of attracting speakers to the May 2010 event. The committee thanked Sarah Hall and Laura James for their hard work in organising these events, and for maintaining a database of economic geography PhD students in the UK to target for potential participation.

e. Postgraduate working paper prize was discussed. While it had been hoped that the database of UK PhD students in economic geography (compiled in 2009) might provide a useful means for generating a significant number of applications for the 2010 prize, only one was received – and this following a series of low submission rates in previous years. It was decided, therefore, to discontinue the postgraduate working paper prize. More encouragingly, it was reported that the postgraduate book review series continues to be very healthy.

f. Postgraduate Masters thesis prize and PhD prize. It was noted that the annual postgraduate prizes were awarded to:

- David Jordhus-Lier, University of Manchester (now at the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research): *The Practice of Neoliberalism: Responses to public sector restructuring across the labour-community divide in Cape Town* (PhD prize)

- Etienne LeBlanc, London School of Economics: *Can enterprise zones deliver local jobs to local people? The impact of the French Zones Franches Urbaines on local unemployment* (Masters prize)

It was noted that, again, there were highly competitive fields for both awards and that the overall standard of submissions was excellent.

5. Forthcoming events:

The 2010 EGRG Annual Symposium will take place at the University of Nottingham on Wednesday 17th November 2010 and is entitled '*Geographies of Finance After the Crisis*'. This event was postponed from May 2010 as a result of the disruption caused by the Icelandic volcanic ash cloud in April 2010 and its knock-on impacts on the teaching and examining schedules of the original participants, many of whom had been stuck in the US for longer than expected following the AAG annual conference in Washington DC. It was reported that the November event will feature Michael Pryke, Jane Pollard, Gordon Clark, Andrew Leyshon and Karel Williams as confirmed speakers. It was also agreed that, based on a general preference amongst the membership for attending an EGRG symposium in November, this timing would be retained for the following year. It was also agreed that as in previous years, attendance fees from salaried members at the EGRG Symposiums will be used to subsidise the attendance of postgraduate students at these events.

The 2011 EGRG Postgraduate Symposium will take place in May 2011 – Sarah Hall invited suggestions for a possible location for this event.

The 2011 EGRG Symposium will take place in November 2011 – ‘The Low Carbon Economy’ was suggested as a potential topic. Sarah Hall invited suggestions for a possible location.

The 2011 RGS-IBG Annual Conference will take place 31 August – 2 September 2011 at the RGS-IBG, London. It was agreed that in response to a request from the conference organisers, Steve Musson would aim to ensure a high degree of fit between EGRG-sponsored sessions and the overall conference theme.

6. Treasurer’s report

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2010 (balance £458.90 as of August and before the RGS subvention). Two points were noted: (i) the postponement of the Annual Symposium from May to November 2010 which will generate income from salaried attendees to offset expenditure on the May Postgraduate Symposium; and (ii) the agreed EGRG sponsorship of £500 in June to the 2010 Summer Institute in Economic Geography in Vancouver which helped enable this important event to take place in the context of funding difficulties in the economic downturn, and for two UK-based economic geography graduate students to attend. On this basis it was agreed that the finances were reasonably healthy, with the Treasurer also reporting that money had already been allocated for the 2011 postgraduate prizes and that the EGRG account would likely return to a balance of £1000 by 2010 FY end. It was agreed that we should continue to charge a £25 fee for waged attendees at the annual symposium.

7. It was noted that due to the 2012 London Olympics it will not be possible to hold the 2012 RGS-IBG Annual International Conference in London in August or September. In response to the RGS-IBG’s call for EGRG input on moving the conference to a different time of year and / or to another city, it was agreed that the usual August end / early September timing should be retained. In relation to an alternative city venue, it was agreed that the conference must be hosted within a single building, and close to an international airport. On this basis, it was agreed that Birmingham or Manchester would provide suitable alternative locations. The Chair would forward these suggestions to Catherine Souch.
8. A presentation was made to the meeting by Mike Bradshaw regarding the procedures for nominating EGRG-supported candidates for the 2014 Research Excellence Framework sub-panel chair and members of the Geography panel. It was agreed that the EGRG supports the nomination of Keith Richards or Chris Philo as sub-panel chair. It was also agreed that Andrew Jones as EGRG Chair would approach John Allen, Roger Lee, Adrian Smith, Susan Smith, Andrew Leyshon, Linda McDowell and Noel Castree as potential EGRG-nominated members of the Geography panel, with the aim of subsequently providing the RGS-IBG with 5 names of candidates *willing* to stand.

9. AOB

Thanks was recorded to Martin Hess for all his hard work as Treasurer of the EGRG for the last three years.

Date of next meeting: tbc

AJ, September 2010