

# RGS-IBG Economic Geography Research Group

## 2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes

8 September 2021, 1300-1400 BST

**Location:** Online meeting

**Apologies:** Zara Babakordi, Lotte Thomsen

**Attendees:** Jon Swords, Jennifer Johns, Julie MacLeavy, Kean Fan Lim, Adrian Smith, Alexandra Dales, Allan Watson, Chloe Billing, Chris Muellerleile, Darja Reuschke, James Faulconbridge, Jane Pollard, Jessa Loomis, Karen Lai, Rhiannon Pugh

**Meeting called to order at 13:00**

1. **Apologies:** Zara Babakordi, Lotte Thomsen
2. **Confirmation of minutes** of 2020 AGM were tabled at the meeting and approved.
3. **Nominations and election of new committee members:** There were no applications for the two postgraduate representative and one early career representative positions. The meeting deliberated a response and agreed to submit another call in the near future. The meeting agreed with the appointment of Allan Watson (Loughborough University) as the new Chair of the EGRG following a nomination by Jennifer Johns, the outgoing chair, and secondment by Julie MacLeavy, Treasurer of the EGRG. The committee thanked Jennifer for her excellent efforts at steering the EGRG to its present position, and welcomed Allan as the new Chair.
4. **Treasurer's report:** Julie MacLeavy provided an overview of the EGRG's financial position: the EGRG is in a good and stable financial position with a current balance of £2084.61. Because of the ongoing pandemic, there has been no major outgoings except the sponsorship for the PhD Dissertation Prize (£150). No major issues pertaining to the budget were raised.

Julie then proceeded to highlight the withdrawal of Sage as the sponsor for the undergraduate dissertation prize (£50 + copy of Global Shift) and invited the meeting to propose responses to this development. The meeting discussed the possibility of funding £50 from the EGRG budget and possibly reduce the PhD Dissertation award's monetary prize from £150 to £100. Some members of the meeting proposed dropping the monetary component of the award altogether if there are better ways to utilise the funds because the Award was already a prestigious recognition in itself. Another suggestion was for winners to produce short videos to increase the profile of their work. Members of the meeting also proposed Agenda Publishing, Verso and Bristol University Press as alternative book sponsors.

The meeting eventually agreed to fund the 2021 Undergraduate Dissertation monetary prize (£50) from the EGRG budget, while the Prize Officer, Alexandra Dales, will explore how other research groups are organising their awards and source for publisher sponsors for 2022.

**5. Report on last year's activities:**

*ECR events:* Zara Babakordi and Minjing Li organised a postgraduate event for the EGRG in November 2020 which was well attended. Some interesting points of discussion came up, including the interdisciplinary work of the attendees and their 'loose' attachment to EG, and their lack of awareness of the EGRG and its activities. Zara and Minjing also organised two virtual events in March 2021 for early career researchers to meet and learn from the developmental and research experiences of two economic geographers (Jennifer Johns and Liam Keenan).

*Annual conference, EGRG sessions:* Jon Swords reported that 28 sessions were sponsored at the 2012 Annual Conference in London. Feedback from the meeting indicates the overall experience of online provision was smooth, although the presenters could not see the audience who were physically present at the meeting. It was also not easy to discern which sessions were sponsored by the EGRG, hence future organisers could be requested to make the sponsorship clearer during the sessions.

*Prizes awarded:* Alexandra Dales reported to the meeting that there were two strong contenders for the PhD Dissertation Award and the award was eventually given to Dr. Nora Lanari (now based at VUW, New Zealand). The dissertation is entitled "The Influence of Global Agricultural Production Networks on Processes of Water Governance" and was submitted at Coventry University. The decision on the undergraduate dissertation award was not made at the time of the AGM and will be announced via the Listserv once a winner is selected.

6. **Discussion on creating a mentoring programme:** The meeting discussed setting up a mentoring programme that focuses on peer-to-peer mentoring. This could be very helpful for addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on the economic geography community. No decision was made and the EGRG committee will continue to explore this possibility.
7. **Opportunities for incoming Chair to speak:** Dr. Allan Watson addressed the meeting.
8. **Forthcoming events:** No forthcoming events are confirmed at the time of the AGM, and details of events will be promoted via the Listserv once the details become available.
9. **Date of the next meeting** depends on whether the meeting will be held at the next Global Conference in Economic Geography (Dublin, June 2022) or at the annual RGS meeting (Newcastle, August 2022).
10. **Any other business:** None.