

ACIDE 40th General Assembly

08th November 2023, Location: SV1717

Minutes

The following acronyms will be used in the minutes:

- EGA for Extraordinary General Assembly
- GA for General Assembly
- EPFL for Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne
- ACIDE for Association of Research Scientists and Lecturers
- EPDA for EPFL PostDoc Association
- PolyDoc for EPFL's doctoral students association
- AE for Assemblée d'Ecole / EPFL Assembly
- APEL for Association of EPFL Professors
- APC for Association du Personnel de la Confédération, section EPFL
- AGEPoly for Association of EPFL's bachelor and master students.

Opening

Time: 17:35

Presence

Chair of the meeting: Anita Nasrallah | Board Member ACIDE (AN)

Committee members: Kelvin Lau (KL) | Vice-President, Jade Mai Cock (JMC) | Treasurer, Pauline Franz (PF) | Board Member, Rita Sarkis (RS) | President (absent, since she left EPFL after her defense)

The complete attendance list is attached.

Agenda

1. Welcome
 - a. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous GA (22nd February 2023)
3. Updates
 - a. Activity report
 - b. Joining forces with EPDA and PolyDoc
 - c. Future directions of ACIDE: proposal for working groups
 - d. ACIDE Membership
4. Elections
 - a. Board members (5)

- b. Commission delegates
5. Miscellaneous

1. Welcome

AN welcomes everyone to the 40th GA of ACIDE, and asks if everyone accepts English as the meeting language; nobody objects. AN introduces the e-voting system which will be used for the votes and attendance list. PF briefly introduces the political system at EPFL, and explains how ACIDE fits in.

a. **Approval of the Agenda**

AN goes through the agenda communicated via email, and asks if someone wants to add points; nobody does.

The agenda was accepted unanimously with 20 votes for.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous GA (22nd February 2023)

AN asks everyone to vote on the acceptance of the Minutes of the previous EGA in February 2023, which were sent around in February and recently again, before the GA.

The minutes of the EGA 2023 were accepted with 20 votes for and 2 abstentions.

3. Updates

a. **Activity report**

JMC starts with the presentation of all organized events since last GA:

- French courses
- The international spouses' christmas party
- VivaPoly booth
- Welcome Event

Behind the scene, JMC also mentions that ACIDE has:

- Changed the statutes during an EGA
- Updated the membership lists such that every member is consensually on the list
- Created a new website with accurate information
- Created a new channel of communication with our members: the SLACK workspace

JMC then goes over the 2022 finances which show a loss of -250.85 CHF by the end of the 2022 year. There is a question about whether it is possible to have a negative amount on the bank account. The answer is yes. Another question is raised about the costs made for ActionUNI. JMC mentions that the fees are based on the number of intermediate body employees EPFL has.

The 2022 financial report was put up for approval by the GA. Before voting, someone asks whether we will approve the budget proposal for the following year, to which AN responds that it is the next committee's duty.

The financial report 2022 was approved and the board members were discharged by 19 votes for, with 3 abstentions.

JMC moves on to the finances of 2023. This shows a projected positive balance of 502.22 CHF at the end of the year. Someone questions the high external provider fees. JMC explained these were things such as the accountant and administrative contractual obligations that ACIDE inherited from the previous year and had to pay. We received sponsorships from various sources that allowed us to cover these financial obligations. As of 2024, these obligations no longer exist.

b. Joining forces with EPDA and PolyDoc

AN starts explaining that the future of ACIDE depends on its members and especially joining forces in a merger with EPDA and Polydoc. She emphasizes the goals of bridging the gaps between each section of our members, ensuring a strong voice and unity and financial sustainability in the face of budget cuts. Once again AN emphasizes that ACIDE is the only official representation for the Intermediate Body within EPFL.

Proposed roadmap suggests that the same active EPDA and Polydoc members join the executive board of ACIDE. We also need new members of the scientific staff.

There were general questions about the process and organization of the merger. AN explains that it is up to the next committee to decide, but that EPDA and Polydoc are on board. Matthieu, EPDA's president agrees. Both EPDA's and PolyDoc's GA will be held in December.

c. Future directions of ACIDE: proposal for working groups

PF introduces several potential working groups for the new committee including, but not limited to: 1) EPFL and Swiss politics, 2) events, 3) operational, 4) counselling 5) communication. These groups are proposed to be headed by a committee member, and

include interested members to work on the specific topic for a self-determined time-frame. The idea is to pick up needs from the community and distribute the workload.

d. ACIDE Membership

KL introduces the current state of the association in terms of members. There were 327 paying members in 2022. In 2023, that number went down to 181 after cleaning up the member list from members who were not aware they had registered, were not part of the association per the new statutes, or had simply left EPFL. Nonetheless, the number of new members has gone up to 259. Those new members had waived membership fees for 2023. This gives a total of 440 ACIDE members as per beginning of November 2023.

KL proposes a new membership fee structure, 20 CHF for PhDs and 30 CHF for Postdocs and staff scientists. This fee structure is 50% less for PhD students than the previous 40 CHF/year. For Postdocs, this is less than the current EPDA fee, which is 40 CHF/year. The difference in membership fees takes into account the difference of income among our members.

KL explains that the membership fee intake for next year is expected to be 9000-11000 CHF. This money will be used to fund our events and enable us to do more than what we can now. Lowering the membership fee is part of a strategy to help attract new paying members.

It was suggested that a fee isn't required. AN mentioned that in order to be independent from EPFL, we must charge a fee. Other organizations such as AGEPOLY also charge membership fees, in an opt-out manner. Members in the GA mention that we should be looking for alternate sources of income rather than membership fees. AN and KL answer that we do not exclude these solutions, but as for now, the main goal should be to be financially sustainable for the association to become stable again. The treasurer of PolyDoc mentions that for a student this fee is the equivalent of 3 beverages at our events and is necessary for planning. Before closing the debate, AN emphasizes once more a need for financial independence.

The new membership fee scheme is approved with 20 votes for, 1 vote against and 1 abstention.

4. Elections

a. Board members (5)

There is a discussion on how to elect the board for the year 2024. Older statutes and previous assemblies elected board members, with the positions of president, vice president,

and treasurer chosen amongst the board. The current statutes are conventional and standard and it was decided to elect 3 persons to the named positions of president, vice president and treasurer, alongside 2 board members.

The following board is elected:

- President: 2 candidates Kelvin Lau and Sally Cheung
KL was voted president with 20 votes for.
- Vice-president: 1 candidate Sally Cheung
Sally was voted vice president with 17 votes and 2 abstentions.
- Treasurer: 1 candidate Guilherme Almeida
Guilherme Almeida was voted treasurer with 20 votes and 2 abstentions.
- 2 Board Members: 2 candidates Mehdi Ali Gadiri and Sourabh Monnappa Kuppanda Jafri
Mehdi and Sourabh were voted board members with 19 votes each.

The GA congratulates the new board members.

b. Commission delegates

- Restauration commission: *Jade Mai Cock (20 votes for, 1 abstention)*
- Restauration COPIL [PhD only]: *To be filled by the board*
- Food working group: *Kelvin Lau (20 votes for)*
- Sports Commission: *To be filled by the board*
- Action Uni: *Victoria Aboukhalil (20 votes for)*
- Disciplinary Commission: *Jade Mai Cock (20 votes for)*
- Commission Sociales Et Bourses: *Malo Perez (20 votes for)*

Vote for the financial auditors Jakob Langer (14 votes) and Jerome Brender (15 votes).

5. Miscellaneous

The meeting closed at 19:00 and was followed by drinks and snacks.

Attendance List

1. Martina Morea
2. Kelvin Lau
3. Matthias Durrieu
4. Lorenzo Moseda
5. Neelu Kalani
6. Anita Nasrallah
7. Jade Cock
8. Simon Duerr
9. Mathilde Raynal
10. Sophia Johnson
11. Solal Pirelli
12. Mehdi Gadiri
13. Elsa Scialom
14. Pauline Franz
15. Charly Castes
16. Tina Papathoma
17. Ayberk Ozkiri
18. Andreas Mori
19. Andrea Krapp
20. Victoria Aboukhalil
21. Kaltrina Paloja
22. Kerome Brender
23. Sally Cheung
24. Guilherme Almeida