INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES
SECTION ON ARCHIVES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

MINUTES FOR SAHR NEWSLETTER (2) MEETING

22 March 2023 AT 4:00 CET/Paris time By Zoom video conference

Present:
Vitor Fonseca (meeting chair); Trudy Peterson (advisory); Kate Blalack (minutes); Dagmar Hovestadt, Andreas Nef; Romain LeDauphin; Jens Boel, Giulia Barrera, Normand Charbonneau

Apologies:
n/a

Discussion Summary:
We will be keeping Trudy’s current format for the time being until the new group onboards. We would like to have one overall coordinator / chief editor. Beginning with the June newsletter Kate Blalack will serve as interim chief editor through the end of 2023 – until we can assess membership commitments. At this time we will either solicit a more permanent chief editor from the membership, or Kate will continue serving in this role if time commitments allow. Normand Charbonneau will serve as support in soliciting articles from a broad list of contacts he has already established within and without ICA membership. Andreas Nef will provide technical and other support where needed. Romain LaDauphin will review articles for content quality. Romain has also already created (and will be circulating) a Google doc-draft, defining roles and responsibilities within the overall newsletter strategic plan. Dagmar Hovestadt will be drafting a communications strategy, which she will share with the group.

At our next meeting we need to develop and refine a workflow moving forward, using our strategic plan outline, role definitions, timelines, and communications strategy.

Discussion Comments
Jens - It would be ideal to have a chief editor, namely someone who can ensure that we are keeping with the scope of the newsletter. We need to have defined tasks and a solid structure. First we need to structure a strategic plan and then use this as a basis for discussion. We should look at how to mainstream and integrate our newsletter within ICA communication activities even more than we already do. This newsletter really reaches across all sections and is relevant to all sections within
ICA, then we need to work on defining outreach activities to reach out to other organizations (eg. Amnesty Int.). Then as a group we can refine our scope based on this reflection. We need to be sure that we identify the entry points for each organization so that we are being strategic about the dissemination of the newsletter and reach the audience in the best way. We need to select a person to take the lead on the next couple of newsletters moving forward.

Dagmar - Strategically we need to develop the newsletter based on the goals and a defined audience and shape the newsletter based on this foundation. Why is this important to our community? What other sections have newsletters? How formal is this newsletter structured on ICA or are we shaping this more specifically for our group? [Dagmar will create a document-outline of a communications strategy]. We also need to review possible communications software. Other questions? Do we look at regions or subjects for the target audience, what are our resources, what kind of funding will we need?

Vitor - Concerned about the responsibility and continued effort and commitment needed to produce a good product for our community. We will need to meet again after this first newsletter to identify and troubleshoot any issues. The group needs to decide what our needs are so that we can discuss these on a more granular level for improvements in 2024. We need to move forward seamlessly without interrupting the flow of the newsletter so we do not lose our current audience. Agrees with Romain that we will need to develop a simple and clean survey so as to not cause “survey fatigue,” because of the very busy schedules of our users’ lives. Then we can hold a more structured meeting on the next steps based on this. August might be a good time to launch this survey. For now we will transition over with Trudy’s guidance, so that the change occurs slowly in increments. For the next meeting we will use our strategic document drafts to serve as a basis for the discussion. We can use this time to refine and clarify the duties and tasks, as well as our path forward. We will likely need to ask ICA to help with some funding and software ideas, but we might find some good free software solutions. Andreas, Romain and Dagmar might have some good software recommendations as well. ICA uses MailChimp. Kate will be interim editor for June [Trudy will help onboard Kate; Normand and Andreas will serve as support] – through the end of the year, and we can then assess everyone’s commitments and possibly quiz membership for a permanent editor.

Normand - We have many colleagues who are interested in collaborating. These individuals have already identified many sources and issues of interest to include in this kind of newsletter. These already defined sources might streamline the process. We need to make sure Maria Paula Garcia Mosquera, communications lead at ICA. We might consider skipping May as the new group onboards. So the first issue would come out in June. Normand will also collect the newsletter articles and news.

Romain - We need to develop a working document defining our strategy, roles, and tasks, and refine this as we shape and develop our plan [Romain has already developed a rough document-plan for this]. We can also use this time to survey and gather user-feedback from our section. We also need to accept the changes that will be coming as a new team transitions to the newsletter.
Giulia - In Italy there is a personnel crisis which is causing a distribution problem. So this is something to keep in mind as we identify distribution channels.

Andreas - We should meet to discuss the documents already being drafted by this group and refine them. Then we should plan and discuss the practical side of how we will get the newsletter done in the next few months. We should focus on the unique qualities, but also look at how many people can contribute and how and then refine responsibilities.

Trudy - Emphasized that it was difficult to get commitments from commentary writers. It was an easier workflow to have the chief editor create the commentary, because they will read all articles and be most familiar with the overall scope of each issue. Also stresses getting the “call for content” out as early as possible.

Action Items:

Dagmar - draft communications strategy and share with group prior to next meeting

Romain - share google doc of role and responsibilities doc for review and refinement

Kate and Trudy - meet to discuss current strategy for newsletter to keep workflow and content requirements moving forward for June. Decide of scope for June newsletter

Normand - Once scope is defined, solicit newsletter items from contacts list

Everyone - Begin thinking about surveys for our membership and defining user/audience scope.

Next Meeting:

Not yet determined.

Meeting End - 22 March 2023 AT 5:40 CET/Paris time

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate L. Blalack