

ASPERA
Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association

Executive Meeting – Draft Minutes

Meeting I
Friday 27th July 2007
RMIT University
Room 6.6.04 @ 2.00pm

Meeting opened: 2.00pm

I Attendance

Present: Nick Oughton (President - GFS), Leo Berkeley (VP - RMIT), Alison Wotherspoon (Treasurer - Flinders Uni) Rachel Wilson (Secretary - RMIT), Mick Broderick (Murdoch Uni).

2 The RQF and ASPERA's response.

2.1 Meeting with Sue Baker

Nick reported on a meeting he had with Sue Baker chair of the Council of University Art and Design Schools (also acting head of VCA) who had just received the latest response to the RQF from the architects at QUT (see appendix).

A discussion took place during which the landscape of (and the tensions inherent within) the RQF were covered. Organizations such as ASPERA will be required to synchronise their position with the research sections of the member institutions. Each University will present a position which benefits their research group/s. ASPERA'S advocacy, while representing academic/practitioners as a whole should not appear too contradictory to the general thrust of institutional approaches. The attack must be harmonised, but without compromising our position.

2.2 Letter to the Labour Party

The executive decided to follow up on the advice from Mick Broderick and lobby the Labour party directly in relation to the continued inclusion of impact in the RQF should the Labour party win the up coming federal election.

A letter (see attached) was drafted and is to be sent to a number of Labour Party shadow ministers within two weeks of this meeting.

ACTION:

Nick to send letter to Labour Party MPs and CHASS. MP's include: shadow minister for education (Kim Carr), leader of the opposition (Kevin Rudd), deputy leader of the opposition (Julia Gillard) and a number of other ministers.

2.3 Establishment of ASPRI as a robust proxy for panel 13.

Lengthy discussion took place in terms of what our understanding of the role of the assessors was and the role of the 'robust proxy'.

It was decided that ASPERA would proceed with the establishment of ASPRI (with modifications) and the setting up of state based assessment panels of minimum 3 members and maximum of 5. The possibility of inviting assessors from industry was discussed and agreed to in principle as long as we were confident the candidates were sympathetic to ASPERA's agenda.

The point system was discussed and it was decided that this is a fluid system and will change as the implications of the RQF were realised - at this stage it was decided to go with the system as is, given the retrospective nature of the 1st RQF audit.

Discussion took place on who might be approached from each state in terms of heading up the assessment panels and to begin their implementation - this action is subject to on-going discussion.

ACTION:

Nick to approach the following people to begin the implementation of ASPRI.

NSW - Michael Sergi (Canberra)

VIC - Leo Berkeley (RMIT)

QLD - Nick Oughton (Griffith Film School)

SA - Alison Wotherspoon (Flinders University)

WA - Mick Broderick (Murdoch)

2.4 The ASPERA film festival

A decision was made to approach Gillian Leahy from UTS indicating in principle support to begin implementation of the ASPERA film festival as pitched at the 2007 conference in time for the 2008 conference. We discussed the allocation of a modest budget subject to checking the finances.

ACTION: Nick to approach Gillian inviting her to begin implementation.

2.5 Other Robust Proxies

A detailed discussion took place on the categories considered important as robust proxies and how to facilitate discussion with the ASPERA membership. The following categories were decided and

members will be invited to nominate organizations etc for each category via the ASPERA mailing list. This list will need to be completed by the end of 2007 in time for the 1st audit in early 2008.

1. Funding

- International (eg. co-pro's, grants etc)
- National (eg. AFC, FFC, Aust Council)
- State based (e.g. Film Vic)

2. Exhibition

- Festivals
 - International
 - National (including ASPERA film festival)
 - State based
- Broadcast
 - International
 - National
- Theatrical
 - International
 - National

3. Distribution/Exhibition (metrics to be included)

- Broadcast
 - International
 - National
- Theatrical
 - International
 - National

ACTION: The above list to be distributed via the ASPERA mailing list and nominations for each category sought. Results to be collated (by Rachel) and the final list to be audited by the executive and forwarded to chair of panel 13 by the beginning of 2008.

3 Conference 2008

3.1 The format

Detailed discussion took place on the length and format of 2008 conference. It was decided to try for three days (at the end of a week) to allow for the incorporation of more formal conference approach for day 1.

The following format was proposed

- Day 1 - Industry Day - open to the general public as well as ASPERA delegates, key note speakers and panels from a range of industry guilds to be approached (eg SPAA, AWG, ADG) a central theme decided, people asked to submit papers beforehand. Evening ASPERA Film Festival.
- Day 2 - ASPERA - themes to be decided by executive and papers sought prior to conference. Possible topic include: pedagogy, future trends, potential cross institutional research collaborations etc
- Day 3 - ASPERA and AGM

ACTION: Leo and Rachel to source suitable venues within RMIT - the round table tradition to be considered for the day 2 and 3 of conference. Dates to be decided and confirmed by end of September 2007.

4 Industry Outreach

4.1 Australian Screen Association

Discussion on how ASPERA might best approach the ASA for inclusion.

ACTION: Nick to approach ASA and check membership guidelines.

4.2 SPAA

We agreed to follow up on Geoff Brown's invitation (as issued at the 2007 conference) to begin discussions on how best ASPERA might be linked with SPAA in the future. It was noted that this is a long-term project and will begin with discussions between Nick and Geoff.

Initial steps might include - SPAA to sponsor ASPERA delegates attendance at the SPAA conference in exchange for chairing duties. The inclusion of ASPERA members in state based SPAA chapters etc.

ACTION: Nick to speak to Geoff Brown and come up with models of co-operation. Nick to follow up on ASPERA's presence at the upcoming SPAA conference.

5 Membership

5.1 Recruitment

It was decided that ASPERA needs to be more active in recruitment of new members and possible institutions that could be approached include: University of Southern Queensland, University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong, University of Tasmania.

It was also discussed that Schools/Facilities running animation courses (and possibly games degrees) might also be approached (if it is felt they are separate from other ASPERA members).

ACTION: Executive members to identify potential new members in their state and a letter to be drafted and set to each potential member by the end of 2007 with Nick as signature. NB - It would be good to include the details of the 2008 conference. Correspondence to be co-ordinated by Rachel.

5.2 Outstanding membership fees.

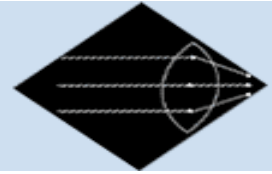
ACTION: Allison to check records and to follow up on outstanding 2007 membership fees ASAP.

6 Next Meeting

It was decided a teleconference should be arranged for the end of November 2007

Meeting closed: 5.00pm.

Aspera



**Australian Screen Production Education & Research
Association (ASPERA)**

ASPERA
Griffith Film School
Griffith University
PO Box 3370
South Brisbane
Qld 4101

31 July 2007

The Hon. Senator Kim Carr
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Senator Carr:

I am writing to you as the President of the Australian Screen Production Education & Research Association (ASPERA), in order to urge you to retain "Impact" as a measure of academic research within the Labor tertiary education policy.

ASPERA is the peak discipline body of Australian tertiary institutions teaching and researching film, video, television and new media as screen-based production practices. It was established in 2004 and currently comprises 19 institutions nationally. ASPERA represents tertiary institutions offering degrees at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including bachelor, master and doctorate in various screen production disciplines. ASPERA also represents nationally around 500 staff (academic, technical and administrative) and approximately 10,000 students. Creative digital content production is now recognised as one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, and is currently estimated to contribute "over \$21 billion annually to the Australian economy or nearly 3.5 per cent of GDP and employs around 300 000 people" (Digital Content Industry Action Agenda 2006). Eighty per cent of the digital screen production industry comes via our institutions.

ASPERA plays an active role in shaping quality education for those planning to or working in research and production for the screen. It addresses issues of concern to the sector, and is concerned with the status of screen production courses within the education sector. It addresses the relationship between the screen production education sector of the industry and the wider Australian screen industries. It aims

to lift the profile of the screen-based industries within the wider economic, social and cultural development of Australia.

As you know the Coalition's Research Quality Framework (RQF) model currently embraces Impact, which is attractive to our ASPERA colleagues and students. However, the Labor policy is deeply troubling to academic-practitioners who often produce research-led works for exhibition, distribution, performance and engagement outside the narrow parameters of DEST and ARC-recognised 'scholarly publishing'. Retaining "Impact", measured by robust peer-review from the national peak bodies and associations of creative arts practitioners, such as ASPERA, as a proxy for the 'conventional' metrics of peer-reviewed journal and monograph publishing, is our preferred model. It is also one that is based on natural justice and starts to redress the imbalance and bias of conventional metrics that have the effect of marginalizing our sector in a 'one-size fits all' mode of quantifying and qualifying traditional research outcomes.

Creative arts academics produce both traditional publishing outcomes and non-conventional, research-led works. These can be the movies you watch, the television documentaries you see, the music you listen to, the performances you attend, the exhibitions/installations you visit, the artworks you admire... Academic artist-practitioners infuse their works with innovative techniques and style, adapting and transforming creative methodologies, which inspire and touch the public in ways appropriate to their medium and form, but considered inappropriate for assessment or irrelevant to the current ways of evaluating research outcomes (and the potentially restrictive Labor policy).

All we ask for is parity and common sense. Many of the works already attain external peer-review in their research, development and production. State and federal arts and media agencies, like the ARC and NHMRC, do not provide grants without rigorous peer-review of applications and proposals, which also assess track records of the practitioner-academic/artist.

I have attached an article relating to model for assessing screen-based media research along the lines mentioned above.

http://nass.murdoch.edu.au/docs/S_Marvell.pdf

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and your advisors to discuss this matter and look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Nicholas Oughton
President