

## DSA Annual General Meeting Draft Minutes: 30 June 2023

**Welcome from SH:** Thanks were given to NomadIT for all the work done over the year including the conference. They do their organisation and administering while keeping broader social values of their work in mind, which is great.

Thanks were given to the conference volunteers. Thanks were also given to Alex Arnall, the conference convenor at the University of Reading, as well as to the conference sponsors (ODS, JDS and JID). Thanks were made to Shailaja Fennell, Uma Kambhampati and Rowena Harding. Ben Radley and Rachel Slater will be stepping down from council this year, thanks were given to them for their contributions, as well as thanks to council members more generally.

**Minutes of AGM 2022** (Online - University College London) were approved. They have been online on the [DSA Governance webpage](#).

**Treasurer's report:** Shailaja Fennell presented the budget. Overall, DSA finances are healthy. Our overspend was only approximately £1k, so again we have struggled to significantly reduce our reserves. However, we are being cautious and ensuring we have finances to go forward with investing in certain new areas and initiatives that we would like to take forward. The largest investment once again has been in the Communications Officer. Our core reserves will remain to ensure we can pay for our CO and to pay NomadIT and conference running for a period of 6 months. Institutional members are especially important in helping keep DSA afloat. The accounts were approved as presented and also the appointment of Sterling Partners to prepare our accounts.

**President's report:** Sam Hickey presented his report (see documents on website). The main DSA event remains the annual conference, however we now have occasional webinars. DSA organised and hosted one webinar in 2023 entitled "NGO and researcher collaboration to tackle inequality and injustice". We wish to maintain webinars where there is energy and interest in the topic. The book series is going very well with a good pipeline with considerable diversity in the authors. There was also a REF debrief with Heads of Centres at our institutional members, which the Heads of Centre found very useful. Several study groups are beginning to become more active again post-pandemic and Council has worked at assessing which groups remain active and encouraging those to set up events and panels in the coming year.

Discussions have been ongoing with JDS over the year. DSA Council decided that we could not afford a new journal given everything else we wanted to do. However, we reached out to the JDS and we will be having a conference Special Issue in 2024. JDS editorial standards are exacting and we will need to meet these. At the same time, this relationship will help the DSA to provide support to ECRs and global South (gS) researchers to facilitate their publications. DSA has been active over the last couple of years in terms of advocacy.

Rowena Harding and her communications work is what brings all the five objectives together. We now have more than 6k twitter followers and an increased newsletter subscription number. There are now more podcasts etc, the most recent being the state of development studies.

We now have two new institutional members – Centre of Development Studies, Cambridge University and a 2<sup>nd</sup> department at the Open University, the Centre for the Study of Global Development.

Question: Can we encourage development economists?

Development economists have exited the DSA in recent years and we are trying to bring them back in. JDS could help with this as we and JDS are very different in our strengths. We tend to do

relatively little on the teaching front though we now provide prizes for dissertations and are also engaging with decolonising the curriculum agenda.

We had a fund for ECRs but rarely ever spent this fully. We have now withdrawn it and are thinking of new ideas of how to engage the ECRs and student members.

Question: New study groups?

DSA has become much more diverse as a community – we now have a new gS study group that has incorporated the South Asia and Africa study groups and we do fund some of their activities including the S-S mentoring scheme.

There is now an EDI audit of development studies centres in the UK underway to try and figure out how we look compared to other disciplines. We are funding this ourselves and doing the quantitative work now. We have a great RA to help with this and are hoping to get more funding for this from the AcSS. Heads of Centres will get emails regarding this soon because the data is not available in any other way. There is a question about geographical spread for the EDI audit.

Questions: How can new study groups be started or old ones be rationalised? Could they work jointly? Should we look at development and aid in the decolonising agenda?

SH said that the DSA has regularly tackled this agenda – decolonising study group, sub-committee on council and keynotes over the years. There is a tension – we include gS scholars in the DSA but are we taking energy away from development activity in the South? Is it time to take the DSA conference to the south? NomadIT says that would solve the visa issue of bringing gS scholars to the gN but it will be expensive. Financing may be harder to obtain to bring gS scholars to another gS location, which currently is provided by host institutions in the gN. We are also a little isolated from Europe at the moment. We are closely linked with EADI – an EADI rep is on our council and Andy Sumner (President of EADI) is a member of the DSA.

Institutional membership – small institutions have decreased in recent years, but larger ones have been stable and/ or increased. However, there is a gap between the investment we get from IMs and the lack of interest from them.

Online conference attendance has increased. University of Reading has brought in 731 registrations (265 online; 466 face-to-face) which is great, a new record for DSA conference attendance.

**Prizes:** The Masters' dissertation prize was won by Lisa Eitingner from LSE who presented her work at the DSA2023 conference. Highly commended entrants in this prize were Sidonie East from IDS and Misbah Haqqani of IGHD, Queen Margaret University.

In the PhD thesis prize the winner was Owen Frazer at the University of Birmingham, who unfortunately was not able to present at the conference due to a scheduling conflict. The highly commended entrant was Kaveri Mudappa from the University of Sussex. The winners were announced and congratulated on their work.

**Council membership amendment proposition:** Currently Council consists of 3 officers, 12 council members and a maximum of 3 co-opted members. Council plans to change the make-up to 3 officers, 10 council members with an additional maximum of 2 global South representatives and 2 student representatives, as well as keeping the 3 co-opted positions.

Global South and student representatives are and will continue to be proposed by the relevant groups/ constituencies within the DSA membership. gS reps will hold their positions for up to two 3 year terms and student reps will hold their positions for one three year term.

The change to the constitution and council make-up was approved by those present at the AGM.



### **Nominations & Elections:**

The following nominations were received: Uma Kambhampati (president), Jonathan Fisher (Secretary), Shailaja Fennell (Treasurer), Peter Taylor (2<sup>nd</sup> term), Annalisa Prizon (2<sup>nd</sup> term).

3 new council members were also nominated: Eyob Balcha Gebremariam, Emma Mawdsley and Touseef Mir.

2 student representative nominations were received: Zachariah Owutumayor and Sheila Ronoh

All 10 candidates were approved and voted onto Council.

SH said thank you to everyone during his time as DSA President and wished everyone and the association well and goodbye.

**DSA2024 Conference** will be held 26-28 June 2024 at SOAS, University of London on the theme: *Social Justice and development in a polarising world*. Looking forward to seeing everyone and others there!