

Newsletter Team Re-organization Proposal

Background

Regular newsletters are one of the main services provided by the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association (EMA). The newsletters are sent out to all registered EMA members who have subscribed to it electronically. A later decision was made so that also the coordinators and some interested organizations would also receive a copy. The EMA newsletter is usually distributed once every six weeks and contains many topics of high interest for students and alumni, such as:

- ❖ EMA
- ❖ Erasmus Mundus Program
- ❖ European Higher Education
- ❖ Jobs and Internships
- ❖ Housing

Sample newsletters are available on the EMA website. So far, 7 issues of newsletter have been delivered to thousands of EMA members, coordinators and other organizations. Through this channel, the vicinity of the association among the Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMC) has been considerably enhanced and increased.

Reason to re-organize

Along with the expanding of the EMA, in terms of members of the association and publicity, the need of EMA members' volunteer work increases dramatically.

The many conferences, events and fairs, along with other interesting stories about EMA members, resulted in a clear need for such information to be gathered and shared with the community. Now, certain actions from the EMA are needed in order to foster this kind of communication.

From the latest General Assembly, it is also shown that there is a great need of the members for internal communication. This is especially true for EMMC, since there are so many diverse courses in so many different fields. There is an obvious added value for the students and alumni to build up inter-program network to facilitate their future careers. The Newsletter team, as an active and enthusiastic team as it is, is willing to take the responsibility and foster this initiative.

Resources

For the moment, we have totally 7 members, including the team coordinator. Most of them are doing their studies in Europe, which imply a bit more flexible time to initialize the new team. Although the team members do not have prior expertise in coordinating the network, their commitment is a guarantee. And from the coming General Assembly, the team is looking forward to expand considerably.

Organization

The new re-organized team is preliminary named "Internal Communication Service Team" (ICS). It aims to have three working groups:

- ❖ *News editing group.* A newly "Internal Communication Service Team" would certainly keep the newsletters, and news item gathering and editing would still consist its core service for EMA. This group's objective is to edit the articles and news in a timely fashion. The team members will have the privilege to know certain information before it is officially published to the community and, in the meantime, they are responsible to provide the community with the news as they are still "fresh", firstly in the community webpage and later packed and sent out as an issue of a newsletter.
- ❖ *Field reporter coordination group.* This group aims to facilitate the willingness of the EMA members to report events of interest.
An example scenario: with a proper proposal to ICS team, Jason, who is currently studying in Paris, was invited to an Asian higher education fair. He speaks perfect French and lives close enough to have a low budget of traveling. He wrote a 200-word article and a short abstract for the community with a few cool pictures he took during the meeting, which later be published on the community front page. His entrance fee (15 Euros) and travel expense (22 Euros), as there were approved beforehand, were reimbursed by the ICS team. He had a great time in Paris and members of the EMA know better about this fair and the choices that Asian high education has to offer.
This field reporter program is completely new within the working group. A few guidelines and ground rules will be set up to assure the publicity and fairness of the program. A detailed proposal is aimed to be formulized after the construction of the working group and subject to the steering committee to approve.
- ❖ *Inter-program activity group.* Many EMMCs students and alumni are geographically close to each other, but so far there are no proper channels to let them know each other. This working group aims to help coordinate such activities to happen. As it is overlapping the conference

team's "Small Event Program", a follow-up discussion will be conducted with the steering committee.

Each working group will have a communicator, who will be responsible for the overall performance of the group.

Future Vision

The new ICS team, if approved by the Steering Committee, is looking forward to contributing more to the EMA with its innovation and commitment. A more detailed working document for the year 2008-2009 is aimed to be draft after the General Assembly.