



Internal policy of the Conferences & Events Advisory Team of EMA (version 01)

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1. Introduction

The Conference & Events Advisory Team¹ (hereafter to be referred to as the “Team”, or the “CAT”) of Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association (the “EMA”) was established during the Erasmus Mundus (the “EM”) Student Seminar in June 2006, together with other service teams and the Launch Committee (which was transformed into the Steering Committee (the “SC”) during the 3rd Student Seminar and the 1st General Assembly of the EMA in October 2007).

The overarching goal of the Team is to assist in constructing a strong community with everlasting inter-personal relationships among its members, through the organization of EMA conferences and events. In order to facilitate this goal, it has been responsible for initiating ideas for conferences and events as well as their organization for EM students and alumni, under the direction of the EMA Steering Committee and European Commission and in close cooperation with other EMA service teams.

The missions of the Team, as adopted by the Parallel Session on Conferences and Events during the 1st General Assembly of EMA, are:

- a. To create a platform for the communication and cooperation among EM students and alumni body, via the implementation of EMA conferences and events;
- b. To promote networking among EMA members and contribute to the establishment of a united community, through providing various means of support for events.
- c. To promote Europe as a centre of excellence in international higher education at all EMA organized conferences and events, in close cooperation with other EMA teams (esp. the Promotion Team of EMA).

¹ Please note that the name of the Team has changed along the process of gradual development.

In accordance with *Paragraph 3, Article 4.2 of the Statute of EMA*, the Team Coordinator shall (i) stimulate and coordinate the Team activities, which contribute to the mission of EMA and (ii) respect the guidance and decisions made annually by the General Assembly. Following the Team's formal Call for Input² with regard to its internal policy and in exercising its mandate the Team Coordinator of CAT has issued this document that defines the internal policy and management rules of the CAT.

2. Registration

Registration with the CAT is voluntary. In accordance with the EMA Statute an applicant must be an EMA General Assembly member and must have signed the Team's statement of commitment³ in order to register as an official Team member ("Member" or "Team Member") and to participate in the Team's decision-making.

3. Observing Members

The CAT highly recognizes the enthusiasm and capabilities of the large EMA community members⁴ who are not General Assembly members and thus welcomes the participation of any active EMA members in the Team activities.

Non-General Assembly EMA members may volunteer to participate in the Team's activity and may be granted an "Observing Member" status by the Team. Applications to participate as an Observing Member are made to the Team Coordinator. The Observing Member status may be granted through either a confirming decision by simple majority vote of the Team members or decision of the Team Coordinator. The decision should be made in due course, normally within two weeks starting from the confirmed receipt date of the application. Such observing membership is subject to the conditions specified in Annex II of this document and does not grant any decision-making rights to the Observing Members.

3. Withdrawal of Memberships

Team Members and Observing Members, may opt out of the Team at any time by submitting to the Team Coordinator a written confirmation (via email) stating his/her withdrawal from the Team. Withdrawal from the Team takes immediate effect upon the receipt of the withdrawal by the Team Coordinator. Any Member or Observing Member may re-apply in accordance with this internal policy document.

² See following sections for the definition of Call for Input.

³ See Annex 1 for details.

⁴ The definition of EMA Member applies. See www.em-a.eu.

Under exceptional circumstances, a team member may be seconded to another EMA Service Team upon approval by the two Team Coordinators. In such case, the Team Member may choose to leave and join the other team officially and permanently, or keep his/her CAT membership while holding a secondment to the other service team, in which case the approval of both Team Coordinators is required.

4. Means of communication

The team uses SKYPE, MSN or other feasible means (wiki, google group, and email) for internal communications. Any formally arranged on-line meetings should be documented in the form of meeting minutes, reports, summaries, or in any other suitable form.

Physical meetings of the Team may be organized as necessary. Such a meeting shall be organized according to prior guidance by the SC. Meetings that involves a working group with small number of participants may be organized by the Team Coordinator or other designated Team member(s) as per the SC decision.

5. Rules of communication

The Team Members are encouraged to communicate with the Team Coordinator any matters relating to the teamwork. The Team Coordinator, in his/her judgment, shall then decide whether or not to open a discussion within the Team. However, the Team Members are free to contact the whole Team and its Members individually at any time.

All issues relating to the Team and its operations shall be first discussed within the Team only, without consulting or informing external parties. If any issue relating to the Team and its operations can not be resolved after a first initial briefing, Team Members may consult an external party, e.g. an SC member.

Formal communication on a specific topic takes place by launching a call for input (CFI), which can be initiated by Team Coordinator by at least three Team Members. This is a formal communication and requires everyone's careful thought before responding to the whole team (or its coordinator), in writing. The input will be taken as the voice representing the corresponding courses, as well as the respondents' contribution to the association. Sometimes consultations with the corresponding course mates will be required.

Subjects of CFIs are not limited to conferences and events matters and can be any matters relating to the interests of the EMA community or the Team.

6. Participating status and membership issues

Participating in CFIs represents the most important contribution of the Team Members or Observing Members. With regard to CFIs the following internal rules for the Team shall apply:

- 1) Each Member or Observing Member shall reply within a reasonable time frame, normally

within 7 calendar days to an initial CFI related to a particular topic. The Team Coordinator shall at its reasonable discretion extend the normal response time for complicated matters and shorten it for urgent matters.

2) If a member does not respond to an initial CFI the Team Coordinator may exclude this Member from the decision-making related to that particular topic and any subsequent comments on this topic by such excluded member may not be considered in whole or in parts at the discretion of the Team coordinator.

3) If a Member does not respond to 9 (nine) or more initial CFIs within his/her term of office, the Team shall take the following actions: i) suspend his or her membership and ii) consider terminating the participation of such Team Member. Such termination shall require a vote of 75 % (seventy-five percent) of all Members in favor a termination of the participation of such a Member. The vote shall be organized by the Team Coordinator. The Team Coordinator shall inform all Members adequately about the situation and shall at the same time call for a vote via a CFI to terminate the Membership. The Team Coordinator, subsequently, shall collect all votes that are made within 7 (seven) calendar days after the call for the vote. Any votes that are not received by the Team Coordinator within 7 (seven) days after the call for the vote shall be void. After termination of the membership in accordance with the aforesaid procedure a former Member may re-apply for membership in accordance with this internal policy document.

Suspended Team Members may wish to withdraw from the Team in order not to receive consideration of Team Membership termination.

4) The Team recognizes the varying availability of its Members during different time of the term of office. A Team Member can make an individual agreement with the Team Coordinator as to his or her availability for service. If a prior agreement for absence is reached, the Team Member absent from the participation during agreed period can be exempt from participating in the teamwork including CFIs, without affecting his or her Membership status. Note that if such an unavailability period amounts to longer than 3 months, the Member can not be nominated to join the EMA Liaison Group⁵.

8. Work distribution

Depending on the nature of the task, a number of Team Members may be assigned by the Team Coordinator to a particular task (e.g. two team members from Africa be requested to assist in evaluating a proposal by some alumni from the same region wishing to do an event in their respective region/country) and submit to the whole Team their conclusion or recommendation within a given deadline (usually based on prior agreement between the Team Coordinator and the assigned members). In such cases, participation in other teamwork, CFIs, online meetings, etc., can be exempted unless otherwise arranged not to be so.

9. Decision-making and voting

⁵ See Section 11.

The Team is collectively responsible and accountable for the decisions it makes. Decisions should be made in a transparent and democratic way⁶. Normally the team makes decisions based on consensus. If all efforts on reaching an agreement have been exhausted, decisions will be made via voting. Any decision is taken with a simple majority vote, whereas the votes of 75 % (seventy-five percent) of the Team Members constitute a quorum. Objections to the majority vote shall be stated and published among the Team. If the quorum is not constituted due to the lack of participating Members, the Team shall be deemed to have made no decision and the particular topic that was subject to the vote shall not be submitted to a vote by the Team for at least 1 (one) calendar month, or the Team Coordinator shall at its discretion make a decision as appropriate. In making such a decision, the Team Coordinator may discuss with the SC of the EMA.

In matters that request a decision within 2 calendar days (“Urgent Matter(s)”) the Team Coordinator (and deputies in the absence of the Team Coordinator) may make decisions without consulting the Team or conducting a CFI. Decisions on Urgent Matters must be communicated to the Team as soon as reasonably possible.

10. Financial responsibility & accountability

The team has a considerable amount of financial responsibilities and accountability as the largest proportion of EMA budget is under its management. Normally the financial planning is made prior to the starting date of a fiscal year. However, financial changes will always be anticipated.

In principle, financial and/or budgetary decisions shall be made by the team as a whole, in accordance with prior guidance or ex-post permission given by the EMA General Assembly, the Steering Committee or prior agreement set up between the European Commission and the EMA Service Provider. Further, the SC meeting (14 Nov 2007) decides that the Team Coordinator shall be responsible for expenditures of the team and any amounts of payments to be made by EMA should be spent **only** with prior approval of the Steering Committee member (leading the respective team).

The Team Coordinator is allowed to make decisions on budget changes, as appropriate, on his or her own capacity to the maximum level of 10% (both up- and down-wards) of the total conferences budget amount during the on-going fiscal year. Any such decisions shall come with proper reasoning(s) and be communicated to the team immediately following the decision, or at the earliest convenience, whichever is more practicably feasible.

The team by 75% majority approval (quorum concept applies) can request the Steering Committee to change the approved budget planning up to 100% of the total CAT budget. Such a request shall come with strong necessity/reasoning.

⁶ Further guidance is expected to come in effect following the next General Assembly as to how to ensure the principle of democracy and transparency with decision-making.

11. Liaison group member nomination

Liaison Group refers to an enlarged body consisting of Steering Committee members and a small number of team representatives. The current practice is that the Team Coordinator nominates such participants to join the Liaison Group.

From time to time, the team members will hear from the Team Coordinator about the activeness of their participation in the teamwork. The opportunity for a CAT member to attend future Liaison Group meetings will depend on the team member's performance in completing his/her teamwork. Those, whose memberships have been suspended, terminated and those who have arranged unavailability period for longer than 3 months shall not be nominated to be liaison group members.

Observing team members are not eligible to be nominated.

12. Implementation of the team's internal policy

The Team Coordinator, or designated team member(s) in the absence of the Team Coordinator, shall be responsible for the enforcement of this document.

With simple majority approval this document can be revised. Amendment requests can be made to the Team Coordinator via email.

**Annex I. Statement of Commitment* signed by all team members
(EMA-CAT-009)**

A COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK IN THE CONFERENCES AND
EVENTS ADVISORY TEAM (CAT)

I, undersigned, _____, will commit myself to actively participate in the work of the conferences and Events Advisory Team. I will participate in the discussion and other work in the Team to my best abilities and skills. In addition to the work done in the team, I will inform the students and alumni in my respective Erasmus Mundus course about the work done in the conferences and Events Team, and collect and share their feedback with the team to further improve the work done for EMA in a timely and accurate manner. My commitment will last until the next CAT team election or upon written submission to the Team coordinator to cease my participation.

Special skills:

- I. E.g. experience in arranging conferences or other events (specify the responsibilities).
- II. Other skills relevant to the work.
- III. Regional.

* The Team Coordinator is responsible for the archiving of valid statements and destroying of statements that are invalidated by the signing team members or by team policy set forward in this document.

Annex II. Rules for applying to the CAT as an Observing Member* (EMA-CAT-015)

The applicant must be a EMA member registered on the EMA website and the registration of an EMA member as an observing/associate member is subject to the following conditions:

- there will be a specified term of service (currently ending on 30 May 2008 for prospective applicants who submit their application before that date), with possibility to extend for an additional term (approximately one year) upon re-application; a written confirm that the applicant is a registered EMA member (registration via EMA website) is required via email;
- an observing team member may be allowed or assigned to participate in certain tasks in fulfilling the team's roles and responsibilities in accordance to its missions; and his/her participation will be acknowledged and appreciated;
- the CAT holds absolute discretion to end an observing/associate membership at any time, with prior notice; the observing/associate member may withdraw his/her participation at any time via email to the team coordinator;
- the applicant must present to the team via email to the Team Coordinator his/her full profile, experience and motivation to join; the Team Coordinator or the Team shall then decide whether or not to accept the person and forward to the team. The Team Coordinator shall complete the registration of the person with the team if the application is approved; if the application is not approved, the applicant cannot appeal but can re-apply to participate in the teamwork.
- an observing/associate member may be invited to participate in certain internal discussions but he/she will not have the right to vote in any CAT decision-making process, but his/her participation will be acknowledged;
- an observing/associate team member is not entitled to participate in the Liaison Group meeting (an enlarged Steering Committee meeting with selected Service Team representatives usually taking place in Brussels).
- the observing/associate member must confirm that unless otherwise irrelevant to his/her membership status, he/she will comply with the team's internal policy where appropriate. He/she must confirm, in writing via email, that he/she will not disseminate any information that is obtained from the team unless a written approval by the Team Coordinator via email is obtained.

*Note: this applies to the team members who choose to withdraw his membership with the team, and/or those whose formal team memberships are recalled and then re-apply to join as an EMA member at a later time.