PDFA Executive Council Meeting
January 22, 2026
Teleconference Meeting

Present: Michael Baggaley, President
Rashaduz Zaman, VP Finance
Javad Bolboli, VP Operations
Alsayed Mostafa, VP External
Furkan Altincicek, VP Internal
Oluwafemi Adu, Member at Large
Yuhan Yi, Member at Large
Mathew Labbe, Member at large

Britney Firth, Member at Large (Absent)
Reshmi Ramakrishnan, VP Communications (Absent)

Staff: Joy Correia, Director of Operations
Terry Sway, Labour Relations Officer
Tamara Phiri, Administrative Assistant
Scott Harris, Communications Strategist

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:06am.

2. Land Acknowledgment

The President acknowledged that the PDFA is in Treaty 6 territory.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION:	To approve the agenda for January 22, 2026	Furkan /Femi	**CARRIED**

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION:	To approve the minutes for December 18, 2025	Furkhan / Femi	**CARRIED**

5. Director of Operations/Labour Relations Officer Report (Joy Correia & Terry Sway)

The Labour Relations officer informed the meeting that during bargaining there were extensive discussions about Article 9.04 which is article 8.04 in the current collective agreement. Following negotiations, an improvement was achieved in this article governing Termination of a contract prior to its end date without cause. The newly improved article 8.04 gives an increased minimum notice from four to six weeks. A member communicated with the LRO that he was given 10 weeks working notice instead.

6. Communications Strategist Report (Scott Harris)

Scott informed the meeting that he had made Bio and Head shot updates on the website.
Email update scheduled for February 4th, a heads up will be sent much earlier.
PDFA specific change over email reminder to have a meeting with the PDFA President.

7. President's report (Michael Baggaley)

7.1 The President encouraged members to communicate if unable to attend the Exec meetings.

7.2 Travel awards – The President informed the meeting about the need to review the Travel award applications The president signed a letter on behalf of the PDFA in support for student Parents on Campus requesting the University to reinstate the funding.

7.3 The president informed the meeting that GPS intends to renew the PDS travel award for 26-27 fiscal year, once announced we will post it on the PDFA website.

7.4 New affiliation agreement with NASA has been signed for six (6) months beginning January

7.5 Meeting with Provost -The President had a meeting with the Provost and discussed that GPS would like the PDFA to conduct some surveys and GPS is willing to pay for some incentives for respondents to the surveys. During this meeting, The Provost offered University common spaces located on the 6th floor to the PDFA for social hours events. The Provost expressed disappointment to learn that some PIs did not support Post Doc travel.

The President explained the establishment of internal grant competition for postdocs PDFA will be working with GPS on this, which would include Travel funding, research funding and support. The Provost is ready to fund this venture.

7.6 Postdoc supervision at the UofA - barriers and current regulations – The President informed the meeting that according to the policy documents, PDs can list themselves as supervisors. The President would like this information disseminated in the Newsletter.

7.7 Engaged with AWARE organization (seeks justice for workers in precarious employment positions) – The President reached out to AWARE to see if there are any programs that could benefit Post Docs

7.8.1 Supervisor accountability (terms of agreement in the works for PDS onboarding - GPS led)

7.8.2 Expectations and desires for postdoc training (survey)

7.9 Innovation & Partnerships table at Winter 2026 PDS onboarding

7.10 Yearly GPS workshop on PDS scholarships – The President explained that most inquiries received from members are about scholarships and that a workshop would be vital. VP external added that it would also be good to have one of the PDFA members at large could take up the role of continuous dissemination of information on scholarships to members.

7. 11PDFA coffee meetup in University Commons building – The President requested suggestions for a coffee meet up date in February.

7.12 PDFA domain email addresses – The President will engage with NASA Communication Strategist -Scott on this.

8. VP Internal Report (Furkan Altincicek)

Furkan informed the meeting that he has taken up a VC Operations role with CAPS. He informed the meeting that there was no meeting in December for the University Research and Advisory Committee (URIAC), the next meeting will be on January 30th.

Furkan informed the meeting of the following items from the January Postdoc Coffee Hour:

- A member explained that the communication on awards was not clear, The President explained that the January Newsletter only stated the PDFA Travel awards because the GPS travel award has not been announced yet and that both awards would be included in the Newsletter.
- Can a Travel grant be used as a research grant i.e Travel to different Museums in Europe or purchase of STEM Lab equipment – The President explained that such requests would not be used with the PDFA Travel award but instead PDs could advocate for funding by the GPS or PI.
- GPS provides postdoc completion letter
- Will the change from Fellow to Scholar affect the name of the PDFA? – The President explained that that a name change will require a change in Legislation.

9. VP External Report (Alsayed Mostafa)

Alsayed attended two meetings – He informed the meeting of the NAIT NASA strike and concerns of the employees with AI. He also mentioned PSE advocation for NAIT NASA.
Alsayed informed the meeting that CAPS has a new board president and congratulated VP internal on his new role with CAPS.

10. VP Finance Report (Rashaduz Zaman)

Rashaduz suggested adding a souvenir to the appreciation package i.e ceramic coffee Mugs.

11. VP Communications (Reshmi Ramakrishnan)

The VP Communications did not attend the meeting

12. **VP Operations** (Javad Bolboli)

Javad attended a meeting with the Innovation and Partnerships team and follow-up actions.
AWS workshop planning and coordination is ongoing.
Improving the visibility and accessibility of Innovation and Partnerships services for new members/postdocs
He also informed the meeting of the Upcoming EDI and Indigenous Initiatives Multi-Institute Committee as a PDFA representative.

13. **Member at Large Reports** (Oluwafemi Adu, Furkan Altincicek, Britney Firth, Yuhan Yi)

Yuhan

- reiterated the confusion of two travel awards as explained by Furkan
- Varied postdoc coffee hour date
- Job opportunities

Femi

- Is the PDFA Rep, Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Networking/training opportunity for early career researchers including postdocs: Black Summer Institute, May 4th-6th, 2026.

Mathew

- Email reminder/on-boarding information: delay in benefit enrollment, Joy and Terry will work on a write up to provide information on the delay in enrolment.
- Fielded question: Lifetime limit on PDFA travel award
- Mathew will be the Alternate Joint Health and Safety Committee PDFA rep

14. **Other Business**

There was no other business

15. **In Camera**

There was an in-camera session.

16. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm

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Michael Baggaley, President & Chair

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Tamara Phiri, Administrative Assistant