

**PDFA Executive Council Meeting
January 23, 2024
Teleconference Meeting**

Present: AKM Shahid Ullah, President
Sherif Ahmed, VP Communications
MD Shaheen, VP Internal
Alsayed Mostafa, Member-at-Large
Alivia Mukherjee, Member-at-Large
Henry Prown, Member-at-Large
Razieh Firouzihaji, VP Operations
Ahmed Badr, Member, VP Finance
Shui Jiang, Member-at-Large

Staff: Kayanna Reff, Administrative Assistant
Joy Correia, Director of Operations
Christianne Nylund, Labour Relations Officer

Regrets: Scott Harris, Communications
Terry Sway, Labour Relations Officer

1. Call to Order

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

2. Land Acknowledgment

The President acknowledged that the PDFA is located on the territory now referred to as Treaty 6.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda for January 23, 2024 Alsayed/Shaaheen	CARRIED
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4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes for December 15, 2023 Shaheen/Sherif	CARRIED
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5. President's Report (AKM Shahid Ullah)

5.1. Meeting with The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS) Dean, Dr. Tracy Raivio

Shahid had his monthly meeting with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS) and met with the new dean, Dr. Tracy Raivio. They discussed ways to increase the number of scholarships for the postdocs and explored various options for financial aid that FGPS could provide to the postdocs.

The Postdoctoral Fellows Association (PDFA) has expressed concerns regarding the current scholarship announcements, stating that they do not provide enough time for postdocs to apply. Therefore, they have requested that more time be given between the announcement of a scholarship and the application deadline. Additionally, the PDFA

has asked the FGPS to forward scholarship announcements to them, so that they can promote them in their monthly newsletter.

5.2. Meeting with Dr. Renee Polziehn (Director of Professional Development; FGPS)

Shahid had a meeting with Dr. Polziehn on January 2nd, 2024 to discuss the onboarding event organized by FGPS and the PDFA. They both agreed on the idea of increasing the frequency of the onboarding event to 3-4 times per year, as currently there are only 1-2 onboarding events held per year.

5.3. The next onboarding event is scheduled for March 7th, 2024 from 1-3 pm. The FGPS has kindly offered to provide headshots for postdocs during the event. Registration to postdocs wanting to get a headshot will be provided.

5.4. Travel Awards

The latest round of Travel Awards ended on December 15th, 2023. The list of winners will be sent to Kayanna, who will then contact them to confirm their acceptance of the award and obtain their mailing address to send them their award.

The next round of Travel Awards will be announced soon in the monthly PDFA newsletter.

6. VP Finance Report (Ahmed Badr)

Shahid and Ahmed will be going to the bank to give signing authority to Ahmed.

Ahmed will also sign the cheques for the Travel Award once he has signing authority.

7. Communications Strategist Report (Scott Harris) – No Report

8. Member-at-Large Report (Henry Prown Shui Jiang, & Alivia Mukherjee)

Alivia expressed interest in joining the Travel Award Committee and agreed to host the Paint Night if the PDFA can't find a campus host.

Shui will lead a mental health workshop for PDFA members in February. Shui has also volunteered to be on the Travel Award Committee.

9. VP Operations Report (Razieh FirouziHaji)

Razieh has offered to be part of the Travel Award Committee

10. Labour Relations Officers Report (Terry Sway & Christianne Nylund)

The PDFA has signed the contract with NASA. This will take effect immediately.

LRO's) have received a limited number of inquiries from members, which have been relatively straightforward to address. However, for the most part, there has been a notable absence of activity and communication.

Terry has written the first article for "Getting to Know your Collective Agreement". The topic is Paid leave and sick leave. Christianne will be writing another article in the near future. However, the topic has not yet been determined.

11. VP External Report (Alsayed Mostafa)

Alsayed reached out to the President of the Canadian Association for Postdoctors (CAPS), APEGA and ACPA to ask if they would consider the Postdoc experience as work experience.

He also has been working on providing an immigration consulting workshop for Postdocs.

12. VP Internal Report (MD Shaheen)

13. MD conducted some research and discovered that Sunlife is not providing sufficient information about postdoc insurance coverage. He believes that there should be more transparency in terms of what is covered and what isn't, especially in certain categories. As a result, the LROs have been requested to investigate this issue and provide a report.

14. VP Communications Report (Sherif Ahmed)

Sherif's term as VP Communications has come to an end as his Postdoc contract has expired. However, he still has some pending tasks to complete before leaving. These include creating a Google form for the upcoming Travel Award session and another Google form to collect information for the Collective Agreement.

15. Other Business

There was no other business.

16. In Camera

There was no in-camera session.

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm.

AKM Shahid Ullah, President & Chair

Kayanna Reff, Administrative Assistant