

IPIM meeting 18 June 2024: Minutes



Meeting convened via Zoom

Present: Michael Silverleaf (Chair), Ese Akpogheneta, Andrea Brewster (Lead Executive Officer), Alicia Chantrey, Clair Curran (Secretary), Julie Dunnett, Lesley Evans, Gordon Harris (Treasurer), James St Ville

Apologies: Robert Andrews

Register of interests (standing agenda item)

Actions: Andrea to incorporate updates from James and Gordon and republish ALL to keep under review and inform of new updates when necessary

Review of matters arising from 16 May 2024 meeting

Actions progressed since the 16 May meeting:

- Michael and Andrea had agreed the key terms for renewing the LEO contract, subject to discussions on the 2024-25 fee levels: see HR update below.
- Andrea had prepared initial recommendations for employee salary reviews: see HR update.
- Anne had looked into systems for encouraging donations from event attendees, including via online booking systems and also contactless payment devices to take to in-person events. She and Andrea will decide which of these systems to trial, and how, in the autumn.
- Lesley had provided Gordon and Andrea with draft terms of reference to govern employee access to the IPIM bank account. Once they have provided their feedback, the terms can be finalised and an application made to RBS to allow Anne access to help manage the account.
- Andrea had already trialled directing new enquiries to IPIM members to explore and if necessary progress on her behalf. An enquiry from a potential recruit was passed to Lesley to respond to. All seemed to go well and Andrea appreciated the extra help. She will continue with this approach in similarly appropriate situations.

The following actions remain outstanding, largely due to Andrea's heavy workload and recent focus on the *Summer of IP* campaign:

- **Ese and Andrea to liaise over a potential event on the impact of hybrid working for early-career IP professionals**

- **Andrea to ask Allen & Overy about hosting our 2025 annual meeting, combined with a larger flagship event on high profile EDI issues, at their London office, following the success of this year’s annual meeting there**
- **ALL to help contacting individual signatories that have not yet donated this year; Andrea to coordinate**
 - **Andrea to circulate a list of Charter signatories showing which have yet to donate; ALL to indicate which they’re able to contact**
 - **Michael and James to speak with their IP Bar Association contacts regarding this year’s donation**
 - **Also see financial update below**
- **Andrea to ensure the next Charter signatories’ survey includes questions on organisations’ preferred contribution methods (including the impact of IP Inclusive registering as a charity and the possibility of annual commitments), as well as questions that could yield case studies and testimonials to evidence IP Inclusive’s value**
- **Later in the year, James to investigate with Counter Culture (a law firm specialising in the incorporation and administration of smaller charities) whether and how they could help IP Inclusive restructure as a charity or CIO**
 - **Also to explore with them the feasibility of a charitable “arm” of IP Inclusive to handle selected aspects of our activities**

HR update

All going well.

Anne and Helen are due salary reviews this month. The meeting discussed suitable increases, based on current UK averages. Also discussed was Anne’s role, which has increased in breadth and responsibility since she joined us, involves a degree of deputising for Andrea, and is now more critical to IP Inclusive’s day-to-day operations; that may impact on her salary.

Sara Belazregue continues to help with *Summer of IP*. Andrea hopes to employ her as a paid intern over the summer to help with the Careers in Ideas website rebuild, as envisaged in the 2023-25 business plan and 2023-24 budget.

Jessica Anderson is working with us during June as an intern funded by Clifford Chance under their “LIFT” scheme. She has provided valuable help in promoting *Summer of IP* and improving the Careers in Ideas social media content.

Michael proposed an increase in LEO fees, as of 1 July 2024, to £3,025 per calendar month for 20 hours’ work a week. This represents a 10% increase over the previous year’s fee and takes account of the increased workload and management responsibilities over that period. It was unanimously agreed.

Actions:

- Andrea to work with Anne on an updated role description**
- Andrea to provide final salary review recommendations, based on the above, for IPIM to approve prior to creation of the 2024-25 budget**
- Michael and Andrea to finalise and sign the 2024-25 LEO contract**

Financial update

The meeting papers included profit and loss reports for the last six months and also the two preceding half-years. Gordon pointed out the trend that these show for income streams to run in two six-month cycles, one flatter and one more profitable. He is not concerned by this; it is merely a function of the annual fundraising cycle. Cash flow remains secure, as does the ring-fenced contingency fund.

IPIM members felt they all have a responsibility to try to raise revenue. This requires a clear message about the value IP Inclusive brings to the IP professions – especially our Charter signatories. We will need an up-to-date list of which signatories have donated so far, and a coordinated approach regarding who will reach out to which signatories to encourage donations.

We should also have some sales pitches and stories to hand, to illustrate IP Inclusive’s value. Clair will begin curating these as a living document; others will contribute their thoughts, in particular as ideas emerge from discussions with our contacts.

IP Inclusive’s budgeting and fundraising year runs from August to July, so the next round of donation requests will begin shortly.

Andrea attended an Advisory Board meeting in early June, at which fundraising was discussed. Board members felt there should be a clearer expectation of donations from Charter signatories, and better guidance on the contribution levels expected. There was also still significant support from the Board for mandatory Charter signatory subscriptions.

Julie reported that the next IP Federation best practice workshop will include a session on how to sell the importance of an IP department having its own EDI initiatives: this can be used to plug IP Inclusive and Careers in Ideas. Andrea offered support with that if needed.

Actions:

- Andrea (with Anne) to provide an updated list of Charter signatory donors, including a sub-list of barristers’ chambers for Michael and James to contact**
- Andrea to coordinate fundraising efforts by individual IPIM members**
- Clair to begin curating a collection of stories, testimonials and sales pitches for use in fundraising requests; ALL to contribute ideas as they arise**
- Julie to include a plug for IP Inclusive in IP Federation’s upcoming best practice workshop**
- Gordon, Lesley and Andrea to progress establishing access to the RBS bank account for Anne**

Advisory Board update

Another recruitment round is needed this autumn. The original Board members have been in post for their formal three-year term. Some have stepped down over the last few months; there are now 21 members.

The Board has run a survey to establish who is ready to step down now or in the near future. It also has a record of the skills and expertise of the remaining members, giving an indication of the gaps we should seek to fill when we recruit. Of the existing members, most are willing to stay for a further period of up to three years, depending on the individual, which should lead to a rolling succession programme. The Board will make recommendations regarding the extension of these members' terms, for IPIM to approve.

Carol Arnold is willing to stay on as Chair until the end of the year. We already have one informal expression of interest in the role after she steps down.

IPIM succession planning

It was felt that the current skill set within IPIM supports the LEO, and the current business plan objectives, well. The only potentially weak area is social media and marketing, but this gap is ably filled by our interns and from within the Advisory Board.

James is still willing to stand as IPIM Chair when Michael steps down at the end of this year. Michael is happy to remain as an IPIM member for up to a year after standing down as Chair.

Action: ALL to vote formally on the appointment of the next Chair at IPIM's September meeting

Date of next meeting

17 September 2024, 4 pm, online