

Minutes for ACCU Committee meeting 2024-01-14, via Jitsi

Meeting started at 14:33 UTC (14:33 BT) and ended at 16:20 UTC (16:20 BT).

1. Attending

Bob Schmidt, Felix Petriconi, Geoff Daniels, Guy Davidson, Matthew Jones, Patrick Martin, Ralph McArdell, Roger Orr, and Stefan Hagen (invited).

Apologies for absence

Adeel Nadeem, Jim Hague

2. Minutes from last meetings

The committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting

3. Actions in progress

Note: the Google Sheet for actions is here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RMTorasYR_A94VBjv-Dn6ghhTVWLbW0w1ekhN994qFI

Actions from previous meetings:

- 195 *Stale - Seeking another owner to take over from Phil (Document role of Local Groups Officer, share by email to accu-committee) (ONGOING)*
- 206 *Patrick: Contact HMRC about tax status; (ONGOING)*
He did sent another letter, will try again, may need find a way to escalate
- 209 *Adeel: consider targeting advertising contacts, pending agreed media pack (#208). (ONGOING)*
- 213 *Bob: document publication web processes (ONGOING)*
Made some progress, but not done yet.
- 217 *Patrick: Investigate setting up membership Discord channel. Contact Jim Roper & Felix about extending the conference Discord channel. (ONGOING)*
Could not contact Jim Roper since finalization of the last ShavedYaks agreement.
Will continue contacting. Patrick plans to provide a minimal proposal.
Felix reminds of clamping the costs as we have diminishing incoming earnings.
Felix also suggests to reuse an existing channel (he knows of) with a large user base we could engage for the ACCU.
Some proposals shall be brought up, so we can discuss next time
- 219 *Stefan: Document process for preparing for AGM (ONGOING)*
Pending / ongoing.
- 221 *Roger: Look into bringing some additional members onto Overload review community (DONE)*
Reports we have new reviewers and also existing reviewers refreshed their commitment.
- 224 *Patrick: Keeping end of year finances spreadsheet up to date per meeting. (DONE)*
Needed sending around quite some paper to establish the new company and link / split the accounts. He emailed the spreadsheet to the accountants and awaits their feedback.
- 225 *Matt: Come up with some ideas for membership tiers and their costs. (ONGOING)*
Analyzed the production cost and identified esp. the overseas cost for the paper journals as the most important cost to be covered with the membership fee changes.
The membership fees have been the same amount since at least 2010.
Bob: Asks if maybe we could find a publisher in the US that prints and mails? He did find one that prints on DIN A4 paper. Around <80 members in the US.
Matthew: Make in any case a premium fee for the paper version.
- 227 *Completed - Felix: To send an email on the conference condition google doc(s) (2023-11-19)*

- 228 *Decision to find a taker to move to another payment provider (ONGOING)*
- 229 *Adeel, Guy, and Jim: Assess best way forward moving off of X and towards Bluesky / Mastodon*
Guy: We discussed and X is looking worse by the day (ONGOING)
Patrick: Mentions from Adeel's report that Bluesky and Mastodon already made progress
Felix: Announced and hibernated the X account (setting to private, unfollowing all followers,
and setting the account to private to avoid any takeover. In parallel set up the Bluesky account
Bob: May need to post every six months or so, to avoid deletion. Problem with Bluesky is that it
is still invite only. Felix: assumes that this may simply be a "secrecy" marketing stance.
Patrick: Simply post something like: "We do not use X..."

Actions added by this meeting:

- 230 *Adeel: Begin the transition moving off of X and towards Bluesky / Mastodon*
- 231 *Felix: To announce resignation as conference chair and call for applicants*
- 232 *Felix? / Roger? / Guy?: Can the conference committee get a signed edition of the latest agreement with ShavedYaks?*

4. Reports

4.1 Advertising

No news.

4.2 Conference

Felix:

- *We have a schedule that will be published within the next few days.*
- *The conference will go over 4 days as before but will have one track less. That is Phil's and his wife's decision to reduce the risk of the costs.*
- *We will have 2 full day workshops before the event*
- *We have put the X-account into hibernation starting 1.1.2024.*
- *We have a bluesky account for the conference too. [Geoff: Where is it? Link? Maybe: accuconf.bsky.social/]*
- *I intend to step down as conference chair after the upcoming event. I have been chair since I took over in April 2020 and I think it is time to let the next one bring their idea into the conference.*
- *I will continue as chair as long as we have found a new one.*
- *We have to find a new candidate. I propose to send out a call out for candidates to the accu-general mailing list. I propose that we set a dead-line until possible candidates have to step forward. Date? Then the accu-committee and the programme-committee should select from this group the next chair. Or do you have other ideas?*
- *Received 134 proposals (a bit more than last year) for 58 slots (including the 20 minute talks)*

Guy: How are we voting for the new conference chair?

- *Previously just the conference committee members.*
- *Guy as a potential candidate would like a wider vote.*

Geoff: Felix to announce resignation and call for applicants.

4.3 Local Groups

Matthew: Interestingly, and relevant to the committee meeting report, it looks like York is restarting:
https://fosstodon.org/@accu_york/111725189617912093...

Matthew: Do we want to continue using meetup? (Seems that york is using it, so yes?)

4.4 Membership

Matthew:

- *Numbers are here, and continue the steady decline:*
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_DBWE4ya54atjshnEMzA4qdWEa-bagJvc4A36u_YOpQ
- *Four trial members converted to fully paid members. I missed these when they happened, over the last quarter, and it revealed a bug in my trial membership code that although they renew at the full membership rate, their membership type stays as trial. For these small numbers I corrected them by hand.*
- *I have just cleaned out 4 of the stale complimentary memberships for Wiley (publishers) and will continue to clean up this area of the database.*
- *Example magazine production costs show that we have something like a £9K deficit between membership fees and magazine costs. This is not a surprise, but it is good to know the numbers which will inform forthcoming changes to membership types and fees.*

4.5 Treasurer

Link to the balance sheet (ACCU Transactions 2023):

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DPuUbSPE00wSx2Ks0T4dcsVhICL20mgxe6eS0PIHmSQ/edit#gid=1611162502>

Guy: *Do we have a signed contract with ShavedYaks?*

Geoff: *Can the conference committee (Felix? / Roger?) get a signed edition of the latest agreement?*
(Added as action 232). Escalation of HMRC tax status question?

Patrick: *Propose, try another phone call and then start the complaints procedure.*

4.6 Publicity & Social Media

Adeel: *We now have a Bluesky and Mastodon ACCU account. The plan is to promote across all these mediums (including Twitter/X) to see what would be best moving forward.*

Matthew: *Found: @ACCU@mastodon.social, but also @accu_york@fosstodon.org, and he already knew (and follows) @ACCUConf@mastodon.social*
Conference Bluesky: accuconf.bsky.social

Geoff: *We as the committee would like to stop using X (leaving it dormant for now). Action 230 to inform our members about leaving our X account dormant and highlight the new accounts we'll be using.*

4.7 Standards

Guy: *C++23 was published. Nothing unusual to report.*

4.8 Website

Jim: *Nothing much to report on the hosting front. He had hoped to make progress on moving hosting, but his current building project is proving a time sink.*

Bob: *Latest overload and CVu posted, other websites updated to show off more of the conference.*
Investigated what it would take to change the payment vendor, big difference: Worldpay provides the web interface, other vendors integrate into our website, which may require more work.

Patrick: *If we want to look at different vendors, what other vendors do we want to consider? Reputation?*
Customer service levels?

Matthew Jones: <https://www.merchantsavvy.co.uk/online-payment-systems/>

4.9 Publications

Roger: *Carrying on as usual. Could do with some more articles.*

Bob: Thanks to Daniel James who's producing the ePub.

5. Any other business

Patrick: Remove RJ Williams from the account signatories - the bank online process will require a text documenting the committee's approval for the action. Proposed document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ozYvYmaGs9SOZsRdR3ME4sLqyWP82_fwqVcaRwoRckw/edit

- *Patrick Martin proposed that Robin J Williams (the prior secretary) be removed from account signatories.*
- *Seconded: Roger Orr*
- *Carried unanimously*

6. Date of next meeting

The date of the next committee meeting will (provisionally) be 2024-03-10 @ 14:30 UTC (14:30 BT), via Jitsi.