

SRSM 2018 Annual Business Meeting
July 18, 2018, 3:30-5:30 pm
M-Shed, Bristol
Draft minutes

1. ***Call to Order*** – meeting started at 3:30 pm
2. ***Approval of minutes*** from 2017 Meeting - approved
3. ***Membership report***
 - Last year, there had been problems with receipt of three nominations for new members. Nominations carried forward. Five new members were elected
 - Diversity committee had been set up. Will be starting work earlier this year.
 - Melissa Cohen investigated options for voting other than use of e-mail and instigated use of SurveyMonkey, which seems to have worked well.
 - Because the information we have may be out of date, a survey will be sent out requesting updated contact, affiliation and interest information. Melissa Cohen is looking into ways to pre-populate survey so as to minimize information members would be asked to enter. Regarding need to know when people switch to "emeritus" from "regular" membership, recommendation only to ask for month and year of birth, and to delete this information from record when member attained emeritus status.
 - Members thanked Melissa Cohen for her work.
4. ***Financial report***
 - SRSM in good financial state. Conferences aim to break even. Montreal 2017 made a profit. – Tourisme de Montréal had contributed to cost of conference there. Added costs in 2017-8 include an administrative assistant (Melissa Cohen) and consultant (Morna Conway) on negotiations with Wiley regarding the journal.
 - Journal income noted to be modest compared with journals such as the *International Journal of Epidemiology*, but commensurate with the size of the Society. This point relevant to deliberations on future vision.
 - Mike Brannick is ending his extended term as Treasurer. Members thanked him for his work.
 - Terri Piggott ratified and welcomed as new Treasurer.
5. ***Journal report***
 - Editors in Chief report presented. Healthy state as evidenced by all five indicators.
 - Reviewers thanked. Jeff Valentine working on system of recognizing reviewers – reviewer of the year prize.
 - Impact Factor (IF) has increased. IF known to have limitations, but relevant to selection of journal by libraries and to determination of open access pricing. Nevertheless, bibliometrics in flux. For example, NIH has developed article-level index (Relative Citation Ratio - RCR).
 - Regarding Altmetric score, this will be increased if doi added to slides downloaded from

articles in *RSM*.

- Special issues and Features on information retrieval, computational tools and methods and tutorials/ reviews (including adapted excerpts from book by Matthias Egger) highlighted, and editors thanked for work on these.
- Contract with publisher (Wiley) being re-negotiated (see below)
- Wiley raised possibility of moving from 4 to 6 issues per year. Editors considered that volume of submissions and rejection rate such that it would be wise to defer for a year.
- Highlights box implemented as optional part of submitted manuscript, because of interdisciplinary nature of journal
- Median time from submission to decision 73.5 days in 2017. Compares very well with statistical journals, but below average for medical journals.
- Time from acceptance to availability of unedited version on line ≤ 2 weeks.
- Rejection rates have increased from about 1/3 in 2014-5 to almost 1/2 in 2016-7
- Greater disciplinary reach needed
- Regarding ability to post manuscripts in archives, *RSM* is classified as “yellow” by SHERPA/RoMEO, so preprints but not postprints can be archived. It would be desirable if classification could be changed to “green”.
- Change in EIC. Tasha Beretvas stepping down and thanked. Gerta Rucker replacing her in December and welcomed; will shadow Tasha for next 6 months.
- **Discussion on contract with Wiley, in advance of meeting of Trustees with Wiley on July 19**
 - Categorization of journal, and competitors (Stats Med, Systematic Reviews). Action point to give journal more outreach, so making interdisciplinary nature more evident;
 - Interaction with Wiley not truly collaborative, e.g. lack of notice and rationale for changes in Open Access fees;
 - Access of members to journal – what would be implications of possible increase in number of members?
 - Open Access fees a concern (1) because of differences in practices and funding by disciplines; (2) for authors based in lower and middle income countries; and (3) authors based outside universities
 - European Commission investing €100 million for transition to gold open access publishing from 2021
 - Open Access much less common in social sciences. Much lower grant funding and no support from funding agencies for free publication.
 - In computer science, self-publishing models are becoming more common. Would need to find a site on which to host materials.
 - Risk sharing model to support lower Open Access fee proposed. Society would guarantee Wiley a fixed sum per year, and if fees received greater than this, would be income for Society. In straw vote, members in support of this either for fully open access or hybrid model.
 - In view of rapidly changing publishing environment, members recommended negotiating a shorter contract

6. *Website report* – tabled

7. *Website expansion* – deferred as depends on decisions to be made about future vision of Society

8. *Future Annual meeting locations*

- Chicago, tentatively 22-24 July 2019 – hosted by Terri Piggott, Larry Hedges and Beth Tipton
- Bern, 2020 - hosted by Georgia Salanti, Matthias Egger
- 2021 – Oregon, proposed by Mark Helfand; Blue Ridge Mountains (Georgia, USA – approximately 2 hours from Atlanta), proposed by Betsy Becker. Melissa to ask members which of these possibilities preferred.

9. *Proposed amendments of the bylaws*

- Measure allowing members to vote electronically for President-Elect approved at 2017 Business Meeting. Revised wording for the bylaws approved (Article IV.2), with friendly amendments on timeline.

10. *Nomination for the new President-Elect*

- For 2018, nominations for President-Elect will be collected at the conference and solicited by email. Nominators to check with nominees regarding willingness to serve. Voting will occur electronically.
- For 2019 onwards, nominations to be sought prior to the meeting.

11. *Other business*

- Early Career Award presented to Byron Wallace
- Ingram Olkin Awardee Mark Lipsey – award will be presented in Chicago in 2019

12. *Discussion on Future Visions for SRSM*

- This discussion built on earlier discussions at annual meetings in Aix-en-Provence and York.
- Four main issues identified from two surveys in 2018: (1) open vs. elected Society; (2) size of Society; (3) size of meeting; and (4) location of meeting. Agreed to focus discussion on first two issues, although some considered that it was difficult to disentangle the third issue from the others.
- On basis of member survey, 67% prefer open society, 33% elected. The difference was much smaller among those with strong preferences. Most of those who supported elected membership had strong preferences that way. If society were open, 83% favored some qualifications for membership. Regarding possible criteria, 32% considered methods contribution insufficient for membership, 61% teaching and 56% applied syntheses, but free text comments showed very different perspectives.
- It was noted that trustees were not agreed as to best way forward but thought it important to move forward to develop proposal on which members could vote.
- Purpose of discussion at annual meeting was to elicit points which had not already been brought up. Advantages and disadvantages that had been identified in survey are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Survey responses on advantages or disadvantages of elected vs. open membership

ELECTED (advantages)	OPEN (advantages)
New members capacities in line with older members vision	New visions, new ideas, diversity
Academic quality “higher” (credibility)	Credibility with growing Open Science movement
Members more likely to have interest in evidence synthesis	Allows distinguished scientists to join
	Journal penetration and awareness
Meeting related	
Warm, friendly meetings with people we know	Larger constituency for journal, new interactions
Serious concerns about meeting size, style	Capacity for advocacy, committees (leaders in meta-analysis)

- Members were asked to identify additional advantages or disadvantages of open (no restriction on size of Society) or elected (status quo, i.e. capped) membership
- Additional advantages of elected membership: diversity easier to control than in open society (in particular, proportion of members in different categories); extended interaction with smaller group; prestige associated with elected membership; less member turnover and more continuity; allows membership to trust colleagues for putting through nominations of strong candidates
- Additional advantages of open membership: some potential members would not join closed society on principle; addresses problem that in practice members tend to nominate people like themselves, so perpetuating lack of diversity; many potential members put off by perception that Society is “elite”; in previous elections, nominated members of high quality have not been elected, and may have been put off the Society for good; current membership lacks geographical diversity; many sub-optimal methods of research synthesis in use and an open society would help improve practice; different levels of membership possible in open society, e.g. student/early-career, fellows (two-tier level of membership could address concerns about size of meeting)
- Discussion of changes to Annual Meeting if SRSM was open. Concerns were raised about more complex organization (organizers of 2019 and 2020 both asked that the meeting size remain the same for those years) and the need for additional support staff to organize bigger meetings, although greater member fees would cover this; meeting finances would be more uncertain and there would be a greater chance that Society would get stuck with extra costs if not enough members attended; bigger conference might require parallel sessions to accommodate different interests, although causal inference conferences have managed to retain a plenary-only format even with larger numbers; smaller social events

- such as boat trips may be difficult to organize
- Larry Hedges was unable to attend business meeting but sent President detailed thought that were communicated to the membership, in particular (1) advice to proceed slowly if decision to make changes; (2) regarding size of meeting, potential issues practical (experience of SREE – Society for Research on Education Effectiveness – that scale-up very complex) and conceptual (disciplinary balance)
- Main issues to be determined: 1) will membership be elected/admitted/open; 2) will there be a cap on membership if not completely open. Note that potential members may already self-nominate.
- It would be worth investigating other society models. Some points that were raised are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Issues associated with meeting organization were Society to become open, and approaches/solutions adopted by other societies

Serious Concern on Meeting	Other Society Models with Solutions
Size too big	Other open societies limit meeting size
First-come first-registered means some distinguished would not be able to attend	“Fellowship” guarantees registration if by certain date
Members need to present to obtain funding for meeting	“Fellowship” guarantees abstract acceptance
Too many presentations	Posters already part of society
Will be difficult to find people to organize the meeting	Other open societies succeed: increased funds, more infrastructure
One-room meeting	Done with 200-300, or parallel
Nature of meeting will change	Yes – value judgement

- Action: Trustees to draft more specific proposal, circulate to membership for comments, revise, and then put to vote. This should be done within next few months. Leaving it to next meeting too long, and would not be inclusive.

13. Close of Meeting

- Julian Higgins and team thanked for excellent organization and welcome in Bristol
- Meeting concluded at 5:40 pm