

Minutes Board Meeting (June 28 & July 7, 2024) – online & Palacio de Fonseca, Salamanca

Present

Board members: Kristel Crombé (KC – Chair), Ken McClements (KMC - Hon. Sec.), Hana Barankova (HB), Andreas Dinklage (AD), Basil Duval (BD), Eva Kovacevic (EK), Mervi Mantsinen (MM), Thomas Mussenbrock (TM), Catarina Riconda (CR), Carlos Silva (CS), Monica Spolaore (MS), Jörg Stober (JS), Vladimir Tikhonchuk (VT), Luca Volpe (LV), Stefan Weber (SW)

EPS2024 PC and LOC chairs: John Kirk (SP), LV

EPS2025 PC chair and LOC representative: Marija Vranic (MV), Jelena Tamulienė (JT)

PPCF Editor-in-Chief: Jon Graves (JG)

Apologies

Andrea Ciardi (AC), Brian Reville (BR)

Open session minutes

1. EPS 2024 conference – Salamanca

1.1 Report from the LOC (LV)

LV gave an update on final preparations for EPS2024. Five rooms have been booked at the Palacio de Congresos in Salamanca for the conference. BD requested that the chairs of parallel sessions be asked to synchronize the ends of sessions so that participants could move between them without missing the start of presentations. LV said that chairs would aim to stick to the programme timing to within ± 5 minutes. A music concert has been planned as part of the social programme on Tuesday evening. During breaks, the updated programme would be shown on screens. Visits to CLPU have been scheduled for Tuesday evening and Friday evening.

LV reported that at the Vision 4 Fusion event on Wednesday evening it would be possible for questions to be asked via a live YouTube link as well as by participants in the room. AD provided additional information on this event at the June 28 meeting. The aim is to bring together fusion stakeholders and scientists. Around 250 conference participants have registered for it.

One of the poster prize winners (out of five in total) will be chosen by popular vote via the conference app, Whova. A presentation on EPS2025 had been scheduled for the closing session of the conference. A photographer will be provided to take photographs of prize winners. LV stated that there were 665 registered participants, compared to a breakeven number of around 500, so the conference should make a profit. EK made the

point that she would prefer to avoid having to give passport details when registering for the EPS conference: BD commented that requesting this information is illegal.

1.2 Report from the PC (JK)

JK presented his report on EPS2024. The PC met in Salamanca in March 2024; almost all members were present at this meeting, with the exception of the BSAP sub-chair who had resigned. 90 orals and 560 posters had been selected from the abstracts submitted, and all contributing authors had been notified. Some rescheduling of the programme had been necessary due to cancellations. 552 posters remained in the schedule, but 74 posters authors had not yet registered. 9 oral authors had not yet registered, and there were 2 vacant slots. JK was less concerned about plenary/invited talks. MV commented that all participants from IST Lisbon who had submitted abstracts would attend, and that not all of these had registered yet. JS asked if it had now been made clear to contributing authors that 4-page papers would not be subject to anti-plagiarism checks. BD commented that while there had been no official notification from PPCF or Nuclear Fusion that this was the case, in practice submission of 4-page papers would not be detrimental to publication in those journals. He proposed that a statement be made about this at the conference. JK reported that the original 4-page paper submission deadline (July 5) would be extended to 08:00 CET on July 8. He had received a couple of emails asking if late submission of the papers would be allowed. The board agreed that July 8 should be a hard deadline. The abstracts were not yet public, and it wasn't clear when they would be. MM asked if post-deadline submissions had been accepted: JK replied that all such submissions had been accepted as posters. He reported that one irate invited speaker had complained about receiving unsolicited emails from Frontiers in Physics, a publisher and sponsor of EPS2024. KMC mentioned receiving unsolicited messages from the same source. It was suggested that contact details of registered conference participants may have been provided to this sponsor, and the board agreed that this should be avoided at future conferences.

CR reported that 4 speakers (2 women and 2 men) had been arranged for the Women in Plasma Physics (WiPP) meeting, which would include a talk on unconscious bias. MV commented that she will be too busy as PC chair at EPS2025 to be involved in the WiPP meeting that year: she will find someone to organize this.

1.3 Report on the PPCF Special Issue (JG)

JG reported that he had emailed all EPS2024 plenary/invited speakers, encouraging them to submit articles for the PPCF special issue, either as regular papers, topical reviews or letters. The motivation for offering the review and letter options is to increase the number of papers in the special issue. JS expressed opposition to this idea. JG emphasized that the quality criteria for papers to be accepted would not change, and that letters would need to be supplemented by a motivation statement. There would be no page limits. CR commented that the criteria for submitting letters rather than regular papers were not well-understood and that authors needed to be provided with greater clarity on this. VT was skeptical that offering the letter option would result in

more papers on the basis that speakers are proposed long in advance of the conference and are thus unlikely to have results of sufficient novelty to merit letter publication. JG replied that very often new results come to light between nominations and the conference, and hence that some speakers may still wish to avail themselves of the letter option. JS indicated that he would be willing to try JG's proposal for one year, provided that the papers continue to consist of material presented at the conference. The current submission deadline for the special issue is the end of August. There may be a case for allowing authors to submit papers up to the end of September on the basis that many of them are likely to be on holiday in July and August.

2. EPS 2025 conference - Vilnius

2.1 Current status from the LOC (JT)

JT reported that a website had been set up for EPS2025, [Home - 51st EPS Conference on Plasma Physics \(epsplasma2025.com\)](https://www.epsplasma2025.com) and that there would be a brief presentation on Vilnius and the 2025 conference in the final session of EPS2024.

2.2 Report from the PC (MV)

MV reported that she had met JT to discuss EPS2025. She plans a satellite meeting on quantum computing for plasmas on Saturday July 12 2025, after the main conference, and also proposed that the proceedings of this meeting be included in the special issue of PPCF. MV has alerted the 2025 PC to the meeting of this committee in Padua on December 2 2024: most PC members are planning to be there. MV is organizing a lunchtime meeting of the EPS2025 PC members present in Salamanca (around a third of the total). JK and JT are also planning to join this meeting. She proposed that nominations for 2025 plenary and invited talks open in mid-August and close in mid-October. It was agreed that the nomination form should include a box for an abstract. JS and BD suggested that mid-August may be too early. MM proposed that the PC be actively involved in making and soliciting nominations that provide a balanced programme. JS expressed concern about nominations being made by PC members on the basis that this may create bias in the selection process: KC, KMC, MM, CS and MV disagreed. It was agreed provisionally that plenary/invited nominations will open on September 2 and close on October 18. MV would like the PC to have the option of submitting additional nominations after the deadline (without re-opening the public call) if there is a perceived need to provide additional balance. MS commented that the call for nominations can itself encourage balance by stating explicitly that a diverse range of nominees was being sought, while emphasizing that scientific excellence would, as always, be the main selection criterion. JS proposed that any post-deadline reopening of nominations should be transparent. If the slate of nominees received by the deadline appears to be unbalanced, AD suggested that the board should encourage the PC to take this into account when making its selections. Before nominations open, MV will make the PC aware of the need for balance and the avoidance of bias. She

suggested that PC members could be encouraged to nominate one woman speaker each.

Closed session minutes

3. Minutes of previous meeting (KMC)

The minutes of the previous full meeting of the Board on December 5-6 2023 were approved.

4. Landau-Spitzer Award (VT)

VT reported that the process had gone smoothly this year. There had been only a small number of nominations (4), but all were strong. He was pleased that one of the winners this year was a woman (Hye-Sook Park): no women had previously been nominated for this prize. As usual, the selection panel included representatives from both Europe and the USA. The joint announcement by the two sides (EPS and APS) had worked well. The panel for the next award of the prize will be chaired by John Sarff (University of Wisconsin) and the process is expected to begin in October 2025. Certificates for the winners are produced by EPS or APS, depending on whose turn it is to organise the conference at which the award is made.

5. EPS – PPCF Sylvie Jacquemot Early Career Prize (Mervi Mantsinen)

MM reported that this new prize had been launched successfully. Nominations had opened in January, with announcements on the EPS DPP website and LinkedIn. There had been a good balance of nominations, 20% of whom had been women. The selection had been made by a panel comprising MM, KC, KMC and VT in March and the outcome was announced on April 22. KC has arranged for a certificate to be produced for the winner. MM recommended that in future years the year in which nominees acquired their PhD should be requested on the nomination form (so that eligibility can be assessed).

Action: KMC to add page on Jacquemot Prize to EPS DPP website.

6. EPS 2026 conference – Edinburgh (KMC)

KMC gave a brief update on planning for this conference (June 29 – July 3 2026). Most of the LOC has now been appointed and is meeting regularly. Fulvio Militello (UKAEA) is chair and KMC is vice-chair. Fernanda Rimini (UKAEA) is also attending these meetings as EPS2026 PC chair-designate. Neil Turok (cosmologist and Higgs Chair at University of Edinburgh) has agreed to give a public lecture. KMC reported that the University of Edinburgh can offer 245 single rooms in student accommodation: 80 of these have shared facilities (£49 per night) and the remainder are ensuite (£62 per night). Pre- and post-conference tours of the Culham Campus are planned: delegates will need to arrange their own travel to Culham. It was commented that there should be at least one person based in Edinburgh on the LOC. MM, having previously been a LOC chair, emphasized the importance of keeping an eye on the budget. She asked whether a visit could

be offered before or after the conference to West Burton, the site of the STEP fusion reactor project. KMC doubted that there would be much to see there by 2026.

Action: KMC to ensure that EPS2026 LOC includes at least one Edinburgh-based member.

7. EPS 2027 conference – Lausanne (BD)

BD isn't sure what his own role will be at this conference. He reported that Yves Martin (EPFL) had agreed to be LOC chair and that hotels in Lausanne should be affordable (this had been a concern).

8. PhD Prize (MS)

MS reported that winners had been selected for all of the PhD prizes available: three of them were scheduled to give presentations at EPS2024. Only three out of twenty nominees this year were women. For the 2025 prizes, MS proposed that nominations be opened on October 1 and closed on November 22. KC expressed the view that it would be better to launch the calls for all of the prizes at the same time. CS commented that it would nevertheless be better to send a separate email announcement for each prize. MM suggested that nomination calls could be sent out in advance, with suitable closing dates specified for each prize, and that it may be better to do this through the central EPS. She also suggested that a poster could be produced clearly stating details of the different prizes. The deadline for nominations for this year's Innovation Prize was February 14: EK plans to have a similar deadline next year.

Action: Prize organisers (AD, EK, MM, MS) to send preferred opening/closing dates for nominations to KC.

9. Alfvén Prize

CR reported that she had obtained 10 Alfvén prize medals from Sylvie Jacquemot, and therefore it should not be necessary to order more medals for several years.

10. 4-page papers (BD)

There was no dissent from the view that we should continue to encourage contributed authors at the EPS plasma conference to write and submit these papers. VT commented that it is particularly beneficial for students to write them. As with the plenary/invited papers, the content of the papers must be closely related to results presented at the conference. BD proposes that a sentence along the following lines should appear on the conference website: "We would like the authors of contributed papers to write a 4-page paper based on the results they present at the conference". He also suggested that authors could be invited to upload posters and slides alongside their 4-page papers. He doesn't want to be too lax on the deadline for submitting the papers on the basis that such laxity might encourage bad behaviour.

11. Next Board Meeting

The next full meeting of the board is scheduled to take place on December 3 2024. MS will host this meeting at Consorzio RFX in Padua, Italy. She plans to organise transportation from city

centre hotels to/from RFX. A visit to the ITER Neutral Beam Test Facility (NBTF) at RFX could be arranged. Board members were encouraged to book two nights of accommodation in Padua (December 2/3 and December 3/4) to optimise the likelihood of being able to stay until the completion of board business on December 3, and to have the option of continuing discussions in the morning of December 4 if this proves to be necessary.

12. Any other business

None