Annual report 2020–21

Contents

President's message

As this annual report sets out, it has been another good year for PLAIN in spite of the coronavirus pandemic, its economic impact and how it has challenged the way we do things. Our membership continues to grow and PLAIN is in good financial health. We have increased our communication with members considerably through social media and our newsletter. We brought together old and new friends of plain language through our virtual conference Access for All in May. PLAIN's next annual general meeting will take place on November 10, 2021 and we will be asking members to approve our strategic plan for 2021–2025. We have already begun operating in accordance with the new plan and will be reporting against its goals in this report.

Strategic plan

This year we consulted members on our strategic plan for 2021–2025. We sent a draft plan to all members for comments in January which attracted some valuable feedback. The strategic plan was greatly informed by our 2020 survey of members. We followed up on the survey with a series of one-to-one interviews with members, which gave us an additional opportunity to consult on the plan. The plan that we submit for final approval at the annual general meeting in November is well rooted in PLAIN's membership and the organization's traditions, spirit and former strategic plan. Yet it contains several strategic moves to adapt the organization to the needs of our members and to reach new regions. Part of the new plan entails a change to the PLAIN board structure, which we have already worked to since the beginning of the year.

Membership

Our focus for membership is still to grow and diversify to become a truly international organization. We continue to grow and to meet our diversity goal, with just over 30% of members from non–English speaking countries. We continue to work to enhance our membership scheme and have introduced several changes to make our members' benefits clearer. An important change we are proposing is to introduce tiered membership fees for high, medium and low income countries. My many thanks to directors Ingrid Olsson and Dominiek Braet for their continuing work to bring a major revision of the membership structure close to an end.

Conference

PLAIN partnered with Clarity International and the Center for Plain Language (CPL) to hold the Access for All conference – a virtual conference in two parts, the first in October 2020 and the second in May 2021. These events demonstrated that a fully digital conference could deliver a valuable experience to attendees, as well as reaching a wider audience by removing the need to travel. The 2 conferences attracted around 800 participants in total, and brought highly valued diversity among presenters and participants, and with that new perspectives on clear communication.

My thanks to director Irene Stotko for the many, many hours spent in cooperation with Clarity and CPL to break new ground and make the conference a reality and success. Thanks also to director Natalia Torro and associate board member Lodewijk van Noort for their continued efforts and much valued skills.

Communications

Communications are key to connecting with our members. This year we have continued to add content to the members-only section of the website (launched in 2019) to provide unique benefits to our

members. Our ongoing task is to make the PLAIN website a helpful destination for members, and a revamp of the website is scheduled for 2022. As well we have released 4 issues of the PLAIN newsletter. I would like to thank communications chair Hannah Sapunor-Davis and director Vera Gergely for their steady work in managing and improving our website, to Hannah for producing our newsletter and to director Romina Marazzato Sparano for her steady work in our social media channels. I also extend our gratitude to Deanna Lorianni of Zuula Consulting, who managed our LinkedIn forum until the end of September. Our followers continue to increase.

Regional development and coordination

The Regional Development committee was formed to address one of PLAIN's major strategic goals – to reach out more broadly, and especially to non–English speaking regions and networks. We now have two pilot projects up and running – one which focuses on the German-speaking area of Central Europe and one which focuses on Spanish-speaking regions and networks. With this came the idea of the 'PLAIN ambassador', through which we are building a network of persons who commit to promoting plain language activities in their local area and liaise with PLAIN. My many thanks to directors Melinda Melcher and Natalia Torro for breaking new ground for PLAIN and plain language across the world.

International Plain Language Federation (IPLF)

The IPLF is an umbrella organization for the 3 organizations PLAIN, Clarity International and the Center for Plain Language. The IPLF has grown in importance in the last 2 years as it has undertaken important work on behalf of its member organizations that would be impractical for a single member organization to undertake alone. These include developing an international standard for plain language, which is now at an advanced stage of development. The IPLF is also engaged in several other projects. A number of PLAIN members and several board members are involved in IPLF projects. PLAIN is committed to continuing that support to the IPLF.

Professional development and member's resources

In April we released our third PLAIN e-journal and the fourth came out on October 15. Communication chair Hannah Sapunor-Davis has taken over the role of managing editor. We plan to engage more members as volunteers to support the journal as editors, proofreaders, and translators in the future. I take this opportunity to thank Neil James, founder and former editor of the journal. The e-journal is now a major asset for our members, and would not have been a reality without Neil's support and work. My many thanks also to Hannah for her outstanding work. Thanks also to the Plain English Foundation, Australia for sponsoring the e-journal. We also acknowledge the work of Paul Da Silva, who is in charge of the graphic design of the e-journal.

At the May conference we presented PLAIN's Christine Mowat award and Cheryl Stephens award to respectively, Enliven Victoria (Australia) and Kate Harrison Whiteside (Canada). Thanks to directors Bede Sunter and Dominiek Braet for their efforts in organizing the trophies and to Skritswap for sponsoring the Cheryl Stephens award.

Governance and finance

The Treasurer's report confirms that PLAIN maintains a strong financial position, and that the money we spend is enabling us to offer more benefits to our members. This year we welcomed Nicole Watkins Campbell as our new treasurer. (Under our bylaw, our treasurer must be a Canadian resident.) I thank her for her conscientious attention to all tasks, big and small, and for bringing much valued organizational experience.

On October 1 this year we changed our operating currency – for membership fees and event charges – from Canadian to US dollars, as was agreed at the 2020 annual general meeting. This produced a few 'hiccups' from our automated membership system that affected a few members trying to join or renew (and we apologize to those affected). Thanks to Nicole for resolving those issues.

I also thank the board's secretary, director Bede Sunter for organizing our meetings in an orderly manner and for making my job as President as easy and enjoyable as possible. But even more importantly I would like to recognize him for taking charge of our member survey, for processing all the input and overseeing delivery of our new strategic plan. I am deeply grateful.

Acknowledging our board members

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to all the board members who have served this year and in particular those who are leaving us at the 2021 AGM.

It's a privilege to work with such a committed and skilled team, and I'm proud of the progress that we have made, the knowledge about plain language that we have spread, the strategic changes we have made to our operations and the new 5-year strategic plan that we have drafted together.

I am particularly grateful for the support of director Vera Gergely who has served on the PLAIN board for 5 years, but leaves us now to focus on their new role as president of the IPLF. Vera is hands-on, efficient, candid and forward thinking and we are grateful for their contributions to PLAIN over the years.

I hope, like me, you are looking forward to the next year in PLAIN.

Margrethe Kvarenes, President

Report card on PLAIN 2025 goals

Strategic goal	Status
1. Membership	
1.1 Double membership over the next 3 years and work toward 1000 members by 2025.	Ongoing
1.2 Increase membership from non-English speaking countries to 50% of members to become more truly international.	Ongoing
1.3 Improve the membership structure to deliver more tangible benefits to professional practitioners and public supporters.	Advanced
1.4 Collaborate with other plain language organizations by offering mutual membership benefits.	Ongoing
1.5 Adjust membership fees in line with increasing member benefits.	In progress
2. Conference	
2.1 Offer both in-person and virtual conferences, working toward optimizing the value of fully virtual conferences	Ongoing
2.2 Continue to standardize the processes for organizing the location, promotion and sponsorship of conferences.	Ongoing
2.3 Maintain participation at 400+ per event (whether online, hybrid or in-person) and increase multilingual, multicultural attendance.	Ongoing
2.4 Increase activities such as running webinars, organizing smaller events, offering networking opportunities	In progress
2.5 Make some conference materials public, but offer extra information to members as part of their membership benefits.	Ongoing
3. Communications	
3.1 Develop the PLAIN website into a helpful destination for members	In progress
3.2 Develop a communication plan to provide our members with regular, useful information.	Advanced
3.3 Develop a clear and cohesive messaging strategy for marketing and member recruitment efforts and regular engagement with members.	In progress
4. Professional development	
4.1 Publish a PLAIN e-journal at least twice a year.	Ongoing
4.2 Develop an online library of standards, best practices, research reports, articles, and news items that will inform and support members in their work and workplaces.	Not started
4.3 Continue our awards program to increase the peer-based recognition of plain language practitioners and organizations.	Ongoing
4.4 Run a 'climate' survey each year and produce a report.	Not started
4.5 Continue to support the IPLF (International Plain Language Federation)	Ongoing
4.6 Facilitate professional development for members.	Ongoing
5. Regional coordination and development	
5.1 Build geography- and language-based regional networks for plain language.	In progress
6. Finance and governance	
6.1 Increase the board's strategic focus and reduce operational responsibilities.	Ongoing
6.2 Increase annual budget to at least $100,000 through increased membership, sponsorship, and income generated by our activities.	Ongoing

Committee reports

1. Membership

Membership committee	Ingrid Olsen (Sweden) Chair
	Dominiek Braet (Belgium)

1.1 Membership continues to grow

PLAIN now has 325 members from 36 countries, an increase of 53 members since we reported in 2020. Just over 30% of our members come from non-English speaking countries.

Membership has been boosted by the Access for All conference in May 2021. A featured benefit of conference attendance was the offer of a free year's membership of one of the 3 hosting organizations – PLAIN, Clarity or CPL. PLAIN has enrolled 15 new members under this arrangement.

1.2 Towards a new membership structure

We are working to finalize a new membership structure that will create clearer benefits for organizational members. It will also provide for larger organizations that have an interest in making plain-language part of their corporate culture.

We also propose to offer reduced membership fees for members from lower-income countries. We consider this a major step for diversity and towards making plain language more accessible for all.

At the 2020 AGM, members agreed to change the currency for membership fees to US dollars. This change aligns PLAIN's currency for payment with that of Clarity and CPL. The change was implemented on October 1 this year. The change from CAD 60 to USD 50 for individual membership represents a small increase in fees based on prevailing exchange rates. We are also considering introducing automatically renewing membership in the coming year.

1.3 Membership statistics

Current active members 325 (272 in 2020)   **All data collected October 12, 2021**

Net increase in active members = 53 (19.5%)

Memberships lapsed this reporting year = 45

Active members by membership level

Membership level	Number	Percent
1. Individual	269	83
2. Enhanced Individual	6	1.8
3. Organizational	21	6.4
4. Enhanced Organizational	11	3.3
5. Student	18	5.5

1.4 PLAIN members by country

Total = 325.
English speaking countries (Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, UK, USA)
= 227, (69.9%)

Alphabetical		By numbers	
Argentina	4	Canada	98
Australia	38	USA	53
Belgium	4	Australia	38
Brazil	5	South Africa	16
Canada	98	Germany	10
Chile	3	Sweden	10
Denmark	1	New Zealand	9
Ecuador	2	United Kingdom	9
Finland	5	Switzerland	8
France	2	Spain	6
Germany	10	Brazil	5
Greece	1	Finland	5
Hong Kong	1	Argentina	4
Hungary	3	Belgium	4
India	2	Ireland	4
Ireland	4	Italy	4
Israel	1	Portugal	4
Italy	4	Russia	4
Japan	1	The Netherlands	4
Luxembourg	2	Chile	3
Malaysia	1	Hungary	3
Mexico	3	Mexico	3
New Zealand	9	Ecuador	2
Norway	2	France	2
Poland	1	India	2
Portugal	4	Luxembourg	2
Russia	4	Norway	2
South Africa	16	Denmark	1
South Korea	1	Greece	1
Spain	6	Hong Kong	1
Sweden	10	Israel	1
Switzerland	8	Japan	1
Thailand	1	Malaysia	1
The Netherlands	4	Poland	1
United Kingdom	9	South Korea	1
USA	53	Thailand	1
Unknown	2	Unknown	2

All data collected October 12, 2021

2. Conference

Conference committee	Irene Stotko (South Africa) Co-chair
	Natalia Torro (The Netherlands) Co-chair
	Lodewijk van Noort (The Netherlands) Associate

2.1 Promoting plain language across the virtual world

In our second *Access for All, Plain Language is a Civil Right* conference in May 2021, we offered a balance of big ideas and practical skills to plain language advocates, practitioners and newcomers alike. Our conference objectives were to help participants discover new high-level ideas on plain language, build community, interact authentically and find inspiration. A secondary objective was to attract new members to the 3 convening organizations – PLAIN, Clarity International and the Center for Plain Language.

Our presenters represented a wide range of perspectives, language communities and global demographics. Our 3-day virtual conference consisted of live and interactive sessions, world cafés for smaller, more intimate discussions and related speaker videos to be watched in one's own time. A live world café was connected to each live day and theme (Design, Literacy, and Practice). Within each café, participants could navigate among table topics, meet formal presenters and thought leaders, and drill down to specific areas of interest or gather in language communities.

Our conference attracted 421 participants from 55 countries, with presenters from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Finland, Hungary, India, Italy, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- 1 unflappable host
- 2 pre-conference workshops
- 3 themes, 3 organizations
- 6 world cafés

- 9 keynotes
- 17 related videos
- 421 participants
- 55 countries

2.2   An effective pricing strategy to increase attendance

For the May conference we decided to offer discounts for countries listed as Zone 1 and Zone 2 in the World Data Average Income Indicators. We have received positive feedback on that strategy. There were 3 new attendees (who are now members) from Argentina and Colombia. One of them commented:

"I appreciate that the organizers have taken into account different economic realities and that this has been reflected in the cost of the tickets."

2.3   Meeting PLAIN's conference goals

Our conferences are one of the most significant ways that PLAIN provides value to members and our conference-related strategic goals reflect that.

2.1. Offer both in-person and virtual conferences, working towards optimizing the value of fully virtual conferences.

In the current circumstances of the world we were unable to offer an in-person conference this year. But who knows what 2023 may bring? However, we can say confidently that our May conference demonstrated that fully virtual conferences can deliver great value. Perhaps in 2023 we will be able to deliver a hybrid in-person/virtual conference.

2.2. Continue to standardize the processes for organizing the location, promotion and sponsorship of our biennial conference

The May conference produced significant advancement in conference organization and related technology. We continue to deliver conferences more efficiently and cost effectively.

2.3. Maintain participation at 400+ per event (whether online, hybrid or in-person) and increase multilingual, multicultural attendance.

The May conference attracted 421 participants from 55 countries. We will continue to work on increasing multilingual, multicultural attendance. We should continue to make conferences accessible to attendees from lower-income countries. Particular thanks go to director Natalia Torro for promoting the conference among Spanish-speaking countries.

2.4. Increase activities such as running webinars and smaller events and providing networking opportunities.

This goal has been difficult to achieve with our current resources. However, the May conference featured Dr. Anne Ketola's free pre-conference workshop on how to produce a comic-style cartoon and an additional workshop featuring Guillaume Rondeau and Isabelle Bourgeois of Éducaloi on teaching-techniques to spark enthusiasm in organizations.

2.5. Make some conference papers public, but offer extra information to members as part of their membership benefits.

In September 2020, we placed a collection of papers from the Oslo conference on the PLAIN website as a members-only resource. For the Access for All conference, participants have access to the recordings until the end of 2021.

A vote of thanks to the entire PLAIN board: Margrethe for her leadership and guidance on the steering committee, Natalia for promoting the conference to the Spanish-speaking world, and for the excellent support from the Communications, Professional Development and Regional Development committees as well as Vera from the International Plain Language Federation.

3. Communications

Communications committee	Hannah Sapunor-Davis (Germany) Chair
	Romina Marazzato Sparano (United States)
	Vera Gergely (Hungary)

In the results of our 2020 survey, 56% of responders said we don't communicate enough. No responders said that we communicate too much. Some feedback from members suggests that little seems to happen between conferences. We consider improving our communication and engagement with members a high priority.

Our LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter channels are doing well. Our PLAIN LinkedIn group of 20,000 members is managed by a contracted professional – in keeping with our objective of professionalizing operations. We will also look into opportunities to incorporate video content.

3.1   Developing the PLAIN website into a helpful destination for members

Based on feedback from our members we will adapt and expand the website into a place where members can:

- find resources
- connect with other members
- stay up to date on PLAIN network developments.

The first step to achieving this goal will be conducting a total content audit. After drafting a roadmap for the website, we will make improvements to the website and member portal, gathering user feedback as much as possible and within means. Potential additions to the website that we are exploring include an online resource library and members-only discussion forum. Website data will be an important indicator for how successful we are.

The audit and initial planning was completed earlier in the year. We hope to begin drafting new copy and first changes to the website in November 2021.

3.2   A communication plan to provide our members with regular, useful information

The plan includes:

- a quarterly email newsletter
- social media accounts
- website news items
- any future avenues of communication.

In order to do this, we will use schedules, templates, and workflows that can be adjusted as needed. This will allow us to provide more consistent and regular messages for our members. We can measure success by metrics from the various platforms and by user feedback.

Over the northern summer we identified the need for paid support to help us with this goal. Once we had support from the board, we posted an advertisement for a freelance assistant position in September. We hope to have this person on board by November 2021. The aim is for this person to

take over the regular, ongoing tasks such as social media, emails and news items, so that the committee can commit more focused in-depth work on plan ing and strategy.

We grew social media over the last year by the following:

Platform	New followers*	Percent increase*
LinkedIn	785	197%
Facebook	144	18%
Twitter	431	17%

* Since August 2020

LinkedIn seems by far to be the platform where we have the most growth and engagement, though we have posted to the company page for a shorter time than Twitter and Facebook, so it is still in the phase of building the audience.

Our email newsletters continue to have open rates of 60–65%.

3.3   A clear and cohesive messaging strategy for marketing and member recruitment efforts and regular engagement with members

We will be achieve this by getting in-depth feedback from members, creating a comprehensive messaging style guide, including a unique selling point, that will be implemented across all platforms. Feedback from both new members and long-time members will be crucial in measuring our success in this goal.

We hope to make the first steps towards cohesive messaging guidelines in 2022.

4. Professional development

Professional development committee	Romina Marazzato Sparano (United States) Chair
	Bede Sunter (Australia)
	Dominiek Braet (Belgium)
	Hannah Sapunor-Davis (Germany)

4.1　Supporting the IPLF – the standard and other projects

The standard for plain language

In September 2019, Technical Committee 37 (TC37) of the International Standards Organization (ISO) voted in favor of the proposal by Standards Australia to develop an international, multi-language standard for plain language.

The work of developing the standard is being managed by the International Plain Language Federation (IPLF) of which PLAIN is a member and a financial contributor to the project. The work of drafting the standard is being carried out by Working Group 11 (WG11) of TC 37. PLAIN is also a 'liaison organization' to WG11. A number of PLAIN members have been active participants in the working group throughout the year.

Over the last year, PLAIN has continued to include its members in consultation on the standard's development, following on from consultation that took place in 2019–20. We invited comments on draft version 1.2 of the standard in October 2020.

The standard has been assigned a number by the ISO – WD 24495 (WD = working draft).

Other IPLF projects

The IPLF is also working on 3 other major projects

- Certification – investigating how to develop and implement certification for plain language organizations, practitioners, training and documents
- Localization of the ISO standard
- Training – working towards standardizing training in plain language and developing plain language resources.

As with development of the standard, these projects have attracted the interest and involvement of a number of PLAIN members.

4.2　Plain language awards

PLAIN continues to offer 2 awards for achievement in plain language:
- The Christine Mowat Plain Language Achievement Award
- The Cheryl Stephens Innovation Award.

(Please see PLAIN's website for details of these 2 awards and think about whom you might like to nominate in 2023.)

These 2 awards are presented every 2 years at PLAIN's biennial conference. The most recent presentations were at PLAIN's Access for All conference in May 2021. The virtual nature of the conference did not diminish the sense of occasion for the award presentations.

The Christine Mowat award was presented to Enliven Victoria, an Australian organization that delivers health-literacy training, editing and information development services.

The Cheryl Stephens award was presented to Kate Harrison Whiteside for her work in founding the Plain Language Academies. Kate is, along with Cheryl Stephens, a co-founder of PLAIN.

4.3   Publications

We have published 2 issues of the PLAIN e-journal since the last annual report. The COVID-19 issue in April was well-received and we were able to include a diverse range of perspectives and authors.

In order to keep this resource sustainable, we need to engage volunteers – particularly editors and proofreaders – who are committed for at least one year (2 years would be ideal). Finding volunteers will be a priority for 2022.

5. Regional coordination and development

Regional coordination and development committee	Melinda Melcher (Switzerland) Chair
	Natalia Torro (The Netherlands)

The Regional Coordination and Development Committee was formed as part of our strategic plan for the next 5 years. This was in response to a need expressed by members responding to our 2020 survey – for greater opportunities to form networks and meet locally, particularly in language-based groups. The single goal for the committee is to "Build geography- and language-based regional networks for plain language". This is part of PLAIN's drive to increase our membership base to become a truly international organization.

5.1 Developing regional networks

This year we focused on strengthening ties to local networks by establishing 'PLAIN ambassador' roles in those networks to increase local engagement.

In September this year we sent out a call for expressions of interest in the role to the German-speaking and Spanish-speaking plain language communities. We have received a number of responses and so far made one formal agreement in the DACH (Germany-Austria-Switzerland) region.

6. Governance and finance

Governance and finance committee	Bede Sunter (Australia) Chair, Secretary
	Margrethe Kvarenes (Norway) President
	Nicole Watkins Campbell (Canada) Treasurer

6.1   Presenting the Treasurer's report

PLAIN's income grew slightly this year, and expenditures grew as well. The financial statements cover the period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021; they accompany this report. We will table the financial statements for comments and endorsement at the 2021 AGM. PLAIN is legally based in Canada, and our financial statements and our governance reporting meet the requirements of Canada's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

Our major source of revenue for this year was memberships; we also received a sponsorship in 2020 for the September 2019 conference.

Our major expenses were professional fees – a donation to Clarity for the 2021 conference.

Our regular financial review meets our legal obligations. Ottawa accountants ABFK, chartered professional accountants, reviewed our financial statements, and the board approved this decision and expense. A financial review is not a complete audit. However a review allows PLAIN to meet our obligations under Canadian law and is much less expensive than an audit.

In the 2020 financial statements all amounts are in Canadian dollars unless stated otherwise.

Notes

- Statement of Financial Position

  In 2021, PLAIN's financial position was $65,907, which is $984 more than in 2019. Financial position is the value of the organization's assets: in our case, memberships and income from conferences.

- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

  Revenues: $24,652
  - Membership fees: $21,370
  - 2019 conference: We received conference sponsorship for the 2019 conference in 2020. The 2019 conference income and expenses were the same and are now balanced.

  Expenditures: $23,308
  - Conference: PLAIN provided US $5000 to Clarity to support the 2021 online conference.
  - Insurance: Errors and omissions insurance for the PLAIN board
  - Interest and bank charges: online payment processing to ensure funds reach our bank account securely for payor and payee
  - Memberships: a membership management online system
  - Website expenses: website hosting, development and maintenance
  - Professional fees: a designer for the PLAIN Journal; social media expert to manage our LinkedIn account; chartered professional accountants to review our financial statements
  - Telephone expenses: conference calling for board meetings

6.2   Treasurer submits a request for motion

As Treasurer, I respectfully submit this report and ask for a motion to approve this report and the financial statements.

6.3   Understanding our governance structure

The working board carries out most of its work at committee level

The board has been operating with 11 directors. Since the 2020 AGM, we held four board meetings as well as other committee meetings.

Every director participates in one or more of the following committees:
*   Executive (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary)
*   Membership
*   Conference
*   Communications
*   Professional development
*   Regional coordination and development
*   Governance and finance.

Each committee has at least 2 directors, including the chair. We can also invite other members of PLAIN to participate in any committee, except the Executive. You can find out more about our board members at www.plainlanguagenetwork.org > PLAIN > Board of directors.

The following table lists the full board, the committees they work on and their board meeting attendance.

Role	Name	Country	Committees	Meetings attended
President	Margrethe Kvarenes	Norway	Executive, Governance and finance	4
Treasurer	Nicole Watkins Campbell	Canada	Executive, Governance and finance	5
Secretary	Bede Sunter	Australia	Executive, Governance and finance, Professional development	5
Director	Hannah Sapunor-Davis	Germany	Communications, Professional development	4
Director	Vera Gergely	Hungary	Communications	3
Director	Ingrid Olsson	Sweden	Membership	5
Director	Irene Stotko	South Africa	Conference	5
Director	Romina Marazzato Sparano	United States	Communications, Professional development	4
Director	Dominiek Braet	Belgium	Membership, Professional development	5
Director	Natalia Torro	Netherlands	Regional development, Conference	5
Director	Melinda Melcher	Switzerland	Regional development	4

Governance activities promote the smooth running of the board

With an international board working across 7 time zones, finding meeting times to suit everyone presents its challenges. (During northern hemisphere standard time our time zones represent a difference of 19 hours.)

The secretary organizes the meetings, prepares an agenda with the president and takes minutes.

For the AGM, we prepare an agenda and provide this report, and other supporting documents. The AGM is held virtually.

Future work for governance will focus on improving the management of our corporate knowledge to provide better continuity in light of the turnover of directors written into our bylaws.

6.4   2021 AGM will elect two new board members

PLAIN's annual general meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 10 2021.

Directors serve for 3-year terms and at each AGM, we have some directors vacating positions, which we need to fill. This year we have selected candidates to join the working board.

One board member, Vera Gergely, is retiring this year and another, Christine Smith, left early in the year.

Vera Gergely has been a driving force on the board for the last five years. During the year, Vera was elected president of the IPLF and that must now become their main focus.

Christine Smith did valuable work on revising PLAIN's membership structure in the year she was on the board but had to leave the board early this year to better focus on her business.

We thank them for their valuable contributions and we wish them the very best.

Two positions are available this year, for 3-year terms. The board received expressions of interest from qualified members to fill the available positions. We will ask the AGM to approve both candidates.

We will send short profiles of the nominating candidates with the agenda for the AGM.