

**2020 COMMISSION MEETING**

11.02.2020

6 pm via teleconference

Appointed at the 2019 AGM this commission held four meetings this past year, two in person and two via teleconference.

These are the commission's recommendations, circulated to members for discussion and decisions at the 2020 AGM on Saturday, 29th February.

If you missed the last report it is included at the end.

If options the recommended option is highlighted.

**Journal:**

Option 1. Cease printing the journal and be on-line only. The costs in postage, printing and cover design are considerable. Few copies of the journal are sold commercially.

Option 2. We implement a rate hike. £10 or no more print copies provided (on line only). £0 change for low-income.

This would be implemented at/after the upcoming issue 125, coinciding with the conference.

Institutions and libraries would be slower but take place in 2020.

We need a Book Editor. This important and enjoyable part of the journal is not functioning at moment.

Roy C-H will ask for returns. Alistair C will compile list of books for review. Advertise for new book editor immediately in journal & on website.

The essay competition should be supported and encouraged.

**Troika:**

Option 1. Abolish the Troika, which no longer functions. Create a management group of a chair, secretary, treasurer and up to three committee members.

Option 2. A secretary (AC), treasurer (DL), and at least one member will be a better match for the responsibilities of a Troika (board). It would be best to add one person annually who is the Conference lead person. Better press outreach from this last person would be desirable.

**Smaller/other groups:**

Establishing regional groups and holding smaller meetings between the annual conferences remains an aspiration. Hiring a room in a community centre isn't expensive. Events could be short, with 2 – 3 speakers, some light refreshments and not much coordination. This would allow more participation from different regions, with little effort. Could be marketed as a sideshow to RSS Regional meetings.

**Marketing:**

We have promo cards, and Alistair C can usually provide spare journals. Renew call to members to bring material to outside events and conferences with overlapping areas of interest.

**Members' participation and support:**

Including this notice we send a blunt message to members, or attendees, saying something like 'You're coming to the conference and we need more people. Don't come to the conference alone. If there is not one single person you know that might be interested that you could recommend to, why bother?' Or 'You support the ideas of RS but we need to renew. Think of a name or idea or offer you can make to get involved. If there isn't any forthcoming, RS will likely not survive'.

We are working on a members' survey, which might shed light on areas of interest or involvement.

**Conference:**

Conference speakers need to commit to journal paper. RS will collect slides. A student could turn (PP) presentations into text (David L & Roy C-H know names.) with 'threat' to publish without input. Archive of slides could be a resource in its own right. Sean will collect at London 2020. AC will bring a storage device. Student helper might become more involved.

**Aims of RadStat:**

Radstats is unique. It is collaborative & supportive.

De-mystification is still relevant.

Members/attendees asked to think & discuss.

**END****SEPTEMBER REPORT**

The commission was appointed at the 2018 AGM to meet independently through this year to make specific recommendations to the 2020 AGM (and general membership) on how to revive Radstats and make it thrive in the future.

The commission consists of Alistair Cairns (Administrator) Roy Carr-Hill (lead journal Editor), Sean Demack, Claire Griffiths and David Lamb (Treasurer). The group has had two meetings in York and has committed to a third in November.

There has been significant progress on repairs to some areas of Radical Statistics that needed rather urgent attention.

Not all credit is due to the commissioners of course but examples include:

A journal paper opt-out/online-only subscription option has been implemented, coinciding with a decision to stop printing expensive colour graphs and to make the issues available fully and immediately on-line. This alone should halt the overspends Radstats has experienced recently. It also helps move in a more environmental and open-access direction.

The dormant Essay competition is going to be reintroduced. It will initially be run by Dave Byrne.

Promotional materials have been chosen and made available or people to share, display etc.

And of course, to the credit of all involved, the new Radstats book has been published at Policy Press.

Due to reasons below, some issues regarding strengthening the journal and ensuring the 2020 Conference succeeds have also been discussed and worked on.

Some of the more intractable issue have not been so easy to strategize.

The Troika consists of one relatively uninvolved (whilst genuinely supportive) member. The last set of Troika was equally undersized, and for some time this body has not performed terribly well. This obviously leaves Radstats rather directionless and prone to unintended or unintentional drift.

[A much stronger Troika is essential to Radstats succeeding. Generally the Troika is served on a rolling three-year basis, but this could be revised; longer-serving 'core members' might be a better model. One idea might be to appoint one or two advisory Troika members to serve for a longer period, and recruit a remaining 'members representative' who could potentially bring fresh ideas into the mix.]

There is not a written constitution – creating one would not be overly difficult and might be wise.

The journal, while capably being steered by Roy, is not getting as many submissions as one might hope. (The quality of submissions is fine.)

The journal has attracted a recruit to help, in the form of Sean Demack. But attracting more Editors is important, and succession planning to help relieve Roy in the short term and allowing him to step down in the medium term needs much more input.

The journal is a mix of non-peer reviewed pieces with a standing offer of peer review upon request. If it were more strongly peer reviewed a publisher might be interested. Professional publishers are not always the most popular people in academia, but one could bring a level of support and help bring much more exposure to the journal. (The books would likely not have been nearly so successful without a professional publisher.)

It has been said that Radstats barely survives and also always thrives, that it is perpetually in a state of crisis and at the same time brilliance. That may be the case.

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For Radical Statistics to continue to thrive brilliantly for the next fifty years needs more people to be more involved. Nothing radical here – tell a friend or colleague, ask for (business card size) promo cards and put them out at a conference, display a flyer, suggest a student submit an essay, invite someone to the conference. But these, while sensible and appreciated, do not fill the gaps described here.

Radstats needs existing and new members to participate. We need active participation in the Troika, we need people who enjoy the journal to join the Editorial board. Radstats needs more online content, probably in the form of blog posts, for the website. We need new ideas, and these will probably come organically from the future members; we are currently relying on too many ‘old hands’.

Again, the commission has agreed to meet again in November, and will review all the previous ideas and discussions and make concrete proposals ahead of the 2020 conference, AGM & discussion on Radstats’ future.