

Implementation of BPA/SWIP Guidance on the representation of women

Learned Societies Recommendations:

1. Learned societies should ensure that a reasonable proportion of women are nominated for positions on their executive committees and for official positions (President, Secretary, etc.)

- Ex Com has eleven members, four of which are women – including the Vice-Chair. Resigning members will be replaced by women, or other under-represented groups until a better balance is in place. We expect parity, or close to parity, within a year.

- It has been decided by Council – from which Executive Committee members are drawn – that new members to Council will be women, or philosophers from other under-representative groups in Philosophy - in particular, BME groups - until a better balance is in place.

2. Conferences:

- **Where learned societies organise their own conferences and seminar series, they should follow the relevant BPA/SWIP Good Practice recommendations (1(a)-(e)) on conference organisation.**

Those recommendations are: (a) ensure that women are well represented when drawing up a list of possible speakers; (b) consult women speakers before fixing the date; (c) spread the funding so women who might be at lower prestige institutions have access to travel funds; (d) treat male and female speakers equally on publicity material; (e) investigate the provision of childcare facilities and consider subsidizing this.

The Institute does not organize its own conferences or seminars, but it does organize the London Lectures, the Annual Lecture and an Annual Debate. The people responsible for organizing these events – JH, AO'H and the Annual Lecture Committee – already (a) ensure that women are well represented on invitation lists; and (b) there is always flexibility in the dates; (c) the Institute covers the travel costs of all speakers; (d) speakers are treated equally on publicity material (we leave off titles and list only affiliations); (e) the Institute is able to subsidize childcare if needed, as part of a speaker's expenses.

- **Where learned societies distribute funding to others to organise conferences and seminar series, they should make it a requirement of funding that the conference organisers follow the relevant BPA/SWIP Good Practice recommendations (1(a)-(e)) on conference organisation.**

The Executive Committee has put the following in the guide to Conference organisers, and in the Conditions for Sponsorship for RIP branches:

“Conference organisers are required to follow the BPA/SWIP Good Practice recommendations:

- a. When drawing up a list of potential invited speakers, take reasonable steps to ensure that women are well represented; see the Good Practice website for more information and advice.

- b. Where possible, consult the women on your list before fixing the date of the event, to ensure that women speakers are not just invited but will actually attend.
- c. Women may well be at lower-prestige institutions and/or in lower-ranked jobs. (E.g. in the UK, only 12% of professors in Russell Group philosophy departments are women.) They may therefore have less access to institutional funding. If you cannot fund all speakers, ask bigger-name speakers whether they can fund their own travel (they can always say no), freeing up resources for less well-known speakers.
- d. Organisers should ensure that male and female speakers are treated equally on publicity material and the conference programme (e.g. to avoid the situation where a male speaker is described as ‘Senior Lecturer in philosophy at ...’ but a female speaker, also an SL, is described as ‘teaches philosophy at ...’; or where the male speaker’s title (Dr, Prof.) is included by the female speaker’s isn’t).
- e. Investigate whether the provision of childcare facilities for the duration of the event is possible. Many universities have crèches on or near campus, which may be able to offer a rate for speakers at larger events. For larger events, if campus facilities are not available consider hosting the event at a hotel that offers childcare and babysitting services. Consider setting aside funding to subsidise the use of childcare facilities by speakers; see the Good Practice website for more information and advice.”

- **Learned societies should consider adopting a formal policy on chairing seminars/conference sessions, for their own events and/or for those that they fund. See the BPA Good Practice website, under ‘Conferences and seminar series’, for some specific proposals you might consider implementing.**

RIP advises moderators for all RIP events to: take a break between the talk and the questions, not operate on a first come first served basis when it comes to taking questions, enforce the hand/ finger distinction, one question per question, and not necessarily grant follow up questions.

- **Learned societies should monitor the gender balance of conferences and seminar series that they fund. Where a conference or seminar series manifests an obvious gender imbalance, the learned society should make enquiries about the steps taken to promote the representation of women, in order to satisfy themselves that appropriate steps were taken by the organisers.**

Conference organisers, and centres, are required to report on the representation of women in their reports. Reports are considered, organisers will be warned if we have evidence of non-compliance. Funding may not be offered if there is repeated non-compliance.

Journals

- **Where a learned society runs a journal, the Executive Committee should review its editorial policies and implement the proposals contained in the BPA/SWIP Good Practice document, ‘Journal Editors/Editorial Boards’.**

This advice is:

- **The Editorial Board (or appropriate alternative) should review the extent to which the editorial and refereeing processes are anonymous. If any stage of the process is not anonymous, the Board should consider whether to introduce anonymity, and should only agree not to do so if there are very good practical reasons not to.**

- The Editorial Board (or appropriate alternative) should seek to ensure that there is a reasonable proportion of women both on the Board itself and amongst the journal's pool of referees.
- The Editorial Board (or appropriate alternative) should consider having, and making available to referees, an explicit editorial policy on refereeing; there is an example, from the journal *Cognition*, on the Good Practice website. Such a policy might also include specific requests concerning anonymity, e.g. that referees do not google paper titles, and that they alert the editor prior to refereeing the paper if they know or have a strong suspicion about who wrote it.

All submissions are anonymized before going to the editor of *Philosophy*.

The editor of *Think* does not receive submissions anonymously – this is mainly because a significant number of pieces are solicited as well as submitted. The Editor approaches many more women than men, in an effort to secure better representation.

- The Executive Committee is the Editorial Board of both *Think* and *Philosophy*, and decisive steps have been taken to insure appropriate representation of women on the Executive Committee (see above.)
- The Exec Committee have agreed a Review Committee recommendation, that the Editors, Director, and Secretary include basic data on representation of women in RIP activities, and RIP journals in their annual reports.
- The current Editor of *Philosophy* is retiring. It has been decided that the appointment of the new Editor will consider proposals to make the journal more representative of under-represented groups in the discipline.
- A recently set up Review Committee (chaired by Lucy O'Brien) has also charged Alexander Bird with writing a separate BPA/SWIP further implementation document for our journals specifically.