

Minutes GLU International Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, September 21st 2020 – 13:00 – 15:00 CET – online

Participants:

Steering committee members

1. Praveen Jha (JNU, Chair)
2. Mark Anner (Penn State, Deputy Chair)
3. Antonio Lisboa/Clair Ruppert (CUT, Deputy Chair)
4. Martina Sproll (Berlin School of Economics and Law)
5. Carolin Vollmann (DGB)
6. Hugo Dias (UNICAMP)
7. Archana Prasad (JNU)
8. Mirko Herberg (FES)
9. Michelle Williams (Wits University)
10. Christoph Scherrer (ICDD/Kassel University)
11. Alfred Mafuleka (Cosatu)
12. Michael Watts (ILO Actrav)
13. Thomas Franco (AIBOC India)
14. Cathy Feingold (AFL-CIO)

Observers and Associate fellows

15. Nicolas Pons-Vignon (WITS University, observer)
16. Frank Hoffer (associate fellow)
17. Soraya Patel (Wits University, observer)
18. Edlira Xhafa (GLU Online Academy, observer)
19. Elaine Hui (Penn State University, Observer)
20. Aleksandra Draganic (ICDD/Kassel University, observer)
21. Hansjörg Herr (Berlin School of Economics and Law, observer)
22. Uma Rani Amara (ILO Research Department, Associate fellow)
23. Harald Kröck (GLU Alumni Coordinator, observer)
24. Simone Buckel (ICDD/Kassel University, Observer)

1. Welcome

2. Introductions of participants and overview of the agenda

Due to the time restrictions the participants were asked before the meeting to submit all reports in written form so the time of the meeting could be fully committed to discussions and questions.

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3. Update on recent development and new challenges at the different campuses

Was shared in written form before the meeting.

4. Steering Committee: Chair

In January 2020, Praveen Jha took over as Chair. Mark Anner became Deputy Chair and CUT holds the position of Trade Union Deputy Chair. In January 2021, Mark Anner will take over as Chair and Hugo Diaz will be the Deputy Chair and Chair in 2022.

The position of Trade Union Deputy Chair starting from January 2021 has to be clarified.

5. Role of Trade Unions at GLU

The TU representatives of CUT, Cosatu and AFL-CIO have pointed out the need to have a discussion about the role of TUs in the GLU and how the work of GLU can be better aligned to the needs of the TU movement especially in times of Corona. Due to the time constraints of the meeting it was proposed and decided that a separate meeting should be scheduled within 2-3 weeks to prepare such a discussion. Cathy and Clair will take of organizing the meeting. The following people were named and volunteered to participate in this preparatory meeting: Cathy Feingold, Clair Ruppert, Antonio Lisboa, Alfred Angula, Thomas Franco, Carolin Vollmann, Jeremy Anderson (in absence), Frank Hoffer, Mirko Herberg, and Mark Anner.

A few points were already raised in the meeting:

Claire and Cathy pointed out the challenging situation of TUs to organize in the current situation and that the work of GLU should focus especially on the needs of trade unions. This could also mean to pause some of the GLU activities in order to set priorities on how to align the academic work of the GLU with the trade union needs.

Alfred raised the issue of the difficult accessibility of the GLU programmes for trade unionists and the request for a harmonized admission procedure across all GLU campuses. Michelle pointed out that this is unfortunately not possible due to the different regulations at the various GLU campuses.

Thomas pointed out that more frequent online meetings should be planned in this time of crisis and he suggests to develop an exclusive course only for trade unionists.

Carolin sees a challenge for network consultations this year due to the Corona-Crisis and she pointed out that one of the benefits of the GLU network is the liberties in activities so that network nevertheless is able to remain active.

Michelle pointed out that the universities have limited resources and that these limitations have to be taken into account when thinking about ways for trade union support.

Frank pointed out that trade union involvement in the GLU has been a recurring issue. He suggests to think about what the GLU is good at and to use the tools that we have instead of inventing new ones (teaching programmes, short term programmes, MOOCs, publications).

Mirko said that a clearer expression of TU needs is very welcome.

6. Migration workshop – cooperation with OSF

The GLU has currently some funding from the Open Society foundation. Among a few other activities (scholarships, Alumni Workshop) the funding also includes funding for a workshop on migration and labour. This workshop was originally planned for April 2020 but due to delays in contract signing it was postponed to September 2020 and then again due to Corona to 2021.

Since the end of Corona is not foreseeable and international travel will most likely not be possible for many months (especially with people coming from many different countries around the globe) the idea emerged to organize the workshop as an online event.

This idea was approved by the ISCM and it was decided to discuss this with the OSF in the following week.

For a possible date December 2020 was suggested.

It was pointed out by Frank and Cathy that the technical and methodological implementation has to be done well.

A working group shall proceed with the planning. The following people are part of this group: Praveen, Nicolas, Cathy, Mark, Claire, Alfred, Mirko, Simone

7. GLU Conference and ISCM in Penn State in 2021

Mark shared that due to Corona the planning for this is very difficult. He will share soon a draft for the content and call.

The discussion on the date and physical planning has to be postponed until the further development with Corona is clearer. If possible the conference shall take place at black-lives-matter plaza at AFL-CIO headquarters which is currently closed.

8. GLU Alumni Summer School 2021

Is planned to take place at Penn State after the GLU Conference at the beginning of October 2021. Is also currently pending due to the Coronavirus.

It was suggested that Alumni activities could be initiated in preparation and that Alumni who take actively part should receive preference for getting invited to the Alumni workshop.

There are currently 3 on-going Alumni research projects. The Alumni of these projects should be encouraged to participate in the planning of the Alumni workshop.

9. Regional GLU Initiatives

Are covered in the reports.

10. GLU Online activities

A report was shared by Edlira and Frank before the meeting. Edlira was applauded for the great job she was and is doing with the GLU Online Academy!

11. Cooperation with trade unions

See point 5

12. Alumni Networking

Harald had shared a report before the meeting.

13. Publications

- Global Labour Column: a report was shared before the meeting; there is a new GLC website and everybody is asked to click on the link to help push the google presence.

- GLU Working Papers: unfortunately the publications came to an end because of lack of funding from ACTRAV. Michael Watts was asked for the reason why ACTRAV has stopped the funding although the publication always had many downloads and whether ACTRAV will take up the funding again. Michael said he will take the issue back to the ILO and discuss with Rafael Peels.

- Global Labour Journal: the journal is also facing financial difficulties. The annual budget is around 11.000€ and for 2021 there is a shortfall of 5.000€. Any ideas how to resolve this are very welcome.

Cathy suggested that OSF could potentially be asked for funding of GLU publications. Christoph sees that problematic and would prefer to reengage the ILO/ACTRAV funding because it comes from governments and therefore secures independence for Academic freedom. Cathy pointed out that this is an interesting debate because it very much depends on the context and government.

Frank suggests to engage trade unions and ITUC to influence ACTRAV for funding for the GLU publications. Cathy says she gladly writes a letter to ACTRAV.

14. Research cooperation

Call by IndustriAll for research on industrial and trade policy; this is a great project for the GLU because a big part of the network gets involved.

Uma reports from the ILS that there is a new director who is quite open and that she will try establish a contact of GLU with him. She suggests that we first should establish a contact before we inquire about funding possibilities.

Nicolas has taken on a professorship in Lugano/Switzerland and is happy to continue his collaboration with the GLU in this new capacity.

15. Associate GLU Membership enlarged networking

No suggestions were submitted

16. New contacts with potential partners

Uma asked what became of the collaboration with SOAS who had participated at the last ISCM and had voiced interest for cooperation. Since SOAS is not able to offer the course without tuition fees a collaboration is not possible because the GLU would not be able to raise the funds for the tuition.

Praveen, Devan and Christoph have advised a university in Nepal to set up a labour MA programme which has started recently. They will keep the ISCM informed whether they might be a potential future partner for the GLU.

The collaboration with TISS has ended because there was no replacement for Sharit Bhomwik at TISS and the labour programme does no longer exist as such.

Nicolas has contacts to a university in Madrid with a labour programme. They have voiced interest in the GLU. Nicolas will keep in touch with them.

Martina suggests inviting the Dean of the University of La Plata from Argentina to the migration workshop to refresh the contact. Christoph had written a letter on behalf of the GLU but there was no response. Claire will establish contact via Luis and Ingrid.

17. Miscellaneous

Ana Paula Melli (CUT) – GLU Alumna – is now working for BWI in Sao Paulo