

Minutes of the TEMA Parent Committee Meeting (Part 1)

18:00 on 9th November 2024

TEMA 18, Bengaluru, India

Present: Xingen Lei (XL), John Beattie (JB), Lothar Rink (LR), Manju Reddy (MR), Miguel Arredondo (MA), Anatoly Skalny (AS)

Apologies: Bob Cousins (BC)

1. Xingen Lei opened the meeting by welcoming Committee members and thanking them for their attendance.
2. JB asked for confirmation that all members were satisfied with the content of the Constitution/By-Laws as there had been some continuing criticism that it was too detailed. All members present confirmed acceptance of the document, which will be used to apply for UK charitable status. [N.B. this version will include the changes discussed below]
3. XL commented that the outstanding issue from the Constitution/By-Laws was the mechanism and charge for membership of the TEMA Society. A discussion ensued with reference to LR's experiences with membership of the ISZB and the German Society for Trace Elements. The Committee agreed that there must be a tangible benefit if a membership fee is charged, and options such as Society journal access, educational courses (AS), student sponsorship for TEMA conferences and reduced conference fees (XL, LR and JB) were proposed. It was concluded that membership, purchased during each TEMA conference, would last until the subsequent conference (normally 3 years) and would allow members discounted registration fees at the latter conference. A membership fee of \$100 was discussed, with the first 3 years being free, but XL suggested having two categories of membership: "Full" and "Student". XL proposed that a third category of elected "Fellow" would be exempted from fees, and a fourth category might be "Industry" membership. MR asked how the membership fee would be collected and both online and on-site methods were mentioned. A practical membership procedure is to be implemented by the next TEMA conference after refinement of the proposals.
4. TEMA has now been established as a non-profit organisation for banking purposes and JB explained that an application for UK charitable status had been delayed until all Committee members confirmed their support for the current bank account location in the UK. The Committee agreed that the TEMA accounts should remain in the UK and so JB will proceed with an application for UK charitable status.
5. JB submitted a statement of the two TEMA accounts at Virgin Money bank in Aberdeen, UK, including all transactions thus far during the 2024-25 UK financial year. In response to a question by MR about the source of the funds, JB explained that they had initially accumulated from unspent money raised by previous TEMA conference organisers. These funds were intended to be a buffer in the event that an organising committee incurred a deficit, as happened with TEMA 11. They were never intended to be used for sponsorship of TEMA conferences. More recently, the TEMA Society has been fortunate to receive donations that allowed it to make up the deficit in sponsorship for the TEMA 18 conference. XL pointed out that despite the insufficient fundraising, India had been a good choice for a TEMA conference due to its population size and emerging economic status. JB flagged the need to find a UK-based co-signatory on the two TEMA accounts

although Prof. Irina Korichneva, a UK resident, had currently agreed to fulfil this duty. LR agreed to send a list of TEMA 17 registrants to try and identify someone suitable.

6. XL commented that the scope and remit of TEMA had been focussed on trace elements and proposed that major minerals should in future be included both for scientific and fundraising reasons. The Committee agreed that this would be advantageous and so the members considered proposals to change the official full name of the Society. However, the Committee also agreed that the brand name “TEMA” is so well-established that it should not be changed. JB commented that the word “Man” in the title might no longer be acceptable to represent humanity. LR proposed the new name “Trace Elements and Minerals Association” which all members present at the meeting thought was very appropriate. The Committee agreed to adopt the new name and retain the TEMA acronym. Changes to the Constitution/By-Laws and website will follow. Ways to convey the international nature of the Society were discussed.
7. The retirement and appointment of Committee members was discussed. It was confirmed that the Constitution/By-Laws allow for five members and three office-bearers. XL pointed out that being a paid-up, active Society member was a prerequisite for eligibility to be co-opted as a Committee member. At present there are only two office-bearers since JB fulfils the function of both Secretary and Treasurer. LR presented a case for having a 9-year term on the Committee for a President, composed of 3 years as President Elect, 3 years as President and 3 years as Past President, in order to give continuity and fulfilment of Presidential duties. This proposed model was based on LR’s experiences with other Societies and has the advantage of, in effect, adding two vice-presidents that can substitute for a President unable to attend a meeting. Given the new Society status of TEMA, XL questioned whether “Parent Committee” was the correct term for the Society Committee. No decision was taken on this.
8. Participation in the forthcoming joint trace element meeting in São Paulo, Brazil, was discussed. LR presented the case in support of TEMA participation, which would require an advance payment of \$10k deposit to secure hotel rooms for TEMA participants. While it was accepted that joint meetings encourage a better attendance by potential delegates, and perhaps introduce some non-TEMA society members to the style and scope of TEMA meetings, some concerns were expressed by XL and JB that joint meetings dilute or marginalise the strong brand identity of TEMA for no clear advantage other than the point made by LR. There was also concern about repayment of the \$10k advance and also of program overlap between Societies. LR explained that the Brazilian group were well organised far in advance of the meeting, leaving sufficient time to raise enough money to repay the Societies. XL commented that TEMA would have to impose some conditions, such as input into the list of invited speakers. Further discussion and a decision was deferred to the second Parent Committee meeting.
9. JB stated that the TEMA proceeding books, volumes 1-10, had been deposited in the University of Aberdeen Medical Library. All subsequent TEMA conference proceedings are published and available online. LR and XL suggested digitalisation of the books and publication online, but this would involve a large input of time by a volunteer or a large amount of money to employ a company to help with this task. JB pointed out that the contents pages of all 10 volumes are already online at the TEMA website.
10. JB reported that the new website for TEMA was now functional, having registered the domain name tema.ac and used WordPress to construct the site. While this website

serves as a focal point for Society information, JB pointed out that it would be more attractive if it was more dynamic and less static. This would require frequent updating and JB suggested that there may be a young TEMA member willing to take this on. LR suggested using a commercial UK-based website designer that he has used previously, and he agreed to investigate. JB expressed concern about the cost of commercial companies and that updating would in any case need to be initiated by TEMA Parent Committee members. The technical aspects of website maintenance are less of a problem than the time required to collate new information for updates, which requires input from TEMA members.

11. XL proposed to have smaller focussed meetings in between the triennial major meetings, with perhaps one of these being organised in 2025 in Enshi, China. MR raised the problem of funding for travel and so this would have to be considered in terms of fundraising.
12. The meeting lasted two hours and was continued the following day.

Minutes of the TEMA Parent Committee Meeting (Part 2)

12:30 on 10th November 2024

TEMA 18, Bangalore, India

Present: Xingen Lei (XL), John Beattie (JB), Lothar Rink (LR), Manju Reddy (MR), Miguel Arredondo (MA), Anatoly Skalny (AS), Sandeep Prabhu (SP), Monica Bastos (MB)

Apologies: Bob Cousins (BC),

1. XL opened the meeting and asked MB to introduce herself and present her proposal to host a joint meeting of 5 trace element societies in São Paulo, Brazil in 2026.
2. MB outlined her experience with hosting a large conference and confirmed that the proposed joint conference would be held in a “well-located” 5-star hotel in São Paulo on 3-6 June 2026. The hotel requires an up-front deposit, which in the case of TEMA would be \$10k for 10-15 rooms, and this expense would be borne by TEMA unless the organisers are able to obtain sufficient sponsorship to cover the room cost. LR asked about the expected number of delegates for the joint meeting and MB responded that the maximum expected number was 700 and that a minimum number would be 460 paying participants. XL asked if the deposit for unfilled rooms would be retained by the organisers and MB confirmed that would be the case. She admitted that São Paulo is an expensive location but pointed out the ease of travel links to the rest of the World. XL asked about registration fees and MB explained that the fees would be lower for resident delegates. She stated that registration fees for each international society would be retained by each society to offset their costs. MB estimated the cost of the conference at \$200k. XL asked for a business plan for the meeting expenses and for a TEMA contribution of \$10k, and for the sponsorship. MB responded that they would provide transparency on the conference finances and organisation in response to questions posed by e-mail. XL thanked MB for answering all questions and MB left the meeting.
3. A discussion ensued about the relative merits and advantages of TEMA being involved in this conference. After much debate, the majority of Committee members agreed that full commitment to this conference offered no major advantages to TEMA that it could not achieve independently, and yet carried some risk of diluting the unique TEMA identity and broad scientific remit that may overlap with that of several other societies. XL considered that some delegates with interests in more than one society may choose not to register through TEMA, depriving the Society of income. It was concluded that TEMA should not participate fully, but make a token representation at the conference, with one or two sessions or a workshop being led by a TEMA member from South America.
4. There was a general discussion of agenda items already discussed at the Committee meeting on the previous day for the benefit of SP, who was not present at that meeting. During a discussion of the website, SP suggested that TEMA should have a presence on social media.
5. The hosting of TEMA 19 and TEMA 20 was discussed with agreement to solicit applications from delegates at the TEMA conference dinner.
6. XL thanked Committee members for their attendance and closed the meeting.