

SORTITION FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 2020 - DRAFT



**SORTITION
FOUNDATION**

Sortition Foundation Annual General Meeting

Agenda: 20 June 2020

TIME & DATE: 5-7pm (UK time, GMT+1), Saturday 20th June 2020

LOCATION: On Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/2890248692>

PRESENT:

APOLOGIES:

MEETING BEGINS: 5:00pm

0. Welcome, appoint facilitator:

1. Directors' Annual Report (below) **Accepted/Not accepted**
2. Statement of Accounts (below) **Accepted/Not accepted**
3. Election of new Director(s)

All directors not appointed at a previous AGM, and one third of the other directors (the longest serving, up to a maximum of 3 years) must stand down at every AGM.

Brett Hennig, Steph Riach, Sarah Matthews, and Ben Redhead must stand down.

Nominations to become a director were received by the deadline from <insert names> and sent to all members.

Election of new directors (maximum of 4, only members can vote): <insert names> unanimously/elected as directors.

The Sortition Foundation directors for 2020-21 are: Peter Cross, Philipp Verpoort, Ayesha Garrett, Keith Garrett, Barnaby Jackson, <insert names>.

4. Any other business:

5. Close of meeting

MEETING ENDS

2019-2020 Directors' Annual Report

The directors for the full 2019-20 year were Brett Hennig, Steph Riach, Sarah Matthews, Peter Cross, Philipp Verpoort, Ayesha Garrett, Keith Garrett, and Barnaby Jackson.

Ben Redhead was appointed as a new director during the year.

We are a member-driven organisation with operational matters taken care of by a maximum of 9 directors, who meet monthly.

PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

- Selection and Stratification Services:** From early 2019 we have been involved in the delivery of Citizens' Assemblies, in particular as providers of [sortition recruitment, selection and stratification services](#). In the last year and half we have recruited for almost 20 sortition-based events around the UK, working with a number of organisations who have been delivering the assembly process. The assemblies have included a 60-person Citizens' Assembly for the National Assembly for Wales, all three *Innovation in Democracy* UK-government-sponsored Citizens' Assemblies in Cambridge, Dudley and Test Valley, and numerous other assemblies on a wide variety of topics, including climate change, hate crime, and driverless cars. Toward the end of 2019 we recruited for our largest Assembly so far, delivering 30,000 invitations to households and recruiting a random, representative sample of 110 people for the UK Climate Assembly.
- Selection and Stratification & Table Allocation Software:** As part of the above delivery work, we developed the necessary software to perform stratified random selections, and we are proud to say that many organisations around the world are now using our software to perform their selections with our support – in Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, the US, and Australia. This selection software will soon be the subject of a series of academic papers, and we have been working with a team from Carnegie Mellon University and Harvard University to make the software the “fairest” possible. In response to a request from our partners, we have also developed table allocation software that allocates Citizens' Assembly participants randomly to table groups, maximising the diversity of people at each table, and across different assembly sessions.

Establishing Sortition Foundation as a global actor in this space: This delivery and software work, along with providing income and funds for campaigning (see below) supports our cause in many other ways: it brings us into contact with local and national authorities and other organisations working in the field of deliberative democracy; it establishes us within the UK and global networks of practitioners, and provides opportunities as part of those networks to share best practice, resources and ideas; it gives us the experience, authority, and credibility to advocate for Citizens' Assemblies. We are firmly on the path to achieving our goal of political transformation as we are now recognised internationally as a key organisation in the global sortition movement.

- Coronavirus impact:** We worked on an increasing stream of paid projects this financial year, and were in the process of recruiting for Citizens' Assemblies (and the like) - around the UK in Camden, Redbridge, Adur & Worthing, North East of England, Scotland, Brighton, and two in Jersey - when the coronavirus hit and all these assemblies were postponed. This has had a considerable impact on our paid work, however we had already started setting aside contingency funds and can easily continue for at least six months at reduced staffing levels (see below), planning our campaigns, and improving internal processes and catching up on administration tasks that had been postponed due to the

large number of concurrent projects. At the same time, two existing projects are continuing to work with us to plan their events, and we have started discussions and preparatory work on two new projects since the pandemic. In the meantime, there is also a concerted push toward exploring online deliberation possibilities by our partners and ourselves.

- **Permanent Staff:** All these paid projects have necessitated the employment of staff and we have rapidly, and smoothly, transitioned from an entirely volunteer-run organisation to one with several staff, some of whom come on board as and when needed, for example to assist in our selection and stratification projects. While the overheads of running an organisation that is constantly managing several projects has taken considerable energy, we are pleased to announce that, due to the surplus generated by this work, we can now announce these two initiatives to support our aim of political transformation:

Campaign Manager coming soon: We are taking on a part-time Campaign Manager who will be responsible for developing and implementing our strategy to transform democracy. This is our *raison d'être* so we are very pleased to be able to have someone developing and expanding this work - more details on this will appear in our newsletters.

Website redesign: We have contracted Tectonica (<https://www.tectonica.co/>) to re-design our website and branding and this should be completed soon (certainly before the AGM - TBC). We think we now have a clear, inspiring, informative and engaging site and we hope you do too!

- **Member & Supporter Activity: US, UK, Hungary, and Australia groups:**

The **United States Chapter** works in a loose framework of four groups: Education, Outreach (movement building), Projects (promoting the use of sortition), and the Coordinating Group. Chapter meetings occur online six times a year, typically with a guest speaker, and working group meetings occur between these - discussions about a national face-to-face meeting are ongoing.

We are also working with a civil society organisation in Washington State that is lobbying state legislators to hold a Citizens' Assembly on climate change, and several legislators have participated in meetings with Sortition Foundation representatives to inform them about the process.

In the **UK**, our members based around London hold regular meetings approximately every two months, where members discuss the various projects they're involved in and share ideas about how to move the debate forward and local actions we can take to widen the spread of deliberative democracy. With the rapid adoption (pre-lockdown) of citizens' assemblies across the UK there has been much to talk about and members are directly involved in many of these projects.

Our Cambridge (UK) group lobbied the local council for a citizens' assembly on climate change, which paid off in 2019 when the UK government chose Cambridge to host one of three *Innovation in Democracy* citizens' assemblies, on improving air quality, sustainable public transport and reducing congestion.

Our **Hungarian** group secured a grant to run a Citizens' Assembly in Budapest, which coincided with a change in city council, and the new council has embraced the idea enthusiastically and planned to partner with us to hold a climate Citizens' Assembly in April 2020. This has now been delayed due to the pandemic, and should be held in late

2020. This is our first successful example of fundraising to make a Citizens' Assembly happen.

A new **Australian** group met for the first time in April and we are supporting its growth and strategy discussions. One of our new team members, Sonia, is supporting this work and also supporting a sortition Citizens' Panel around Geelong in Victoria.

If you want to start a local or national group wherever you are in the world, just get in touch and we will support you.

- **Democracy R&D International Network:** We continue to play an important role in the [Democracy R&D](#) network; four of our directors and staff participated in the third DR&D annual meeting in Manchester in January 2020 and we participate in several working groups and the key coordination group.

LOOKING FORWARD

While our strategy will be shaped and informed by members around the AGM process and through other facilitated processes, we see the following opportunities for the coming year:

- Post-coronavirus we will surely continue to work on many more Citizens' Assemblies in the UK and around the world.
- With our new campaign manager we will be able to support a growing grassroots global movement demanding sortition democracy.
- We will continue to support and share resources and ideas between our developing regional groups.

ONLINE PRESENCE, MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES

Our membership and supporter base continued to grow steadily last year. Some metrics of that growth are below:

- Facebook followers: 1524 (1021 last year) – 49% growth;
- Twitter followers: 2977 (2276 last year) – 31% growth;
- Website: 10,452 Nationbuilder interactions (5714 last year, but many from this year were registrations for Citizens' Assemblies, not supporters) of which 1745 with opted-in email addresses (1481 last year) – 18% growth;
- Membership: 111 members (88 last year) – 27% growth.

Financially our growth has been even more significant - see details below. This is a result of our selection and stratification service provision increasing dramatically over the last financial year, as predicted in our last annual report.

Of course, we are still a very small organisation, both membership wise and as a not-for-profit company. Our members give us a solid basis on which to build and progress and work towards our aim of transforming democracy.

Thank you for your continued support!

2019-2020 End of Year Financial Report

This statement is for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020. All foreign currency amounts (USD, AUD, EUR, HUF) have been converted to GBP based on current market exchange rates.

2019-2020 PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT

INCOME:

Membership fees (111 members, of which 87 ongoing):	£3,843
Selection & Stratification Services:	£73,859
Donations:	£2,110
Hungarian CA Grant (part):	£2,920
Other miscellaneous income:	£1,069
TOTAL	£83,801

EXPENSES:

Website redesign, hosting, domain, email, Zoom:	£7,527
Stratification Expenses (phone, PAF database, etc.):	£12,197
Staff and contractor fees:	£42,433
Hungarian CA Grant (part):	£2,920
Bank fees:	£561
Other miscellaneous expenses (conferences, depreciation etc):	£3,510
TOTAL	£69,149
NET INCOME 2019-2020	£14,652

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 March 2020

ASSETS:

Current assets (cash etc): £23,423

Equipment/fixed assets: £47

Creditors: £1,553

TOTAL NET ASSETS: £25,023

Accruals/deferred income: -£14,018

LIABILITIES: None

NET ASSETS/LIABILITIES: £11,005



SORTITION FOUNDATION



SortitionFoundation



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