

# Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting held on 30 January 2023

**Location:** Petersgraben 45, meeting room in the basement

**Time:** 12:15 pm - 13:40 pm

**Present:** Stephen Germany, Marga Burri, David Ballmer, Tolga Daniel Dittrich, Galya Iseli, Boris Ševarika, Laura Rindlisbacher, Ali Darudi, Sven Kraus, Antonia Vogler, Amancaya Formica, Patricia Eiche

**Absent:** Esther Maria Meyer, Anna Viola Bleichenbacher, Séveric Yersin, Ulrike Unterhofer, Elena Pauli

**Total:** 12 present, thereof entitled to vote: 7

**Minutes:** Patricia Eiche

## Agenda:

1. Approval of the January 30, 2023 executive board meeting's agenda
2. Election of minutes taker
3. Election of vote counter
4. Approval of the minutes of September 14, 2022
5. Personnel
  - a) New contracts as of 1.1.2023
  - b) Information from the retreat, division of tasks, organization chart
  - c) Overtime (reduction) by Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche
  - d) Child support allowance
6. Finance
  - a) Tax status
  - b) avuba budget 2023
  - c) Expenditure for events
  - d) Quarterly financial review
7. Current avuba business and project list
8. Varia
9. Upcoming avuba executive board meeting

### Agenda item 1: Approval of the January 30, 2023 executive board meeting's agenda

The agenda of the executive board meeting is approved unanimously.

### Agenda item 2: Election of minutes taker

Patricia Eiche is elected unanimously as minutes taker

### **Agenda item 3: Election of vote counter**

Amancaya Formica is elected unanimously as vote counter.

### **Agenda item 4: Approval of the minutes of September 14, 2022**

The minutes of the executive board meeting of 14.9.2022 are approved unanimously and thanks are expressed.

### **Agenda item 5: Personnel a) New contracts as of 1.1.2023, b) Information from the retreat, division of tasks, organizational chart, c) Overtime (reduction) of Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche, d) child support allowance**

#### **a) New contracts as of 1.1.2023**

The avuba board of directors passed the following circular resolution on December 22, 2022:

- Patricia Eiche is permanently employed for 40 % (previously: 30%, temporary for the duration of three months)
- Grade increases for Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche, with Patricia Eiche's step increase 2023 not resulting in higher costs.
- Cost-of-living adjustment of 2.5% for Amancaya Formica, Patricia Eiche and the co-presidium – following up on the recent cost-of-living adjustment by University of Basel.
- Total expected annual personnel costs for avuba amount to CHF 140,000.
- Personnel costs of CHF 150,000 was approved at the November 30, 2022 general meeting.
- There remains a budgeted CHF 10,000 for honoraria.
- In 2023, there needs to be a reduction in Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche's 2022 overtime, because there is not enough money for payouts.

In the context of the 2022 annual financial statements, various interface issues arose between avuba and the University of Basel HR, which assists avuba in its personnel administration. The adjusted interfaces will soon be documented and filed. As a result of the discussions, HR sent avuba updated employment contracts on January 25, 2023.

Note on the above-mentioned step increase: According to the current avuba financial regulations, which were approved by circular resolution by the avuba executive board as of 1.10.2021, "*...The General Management is remunerated based on the prevailing market conditions, taking into account the work performed. Comparable positions within the University are to be taken into account [...] Remuneration is reviewed yearly by the avuba co-presidents based on the increase in pay grade and compensation for inflation in accordance with the University's salary regulations and, where appropriate, adjusted with the approval of the Executive Board*".

University of Basel's salary classification is based on the model of canton Basel-Stadt. Wage classes as well as wage levels are decided at the time a position is taken up. While a job's salary band evaluates the position, its salary grade reflects an employee's years of experience.

#### **b) Information from the retreat, division of tasks, organization chart**

On 22.12.2022, Sven Kraus, Lars Fluri (avuba Co-President 2022), Antonia Vogler, Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche met for a retreat to discuss avuba's current and future tasks and the division of responsibilities. For the occasion of this meeting, Patricia Eiche prepared a list of annually recurring tasks as well as the open avuba projects. The tasks were discussed at the retreat and assigned to either the general managers or the co-presidium.

Marga Burri asks why only the general managers are mentioned for practically all recurring tasks. Sven Kraus explains that the intention is to relieve the co-presidium of administrative work – Patricia Eiche has been rehired for this reason, among others. Patricia Eiche and Amancaya Formica share all administrative tasks. Thus, the co-presidium can focus on strategic and university policy projects this year. The avuba [organization chart](#) was created at the request of the rectorate and may be adapted at any time.

c) Overtime (reduction) by Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche

Currently, Amancaya Formica and Patricia Eiche have reached around 110 hours of overtime each, the majority of which dates back to 2022. The tasks of the general management, which Patricia Eiche has done by herself for years, were greatly underestimated. In addition, work that could not be completed in 2021, due to a lack of resources, had to be postponed to 2022. Since Amancaya Formica first had to familiarize herself with the work and avuba was not yet sufficiently equipped in terms of resources in 2022, a lot of work remained unfinished until October 2022, when avuba was able to offer Patricia Eiche a 30% position. Amancaya Formica had to work overtime when she was running the office alone. Patricia Eiche tried to catch up with the most pressing tasks during her 3-month 30% employment. This resulted in the many overtime hours, which could not yet be reduced due to various urgent clarifications in January 2023 with HR, accounting and controlling; plus the preparation of this executive board meeting.

Amancaya Formica will be on vacation for 3.5 weeks between mid-February and mid-March 2023, in order to reduce overtime. Patricia Eiche will also take a vacation during various school holiday weeks in 2023 and thereby reduce her overtime. In addition, the general managers will try not to work on Fridays and weekends, except in urgent cases; i.e. an absence agent will be activated during this time. Sven Kraus would like to stress that the overcommitment of the general managers it is neither expected nor desired by the co-presidium. In the future, it would also be possible to compensate executive board members on an hourly basis for work that they do on an exceptional basis. This would allow either events or projects to be carried out on behalf of members of the avuba executive board, without generating additional overtime for the general managers.

d) Child support allowance

Preliminary remark: Employees of canton Basel-Stadt and the University of Basel receive generous child support allowance payments in addition to the family allowance payments (which are cost-neutral, as they are paid by the cantonal family compensation funds). This monthly payment by University of Basel currently amounts to 521 Swiss francs for an employee with two children.

Due to a technical error of the HR, Amancaya Formica's 2022 child support allowance payments were paid out. Since avuba does not explicitly mention anywhere that it does child support allowance payments, Amancaya Formica will pay back the child support allowance payments from 2022.

Since Patricia Eiche has not received any child support allowance during her employment since May 2013, it cannot be ruled out that a court could assess the situation differently from a legal point of view, however; i.e. Patricia Eiche or Amancaya Formica could assert claims retroactively. Marga Burri proposes, in the interest of avuba, to have a "waiver concerning any past child support allowance" signed by the general managers. This way, avuba can be quite sure that the association will not have to make a retroactive settlement of any past child support allowance payments. The general managers must consider whether they are willing to sign this waiver. The executive board knows that this cannot be taken for granted. The general managers are in a conflict of interest between their private interests and the interests they represent as general managers of avuba.

The avuba executive board decides to discuss the topic in detail at the next executive board meeting. For this purpose, the following preparatory work has to be carried out by the co-presidium and the general managers:

- Based on a proposed text from legal services, a waiver draft needs to be written.
- The co-presidium is to compile a dossier for the next executive board meeting on how avuba should act as an employer, what the respective financial consequences of the scenarios would be and whether, if necessary, the employment contracts, the avuba articles of association and/or the avuba financial regulations would need to be amended.

In connection to this topic, the issue of assistants' parenthood came up. It was decided to create

- a dossier , which provides information about the financial consequences assistants face with parenthood. This information should be recorded separately for the main types of funding (structural positions, i.e. university-funded, SNF-funded, fellowships, etc.). Patricia Zweifel from the Vice Rectorate People & Culture can be contacted in this regard.

**Agenda item 6: Finance: a) Tax status b) avuba budget 2023, c) Expenditure for events, d) Quarterly financial review**

a) Tax status

After contacting the Basel-Stadt tax authorities, avuba received the following response on January 24, 2023: "The avuba association is entered in our tax register as a tax-exempt institution. The association remains tax-exempt. For administrative reasons, we will not send you a questionnaire for the time being. We ask you to submit the 2022/2023 financial statements at the beginning of 2024, so that we can reassess the tax exemption". avuba will contact the tax administration office again in January 2024.

b) avuba budget 2023

Various interface issues between the controlling department of University of Basel and avuba are currently being clarified. As the people in the accounting department are currently busy with annual financial statements, their answers will be provided within the timeframe of a few weeks.

Between 2021 and 2023, the following changes happened:

- As of the beginning of 2022, the deficit guarantee by University of Basel was converted into a fixed amount. (According to a new performance agreement, the university will grant an annual fixed amount of 50,000 CHF, as of 2022).
- As of mid-2022, the increased membership fees became fully effective (20 CHF instead of 15 CHF per semester).
- The contribution of the university is set at CHF 50,000 as of 1.1.2022, which will lead to a positive annual result in 2022, for the first time in avuba history. Until now, the profit always amounted to 0 CHF. It is not yet known exactly how high the annual profit will be for 2022. This is the case, since the transitory posting of the avuba membership fees for HS 2022/2023 will be postponed by controlling proportionately into the new year. avuba will know the definitive figures by the end of February.
- According to the rectorate resolution of November 1, 2022, the rectorate will release an additional CHF 25,000 per year to increase avuba personnel resources. Accordingly, the annual fixed amount is now CHF 75,000.

- The avuba budget 2023, which was approved by the general meeting, contained a formula error, which Patricia Eiche noticed in January 2023. The actual sum of operating expenses is 32,000 CHF, instead of the approved 30,000 CHF. The avuba must therefore reduce costs – for example for events, from 15,000 to 13,000 – amounting to a saving of 2,000 CHF. This would imply organizing fewer or cheaper events so that the total operating expenses will be CHF 30,000, as approved. With a cost reduction of 2'000 CHF, the budgeted operating costs, the budgeted total cost as well as the budgeted annual result approved by the general assembly would remain unchanged.
- c) Expenditure for events  
In order not to reduce the expenses for events, the avuba executive board proposes to reduce the costs for the translation of avuba documents into English.
- As Antonia Vogler is a new member of the avuba co-presidium and has an excellent knowledge of English, she will be responsible for translating the avuba newsletter this year.
  - In addition, it is to be examined whether avuba can use DeepL pro to translate documents into English independently of the translation service in order to save costs. *(Addendum to the executive board meeting: An initial test has shown that the text originating from deepl.pro still needs to be revised. The pilot this February will show how time consuming this effort is and will be noted in the next minutes).*
- d) Quarterly financial review  
Esther Maria Meyer has agreed to take over the quarterly financial controls of avuba in 2023. The first control (Q1) will take place in March, together with Patricia Eiche.

### **Agenda item 7: Current avuba business and project list**

The list of current business includes the following areas, the majority of which are handled by the general managers:

- Email inquiries
- Finance
- HR
- Member management
- Events
- Communication
- Association meetings and general meeting
- Exchange talks uni-internally
- Exchange discussions uni-externally (university policy, contact to other Swiss Mittelbau associations, including actionuni as the Mittelbau's umbrella organization)
- Participation (senate, interdepartmental boards and commissions)

The unique projects that avuba would like to tackle are listed below:

- Prio 1:
  - Clarify and record interfaces with accounting and controlling of the University of Basel
  - Clarify and record interfaces with the HR of the University of Basel
  - Granting reading and writing rights for avuba executive board members on the avuba R:\ drive.
  - Revision of the newsletter
  - Digital registration for avuba lunch meetings

- PhD survey in the Faculty of Philosophy and History: Provide a questionnaire with core questions to the assistants in the support groups. (Addendum to the executive board meeting: By the end of 2023, the PhD surveys will be completed in all departments across the university).
- Prio 2:
  - Conducting a nationwide survey of intermediate staff organizations regarding salary levels and semester fees and present and discussing the results at a board meeting of actionuni
  - Writing an avuba position paper ([guidelines](#) adhere to MVUB)
  - Proposing to the rectorate to create additional positions below the professorship level
  - Creating a communication concept
  - avuba postdoc survey 2020: Discussing possible measures and clarify with quality development whether regular postdoc surveys will be conducted by the university in the future. The discussion will take place with the rectorate.
  - Clarifying authorship in scientific publications, proposing an official statement by University of Basel (Code of Scientific Integrity)
  - Clarifying the legal independence of avuba
  - Drawing up avuba's longer-term financial plans, including the search for additional sources of funding
  - Mental Health Survey: Clarifying whether avuba can obtain the mental health survey conducted at University of Lausanne, the results of which will be published in summer 2023. The executive board will then decide whether avuba should conduct a similar survey.
- Prio 3:
  - Contacting new avuba members twice a year
  - For the new assistants, creating a guideline that contains the most important information for each faculty.
  - Writing up avuba election regulations
  - Redesigning the avuba website (making it more user-friendly and updating it)
  - Writing job descriptions for the co-presidium and the executive board

#### **Agenda item 8: Varia**

This is the last avuba executive board meeting for Marga Burri, as she will be stepping down from her position as of February 1, 2023. Sven Kraus thanks her on behalf of the avuba executive board for her active support and legal clarifications during recent years.

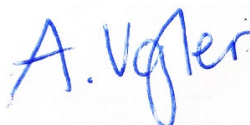
#### **Agenda item 9: Upcoming avuba executive board meeting**

The next meeting should be held, if possible, at the end of April – at least one week before the next bilateral meeting with the President's Office on May 9, 2023.

Basel, February 8, 2023



Sven Kraus  
avuba Co-President



Antonia Vogler  
avuba Co-President