



WSDC LTD DIRECTORS' REPORT

2011-2012

1. Introduction

The following individuals have served on the Board of Directors (the Board; the Directors) of the World Schools Debating Championships Ltd. (WSDC Ltd) since February 2011:

- Mehvesh Mumtaz Ahmed
- Taimur Bandey
- Geetha Creffield
- Andrea Coomber (chair until resignation from the board in May 2011)
- Effie Giannkouri
- Daragh Grant
- James Probert (chair from May 2011)
- Yuri Romanenkov (resigned December 2011)
- Trevor Sather (co-opted May 2011)
- Bojana Skrt

2. Achievements

a) The process of taking WSDC Ltd. from an idea, to a legal entity, to a charity with mature structures of governance and management, is proving a slow one. Despite that, progress has been made in the last year, culminating in the launch, for this AGM, of an online system for registering, and collecting fees from, members. This should yield a sufficient level of income for the company to allow us to pass the GBP5,000 threshold at which the UK's Charity Commission will consider granting charitable status.

b) As part of the process of governance reform last year's AGM passed the following resolutions:

IIa. That the wording of proposed bye law 4.4 be amended to clarify that directors charge fees on behalf of the Charity.

PASSED: 21-5 (5 abstentions)

IIb. That section 4 of the proposed bye laws be amended to give countries equal weight in votes of the membership

PASSED: 23-6 (2 abstentions)

The board of directors subsequently amended and adopted the new bye laws as directed by these two resolutions. The final wording may be found in the bye laws as available to download from www.schoolsdebate.com.

3. Future strategy

Much has also been agreed by the board as to the next steps that the organization must take in order to start achieving the mission set out for it and ratified by the membership in the governance reform proposals at the last AGM—namely, to support greater access to the tournament.

a) Creation of a formal contract framework between WSDC Ltd and annual hosts (see agenda item 6). This will make clear the rights and responsibilities of both parties, and allow WSDC Ltd to leverage all the benefits, in terms of finances, communications and membership marketing, made possible by a string of annual global events, but currently unexploited.

b) Creation of a communications policy. WSDC Ltd's primary asset is its brand—both the formal elements of name and logo, which must now be trademarked, and the informal elements of goodwill and history. Our website, www.schoolsdebate.com, is a well-known portal, and offers us the ability to think strategically about how we communicate our mission, and our needs, to our members, to potential beneficiaries (young debaters and their schools or organizations), and to potential funders.

c) Creation of a fundraising strategy. Finally, when WSDC has charitable status, a secure legal relationship with annual tournaments, and a consistent message, it will be in a position to create a business plan to undertake practical actions to widen access to the tournament and appeal for funds to do so.

4. Challenges

It will not be feasible or appropriate for some time for WSDC Ltd to employ staff to help the Directors discharge their responsibilities or to drive forward the three priorities outlined above. There will therefore continue to be, for the foreseeable future, a need for willing volunteers to both take up positions on the board and the development committee, and to actively contribute to the organization's work once they are members. Involvement in the company cannot be seen as a role merely of oversight or as sounding board, but an active working position akin to the positions of convenor, chief adjudicator, executive committee member, etc.

The board looks forward to more members of the company and the wider community outing themselves forward for these positions in the next year, and making real contributions to the strategy outlined in this report.

James Probert, chair, on behalf of the WSDC Ltd board of directors,

15 February 2012