

PROPOSAL FOR A BFUG DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Submitted at the BFUG meeting in Bratislava, 8-9 December 2016

Context

The BFUG Secretariat was mandated by the BFUG at its meeting in Luxembourg, September 2015 to propose a new website for the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna process.

This new website was designed to fulfil the following needs:

- Transparency of the Bologna Follow-Up Group activities;
- Direct access to the tools and achievements of the Bologna Process;
- Content and resources for higher education experts about the European Higher Education Area;
- Introductory material for students and general public;
- Accessibility for all publics (people with disabilities) and on any kind of device (desktop, tablet, mobile).

The launch of the new version of the website in September 2016 was the first step of a long-term strategy to make it the international reference on higher education in Europe.

The Secretariat proposes to the BFUG the creation of a Digital Communications Team (DCT).

Mandate and specific tasks

The Digital Communications Team (DCT) could be mainly responsible for the co-ordination, the development, and the follow-up of any activities related to the online presence of the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process, under the supervision of the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

The DCT could report on its activities at the BFUG Board meetings and the BFUG meetings.

The specific tasks of the DCT could be among others:

- to oversee the EHEA website;
- to propose continuous development of the EHEA website to improve it continuously;
- to develop new information and communication tools relevant to the EHEA and Bologna Process;
- to ensure coherence and synergies between existing and future information and communication tools relevant to the EHEA and the Bologna Process;
- to advise the BFUG on issues related to digital communications (i.e. the web and social networks).

Composition and functioning

The DCT could be composed of voluntary representatives proposed by BFUG members, with due regard to geographical and gender balance as well as expertise in web and social networks.

In particular, the composition should be balanced between **members with “technical” profile and expertise** (related for example to information and communication technologies, marketing, community management, etc.) and **members with “policy-making” profile and expertise**.

The members of the DCT will be proposed by countries and consultative members and probably will be different from people participating at the BFUG meetings.

The members should be expected to take an active part in the activities of the DCT and more specifically:

- to attend the DCT meetings;
- to prepare and participate in specific activities of the DCT;
- to realise specific tasks such as contributing to the annual report, analysing statistics about the EHEA website, updating information on the website and on social media, etc.

The DCT will also include one or more representatives of the BFUG Secretariat. The BFUG Secretariat should be specifically facilitating:

- the face-to-face and online meetings including supporting the Chair in drafting the agenda, the minutes, the annual report and other relevant documents;
- communication within the DCT and towards the BFUG.

The number of members composing the DCT will have to be limited in order to facilitate the operational work and might be no more than 5.

The governance of the structure could be as follows:

5 participants on a voluntary basis. One chair will be determined internally among members of the group.

The chair could be responsible for the overall coordination of the activities of the DCT and could be expected more specifically:

- to prepare and moderate the DCT meetings;
- to prepare and present the annual report of the DCT at the BFUG meeting;
- to report on the activities of the DCT to the BFUG Board and the BFUG.

The mandate of the chair should be limited in time for two consecutive mandates for instance.

The mandate of the DCT members should not be limited in time. However, the composition of the DCT should be reviewed annually. This review of the composition might imply a call for new members at the BFUG meeting. The mandate of the DCT members should last preferably more than two years.

In case of more declarations of interest than expected, the members of the starting team should be selected among volunteers by the BFUG Secretariat with the help of the co-chairs and the vice-chair.

Funding

The DCT activities could generate various types of spending:

1. **Meetings:** traveling costs, daily allowances of members, accommodation.
2. **EHEA website:** graphic and ergonomic design, development, hosting, contents creation (daily allowances of members, infographics, video, etc.).
3. **Social networks:** community management (daily allowances of members), contents creation (daily allowances of members, infographics, video, etc.).
4. **Subscriptions:** domain name, news agencies, thematic watches

The spending related to the **organisation of and participation in meetings** could be funded like the Working Groups: participants will take in charge travel and accommodation costs. Meeting room could be offered by the host of the event. As the number of participants will be less than 10 persons this should be easy to provide. Moreover, the DCT could meet only once a year face-to-face and organize online meetings in-between.

The spending related to **the EHEA website** has been funded recently as follows:

- Hosting funded by the French ministry in charge of Higher Education as part of the hosting of the BFUG Secretariat.
- Graphic and ergonomic design, development, contents creation and project management funded by the French ministry in charge for Higher Education and partially funded by the European Commission as part of the BFUG Secretariat activities

The question of the future funding of the EHEA website is open.

The website will probably remain an expense of the Secretariat. Should a permanent Secretariat arise, the expense would be included in the contribution of each participant to the activities of the Secretariat (this option is still to be determined).

Draft Calendar

BFUG meeting in Bratislava, Dec. 2016	Draft proposal to the BFUG by the BFUG Secretariat
Until February 28 th 2017	Comments from BFUG members on the proposals are addressed to the BFUG Secretariat. BFUG members interested in sending qualified representatives to the DCT or providing services to the DCT (hosting, development, graphic design, news agencies subscriptions, etc.) apply by sending the form available in annex to the BFUG Secretariat.
March – April 2017	The Secretariat selects the participants between the volunteers (with help of the co-chairs / vice-chair). The Secretariat organizes a Google Hangout or another online meeting with the participants and gathers their suggestions of organization.
BFUG meeting in Gozo, May 2017	The BFUG Secretariat proposes an amended version of the paper taking into account the comments collected. The BFUG members install the DCT.
Summer 2017 (July or early September) (tbc)	The Secretariat launches the activities of the DCT.
BFUG meeting in Tallinn, Nov. 2017 (tbc)	The DCT chair sends the first work report to the BFUG.

Annex – Existing resources

1. The EHEA website

A permanent European Higher Education Area website <http://www.ehea.info> was established in 2010 by the Romanian Bologna Secretariat as part of the EHEA communication efforts. The Secretariat maintains, with support from the BFUG and its sub-structures, the permanent European Higher Education Area website ensuring that up to date information is made available at all times for the BFUG and to the wider public.

In September 2015, the BFUG mandated the Secretariat to review and update the EHEA website and archives. It developed an ad-hoc communication system, using up-to-date digital tools.

In September 2016, the new website was launched which offer public access to the full archive with exception of only those documents which have been decided to be confidential.

2. The Social Networks

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/BFUGSecretariat>

This page has been created by the Armenian BFUG Secretariat and is pursued by the French BFUG Secretariat since September 2016.

To strengthen the information about BFUG activities, the French Secretariat created in September 2016 the **Twitter** account <https://twitter.com/BFUGsecretariat>

BFUG Secretariat accounts on **Twitter** and **Facebook** are mainly dedicated to:

- Promotion of <http://www.ehea.info> website contents.
- Announcement of the 2015-2018 work program events.
- Relay of information for each of the countries and the organization members related to the work plan or the main topics.