

THE AAOU ANNUAL REPORT 2014

ANNUAL REPORT

2014

THE ASIAN ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITIES



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1 INTRODUCTION

As of 1st January 2014, the Presidency and Secretariat of the AAOU moved from Wawasan Open University in Penang, Malaysia, to the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) in Hong Kong, China. On behalf of all members, the AAOU Secretariat would like to record its sincere gratitude to the immediate Past President, Professor Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye, and his colleagues at Wawasan Open University for their excellent work over the past three years in providing leadership and service to the Association.

Professor John Leong Chi Yan retired as President of the OUHK on 1st April 2014, and was succeeded by Professor Yuk-Shan Wong who — in accordance with the AAOU Constitution, Article IX (The President and the President Elect) clause (d) — became the AAOU President until the next annual General Body meeting in October 2014. In the meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body held during the AAOU Conference in October 2014, the members unanimously approved the continuation of Professor Yuk-Shan Wong (President of OUHK) as the President of the AAOU until the end of 2016.

This report outlines the AAOU-related activities in 2014, as well as the decisions of the Executive Committee and General Body meetings. It also covers the 28th AAOU Annual Conference 2014 and some of the actions taken based on the minutes of the meetings.

2 MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

2.1 AAOU ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND GENERAL BODY 2014

The 29th AAOU Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC) and the 28th Annual Meeting of the General Body (GB) were held at the OUHK, Hong Kong, on 28th and 29th October 2014 respectively, with the OUHK as the host for the 28th AAOU Annual Conference.

Minutes of the EC and GB meetings in 2013 were circulated via email to all members for their comments and feedback. There was no need to make any amendments or corrections to the minutes.

2.2 AAOU ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014

The 28th AAOU Annual Conference was organised successfully by the Open University of Hong Kong from 28th to 31st October, 2014 on the theme 'Advancing Open and Distance Learning: Research and Practices'.



The AAOU President, Professor Yuk-Shan Wong, delivering a welcoming speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 28th AAOU Annual Conference

The 28th AAOU Annual Conference brought together about 300 international and local delegates who came from about 15 different countries. The participants comprised Vice-Chancellors/Rectors/Presidents, scholars, senior administrators and policy-makers representing the open universities in the Asia region and other open and distance learning (ODL) institutes or organisations from countries across Europe and North America. On 28th October 2014, the conference was officiated by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury of the HKSAR, the Honourable Professor K C Chan, GBS, JP.



The Honourable Professor K C Chan, GBS, JP giving a speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 28th AAOU Annual Conference

This annual conference featured four keynote speeches, three conference workshops, a Presidents' Forum, and five parallel sessions where 133 oral presentations were delivered. The conference focused on recent and potential research and practices in ODL. The presentations in the parallel sessions dealt with the following conference sub-themes:



- Multi-mode education within open and distance learning institutions
- Nurturing an institutional research culture
- Institutional advancement and innovations
- Studies on OpenCourseWare (OCW) and massive open online courses (MOOCs)
- Funding and infrastructure for research and development
- Research and innovative ODL practices in the following areas:
 - Planning and management
 - Development of instructional materials
 - Use of ICT in course delivery
 - Student learning support
 - Assessment and evaluation
 - Development and adoption of OER
 - Staff development
 - Collaboration between institutions
 - Quality assurance
 - Blended learning.

The details of the four keynote speeches and three conference workshops were as follows:

Keynote Speeches	
Speaker	Topic
Professor Asha Kanwar President and CEO, the Commonwealth of Learning	Advancing research and practice in ODL: Where are the missing links?
Professor Yoichi Okabe President, the Open University of Japan	After MOOCs
Professor António Teixeira President, the European Distance and E-learning Network and Professor of Distance Education, Universidade Aberta, Portugal	Opening up universities: A strategy-driven radical innovation process at the Portuguese Open University
Professor Cheong Hee Kiat President, SIM University, Singapore	The changing landscape confronting open-access universities: Musings from Singapore
Conference Workshops	
Facilitator(s)	Topic
Professor Tsuneo Yamada Professor, Department of Informatics, the Open University of Japan	Institutional repositories and their federation: New roles in the MOOC and post-MOOC era
Professor Fred Mulder UNESCO/ICDE Chair in Open Educational Resources and former Rector, the Open University of the Netherlands	Open universities in MOOCs and opening up education. How about Asia?
Mr Abel Caine UNESCO Programme Specialist and Open Educational Resources	

**Dr Eva Tsang**

Deputy Director (Learning and Teaching),
Educational Technology & Publishing Unit,
the Open University of Hong Kong, China

Using mobile technologies/apps to
enhance teaching and learning

The Presidents' Forum was held before the closing ceremony. The following four Heads of open universities were invited to give a short presentation and discuss the topic 'Advancing open and distance education: Reflections and future directions':

- Professor Yuk-Shan Wong, President, the Open University of Hong Kong, China
- Professor Fred Mulder, UNESCO/ICDE Chair in Open Educational Resources and former Rector, the Open University of the Netherlands
- Professor Tian Belawati, Rector, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia
- Professor Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye, Vice Chancellor and CEO, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia.



Four guests expressing their views on the Presidents' Forum

The conference closing ceremony was officiated by Professor Gajaraj Dhanarajan, the Honorary Director of the Institute of Research and Innovation, Wawasan Open University. Professor Dhanarajan was impressed by the OUHK's organisation of the conference; and he complimented the outstanding performance of the paper award winners, the MSA recipient, and the four keynote speakers. Professor Dhanarajan also suggested a number of challenges that the AAOU may take up in future to promote open education and advance the development of open and distance learning.

There were two workshops organised before and after the Conference. On 27th October, a 'High-level executive workshop on MOOCs' was held, especially for the Presidents, Rectors and Vice-Chancellors of Asian open universities. It highlighted the development of MOOCs in Europe and Asia, as well as in a global context. After the conference, a post-conference workshop on 'Android app development using visual programming' was held on 31st October and 1st November. It introduced the basic and intermediate concepts of Android app development on the AI2 platform, and showed participants how to use the Designer and Blocks Editor components of the App Inventor to create



apps.

2.3 AAOU AWARDS AND THE WINNERS

(i) 2014 AAOU MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

The AAOU Secretariat received a total of two nominations as shown below for the 2014 AAOU Meritorious Service Award (MSA):

No.	Nominee
1.	Professor Asha Kanwar President and CEO, the Commonwealth of Learning
2.	Professor Emeritus Anuwar Ali President/Vice Chancellor, Open University Malaysia

The nominations were assessed and evaluated by an Adjudication Committee chaired by Tan Sri Professor Emeritus Dato' Gajaraj Dhanarajan, Chair of the Board of Governors, Wawasan Open University and assisted by Dr Grace Javier Alfonso, Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Open University, and Professor Tian Belawati, Rector of Universitas Terbuka and President of the International Council of Open and Distance Education.

The Adjudication Committee unanimously recommended Professor Asha Kanwar to be awarded the 2014 AAOU MSA. The President accepted the recommendations and this was also endorsed by the Executive Committee.



Professor Wong presenting the MSA vase and certificate to the MSA recipient, Professor Asha Kanwar



(ii) AAOU BEST PAPER AWARD

The Adjudication Committee for the 2014 Best Paper Award consisted of the following persons:

- Chair: **Professor Danny Wong**
Vice President (Academic), the Open University of Hong Kong, China
- Members: **Professor Tae Rim Lee**
Professor, Department of Information Statistics and Dean of the College of Natural Science, the Korea National Open University, South Korea
- Assoc. Professor Chailerd Pichitpornchai**
President, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Thailand

The Academic Sub-Committee of the Conference Organising Committee selected 12 papers from the 165 submitted for further evaluation by the Adjudication Committee. The Adjudication Committee assessed the 12 papers and shortlisted six as the 2014 Best Paper Award finalists. The details of the six finalists were as follows:

Paper ID	Title	Author(s)	Institution(s)
45	WOU mLearning: Widening the access to teaching and learning in an ODL environment	Sheng Hung Chung, Mohandas Balakrishna Menon, and Ean Teng Khor	Wawasan Open University, Malaysia
75	Development and validation of a scale to measure faculty attitudes toward open educational resources	Meenu Sharma, Sanjaya Mishra, and Atul Thakur	Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia
87	Analysis of online learning behaviour from a tutor's perspectives: Reflections on interactive teaching and learning in the big data era	Yanhui Han, Shunping Wei, and Shaogang Zhang	The Open University of China, China
325	Learner autonomy through the adoption of open educational resources (OER) using social network services and multi-media e-textbooks	Masumi Hori, Seishi Ono, Shinzo Kobayashi, Kazutsuna Yamaji, Toshihiro Kita, and Tsuneo Yamada	NPO CCC-TIES, Japan NPO CCC-TIES, Japan SmileNC & co., Japan National Institute of Informatics, Japan Kumamoto University, Japan and the Open University of Japan
326	Factors affecting adult learners' persistence in e-learning programmes in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam – A mediation analysis of learners' motivation	Tu Tran Hoang Cam, and Khuong Mai Ngoc	Nguyen Tat Thanh University, Vietnam and the International University – VNU, HCMC, Vietnam
335	Student satisfaction and persistence: Imperative features for retention in open and distance learning	Maximus Gorky Sembiring	Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia



On 29th October, the Adjudication Committee further evaluated the six finalists based on the quality of the oral presentations given by the authors. Three papers were selected as winners of the Best Paper Award competition. The results were approved by the President and announced during the closing ceremony. The Best Paper Award medal winners were:

Best Paper Award	Author(s) and Institution(s)	Paper ID and Title
Gold Medal	Maximus Gorky Sembiring Universitas Terbuka	Paper 335 Student satisfaction and persistence: Imperative features for retention in open and distance learning
Silver Medal	Tu Tran Hoang Cam Nguyen Tat Thanh University, Vietnam Khuong Mai Ngoc The International University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	Paper 326 Factors affecting adult learners' persistence in e-learning programmes in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam — A mediation analysis of learners' motivation
Silver Medal	Masumi Hori and Seishi Ono NPO CCC-TIES, Japan Shinzo Kobayashi SmileNC & Co., Japan Kazutsuna Yamaji National Institute of Informatics, Japan Toshihiro Kita Kumamoto University, Japan Tsuneo Yamada The Open University of Japan, Japan	Paper 325 Learner autonomy through the adoption of open educational resources (OER) using social network services and multi-media e-textbooks

(iii) AAOU BEST PRACTICE AWARD

A new award, namely the Best Practice Award, was established in 2014 to promote the sharing of good practices in ODL. It was implemented in the same way as the Best Paper Award.

The Adjudication Committee for the 2014 Best Practice Award consisted of the following members:

- Chair: **Professor Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye**
President, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia
- Members: **Dr Kin Sun Yuen**
Director of Educational Technology & Publishing Unit, the Open University of Hong Kong, China
- Professor Philips Wang**
Vice President, Caritas Institute of Higher Education, China

The Academic Sub-Committee of the Conference Organising Committee selected 13 papers from the 165 submitted for further evaluation by the Adjudication Committee. The Adjudication Committee assessed the 13 papers and shortlisted six as the 2014 Best



Practice Award finalists. The details of the six finalists were as follows:

Paper ID	Title	Author(s)	Institution(s)
111	A survey of current opportunities for developing an automated assessment system for C/C++ programming assignments	Muhammad Salman Khan, Adnan Ahmad, and Muhammad Humayoun	COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Pakistan COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Pakistan and the University of Central Punjab, Pakistan
163	The potential of mobile phones to transform teacher professional development to build sustainable educational futures in Bangladesh	Christopher Walsh, Clare Woodward, Mike Solly, and Prithvi Shrestha	Torrens University Australia, The Open University, United Kingdom The Open University, United Kingdom and The Open University, United Kingdom
199	Expanding the frontiers of engineering education in open distance learning by an online laboratory platform	WA Rasika Nandana, W R de Mel, and HDNS Priyankara	The Open University of Sri Lanka
217	Mobile applications at a mega university: Anadolu University Campus App	Ozgur Yilmazel, and Erk Ekin	Anadolu University, Turkey
277	Reflections on blended learning: A case study at the Open University of Hong Kong	Wing Bo Tso	The Open University of Hong Kong, China
327	Integration of micro-lectures into the blended learning discourse in tertiary education	Jie Xu and Xiangyang Zhang	The Open University of Jiangsu, China

On 30th October, the Adjudication Committee further evaluated the six finalists based on the quality of the oral presentations given by the authors. Three papers were selected as winners of the Best Practice Award competition. The results were approved by the President and announced during the closing ceremony. The medal winners of the Best Practice Award were:

Best Practice Award	Author(s) and Institution(s)	Paper ID and Title
Gold Medal	Christopher Walsh Torrens University, Australia Clare Woodward, Mike Solly and Prithvi Shrestha The Open University, United Kingdom	Paper 163 The potential of mobile phones to transform teacher professional development to build sustainable educational futures in Bangladesh
Silver Medal	Ozgur Yilmazel and Erk Ekin Anadolu University, Turkey	Paper 217 Mobile applications at a mega university: Anadolu University Campus App



Silver Medal	Jie Xu and Xiangyang Zhang The Open University of Jiangsu, China	Paper 327 Integration of micro-lectures into the blended learning discourse in tertiary education
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(iv) AAOU YOUNG INNOVATOR AWARD (YIA)

The Young Innovator Award Adjudication Committee for 2014 comprised the following members:

- Chair: **Professor Naveed A Malik**
President, the Virtual University of Pakistan
- Members: **Professor Tae Rim Lee**
Professor, Department of Information Statistics and Dean of the College of Natural Science, the Korea National Open University, South Korea
- Professor Uma Coomaraswamy**
Former Vice Chancellor, the Open University of Sri Lanka.

The Academic Sub-Committee of the 2014 Conference Organising Committee recommended six papers for evaluation by the YIA Adjudication Committee. The YIA Adjudication Committee assessed the six papers and selected the following three as the winners in the YIA category:

Young Innovator Award	Author(s) and Institution(s)	Paper ID and Title
Gold Medal	Ean-Teng Khor Wawasan Open University, Malaysia	Paper 54 Virtual collaborative learning using wikis for adult ODL learners: The case of Wawasan Open University
Silver Medal	Xiaoyang Shu Zhejiang Radio & Television University, China	Paper 23 An empirical study on flipped classroom in open university teaching based on an ecological perspective — A case study on translation theory and practice
Silver Medal	Nantha Kumar Subramaniam Open University Malaysia	Paper 83 Self-managed learning via Weblog: Design and implementation

3 MEMBERSHIP

3.1 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The following members who were in arrears for more than three years are listed below:

Full members

- Uttar Pradesh Rajashi Tandon Open University, India



Associate members

- CAP College Foundation Inc., The Distance Learning Alternative System, The Philippines
- The Centre for Distance Education, SNDT Women's University, India
- University of British Columbia, Canada

As there was no response despite numerous reminders through the various modes of communications adopted by the AAOU Secretariat, these members were removed from the AAOU membership list at the end of 2014.

3.2 NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Executive Committee approved six out of the seven applications submitted in 2014. The details and status of the approval are shown in the following table:

No.	Institution	Type of Membership	Resolution
1.	Aldersgate College, the Philippines	Full Member	Approved for Associate Member instead. (It does not use ODL as a major mode of education.)
2.	Bircham International University, Spain	Full Member	Approved for Associate Member instead. (It is not located in Asia.)
3.	Charles Sturt University, Australia	Associate Member	Approved for Associate Member . (It satisfies the criteria of Associate Membership.)
4.	International Hongkongers' Board and Councils of Musicology and Music (IHBCM), Hong Kong, China	Associate Member	Rejected. (It is not an educational organization.)
5.	UNITAR International University, Malaysia	Full Member	Approved for Full Member . (It satisfies the criteria of Full Membership.)
6.	Yangon University of Distance Education, Myanmar	Full Member	Approved for Full Member . (It satisfies the criteria of Full Membership.)
7.	Institute of Distance and Open Learning, Gauhati University, India	Full Member	Approved for Full Member . (It satisfies the criteria of Full Membership.)

These institutions remitted their membership fees and hence their membership commenced from 2014.

4 AAOU STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORT FOR 2014

According to the audited statement of accounts, there was an opening balance of USD309,672 at the beginning of the 2014 year. The closing balance as of 31st



December, 2014 was USD340,508, which reflects a net increase of USD30,836 in the Association's funds. The AAOU granted a subsidy of USD3,000 to meet a portion of the cost for conducting the 28th AAOU Annual Conference.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Headquarters provided a grant of USD4,578 and USD1,980 respectively to cover the registration fees and accommodation subsidy of selected participants attending the 28th AAOU Annual Conference.

5 THE AAOU INTER-UNIVERSITY STAFF EXCHANGE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

The AAOU Inter-University Staff Exchange Fellowship Programme provides a platform for capacity-building and the establishment of sustainable partnerships, as well as fostering the exchange of knowledge and promotion of mutual understanding among staff of Asian open universities.

In 2014, the following five institutions offered fellowships to deserving candidates in the AAOU Inter-University Exchange Fellowship Programme:

- Al-Quds Open University, Pakistan
- Korea National Open University, South Korea
- Shanghai Open University, China
- Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Thailand
- Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

The details of the recipients and their research proposal titles are indicated in the following tables:

Fellowships offered by Al-Quds Open University			
Name	Post	University	Research proposal title
Zlatko Kovacic	Associate Professor, statistics and researcher	The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand	A comparative analysis of the Open Polytechnic New Zealand and Al-Quds Open University's strategies and practices in student assessment
Yasir Riady (*has withdrawn due to the political situation in Palestine)	Academic staff	Universitas Terbuka (the Open University of Indonesia)	Optimization and evaluation of online systems in distance education



Fellowships offered by Korea National Open University			
Name	Post	University	Research proposal title
John Steven Green	Senior Lecturer	The Open Polytechnic, School of Information and Social Sciences (New Zealand)	A comparative analysis of retention strategies along the disaggregated value chain of the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand and the Korea National Open University
Mehmet Firat	Assistant Professor	Anadolu University, Open Education Faculty, Department of Distance Education (Turkey)	Usage of e-learning resources in open and distance education: A case of Anadolu University and the Korea National Open University

Fellowship offered by Shanghai Open University			
Name	Post	University	Research proposal title
Zlatko Kovacic	Associate Professor	The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand	A comparative analysis of the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand and Shanghai Open University's strategies and practices in student assessment, and designing and developing online education resources with the aim of reducing dropout rates in distance and online education
Saumya	Assistant Professor	Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), India	A comparative study of distance learning practices at Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU), India and Shanghai Open University (SOU), China
Dr Anirban Ghosh	Assistant Professor	Netaji Subhas Open University, Kolkata	A comparative study of distance learning practices at Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU), India and Shanghai Open University (SOU), China
Yasir Riady	Academic Staff	Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia	Optimization and evaluation of online systems in distance education (A case study of the implementation of online systems in Universitas Terbuka and Shanghai Open University)
Irsanti Widuri Asih	Lecturer	Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia	The implementation of student support services through online communication in Shanghai Open University (SOU)
Imre Mátyás	Associate Professor	The university of Miskolc, Hungary	Construction of a lifelong learning system in a learning society



Lina Gurung	Teaching Assistant	Kathmandu University, Nepal	Gender dynamics in distance education: A comparative study of Kathmandu University and Shanghai Open University
Colum Foley DCU	Programme Chair	The Open Education Unit of Dublin City University, Ireland	Comparative study on open education
Muhammad Ajmal Chaudhry	Assistant Professor	Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan	Need assessment of continuous professional development for capacity-building of distance educators at Shanghai Open University, China
Humaira Jamshed	Instructor	The Virtual University of Pakistan	Practical aspects of using unconventional teaching material in an activity-based e-learning English Language class

Fellowship offered by Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University

Name	Post	University	Research proposal title
Makiko Miwa	Professor, Centre of ICT and Distance Education	The Open University of Japan	Development of digital and information literacy competencies applicable to students of open and distance learning programmes in Asian countries

Fellowships offered by Universitas Terbuka

Name	Post	University	Research proposal title
DG S Doluweera	Senior Lecture Grade II in the Department of Botany	The Open University of Sri Lanka	A study on the status of the printed materials for selected courses from the degree programmes of Universitas Terbuka: Students' perspectives
Yu Minsheng	Staff of the Propaganda and Information Office	The Open University of China	Using social media in open and distance learning

6 AAOU JOURNAL

With the moving of the AAOU Secretariat to the Open University of Hong Kong in 2014, a new editorial board for the *AAOU Journal* was set up. The new editorial board comprises the following members:

Editor-in-chief:	Professor Tian BELAWATI Rector, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia
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Editorial Board Members:	Professor Dr Naveed A. MALIK Rector, the Virtual University of Pakistan Professor Yoichi OKABE President, the Open University of Japan Professor Dato' Dr HO Sinn Chye Vice Chancellor and CEO, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia Dr Grace Javier ALFONSO Chancellor, the University of the Philippines Open University
Executive Editor:	Dr LI Kam Cheong Director of the University Research Centre, the Open University of Hong Kong
Deputy Executive Editor:	Dr LIEW Teik Kooi Andy Director of the Directorate of Quality Assurance and External Relations, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia

The *AAOU Journal* September 2014 issue [Volume 9 (No. 1)] was published in the AAOU website (<http://aaou.ouhk.edu.hk/journal-volumes.html>). This issue included seven shortlisted papers from the 2013 AAOU Annual Conference Best Paper Award (BPA) and Young Innovator Award (YIA), and two other submissions. The details of the nine papers published in this issue were as follows:

AAOU Journal [Volume 9 (No. 1), September 2014]

	Title	Author(s)	Institution
1.	Mastering new information through Facebook and discussion forums: A comparative analysis [BPA Silver Medal]	Nantha Kumar Subramaniam, Maheswari Kandasamy	Open University Malaysia
2.	A study of the relationship between learning styles of students and instructional inputs of teacher education programme of IGNOU [BPA Silver Medal]	Pravat Kumar Sahoo, Subhash Chandra	The University of Allahabad, India
3.	How flexible do students prefer their learning to be? [BPA Gold Medal]	Kam Cheong Li	The Open University of Hong Kong, China
4.	Student perceptions of using SCORM compliant learning objects (SCLO) for learning in an ODL environment [YIA Silver Medal]	Ean-Teng Khor	Wawasan Open University, Malaysia
5.	Mobile phone intervention for Sri Lankan mushroom producers [BPA finalist]	Mahinda Wijeratne, Nilantha De Silva	The University of Ruhuna, Mapalana, Kamburupitiya
6.	KNOU-UNESCO cooperative model for PCPD region development [BPA Finalist]	Jinah Seol	The Korea National Open University, South Korea



7.	Evolving trends in teaching: Narration and imagination vs video footages [YIA Finalist]	Urooj Fatima	The Virtual University of Pakistan
8.	Scenario-based assessment exercises and the perceived learning of mass communication students	Aisha Muhammad Din, Sadia Jabeen	The Virtual University of Pakistan
9.	The relationship between customer value and customer satisfaction in face-to-face tutorial at Universitas Terbuka	Herman	Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

One winner (Gold medal) of the 2013 AAOU YIA had written to the AAOU Editorial Board requesting it not to publish the related paper in the *AAOU Journal* as the paper had been published in another journal. The details of the paper were as follows:

	Title	Author(s)	Institution
1.	Measuring the impact of E-portals in the enhancement of learning in higher education [YIA Gold Medal]	Aysha Khalil	Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan

7 THE 29TH AAOU ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN 2015

The AAOU Secretariat made efforts through several emails sent in March and August to invite the Full Members to consider hosting the 29th AAOU Annual Conference in 2015 and submit their proposal to the Secretariat. By the end of September 2014, the Secretariat had received two proposals, one submitted by the Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning (SCDL), India, and the other by Open University Malaysia (OUM).

The two proposals were circulated to Executive Committee members via email on 2nd October 2014 for comments and approval. Open University Malaysia was elected by majority as the host for the 2015 AAOU Annual Conference. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the AAOU and OUM on 27th October 2014.

8 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE AAOU CONSTITUTION

In the 28th AAOU General Body meeting, the following change was approved to be made to the AAOU Constitution (amended version 2014):

Item	Approved amendment
ARTICLE: VII - Executive Committee Section 1 (iii) The Executive Committee will be so	(iii) The Executive Committee will be so



constituted that <u>each of the following regions will be represented: South Asia, South East Asia, China and Far East Asia and West Asia.</u> In the event of any region not being represented on the Executive Committee, the Committee shall co-opt members to effect such representation; <u>in as far as possible the Executive Committee will seek to have representation from all member countries.</u>	constituted that <u>there will be at least two members from each of the following three regions: (1) Eastern Asia, (2) Southeast Asia, and (3) South-central Asia and Western Asia.</u> In the event of any region not being represented on the Executive Committee, the Committee shall co-opt members to effect such representation.
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9 PUBLISHING E-COMMUNICATION

To enhance communication among AAOU members and update members on the latest events and development at member institutions, the AAOU began to publish two forms of e-communications in 2014, namely the *AAOU News* and *eBulletin*. In these e-communications, the Secretariat announced important events, such as international conferences on open and distance education, the Inter-University Staff Exchange Fellowship Programme by our member institutions, the publication of the *AAOU Journal*, calls for paper submission, and up-to-date news from member institutions. Three issues of each communication were published, as listed below.

e-Communication	Issue No.	Publication month
<i>AAOU News</i>	No. 1	January 2014
	No. 2	April 2014
	No. 3	December 2014
<i>eBulletin</i>	No. 1	May 2014
	No. 2	July 2014
	No. 3	September 2014

10 THE AAOU WEB-CONFERENCES

To share the latest ideas and information in the field of open and distance learning with scholars and professionals, the AAOU started to organise web-conferences in 2014. Three web-conferences were organised, with the details listed below:

Date	Topic	Speakers
25 February 2014	OER in Asia: Key issues of sharing and searching	Professor Tsuneo Yamada, Dr Minh Do, Mr Ishan Abeywardena and Dr Kin Sun Yuen
12 June 2014	Opening up education and MOOCs for open universities	Professor Fred Mulder, Mr Abel Caine and Mr Darco Jansen



15 September 2014	In the tsunami of MOOCs: What could Asia, its open universities and the AAOU do?	Professor Fred Mulder, Mr Abel Caine, Mr Darco Jansen, Professor Tsuneo Yamada and Professor Tae Rim Lee
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11 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Overall, the year 2014 was reasonably eventful and successful. The Association wishes to record its gratitude to all members of the AAOU Executive Committee and General Body for their support and cooperation. The AAOU is also grateful to COL and the UNESCO Headquarters for their continued sponsorship for supporting deserving individuals to participate in the AAOU Annual Conference.