

ERSCP2012



Proposal for establishing an ERSCP society

ERSCP 2012, Bregenz,
02.05.2012

Structure for our discussion

- Context and history of this initiative
- Rationale for an ERSCP society
- Proposed legal and practical infrastructure and activities
- Steps to make it happen: what, who, when

Context

- ERSCP:
 - Already 15 years the main European SCP conference
 - Every 1-1.5 years
 - Typically 200-450 visitors
- History of the initiative
 - ERSCP never managed to become formal, ERSCP 2010 suggested establishing a formal ERSCP society
 - In 2011 ERSCP 2010 organisers moved on with this
 - Discussion at various places (PREPARE, other):
 - Positive responses everywhere we presented it
 - Proposal links various groups
 - Draft statutes etc. prepared; Bregenz should give the final 'go'
 - Seems hence unique window of opportunity to move to a solid organisation of SCP in Europe

Rationale for an ERSCP society

- Meeting during ERSCP 2010 considered:
 - Consolidates ERSCP visitors as a group
 - Will enable to engage this groups easier in future events
 - Can formally appoint and select ERSCP organisers
 - Can give a stable infrastructure for conferences rather than re-inventing websites etc. time and again
 - Can provide other benefits, e.g. reduced Journal substriptions
 - Potentially can also provide an umbrella for other activities, such as
 - In-depth discussions in specific SCP-sub fields -> improving scientific rigor with regard to SCP
 - Smaller workshops and events
 - Feedback to policy and writing opinion and position papers

Proposed legal set up

- Get an Establishing act in a country that
 - Allows any (European) individual to be member with full (voting and other) rights
 - Allows any (European) national to be board member
 - Allows statutes enabling full democratic governance
 - Allows secretariat to be based in any (European) country
 - Avoids personal liability of board members
 - Avoids complicated procedures in case of Board changes (e.g. personal visits to Chambers of commerce)
- Result investigation
 - Not problematic, requires
 - Providing a notariat with key points for the Establishing act that he/she elaborates (typically a few 100 Euro)
 - Around 2-3 people visiting the notariat for the formal establishment, with a list and cc of ID's of initial Board members
 - Registration with a Chamber of commerce (20-50 Euro)
 - Establishing board has as main task to write out elections on a defined (short) time frame to get a first formal elected board

Proposed practical infrastructure

- Starting infrastructure
 - Start capital from TUD and TNO surpluses of ERSCP 2010
 - If appreciated a (sleeping, brand new) website still available from SCORE surpluses – but any other site with the following can do
 - Membership registration module
 - Registration and payment module for conferences
 - Ideally also: voting module, listserv, maybe discussion forum, library, potential for Working group home pages etc.
 - Inviting ERSCP 2010 and 2012 visitors as initial members (e.g. first year free membership given surplus)
- Organisation
 - Use PREPARE secretariat also as ERSCP society secretariat for a modest but reasonable compensation
 - Limit secretariat work however, use voluntary committees for most work (newsletters, website management, ec.)
 - Open for the rest allowing for all kinds of links, WGs, etc.
- Advantage: can link most/all SCP actors in Europe!

Potential activities

- Main activities
 - Initially, in any case: ERSCP; at financial risk of local organisers
 - Later also possible: other types of workshops (e.g. like the SCORAI workshop in Bregenz, or topical workshops in projects like SCORE, CORPUS, etc.)
- What ambition given the European SCP landscape?
 - ERSCP Society is heads on competed by other initiatives
 - ERSCP Society just organises a conference
 - ERSCP Society aims to evolve naturally to a(?)/the(?) main hub/umbrella for SCP researchers in Europe, starting with the significant basis it has now and anyone who wants to join
 - ERSCP Society is set up as a full blown European SCP hub from the start (cf. how ISEE or ISIE currently operate)

Next steps to make it happen

- Re-confirmation in this meeting that we should go for it
 - Yes?
 - No?
- Confirming a key list of topics for establishing act
- Practicalities with regard to establishment

Confirming a key list of topics for the Establishing act (underlined: proposal)

- Mission
 - Advancement of SCP science and practice in Europe
 - In any case by organising the ERSCP
- Democratic principles
 - Anyone can become member (choice: Europe / any country?)
 - Any member can be elected as Board member
 - Board members serve limited time (proposal: 2 years; chairs four years since first 2 years as president elect)
 - Details (can be left to the Establishment committee?)
 - No of board members, every year half change? One time re-election?
 - Factual secretariat can be based in other country as of legal establishment
 - How to elect or establish committees
 - Fiscal year, at what moment board members change office, other procedures
- Other topics and practicalities
 - Put as much as possible in by-laws (can be changed by society without lawyer costs)
 - Allow for internet based elections/meetings

Practicalities with regard to establishment

- Identification of +/- 5 people responsible for establishment
 - Job: establishment legal entity & infrastructure, invitation of members, then elections
 - ..within a time frame provided in establishing act, say 6 (?) or 12 (?) months.
- Identification of ‘sounding board’ (up to 30 people?) who the 5 use for consulting on new/unexpected issues
- Decision in this meeting if applicable law is seen as an issue
 - We must choose a country in any case
 - This seems not too critical
 - Proposal: NL, since we checked it fits our bill (democratic, no complicated situation in case of board changes, no personal liability of board members in case of a registered society, TU Delft/TNO funding legal costs)
- If all the former points are ok, establishment can go quite quick (1-2 months, elections formal board in Fall, 1 Januari 2013 formal handover).