

Minutes of the NIAS Fellows Association

General Meeting 2022

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2022 15.00 – 15.45 CET

Location: NIAS Conference Room and online via Zoom

Board members present: Philip Spinhoven (Chair), Emmanuel Berger (Treasurer), Theo Kuipers (board member), Jan Willem Duyvendak (Director NIAS, Staff Representative), Kahliya Ronde (Staff Representative, minutes)

Board members absent: Roxane Farmanfarmaian (Secretary), Ana Maria Gomez Lopez (board member), Jacob Thaisen (board member)

Agenda

1. Opening of the General Meeting
2. Minutes of the last General Meeting in 2021 ([Minutes of 2021 NFA General Meeting signed](#))
3. Financial Report 2021. Report of the Auditing Committee ([NFA – Financial Report 2021](#))
4. Appointment of a New Auditing Committee
5. Establish retirement schedule board members
6. This year at the NFA. Report by Philip Spinhoven
7. This year at NIAS. Report by Jan Willem Duyvendak
8. Other business
9. Closing

1. Opening

Philip Spinhoven, Chair of the NIAS Fellows Association, opens the general meeting, welcoming all for the hybrid meeting (both online and on site). Online attendees can raise their hand digitally or use the chat function. There are no points to be added to the agenda from the general membership.

2. Minutes of the last General Meeting in 2021

No queries or comments. The minutes are approved.

3. Financial Report 2021. Report of the Auditing Committee

The financial report was made public before the meeting (online via [NFA – Financial Report 2021](#)). Emmanuel Berger (treasurer) presents the main findings.

The balance is positive. Thanks to the membership fees we are able to finance NFA meeting every year, but cannot do so much more. Average about 1.400 euro income from the

membership fees. We lose money because of the bank fees, about 20% of income. We will move to another bank. Last year we had to pay the notary costs, which are high for our income. NIAS will also pay a large part of the costs, for which the NFA is grateful. The auditing committee has approved the financial report – the committee consisted of Ghazwan Yaghi and Britta Schilling.

4. Appointment of a New Auditing Committee

Fleur van der Bij (Fellow 21/22) and Rahul Rao (Fellow 21/22) have agreed to audit the financial report 2022 for the next meeting in June 2023.

5. Establish retirement schedule board members

Name		First term	Second term (Establishment Formal Association in 2022)
Philip Spinhoven	Chair	2018 – 2021	2021 – 2023
Roxane Farmanfarmaian	Secretary	2018 – 2021	2021 – 2023
Emmanuel Berger	Treasurer	2018 – 2021	2021 – 2023
Ana Maria Gomez Lopez	Member	2019 – 2023	2023 – 2026
Theo Kuipers	Member	2019 – 2023	-
Jacob Thaisen	Member	2019 – 2023	2023 – 2026
Jan Willem Duyvendak	Director of NIAS, Staff Representative	2018 -	
Kahliya Ronde	Staff representative	2018 -	

Roxane Farmanfarmaian, Emmanuel Berger, Philip Spinhoven and Ana Maria Gomez Lopez will have a longer term of four years, because of the covid-year. Roxane Farmanfarmaian, Emmanuel Berger and Philip Spinhoven are willing to serve a second term. There are no objections to the continuation of their board membership. The membership accepts them as secretary, treasurer and chair for a second term.

Board member Theo Kuipers completes his first term and will not serve a second term. This meeting is his last as representative of the NFA board. The board thanks him for his commitment, contributions and invaluable support.

There are currently enough board members to complete the board formally. New candidates however are welcome, they may be put forward by contacting the board.

6. This year at the NFA. Report by Philip Spinhoven

The formal establishment of the NIAS Association Board is not completed yet. The NFA started a rocky road, most recently the requirement for foreign board members to get notarized copies of their passport to the notary in Amsterdam. The board is hopeful to formalize the requirements this year.

The 50-year anniversary present to NIAS is in the making. We started out with the idea to give a mural, a quote on the wall of NIAS. The quote was “play is the highest form of research” but fortunately, before it was materialized, we were warned by alumna Cynthia Pyle that the quote might not be by Einstein. So we had another round and considered alternatives, including “research is the highest form of play” but in the end we became blind for quotes. The board decided to go into another direction and that is to ask Arne Hendriks, a former artist-in-residence, to make a collage with pictures from NIAS at Wassenaar and NIAS in Amsterdam, making a bridge between previous and current locations. He is willing to do this. The present will materialize, to be put on the wall here.

One initiative by the NFA board has been to open the Fellows House for alumni in summer. In 2020 this was not possible due to the pandemic. But in the other years, 2019, 2021 and 2022, there were 15 individual fellows who came for an alumni stay. They are from many different nationalities, which is interesting to see. There have also been theme groups that have returned in summer, it is good to stress that groups can also apply for these stays. Groups are even formed at the fellows house, which is a development to be applauded. The stays are not only for individualistic retreat but also an opportunity for collaboration.

A new initiative will start this year. In addition to the general all-year reunion, we will also start year group reunions, online or hybrid. During the 50-years reunion we noticed specific interest in meeting fellows from one’s own year. We will start with 2016/17 in August. Other year groups will follow. This is a nice addition, as the NFA is about connecting and reestablishing ties.

The last point is about new memberships. We try to attract more fellows, Roxane compiled a beautiful invitation letter to join the NFA, and the board introduces the NFA’s activities during the start of the academic year at NIAS, and the fellows representatives helps knock on doors to attract new members. In the difficult times of the pandemic, we attracted 19 new fellows, somehow more than the average of previous years.

Question: How far will you go back when organizing year group reunions?

Answer: As far back as possible. We have to make a start somewhere and the cohorts with board members are convenient for that. But the ambition is to move beyond that. There are also many cohorts still from Wassenaar who would like to get together.

In addition to that, we will also pick up on organizing groups of alumni in specific regions. We organised one such an event in New York, but this could also work in cities like London or Johannesburg, where there is a concentration of fellows (from different years).

Question: Which time of the year will these reunions take place?

Answer: It can be organised throughout the year, we’ll see by trial and error what works.

7. This year at NIAS. Report by Jan Willem Duyvendak

There are many things that could be reported on, but 5 points will be highlighted.

The first is the situation of covid. This year has had two faces, with a first semester that started without restrictions but got increasingly affected by corona measures, while the second semester began under some limitations but the situation gradually improved. It makes an enormous difference for forming an intellectual community, even if NIAS tried its utmost best to create a community online via Zoom, they were nevertheless difficult years. So-called "covid-fellows" do not need to wait ten years before re-applying but can apply sooner. Actually in the upcoming group there are four "covid-fellows" who reapplied and got selected by the Academic Advisory Board.

Secondly, we celebrated the 50-years-anniversary last calendar year with, amongst others, two publications, "Fifty years of academic freedom" and "Thuis", both available for alumni at the meeting.

Thirdly, the Persian Rose Garden from Wassenaar was planned to materialize in the garden of the Royal Academy, but this proved to be too expensive. However, it will be rebuilt in the garden of the NIAS Fellows House, on the premises of NIAS. It will happen in August. It will be opened and alumni will be invited to that.

Fourthly, NIAS has more and more summer activities. This includes our first Summer School, reaching out to postdocs and younger generations. There are more alumni stays, individually or groups, or alumni who invite other scholars to work with them at NIAS during the summer. One such group will work on the topic of homeland. We hope to attract more attention to this, because it is an attractive way to return to NIAS.

Fifth, the war in Ukraine. NIAS selected two fellows from Ukraine, who became part of the fellows group in the second semester. In the next academic year, there will be another four spaces for scholars affected by the war in Ukraine. We do not exclude people from Russia or Belarus as long as they do not have any institutional links to Russia or Belarus. It remains little in comparison to the suffering, but NIAS can do at least something this way.

Question: There are dissidents who still have institutional ties at the moment of application, can they apply?

Answer: They can only apply when ties are broken. This is a deeply controversial topic among directors of Institutes for Advanced Study. Quite some institutes only invite scholars from Ukraine, based on the position that suffering in Ukraine is incomparable to that of dissidents. Our position is that even though suffering is not the same, but we should be open to both groups.



Artist impression of Persian Rose Garden in the garden of the Fellows House.

8. Other business

No further questions or comments.

9. Closing

The chair thanks all attendees and introduces the next part of the programme, the Uhlenbeck Lecture by alumnus Hans Radder.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ph Spinhoven".

Signed Philip Spinhoven (Chair NFA)

Signed Jan Willem Duyvendak (Director NIAS)