



**Confucius Institute in Auckland  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
(Zoom Meeting with Otago and Fudan)  
10 September 2020, 13:00**

**Present:** Prof. Jenny Dixon (Chair), Prof. Helen Nicholson, Prof. Paul Clark,  
Danny Chan, Pat English, Li Yanguang  
Prof. Zhimin Chen, Prof. Zhongwei Wu, Prof Lian Lu,

**In attendance:** Nora Yao, Bing Zhou, Janine Chin, Lin Li, Chriss Hamilton

**Apologies:** Peter Chin

**COVID-19 update:**

- Prof. Dixon noted that the Auckland region is currently at Alert Level 2.5 while the rest of the country is at Alert Level 2. On behalf of the Advisory Board, Prof. Dixon expressed her thanks to Fudan for their generosity in sending masks to Auckland.

**1. Welcome**

- Chairperson Prof. Dixon welcomed the Board members to the meeting.

**2. Farewell to Mr. Li Yanguang**

Mr. Li put forward his resignation to resign from the CI Board.

On behalf of the Chinese Consul General in Auckland, Mr. Li expressed his sincere gratitude and thanks to all the board members for supporting the development of closer relationships between China and New Zealand. CI Auckland had made great achievements in promoting Chinese culture and language learning in NZ.

Mr. Li also expressed his desire for both the University of Auckland and Fudan University to continue its support for CI and his best wishes for this ongoing relationship.

Prof. Dixon accepted Mr. Li's decision to resign and acknowledged Mr. Li for his contribution - in particular for his support for the MLA programme.

**3. Minutes from previous meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

Corrections: No Corrections

Approval of minutes: Moved Prof. Dixon, seconded by Danny Chan.

**Matters Arising**



Mr Chan noted that he will follow up with people interested in supporting Chinese Language Week considering public events are likely to be limited due to Covid-19 restrictions.

#### **4. Establishment of Chinese International Education Foundation (CIEF) and Center for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC), Changes on institution arrangement**

Prof. Dixon confirmed that there has been a change of Administration in China for all Confucius Institutes overseas. Two organizations, namely the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC) and Chinese International Education Foundation (CIEF/NGO Foundation), have been set up for Chinese language education and cooperation, and CIEF will work with Fudan as our partner University.

Fudan will be taking a much more active role in the management of their affiliated CIs including CI AKL and its budget submissions and approval. There will be some activities that CI AKL may engage with CLEC directly but most communication will be with Fudan and through Fudan to the Foundation.

CI AKL is in the process of finalising an agreement as part of the transition of the former agreement with Hanban. Once the updated agreement is signed off, CI will review the agreement with Fudan, which was signed in 2017.

Prof. Lu noted that Fudan is currently working closely with the Foundation and will ensure that the collaboration will proceed smoothly and positively, so as to achieve all-round excellent results.

#### **5. Financial Reports – presented by Janine Chin** **Period: 01/01/2020 – 31/07/ 2020**

##### **1357 CI Projects funded by Hanban/China:**

- Decrease of \$56k in revenue, due to loss of Ministry of Education contract with non-arrival of MLAs this year and the cancellation of Chinese courses and exams due to the Covid-19 lockdowns.
- Decrease of \$65k in people costs due to vacant office coordinator's position filled by casual appointment. With no MLAs, two additional casual staff were also employed prior to the lockdown to help with the language courses. Website costs are lower as contract work for development had been completed in 2019. No additional contractors were required to support events for the MLA programme.
- Operating Expenses were \$192k lower due mainly to the timing of payments for Confucius Classrooms and the cancellation of MLA events for expenses such as accommodation, travel, hospitality etc.

**1358 UOA contribution to CI:**

- Savings on people costs due to the vacant office coordinator's position.
- Operating expenses decreased slightly due to limited office-based activities.
- Occupancy decreased as CI now only pay for upper floor occupation versus previously, the whole building.

**Others:**

- CI funding for 2020 has been approved. Programmes have been coordinated as per usual but with Covid-19 restrictions, additional work has also been required to plan 'alternative' options as well as managing the cancellation, postponement and/or rescheduling of events, courses and exams.
- Some deposits lost and/or cancellation fees imposed eg MLA accommodation bookings at the beginning of the year.
- Funding for MLA accommodation from last year had been received.
- Set up funding for Waikato Confucius Classroom has also been received. A low-key CC launch is planned for 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept as part of Chinese Language Week and to avoid any cancellations/postponements due to Covid-19 restrictions with a larger event.
- Full funding for CI 2020 projects has been received.
- Received donation from ICBC for the Speech Competition.
- Exams funds are low due to cancellations and refunds for the test fees.
- Interest is still being accrued from the UoA Pembridge building fund.

Question raised by Danny Chan regarding 'Funds Received NZ' column. 'Extra' to be added to indicate that these are additional funds received by sponsorship, fees etc on top of approved Hanban funding.

Acceptance of financial report: Moved Prof. Dixon, seconded Danny Chan.

**6. Confucius Institute Report** - presented by Nora Yao  
Review of activities from April 2019 – August 2020

**Highlighted programmes:**

- Chinese in Schools: Very much impacted by no MLAs this year but maintaining connections with updates on resources available, teacher workshops, local helpers, competitions and as required.
- Language courses: CI currently has casual contracts with two former MLAs studying in NZ, to teach CI's Chinese courses. Due to the lockdown, some Chinese classes were cancelled and some switched to online teaching.
- Exams: HSK exams have been rescheduled several times due to the lockdown. Next scheduled exam is on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept and will proceed according to Level 2.5 number restrictions and social distancing criteria. Next exam will be in October, with

higher numbers than usual due to cancellations earlier in the year.

- China scholarship: the selection panel were impressed with the quality of the 2021 applicants this year which made the selection process much easier.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and border restrictions in China, the 2020 scholarship winners were unable to go to China to study this year. CI is waiting for the final confirmation from China Scholarship Council to see whether these students can start their programme at the beginning of 2021 if borders open. If so, we will have two groups of scholarship students in China in 2021.

- Speech Competition: Compared to previous years, we only had 1/3 of the participants take part in this year's speech competition. However, the students' abilities were very high. The selection panel was pleased to see that the students not only had a wide vocabulary but also their speeches covered a wide range of topics. A great result achieved for this year despite Covid-19 and speeches delivered online.
- CI website: Re-designed to be more interactive and to engage a wider range of people. MoUs, strategic plans to be included. Good progress to date with the new site to go live soon.
- CI interviewed candidates to replace Otago's TA for 2021. Current TA, who was unable to return to NZ, will continue online teaching for the remainder of the year.

## **7. Otago Office Report** - presented by Chriss Hamilton Review of activities planned for 2020

- Ms Hamilton noted that students on campus showed a high level of interest attending the workshops on Chinese culture and language learning.
- More workshops and activities will be organized when Covid-19 restrictions allow. Currently, only limited activities can be arranged due to capacity of rooms and social distancing requirements.
- Otago is expecting to provide more activities and engage with more international and local students over the summer period.

## **8. Sub-board meetings in Auckland 22<sup>nd</sup> June – presented by Prof. Dixon**

Prof. Dixon noted that CI would likely be unable to get MLAs in 2021 unless border restrictions eased. At this stage, small groups of students may be allowed to return but an issue was the lack of 'approved' quarantine facilities. If this can be resolved with the government, more students may be able to enter.

NZ universities are unsure of what will happen longer-term with border restrictions. Decisions are likely to be on hold until after New Zealand's elections on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

CI has started some initial work for the new strategic plan as the current one covers 2017-2020.

## 9. Fudan University

Prof. Chen:

- Fudan hopes that by the beginning of 2021 increased numbers of foreign students able to enter China to study and similarly for New Zealand. Fudan agreed that CI should have a 'back-up' plan for 2021.
- On behalf of Fudan, congratulated Prof. Dixon on her appointment as new Provost of Universitas 21 (U21) which Fudan part is of.
- Expressed their appreciation and gratitude to Prof. Clark for his publication in NZ media about the importance of Chinese language and culture programmes.
- Was pleased to hear that most of the schools are still welcoming the volunteer teachers to return to their schools.
- Noted that Fudan has strong faith and confidence in this collaboration and the CI programme in New Zealand.

Prof. Dixon endorsed the value of university collaborations and is pleased that she will continue to be involved with Fudan when she takes up the new U21 role in 2021.

## 10. Other Business

Prof. Zhou's current term was to conclude at the end of 2020. However, Fudan has agreed to extend it for another term. Prof. Dixon noted that Prof. Zhou has made an outstanding contribution and that we are very pleased he can stay on for another term.

## 11. Next MEETING

Proposed Board meeting in December - date to be confirmed and documents will be circulated by email.

The meeting concluded at 14:15pm.

Minutes submitted by: Nina Zhang



Approved by:

Chair: Professor Jenny Dixon