June 2020

Dear Members, Participants and Friends,

We hope you and your families are safe and managing the global situation as best as you can. Between the continued spread and progression of the global novel coronavirus – with its impacts on our daily lives due to social distancing requirements and economic factors – as well as the social unrest and activism sparked by racism and injustice in the U.S. that has now spread globally, it is clear that we are all living through an important moment in history that will likely have profound impacts on all of us and our communities. Many of you are using this moment to engage in new research and activism, and as a society we look forward to seeing the fruits of those labors as they pertain to the study of drug policy. We have been very saddened to have to cancel the ISSDP conference this year (details below) and miss the opportunity to connect and catch up face to face. To help fill that gap the ISSDP board has come up with a few opportunities for us of us to re-engage, albeit virtually, in the coming months. Below we discuss some of those opportunities as well as provide you with other important updates. We apologize in advance for the length of this note, but we hope that we can reduce the number of emails by sending this altogether.

1. Postponement of Annual ISSDP Conference until June 2021 and June 2022 conference plans

The changing situation with respect to Coronavirus (COVID-19) coupled with its anticipated resurgence in late 2020 led the ISSDP board to decide to postpone the 2020 annual meeting in Aquascalientes to next year. Trying to do a 3-day meeting virtually with members from across the globe given all the different time zones just would not enable the type of exchange we all value out of our face-to-face meetings. Our host organization, CIDE in Mexico, has agreed to host the meeting for us next year, so please save the dates of June 2-4, 2021. We have pushed the meeting back into early June in hopes that doing so will reduce the risk of us being impacted by COVID-19 again next year. The host committee is already ascertaining what amount of the existing program will be retained and how much room there is for new abstract submissions on key themes. We appreciate everyone’s patience with us, and advice, as we worked through the various scenarios and assessed the impacts of the various options. Updates about the conference will be provided here: https://www.conference.issdp.org/.

You might also be interested in knowing that we plan to hold the 2022 Annual ISSDP conference in Marrakesh, Morocco in early June 2022 as well. We are very excited to be holding our first
meeting on the African continent, and will provide updates for you regarding themes and conference details as we get closer.


As hinted at above, in an effort to provide an opportunity for the ISSDP group to gather and building on efforts from a meeting between ISSDP and UNODC at the 2020 CND meeting, we have decided to hold a Webinar (well actually two) on Thursday, July 2nd around the release of the 2020 World Drug Report (WDR). The goal will provide UNODC (a.k.a. Angela Me) the opportunity to present a summary of the key findings of the WDR to academics and scholars, and then allow us to engage in a constructive conversation regarding the limits and strengths of the data, methods, and findings included in the report.

Given we hope to engage the global membership, as well as colleagues who may be interested, we will hold two versions of the webinar to facilitate a discussion with members in different parts of the globe. The first will take place on Thursday July 2nd at 10:00 am CEST (Geneva time) and the second will take place at 10:00 am PDT (Los Angeles, USA time). We will be sending out an email with a link to register for the webinar in the next two weeks, so please be on the lookout for it.


Due to the postponement of the annual conference and our requirement to hold a general meeting of our members every 18 months, we will be holding our next AGM via video (zoom) meeting. In order to facilitate participation from everyone given the different time zones, the AGM meeting will take place twice, and members will be asked to choose to participate at one of the following dates/times:

Meeting #1: Tuesday, September 1st / Wednesday, September 2nd

- Los Angeles, USA 5:00 pm PDT Tues, Sept 1
- New York, USA 8:00 pm EDT Tues, Sept 1
- London, UK 1:00 am BST Wed, Sept 2
- Geneva, Switz 2:00 am CEST Wed, Sept 2
- New Delhi, India 5:30 am IST Wed, Sept 2
- Hong Kong 8:00 am HKT Wed, Sept 2
- Adelaide, Australia 9:30 am ACST Wed, Sept 2
- Sydney, Australia 10:00 am AEST Wed, Sept 2
- Auckland, NZ 12:00 noon NZST Wed, Sept 2

Meeting #2: Wednesday, September 2nd

- Los Angeles, USA 6:00 am PDT
- New York, USA 9:00 am EDT
The same content will be discussed in both meetings, as our goal is to share the latest information with a broad reach of our membership, including:

- The development of a new ISSDP prize for scholarship (including a financial gift)
- New MEMBERCLICKS membership software (more on that below)
- Forthcoming website additions
- ISSDP collaborative opportunities with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime
- Mentoring opportunities

Members will be asked to register for a specific meeting in a separate email. Any items requiring voting of the membership will be announced during the meeting and then voted on via our new membership system. More details to come, but please hold a date!

4. **European Society of Criminology online conference collaboration**

The ISSDP has a joint working group on European drug policy with the European Society of Criminology (ESC). The ESC is planning an online conference for September 10-11, 2020. They have invited the joint working group to collaborate on creating panels for this conference. There is no cost to attend the conference but presenters will need to join the ESC to take part, if they are not already members ([https://www.esc-eurocrim.org/index.php/membership](https://www.esc-eurocrim.org/index.php/membership)).

Potential topics for panels include: impacts of COVID-19 on drug policy, use and supply; alternatives to criminalisation for drug possession; drug law enforcement; online drug supply; changing patterns of drug use and supply; comparative policy analysis. We welcome other suggestions.

Please email Caitlin (caitlin.hughes@flinders.edu.au) if you would be interested in presenting in this online conference. The process will then be that you submit an abstract to the ESC. The deadline for that is 1 July 2020.

5. **Trustee nominations for Summer 2020**

Due to a number of things hitting simultaneously, we somehow missed that we were due to elect two new board members in May 2020 (last month). Both Nicola Singleton and Rebecca Askew’s (Treasure & Secretary) completed their 4-year terms this May. We have asked Rebecca to stay on for at least a year to help transition some of her duties to a new board member, but we still need to elect two new officials to the board. One will be an ordinary
trustee and the other will fill the role of treasurer, and hence must be from the UK (as that is where the ISSDP bank account is). Vibeke Asmussen Frank has kindly agreed to organize and manage the election process, which we hope can take place in the next 2 months. She will be sending out additional information soon, but nominations – including self-nominations - can be sent to Vibeke at (vaf.crf@psy.au.dk). Once the nominees are identified, we will be requesting a brief biographical paragraph and statement of interest that we can share with the membership for voting purposes.

6. New membership system

ISSDP is currently implementing a new administration software (MemberClicks), that will provide the society with a number of new communication and administration tools including:

- Automated system to remind members when their membership fees are due
- A searchable database providing more comprehensive information about our membership by region, including field of expertise, languages spoken, areas of interest, and prior attendance at ISSDP-sponsored events. Such features will enable the development of communication boards on particular topics, identifying those who are likely to be interested, as well as target emails when local or regional opportunities emerge in an area.
- Improved integration of conference registration and membership information.
- A forward-looking database, that can be used to survey the membership on issues that come up quickly.

Please expect to see an email from the system soon. We would really appreciate you responding and setting up your new member profile in the system as soon as you get it.

Warmest regards,

Rosalie Liccardo Pacula, President ISSDP

Caitlin Hughes, Vice-President ISSDP