

ISOLA - TWELVETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SECRETARY'S REPORT



A very warm welcome to all members present here today at the 12th Annual General Meeting of the Indian Society of Landscape Architects. We are delighted and encouraged to see members participate in this yearly meeting to take account of the year that has passed and collaborate and synergize our efforts in formulating plans for ISOLA for the year to come.

The following items have been elaborated on in this report:

1. Status of ISOLA Executive Council and Chapter Executive Committees
2. Status of ISOLA Accounts
3. Status of ISOLA Membership
4. Report on the events conducted by the ISOLA Chapters and ISOLA Central EC
5. Representation of ISOLA on other platforms
6. Objectives set by the EC for the current term and outlining the way to achieve them

STATUS OF ISOLA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

The 2015-17 Executive Council handed over charge to the new EC on May 23rd, 2017, following online elections held in March- April of this year.

The **new Executive Council (2017-19)** comprises of your office bearers

Honorary President	Sujata Kohli
Honorary Vice President	Sridevi Rao
Honorary Treasurer	Jitendra Pawgi
Honorary Secretary	Nidhi Madan

Rohit Marol continues his role on the EC as the immediate Past President. Each of the other elected EC fellow members has their task set out as well, Avadhoot Kumthekar is Chapter Coordinator, Swati Sahasrabudhe Education Board Convenor, and Shravana Reddy Media, Website and Outreach coordinator. Dwaipayan Bhattacharya and Asok Kumar are Associate members and Maithily Velangi is a Co-Opted Member. The new ISOLA EC has representatives from Delhi, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai and for the first time Kolkata.

This EC shall continue to hold office till the 22nd of May 2019.

Before we proceed, we would like to acknowledge the **Outgoing Executive Council (2015-17)**, President Rohit Marol, Vice President Ashish Patankar, Secretary Shilpa Chandawarkar, Treasurer Neelima Soni, Past President Sachin Jain, and EC members Manguesh Prabhugaonker, Nupur Prothi Khanna, Sreejith S. and Harsh Goel for their tireless work over the last two years, and more, in bringing ISOLA to where it stands today. It has taken huge efforts to put systems in place, organize and direct energies away from administrative issues, to a situation now where we can focus on the larger mission of ISOLA.

Chapter elections for Bangalore and Mumbai chapter were also held earlier this summer for the 2017-19 term. ISOLA welcomes the newly elected **Bangalore Chapter Managing Committee (2017-19)**

Honorary Chairperson	Nina Chandavarkar
Honorary Secretary	Varna Shashidhar
Honorary Treasurer	Prashanta Bhat
EC members	Dhileep Kumara Raja Govindan and Preetanshi Singh

Elections for the Executive Committee of ISOLA Mumbai Chapter were completed earlier this week and we welcome the newly elected **Mumbai Chapter Managing Committee (2017-19)**,

Anju Bareja, Bhakti Amrish Thakoor, Devyani Deshmukh Upasani and Shilpa Gaurish Chandawarkar.

All three elections were conducted online. In each case, the number of valid nominations received was the same as the number of mandated candidates and all candidates were declared elected unopposed. The online election process was thus limited to the three step nomination process, with no voting conducted.

ISOLA Delhi NCR Chapter Managing Committee continues to be led by Chairperson Jasleen Waraich, Secretary Madhup Mazumder and Treasurer Sujata Hingorani.

ISOLA Gujarat Chapter is currently headed by Deepa Maheshwari, Secretary Sandip Patil and Treasurer Priyesh Shah.

And, ISOLA Kerala chapter Managing Committee consists of Chairperson Vishwanathan Ganesh Iyer, Secretary Sreejith S., Joint Secretary Anju John, and Treasurer Rohini Prasad.

Elections for Delhi NCR Chapter, Kerala and Gujarat Chapter for the 2018-20 term will be held next year.

STATUS OF ISOLA ACCOUNTS

Today we place on record the consolidated accounts of ISOLA (which includes the Central ISOLA, and all its chapters –Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Gujarat, and the Goa Conference LOC) for the year ending 31st March 2017 and are ready to be filed once they are approved at this AGM.

We would like to thank our auditor Rajnikant Trivedi for his guidance in all accounting related matters, his continued support towards ISOLA's ethical and fiscal discipline and appreciate his promptness in responding to all queries and concerns to ensure our accounts are in order and audited in time.

Over the last few years, ISOLA has achieved some financial stability, with the efforts of past Executive Committees, Investments and Conference donorships. We now look forward to building a corpus to pursue the larger objectives of being an organization that promotes research and scholarship and is a resource centre for its members.

STATUS OF ISOLA MEMBERSHIP DATABASE

Today, the count of ISOLA memberships, past and present, stand at 550 over the last 5 years, although valid memberships are 338, with 191 fellow, 87 associate, 33 graduate and 27 student members.

Next month, it will be a year since we migrated the entire membership database and renewal process to an online system. This has enabled us to streamline the membership application and renewal process, allow members to update their personal and professional information and access their records at any time. It also creates a valuable resource in sharing membership information with chapters, conducting elections and resolutions and also conference registrations.

As I mentioned before, we have also conducted three sets of elections, albeit partially, online for the first time. We continue to improve on the system, and would request all members to share any improvements/additions we can make to it in the near future. The entire process of conference registration was also conducted through this system, streamlining the cumbersome process of mailing, payments, banking and confirmations into a simple and direct exercise.

CONFERENCE

The EC-driven ISOLA Goa Conference 'Changing Climates, Evolving Landscapes' built on the success and goodwill of the Bangalore conference with over 400 delegates attending. The conference format included presentations, workshops, walks, panoramas, award presentations and exhibitions planned across the country but brought together at the Kala Academy in Goa. This could not have been possible without sole Goa resident, EC member Manguesh Prabhugaokar, the Conference Convenor who anchored all our efforts singlehandedly in Goa and was instrumental in bringing together government representatives, activists, civil society organizations and the press as well. The ISOLA conference was covered widely in the Goa press and TV with press releases, a press conference and numerous interviews with local media.

Another first at the conference, was the creation of Conference Content Committee with Varsha Gavandi, Nikhil Dhar and Mohan Rao, driven by Nupur Prothi Khanna from the EC. Tremendous efforts were put in to develop the content of the event as a dedicated effort. Work done by this committee will continue to assist future conference committees. It will also form the springboard for the Resource Centre in the coming years.

Conference accounting too has been streamlined, with one conference account set up for all future conferences. The same will be handed over to the next LOC, avoiding the process of setting up and closing new accounts every year. Neelima Soni, treasurer has set high standards for accounting practice, that we hope to continue.

As you may be aware, a decision was taken at the Member's meeting at the Goa Conference, to have conferences every alternate year. The newly formed Kerala chapter has taken on the onus of the next Conference to be held in early 2019. Sreejith will brief us about the theme, dates and venue today.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

This past year, there has been limited activities held by the Chapters, with Delhi chapter the most active. Delhi Chapter held an event on Eco-Tourism with IFLA member Hitesh Mehta and Dean D'Cruz in July 2016, followed by two tribute events for Prof. Shaheer, one with Dr. Priyaleen Singh at Sanskriti Kala Kendra and the second, a day long visit to the Sokka Bodhi Garden. Earlier this year, architect Ricardo Bofill spoke about Global Landscapes at the Chapter GBM. Three nature walks were also conducted.

We hope this year to do better across all chapters, with new committees, greater enthusiasm and plans to create a calendar of ISOLA activities, with all chapters on board. With the next conference a year and a half away, we look to chapter events to create a series of events across various platforms in the run up to the next conference. Sreejith, will tell us about the Kerala conference, and how all chapters can engage in the interim. Each chapter also has a page on the website, and we look forward to them making available to other members information, videos, articles and other documentation about their forthcoming and past events.

REPRESENTATION OF ISOLA ON OTHER PLATFORMS

IFLA Jury

Past President Rohit Marol was invited to be on the jury of the IFLA ASIA-PACIFIC Landscape Architecture Awards 2017, also known as IFLA Asia-Pac LA Awards. The awards ceremony will be held at the annual IFLA Regional Congress, Thailand on 2nd November 2017.

IIA Conference

ISOLA Delhi Chapter chairperson, Jasleen Waraich, past Chairperson Minesh Parikh and Treasurer Sujata Hingorani represented ISOLA at a Conference on "Architects and Smart City Mission" organized by IIA in New Delhi in April 2016.

ISOLA Workshop with IGBC on Green Landscape Ratings

Continuing our association with IGBC, ISOLA members participated IGBC Conference on Green Landscape Ratings held in November 2016 and also in a one day workshop hosted by IGBC at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi to deliberate on its Green Landscape Rating systems.

NASA ISOLA Trophy

The ISOLA NASA Trophy this year too attracted the maximum number of entries at the annual convention held in Jaipur. We would like to thank our members Kavita Jain, Nilambari Vaidya and Harsh Mittal for conducting the jury on behalf of ISOLA.

The ISOLA NASA trophy shall henceforth be called the MOHAMMAD SHAHEER NASA TROPHY and we hope to raise the quality of entries in the trophy in tribute to our founder member and mentor Prof. Shaheer.

EDUCATION BOARD

The newly constituted Education Board includes

Chairperson Nikhil Dhar

Convenor Swati Sahasrabudhe

Members Sachin Jain, Abhijit Natu, Krishnachandran Balakrishnan, Priyaleen Singh, Shilpa Chandawarkar, Sridevi Rao, Saurabh Popli and Varsha Gavandi.

The Education board has been very active over the past few months, and had their first meeting yesterday. Swati will share with us their deliberations and plans for the way forward.

WEBSITE

The revamped ISOLA website went live at the Goa conference, thanks to the tireless efforts of Neelima Soni in consolidating years of scattered information, images and content and Sreejith S. for his graphic and design inputs. The website, that I hope everyone has visited, is our repository of information on events, news, awards, chapters, newsletters and resources. We hope our members will help to make it better with suggestions, content and time. It is a one-point source for all information related to ISOLA, including a members-only section with access to all EC meetings, AGMs, EGMs, resources and resolutions. We know have three dedicated online resources- the ISOLA website the first, and the membership site, the second. The membership website is also accessible from the www.isola.org.in site, with all members sections accessed through the same login -username and password.

We also have a dedicated website for ISOLA conferences, again linked with the main ISOLA website, where detailed information of the past conferences can be found. We owe a debt of gratitude to Rahul Paul, who is not an ISOLA member, in putting it together and continually updating it.

NEWSLETTER

In January, the newsletter was released in time for the Goa conference, with our member from Pune, Manjusha Ukidve as Editor. The newsletter has been a sporadic effort over the last few years, and in the coming year, we intend to have chapters to take on the curation, providing content and coordination for a biannual effort. We look forward to the next newsletter from the Mumbai chapter in December 2017 and Bangalore chapter in March 2018.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our Facebook Page, Twitter and Instagram accounts was successfully disseminating information to our members regarding all our activities with the creative graphic updates by Sreejith S. on a regular basis. In the future, we hope to build on his endeavors and use this medium to increase connectivity with our members and well-wishers.

LEGAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS (MANUAL OF PROCEDURES, BYELAWS DOCUMENT – REGISTRATION WITH CHARITY COMMISSIONER’S OFFICE)

The documents for registering our byelaws have been submitted to the Charity Commissioner by our lawyer, and it is in the process of acceptance.

ISOLA AWARDS AND HONOURS

The ISOLA Awards Committee will send out the Call for Entries for the seventh cycle of ISOLA Awards for the year 2017 later this month. Our senior member and Past President Savita Punde is the Awards Convenor, and Avadhoot Kumthekar the Awards Coordinator. BNCA Pune has kindly consented to host the jury in January, and we have an eminent jury panel consisting of Kishore Pradhan, Narendra Dengle, Jayant Dharap, Suneet Mohindru and Rohit Marol (EC representative).

For the first time this year, soft copy submissions will be accepted based on member feedback to reduce the time constraints and challenges of hard copy submissions and late deliveries. Details will be emailed to all members later this month and uploaded to the website. The Honours and Awards will be presented to the winners at the next Annual General Meeting in Ahmedabad in August or September 2018. We hope to see the ISOLA Awards grow in quality, content, pride and stature and we need tremendous support from our members for this by way of enthusiastic participation.

ISBN Number

Over the last few years, the costs and efforts of publishing and distributing conference proceedings books has not been justified. Particularly with the lag in distribution and change of addresses, it was found that the publications did not find a larger audience, outside of conference attendees, that they should have. For the Goa conference, the EC decided to separate the purchase and distribution of conference books from the conference registration. Purchase of the books can be done separately. Shilpa Chandawarkar, past Secretary has also followed up on getting ISBN numbers to enable the book to be made available online and in stores.

OFFICE RENOVATION

From March to May of this year, past EC member Sachin Jain, directed the revamping of the ISOLA office in Ahmedabad. We now have a professional looking office space, with the ability to host meetings of up to 15 people.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the executive council for their enthusiasm in taking up new tasks, as we engage with all of you in the years to come. To the chapter representatives, we look to you to take the lead in upcoming strategies and thank you for your time and efforts. Much appreciation is due to our Office Assistant, Khushboo Sharma, for manning the office, supporting all works and cheerfully making all tasks easier.

Before I end, I would like to acknowledge the support and encouragement of all past EC members. This EC has seen a change of guard, and we all greatly value the council of those before us. Shilpa Chandawarkar, who left us big shoes to fill, and continues to be our go-to for all issues ISOLA, so a big thank you to her. And lastly, we thank you, ISOLA members, for taking the time to be here today to participate in this AGM. Once again, we request all members to proactively engage in the working of the Society.

Nidhi Madan

Honorary Secretary

ISOLA

August 19th, 2017