

ZERORIGINDIA

ANNUAL ZOI/IFZA BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 13, 2019, THE HAGUE

A Joint Annual Board Meeting of the ZerOrigIndia Foundation (ZOI) and the International Friends of Zero Association (IFZA) was held on Friday, December 13, 2019, in The Hague.

2. The meeting was also attended by the Ambassador of India, H.E. Mr Venu Rajamony, as well as by former Dutch Ambassador in India, Mr Alphons (Fons) Stoelinga, to advise the Board on how best to take forward the Zero Project.

On the agenda were, among others:

I. Monograph progress report

ZOI secretary Peter Gobets was requested by the chair to brief the ambassadors on latest developments regarding the *Monograph on Zero* manuscript, a collection of 22 article contributions on the invention of the number zero (0) and/or its significance in the field of expertise of the scholar concerned.

Ambassador Stoelinga asked questions about the exact scope of the Zero Project research proposal, which required a brief overview of the history, transmission, philosophy and significance of the invention of zero in the sciences.

The running controversy over rival claims to the invention of zero by India, China, Cambodia, Greece and others was discussed, reinforcing the relevance and urgency of the Zero Project. Hence it is of crucial importance that the policy observed throughout is one of scrupulous evenhandedness by inviting participation from all quarters, as indeed also reflected in the Monograph.

II. Ph.D. research program / *International Conference on Zero*

The aforementioned principle of a balanced approach to the question of zero's origin holds equally for the proposed research program to be conducted by Ph.D. students in future. Ambassador Stoelinga asked whether there was a specific proposal at present and what the estimated budget would be to have it carried out. On average the costs would run to approximately Eu. 100,000 per student for a period of 3 years. Envisaged are 4-5 Ph.D. students with commensurate budget of approximately Eu. 1 million.

III. Fundraising for Ph.D. program / *International Conference on Zero*

It was explained to the two ambassadors that funding had proved difficult as the Zero Project piqued interest among a host of reputed academic from other countries but not in the Netherlands, thus disqualifying ZOI from applying for NWO funds.

It was also pointed out to the ambassadors that while the academic aspect of the Zero Project are satisfactory, the main issue impeding progress of the Zero Project to date continues to be funding, both as to the in-depth research program as well as for the proposed *International Conference on Zero*.

IV. Last but not least, following the tragic passing of ZOI's chairman, René Samson, last July, the issue of a successor was in order.

ZerOrigIndia Foundation

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