ACM History Committee Meeting Minutes, February 21, 2023

Welcome (Owens)

- Meeting began at 12:00pm EDT /9:00am PDT via Zoom
- Meeting time adjusted to 3rd Tuesdays at noon Eastern time beginning this meeting, based on the result of the committee survey regarding availability.

1. Attendees (Owens)

- Barbara Boucher Owens (chair)
- Vicki Almstrum
- Troy Astarte
- David Brock
- Carol Hutchins
- ac Loup
- Sachin Maheshwari
- Erik Rau
- Kim Tracy
- Mary Whitton
- Jeffrey Yost
- Chuck House (guest)

Not in attendance

- N/A

2. Minutes (Secretariat / Almstrum, Astarte)

- January 16, 2023 minutes: 7 votes to approve before the meeting ended, so the January minutes are ready for Kim to post on the HC website

3. Committee membership and recruitment (Owens)

- We discussed where in the Membership folder the recruitment notes are located.
- We reviewed the list of current candidates for the committee and developed a strategy for contacting these candidates to judge interest.

4. Brief updates on committee work

a. Secretariat

- The Secretariat encourages the HC to bring accessibility issues into all of the documents we produce. This includes PDF documents, images, etc.
- ACTION ITEM: The Secretariat will propose a strategy to support the committee in this goal.

b. Fellowship (Tracy, Whitton)

- Kim reported we received fewer proposals this year, about half the number we normally receive. We discussed reasons for this lower number. Are there additional publicity channels we should consider? Is the proposal reaching the right people? Does the wording of the proposal "sell" the opportunity?
- The fellowship call may have been late to reach some of the target audiences. For example, Erik noted that his posting to H-net was significantly delayed.
- Troy asked whether it could be the case that the number of fellowships available each year exceeds the rate at which the educational system produces people who would benefit from them.
- SUGGESTION: Add a question for the application process that asks the applicant to report where they heard about the program. (NOTE: Vicki added a reminder about this to the initial version of the 2024 call.)

c. Budget and Finances (Whitton, Rau)

- Pat Ryan has warned that the HC has been underspending the past few years (that is, expenditures are lower than the plan presented in the budget).
- Time is short for finalizing the 2023-2024 budget (due at the end of February), so we decided to devote as much of the meeting to discussing the budget as needed.
- Travel budget
  - For the past 3 years, the budgeted travel funds have been essentially untouched due to pandemic restrictions.
  - We discussed travel for HC work and whether to plan for having the HC represented at more events in person.
  - Vicki suggested that we should target specific conferences to offer workshops and Birds-of-a-Feather sessions related to the Heritage work.
- Key Awardees Project budget
  - This project is funded via restricted development funds through the end of calendar year 2023. In a subsequent conversation with Pat Ryan, she recommended to Erik that if the project runs out of funds before FY25, we should request bridging money.
  - As the project transitions from being budgeted from Development funds, the HC budget will include this project as an on-going budget item. Chuck confirmed that he plans to continue leading this effort for the foreseeable future.
  - The ACM issues about 20 awards every year and Chuck's rate of adding interviews has settled in at 10–12 per year, which is 50%-60% of the awards. The per-interview rate has been about $3k per interview. We will include $40k in the budget to cover 12 interviews.
  - To address the goal of developing snippets for the Key Awardees interviews, Chuck estimates that about 100 of the 140 current interviews include segments that would work well as snippets.

- - Chuck continues to experiment with AI tools that could be useful in creating snippets. The tool that he demonstrated in 2019 did not work well. He is now experimenting with Camtasia. Barb pondered whether the cost of such tools will become lower as the tools mature.
    - We observed that we should find someone to drive the snippet work in the same manner Tom Haigh has worked with producing the Turing Project snippets.
    - We considered whether the Development funds can cover the snippet work, but Chuck was not sure. Erik noted that the fiscal year begins July 1, 2023, which creates a gap of about 6 months between the end of the Development funds and the start of the next fiscal year. We will request about $20k for the snippet work.
    - Barb mentioned that the ACM also prepares snippets about each award winner to display at the annual ACM banquet. Chuck has been incorporating these snippets in the work he does for each interview.
    - Carol pointed out that Chuck must develop instructions related to the Key Awardees Project, for example that he uses additional sources such as People of ACM. The project includes some complexity that must be documented.
  - Turing Awardee Project budget
    - David shared a summary of the project status. (The PDF file is available in the meeting folder on the HC Operations drive.)
    - The project goal has evolved from only producing a video for each Awardee to including a full profile, a web page, a YouTube entry, and some number of snippets. The snippet collection on YouTube attracts about 5k views/month.
    - An important long-term challenge is to properly archive each video. We have several archival possibilities, including ACM HQ, the Charles Babbage Institute, and the Computer History Museum. The interviews are currently stored on multiple hard drives at ACM, Franny holds a set, and some are saved on Google Drive.
    - The way ACM tracks expenses does not match David's records. His tracking indicates the budget for the current FY has been spent. He recommends holding off on additional spending until July 1, 2023.
    - There are two recording methods which have been used so far: "ACM-only" involves hiring a studio and related staff and is more expensive; "CHM-partnership" utilizes CHM resources and is consequently cheaper.
    - Not all interviews can be conducted at CHM, for a variety of reasons, and so this must be reflected in the budget.
    - David recommends increasing the budget so Tom Haigh can be charged with developing more snippets (up to 3) from existing interviews. Further, Tom asked for a raise which Chuck and the rest of the committee agreed to approve.

- David shared his prioritized list of potential interviewees and his proposed strategy for completing these interviews.
- Budget for Face-to-Face meeting
  - Even though Mary is stepping down from the ACM HC, she is still happy to host a F2F HC meeting in North Carolina, perhaps in October.
  - We should include this in the budget so all committee members can attend.

d. ACM Key Awards Video Series (House)
- See budget discussion for this update.

e. Turing Awardee History Project (Brock)
- See budget discussion for this update.

f. Global (Maheshwari, Hutchins)
- Deferred

g. Heritage Project (Almstrum, Wick, Loup)
- Deferred

h. Outreach, Marketing, Web presence (Hutchins, Tracy)
- Deferred

i. DEI and accessibility issues
- Deferred

j. Other?
- None

5. Pending issues

a. Digital Preservation Strategy + History of ACM webpage(s) + Timeline idea
- Deferred

6. Additional business
- During the budget discussion, the suggestion came up for ACM to license CHM interviews and use that content for snippets. Chuck responded this would also help with the Key Awardee interviews to have access to CHM.
- ACTION ITEM: David Brock should propose a process for making this happen.

7. Upcoming meetings
   Tuesday, March 21, 12:00 noon EDT via Zoom (note mismatched timing for going to daylight savings / summertime)

8. Conclusion 1:00 pm EDT