NEALT President's report 2022-2023

by Barbara Plank

The Northern European Association for Language Technology (NEALT) was founded in Gothenburg on October 28, 2006 to promote research, cooperation and development activities in language technology in Northern Europe. Its first business meeting was held at NoDaLiDa 2007, the biannual conference endorsed by NEALT. The last business meeting was held virtually during NoDaLiDa 2021 due to Covid. This year will be the first time again for an on-site business meeting to be held during NoDaLiDa 2023 in Tórshavn, Faroe Islands.

NEALT is registered as a Swedish association and so far had a Swedish bank account. The University of Oslo maintains the official NEALT website for the association and a registry of members of the association.

The aims of the Executive Committee during the past two years have been to strengthen the outreach of the organization, indexing of its publications, revival of the journal, and improvements of the organizations' financial structure.

We continued to use the Executive Committee Dropbox structure and the website created during the former presidents' presidency, which collected information for our members about the previous business meetings, the constitution, and the executive committees that served NEALT over the years. Moreover, we collected information that was collected from NoDaLiDa general chairs during the last 3 editions of NoDaLiDa (2017, 2019, 2021) with suggestions on how to organize NoDaLiDa and proposals for a persistent NoDaLiDa Twitter account. The Twitter account was created for the 2019 edition by the publicity chair and is available since then at https://twitter.com/NoDaLiDa. We would like to thank the former president Bea Megyesi for providing the structure and excellent information of the Executive Committee's shared folder!

The association has the responsibility for the continuation of the biannual NoDaLiDa conferences which have been successfully organized since 1977, see the compiled proceedings of the NoDaLiDa series available in the ACL anthology along with the collection of the proceedings from previous years. In addition, NEALT provides sponsorship for students' participation at NoDaLiDa conferences.

The NEALT Executive Committee appoints the general chair of the program committee and the local organization committee who then take the shared responsibility for organizing the conference according to the rules for NODALIDA conferences. The executive committee appointed Mark Fishel, University of Tartu, Estonia as the general chair and Iben Nyholm Debess as the local chair, with Bergur D. Hansen, Peter Juel Henriksen and Sandra Saxov Lamhauge as local co-chairs to organize the 24th NoDaLiDa on the Faroe Islands in May 2023.

An important task of the association is to host publications, for which purpose one member of the Executive Board is the Editor in Chief heading the Editorial Board. The Editor in Chief Leon Derczynski has worked on an extensive update and revival of the NEJLT journal, now with a global focus with quick and thorough reviews, a new website and editorial board, and

publications additionally promoted via the ACL anthology.

Until recently, the publication of the NoDaLiDa Proceedings Series was carried out by Linköping University E-Press. However, as already expressed in the business meeting in 2019 by members, some member countries were negatively impacted by the fact that NoDaLiDa proceedings were not indexed by Scopus. The Executive Committee worked on improving the situation. We are happy to announce that starting from 2023, the NoDaLiDa proceedings are published by Tartu University Press and continued to be indexed in the ACL Anthology. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Jörg Tiedemann and particularly Tanel Alumäe for their invaluable work, which at times required digging in the past for a better future. Interestingly, Tartu University Press was the publisher of NEALT in early days, so it can be seen in a way of returning home.

Finally, an important task was to improve the financial processes. The bank account of the organization is in Sweden, which brings to limitations: the need for a finance officer residing in Sweden and the recurring costs of the bank account. The Executive Committee has worked on solutions to this and is moving the bank account to a digital bank in the Nordics (Estonia) which is supposed to eliminate the two limitations. The move of the bank account has been approved by the Executive Committee and is in progress. We thank the finance officer Elena Volodina for her work on this important innovation.

The presidential period is usually summed up at the business meeting. This is also the moment to thank many people, who devoted their time to NEALT or NoDaLida.

Therefore, I would like to thank all the people who contribute voluntarily to our organization in some way or another. Without their support, keeping up the work would be impossible. The NoDaLiDa organizers deserve a huge thanks for the successful conference, in particular Iben for the local organization, and Mark Fishel for chairing the program committee. The high-quality conference would not have been possible without the program committee members: Inguna Skadina, Christian Hardmeier, Tanel Alumäe and Lilja Øvrelid. Thank you all!

I would like to thank specially my colleagues on the executive committee, Jörg Tiedemann, Tanel Alumäe, Elena Volodina, Leon Derczynski, Andre Kåsen and Anders Nøklestad for the rewarding cooperation and constructive Zoom-sessions – and the nominating committee, the past two presidents, Beáta Megyesi and Andrejs Vasiljevs for their work. Special thanks to Bea for her continuous support for NEALT. We are further grateful to Anders Nøklestad for his generous help and support with the NEALT website, and to Leon Derczynski for reviving the NJEALT journal. I welcome the new committee members and wish them a fruitful collaboration and much success with leading NEALT and its associated conferences and publication outlets.

Best regards

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