

Minutes of the AAATE General Assembly 2025

Date/time: Thursday, 11th of September 2025, at 17.00-19.00 EEST

Place: European University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

Online: It was possible to follow the Assembly remotely: <https://zoom.us/j/9056550031>

Agenda

1. Welcome and opening
2. Minutes of the last General Assembly
3. Report from the treasurer and the auditors. Relief of the Board
4. AAATE activity report and highlights
5. Elections of the Board
6. Short Announcements of members
7. Any other business
8. Meeting closed

Minutes

1. Welcome and opening

The President, Pedro Encarnação, opened the General Assembly and welcomed the 42 members, one member connecting remotely.

2. Minutes of the last General Assembly

The minutes of the last General Assembly were approved.

3. Report from the treasurer and the auditors

The financial report for 2024 was presented by the Treasurer, Silvio Marcello Pagliara, using the old format and reviewed by the Assembly. The balance complies with regulations and has been audited by elected and external independent auditors.

The treasurer introduced and explained the new format, according to the discussion from the previous General Assembly and within the Board. The new format for Financial Reports, starting in 2025, simplifies comparisons year-on-year and clarifies operational costs versus project-related flows. Financial data distinguish between AAATE Office and Projects, with a Consolidated summary.

The Auditors and the Board thanked Priska Feichtenschlager for her support in the preparation and analysis of the Financial Report.

Questions from the audience about the Consolidated Summary 2024:

- Q1: Why is it such a high deficit?
- A1: Deficits are covered by project costs. Major fluctuations in income and expenditure are due to the irregular nature of project funding, which is recorded in the year it is received, while related expenditures may occur in subsequent years. Priska Feichtenschlager and Pedro Encarnação assisted in clarifying the deficit.

The reports by auditors Jan Engelen and Susanne Dirks, confirming the soundness of the accounting and the overall financial situation, were made available to and appreciated by the General Assembly.

Both the financial report and the auditors' reports were approved by the General Assembly with 41 favorable votes and one abstention

Silvio Marcello Pagliara presented the Budget for 2026, including Project and AAATE office income and expenses.

The Board proposed an increase in membership fees due to inflation and the fact that the membership fee has remained unchanged since 2019. The membership fee structure includes the option for members to renew for two years at a discounted rate.

Question from the audience and notes from the discussion:

- Q1: Are there any risks of losing members?
- A1: The Board has discussed the risk, believing it is a reasonable increase, which, in general, is lower than the inflation rate during the period from 2019.
- It was suggested to consider having an equal percentage increase for both individual and institutional members.
- It was suggested to have a smaller increase more frequently, maybe an increase every year, reflecting the inflation rate.
- The Board will plan for smaller increases in member fees more frequently.

The proposed increase in Membership fee was approved by the General Assembly with 41 favorable votes and one abstention

Individual Membership from 2026	1 year	2 years
Professionals	100 EUR	165 EUR
Students, Seniors (+65), members with disabilities, who are not employed and members living in Non High-Income Countries	50 EUR	80 EUR
Institutional Membership from 2026	1 year	2 years
Institution (3 individuals included)	325 EUR	550 EUR
Additional individual member	50 EUR	80 EUR

There has been an increase in membership numbers. Current membership by 07/ 2025 is:

Institutions: 41 (27 with biannual membership)

Individuals: 226 (135 with biannual membership)

4. AAATE activity report 2024-2025

The presentation of the activity report was structured around the following points:

- Strategic development (President Pedro Encarnação)
- National Contact Persons (President Pedro Encarnação)
- Project participation (Secretary-General Evert Jan Hoogerwerf)
- GAATO collaboration (Secretary-General Evert Jan Hoogerwerf)
- Communication affairs (Communication Officer Sabine Long)
- Publication affairs (President Pedro Encarnação and Gabriela Ricci, IOS Press)

Strategic development

President Pedro Encarnação presented the strategic development, framed within the objectives defined in the AAATE Strategic Development 2022-2023, which was discussed and reaffirmed at the Lisbon Board Meeting on 22 January 2024.

National Contact Persons

President Pedro Encarnação presented the activities supporting the AAATE National Contact Persons (NCPs). There is a new AAATE flyer and a new PPT AAATE presentation, and NCPs were invited to translate them into their own languages, if useful. AAATE currently has NCPs in 33 countries. The European countries where AAATE has not yet established an NCP are: Andorra, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Palestine, and Russia. Members were invited to propose suitable candidates for these positions.

Project participation

Secretary-General Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf presented an overview of AAATE's involvement in project activities.

During 2024-2025, AAATE has participated in 11 European project proposals, two have received funding, 5 have not received funding, and 4 have not been decided yet.

Participating in European Project Activities is an important opportunity to strengthen the organisation and to create impact.

Projects concluded in 2024

- TRIPS (Increasing accessibility of public transport)
- DIGI READY (Erasmus+ Project)
- Right to Connect Now (Erasmus+ Project)

Projects concluded in 2025

- SEURO (Horizon 2020 Person-centred technologies for integrated care). Global Think Tank on Ageing and Person Centred Technology in care and support services has been part of the SEURO-AAATE-GAATO collaboration and will continue in 2026.

Projects started in 2025

- AI4HomeCarers (Erasmus+ Project)
- UPGRADE (Erasmus+ Project)

Numerous AAATE members have actively supported the project development and implementation activities

Members were encouraged to consider AAATE as a possible project partner.

See: <https://aaate.net/activities/projects/>

GAATO collaboration

Secretary-General Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf reported on AAATE's involvement in GAATO, the Global Alliance of Assistive Technology Organizations.

- Other associations have joined GAATO, strengthening the association
- Luc de Witte serves as president of GAATO, representing AAATE
- Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf serves as Secretary-General for GAATO
- Alternate Board Member for AAATE is Pedro Encarnação

AAATE continues to play a leading role in the development and coordination of GAATO's activities.

GAATO actively collaborates with the Inclusion Forum of the AAATE'25 conference.

Other international collaboration

- AAATE and EASPD - European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities collaborated during AAATE2025
- AAATE and ZEROProject collaborated during the ZEROProject Conference 2025 and AAATE2025
- Secretary-General Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf represented AAATE and the SEURO project at the i-CREAtE 2024 conference, 23-26 August 2024, Shanghai, China.

Communication affairs

Communication Officer Sabine Long presented an overview of AAATE's communication channels:

AAATE website: <http://aaate.net/category/news/>

- association news and members update via the blog

- members login => connect with the AAATE network
- resources (incl. Access to Technology & Disability journal)

Social media & emailings

- LinkedIn page (770 followers) & group (767 members),
- LinkedIn AAATE Group and Page:
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2094327/>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/association-for-the-advancement-of-assistive-technology-in-europe-aaate/>
- AAATE is migrating from Twitter to BlueSky: @aaate-net.bsky.social
- AAATE provides regular updates via emailings & quarterly newsletters

Exchange and connect

- Organise bi-annual conferences and workshops
- Organise quarterly Online Aperitivos
- Reports from events
- Press releases

Publication affairs

Gabriela Ricci, from IOS Press, presented the journal Technology and Disability

- Technology and Disability holds an Impact Factor since 2023
- Abstracted/Indexed in major academic databases, including EBSCO, Scopus and Web of Science
- AAATE members were encouraged to register as reviewers for the journal and to consider submitting their work for publication in T&D.
- Submission information on <https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/TAD>

Contacts:

- Associate Publisher at IOS Press Gabriela Ricci (g.ricci@iospress.nl)
- Editor-in-Chief: Luc de Witte (L.P.deWitte@hhs.nl)

Free access for AAATE members on
<http://aaate.net/publications/technology-and-disability/> to AAATE 30th Anniversary
Special Issue: "State of the Art in Assistive Technology" has

6. Elections of the Board

The Election Package was distributed to the members upfront.

Luc De Witte, representing the Nomination Committee, chaired the election process

Positions for election for the term 2026-2027, currently held by:

- President: Pedro Encarnação (P)
- President Elect: Dominique Archambault (FR)
- Past President: Georgios Kouroupetroglou (GR)
- Treasurer: Silvio Marcello Pagliara (IT)
- Secretary: Tone Øderud (No)
- Project Officer: Maurice Grinberg (B)
- External Communication and Information: Emma Smith (IE)

Candidates proposed by the board in office, following the election by-law:

- President: Dominique Archambault (FR)
- President Elect: Silvio Marcello Pagliara (IT)
- Past President: Pedro Encarnação (P)

Candidates for four board positions :

- Maurice Grinberg (BG) (re-candidate)
- Tone Øderud (NO) (re-candidate)
- Emma Smith (IE) (re-candidate)
- Annalu Waller (IE) (new candidate)
- Merita Hoxha (ALB) (new candidate)
- Lorenzo Desideri (IT) (new candidate)
- Reinhard Koutny (AT) (new candidate)
- Melanie Schaur (AT) (new candidate)

The candidates were tasked to provide a 1-minute oral presentation

Candidates elected for the four board positions:

- Annalu Waller (IE)
- Merita Hoxha (ALB)
- Lorenzo Desideri (IT)
- Tone Øderud (NO)

Allocations of the Treasurer, Secretary, Project Officer, and External Communication/Information roles on the board will be agreed upon by the new board.

Two positions as auditors for the term 2026-2027, currently held by:

- Susanne Dirks (DE) (re-candidate)
- Jan Engelen (BE) (re-candidate)

Candidates for the two auditor positions:

- Susanne Dirks (DE) (re-candidate)
- Jan Engelen (BE) (re-candidate)
- Reinhard Koutny (AT) (new candidate)
- Melanie Schaur (AT) (new candidate)

Candidates elected for the two auditor positions.

- Susanne Dirks (DE) (re-candidate)
- Jan Engelen (BE) (re-candidate)

Three positions in the Nomination Committee for the term 2026-2027, currently held by:

- Renzo Andrich (IT) (re-candidate)
- Luc de Witte (NL) (re-candidate)
- Klaus Miesenberger (AT) (re-candidate)

Candidates for the three positions in the Nomination Committee

- Renzo Andrich (IT)
- Luc de Witte (NL)
- Klaus Miesenberger (AT)

The Candidates for the three positions in the Nomination Committee were elected by acclamation.

7. Short Announcements of members

No announcements

8. Any other business

No other business

9. Meeting closed

Given that there were no announcements from members or any other business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 19.00 EEST.