

Minutes of the 2025 business meeting of the Association for Written Language and Literacy

AWLL board: President - Terry Joyce; vice-presidents - Lynne Cahill and Dorit Ravid
Italian National Research Council (CNR), Institute for Computational Linguistics “Antonio Zampolli”,
Pisa, Italy; 30 October 2025

AWLL business meetings are held during our workshops as an informal forum for discussing matters pertaining to AWLL and its workshops. This one was chaired by Terry and Lynne; these minutes are based on the meeting agenda and the board’s recollections for all matters discussed; many participants, both onsite and online, attended the business meeting.

Agenda

1. AWLL board thanked Vito Pirrelli for graciously serving as AWLL15 local organizer
2. AWLL’s ‘growing pains’
3. AWLL15: Evolving organizational approach
4. AWLL membership revisited
5. AWLL-CIC structure
6. AWLL14 special issue
7. AWLL15 special issue
8. AWLL15 presentation files and recordings
9. AWLL16 ...
10. Other matters

1. AWLL board thanked Vito Pirrelli for graciously serving as AWLL15 local organizer

On behalf of all AWLL15 participants, the board expressed our sincere appreciation to Vito Pirelli for his hard work in making the necessary local preparations and for being a true gentleman of a host during the workshop.

The board also thanked the members of the “Antonio Zampolli” Institute for Computational Linguistics for their kind support to the workshop.

2. AWLL’s ‘growing pains’

As already conveyed to the AWLL community [see AWLL14-BMMinutes and newsletters 14 and 15], the AWLL14 workshop, most unexpectedly, afforded AWLL with a unique opportunity to seed a small ‘buffer’ of financial support for future conferences. However, as also communicated, in order to realize that opportunity, AWLL has had to transform itself from being a *social network* to being a *legal entity*, with the additional responsibilities that entails. More specifically, in order to receive the small financial legacy from AWLL14, first AWLL needed to become a *community interest company* (incorporated in UK, #15584755, 22 March 2024, AWLL board becoming directors on behalf of the community) capable of operating a bank account. Then,

the AWLL board sought to open that account with a UK bank; a particularly fraught endeavor due to the verification hurdles for the non-UK resident board members (i.e., Terry and Dorit) which was prolonged at times by periods of personal matters. The (temporary) solution to emerge has been for Lynne to take on the role of AWLL treasurer [on behalf of the community, Terry truly thanked Lynne for this]. With a UK bank account opened, AWLL-CIC was able to receive AWLL14's financial residue (see below). The next step was to arrange (just in time) for a Stripe account, the online payment system (with Lynne and Terry as administrators for AWLL-CIC), necessary to receive the AWLL15 registration fees.

3. AWLL15: Evolving organizational approach

As also previously explained to the AWLL community [see AWLL14-BMMinutes], a unique donation made it possible for AWLL14 to convene in Rome in 2023. As that donation was administered by Temple University Japan, effectively, AWLL14 broke away from the traditional pattern of AWLL conferences in having a local researcher as the local organizer. Accordingly, AWLL board is extremely grateful to Vito for agreeing to host AWLL15 in Pisa, in greatly restoring that tradition and for generously covering the costs for room hire and local support. However, with its new legal status, AWLL-CIC has assumed direct responsibility for all other financial aspects of organizing AWLL15.

A fuller outline of the AWLL-CIC's account will be provided at the next AWLL business meeting, but the meeting was informed that the financial legacy from AWLL14 was £3,200. However, it was also reported that approximately £1,800 (about 55% of the legacy) has already been set aside to cover various costs already incurred in the setting up processes and for engaging an accountant to file for AWLL-CIC's first-year accounts. The meeting was also informed of Amalia Gnanadesikan's most generous donation of \$2,000 for AWLL15. Consistent with Amalia's wish that approximately half of the donation should specifically promote student participation, that proportion made it possible to offer student waivers for attending the conference dinner, with the rest greatly helping with the costs for keynotes. Accordingly, in estimating appropriate registration fees for AWLL15, AWLL-CIC sought to keep them to minimal levels to cover the costs of the refreshment breaks and lunches (which amply demonstrated the Italian concerns for good food), and the welcome reception which included a bracing walking tour.

4. AWLL membership revisited

Traditionally, everyone who has attended an AWLL workshop has been considered members of the AWLL community and, thus, automatically included on our mailing list. During the AWLL12 business meeting, a proposal was approved to add a small margin to workshop registration fees on top of covering the basic costs, but that never happened due to the very different circumstances of recent workshops (AWLL13~AWLL15).

However, given the need to cover the ongoing costs that are necessary to maintain AWLL-CIC's status of legal entity, this warrants rethinking. At present, recognition as a member of AWLL's core community operates on an opt-in system; that is, members are required to explicitly confirm their wish to be part of the core community. Core community members are entitled to have a profile (brief listing of research interests) on the AWLL community website, to announce their recent publications in newsletters, and to also contribute pieces to the newsletters. The proposal floated at this meeting was that, going forward, this would involve a small annual subscription and suggestions for an appropriate level were invited. Generally, the proposal was met with understanding, which prompted discussion about the membership fees of other related academic organizations, but no concrete suggestions emerged during the meeting. Accordingly, the board will continue to consider the matter.

5. AWLL-CIC structure

The board wishes to explore the possibilities of expanding the structure of AWLL-CIC. More specifically, the board wants to open up some new roles going forward, such as having more technical support, an AWLL secretary, as well as an editorial team for newsletters. Accordingly, any interested parties were invited to contact Terry to consider appropriate role(s).

6. AWLL14 special issue

Terry reported that he and Constanze are continuing to work on the special issue for AWLL14, which is approaching its final stages.

7. AWLL15 special issue

Conversations have already taken place about returning to AWLL's usual practice of the workshop's local organiser taking on one of the guest-editor roles.

[Postscript: Vito Pirelli has since confirmed his willingness to be the first guest-editor and Sonali Nag will be joining him as the second guest-editor]

8. AWLL15 presentation files and recordings

As with previous AWLL workshops, Terry plans to upload all presentation files and recordings to the AWLL15 website as soon as possible. To that aim, all presenters were asked (if only sharing a PPTX file so far) to provide a PDF version of their presentation.

[Postscript: Presentation PDFs are now uploaded and work in editing the recordings continues]

9. AWLL16 ...

Very much hoping to return to 18-month intervals between gatherings, we are aiming for Spring 2027 for AWLL16 and open to any possibilities.

10. Other topics: These were deferred to the conference dinner and to by email at any time...