

# Learner Development SIG

## Team Reports for the Annual General Meeting

### Instructions

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3. Enter information for each of the items.  
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### 1. Co-coordinators

(Submitted by Mathew Porter & Mayumi Abe)

*Write a summary of all of the team reports for submission to the SIG Representative Liaison. These reports are all submitted into the record at the LD SIG's Annual General Meeting, which is held during the JALT international conference.*

1. Achievements:

The Learner Development SIG continued to fulfill its obligations to its members by providing forums, both in print and in person, to discuss, research, and share various facets of learner development. Our role as coordinators has been to support the teams that are responsible for the different areas of the SIG, communicate with members, and represent the SIG and its members at JALT national executive meetings. We would like to highlight some of the SIG's major achievements from November 2015 to November 2016:

- Steadily growing membership and sustained personalized communication with SIG members (membership team)
- Avoided negative balance by reducing number/values of grants. Have been able to provide some support for unforeseen events, but austerity is needed. (treasury team)
- Grants awarded to members for two conferences, one research project, and one project, totaling 125,000 yen. (grants team)
- Published two regular issues of Learning Learning and one special issue, which featured 8 short papers from the 2015 LD Forum on "Learners as Teachers: What Teachers Learn From Their Learners" and the 2015 Creating Community: Learning Together 2 informal afternoon conference. (LL editorial team)
- Ordered two small print runs of publication projects: *Learning Development Working Papers* (80) and *Looking Back: This Past Year after the Earthquake* (35), delivered to project team members and sites in Rikuzentakata (publications team & former outreach team)
- Held forums at national conferences: JALT2016, PanSIG, and JALTCALL (programme team)
- Making progress on the first issue of the Learner Development Journal and a Review Network has been established. A theme, editors, and CFP have been announced for the second issue of LDJ. (Learner Development Journal Steering Group)
- Tokyo Get Together group met 7 times in 2016, and the group held their second Creating Community: Learning Together mini-conference for teachers and their students in December 2015. They are currently accepting proposals for their third CC:LT in December 2016 (Tokyo Get-Together organizing team)
- Kansai Get Togethers were successfully restarted, holding meetings monthly throughout the year, and the team held their first student conference in November 2016 (Kansai Get-Together organizing team)
- Hiroshima Get Together group met 5 times in 2016, and are currently preparing for their annual inter-university Scrabble competition in December (Hiroshima Get-Together organizing team)

- Collaborated with other organizations inside and outside of JALT: sponsoring Hugh Nicoll at the Sojo University Teaching and Learning Forum (NanKyu Chapter) in Feb. 2017, developing a workshop on Goal-Setting and Learning Outcomes with FLP and the Nagoya chapter, and successfully bidding to host the Independent Learning Association's conference in August/September 2018.

## 2. Unresolved Challenges: (Agenda)

- Budget priorities

How the SIG is financed by JALT has changed and we were quite generous with our funds in the past. We are encouraged by JALT to keep a "rainy day fund" equivalent to one year of our budget. We must rethink our grants, meanwhile we have requests for funding from GT groups and the PR team

- Volunteers

We are in need of volunteers for both key roles and shadow positions, particularly for the coordinators, web team, and pub team.

- Understanding Member Needs

Some team members have suggested a need to better understand what our members want from the SIG. Should a member survey be prioritized and who would design/implement it and analyze the results?

- Attracting New Members

JALT members now get a free SIG, but we didn't experience a surge in membership. How do we attract new members?

- Activities

Nagoya and FLP are eager to collaborate with LD on an event, but talks have stalled. The SIG will host ILA2018 and the conference committee will need our support.

## 3. Recommendations:

- Improve communication

- Mayumi and Mathew need to communicate with the teams better. We have started to hold monthly Skype meetings, but perhaps we should make our notes public or send a monthly summary of coordinator news to the list.
- There needs to be more awareness of areas where teams interact (get-togethers, PR, web, grants, pubs, membership) and a greater attempt by team members to make sure that info is getting to the right people in time so it can get to our members.
- Switch to Mail Chimp for announcements. ER SIG currently uses Mail Chimp for their

newsletter (basically announcements). It's better for announcements as it allows for embedded media and collects open and click data. Do we need to look at how other SIGs communicate with members and encourage interaction?

- Understanding Members' Needs
  - Develop survey to be used with membership letters tailored for new, renewing, and departing members. Try to identify what our current strengths, successes, and weaknesses. Ask respondents to for permission to use opinions in PR material.
  
- 4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget:
  - information pamphlet (500 postcards 10,000)
  - Tokyo GT room fees: 25,000 yen
  - Kansai GT room venue fees: 35,000
  - Approximately ¥20,000 for web hosting and domain registration fees.
  - PanSIG Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen (20,000-25,000?)
  - JALT CALL Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen (20,000-25,000?)
  - Research Grant - 1 x 25,000 yen
  - Project Grant - 2 x 20,000 yen = 40,000 yen
  - JALT International Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen
  
- 5. Goals for 2016-2017:
  - a. Create a budget and operate within it
  - b. Facilitate communication b/w teams and w/members
  - c. Recruit new committee members
  
- 6. Team members/roles for 2016-2017

## **2. Treasury Team**

(submitted by Huw Davies)

1. Achievements: Having received slightly more than expected for membership from JCO, and thanks to the help of the grants team, finances are in a much more stable position than expected
2. Unresolved Challenges: Further discussion is needed going forward, because to continue spending as we did in previous years is likely to lead us into a sticky situation. That said, it is important to offer value to our members, and to offer grants and give opportunities to present and publish
3. Recommendations: A full discussion at JALT National to learn members' priorities for how money should be spent moving forward. Both of the treasury team will be at the meeting this year.
4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget: Unchanged so far. It would be helpful if we were informed of any expected expenses in the coming year - even if the project is likely to break even.
5. Goals for 2016-2017: To distribute funds to worthy projects, as chosen by our members.

6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017: unchanged - Huw and Sami to continue, though we would welcome shadows.

### **3. Membership Team**

(Ann Flanagan)

- 1) Achievements:
  - a. There has been a steady increase of new members each month.
  - b. The format for the letters has been changed and well received.
  - c. The membership update procedures have been updated.
  - d. Collaboration with other team members went smoothly.
- 2) Unresolved Challenges:
  - a. Being consistent with when the letters are being sent out.
  - b. Knowing when to update the letters and what content is appropriate for each update.
- 3) Recommendations:
  - a. Changing the advanced renewal letters system from +1, +2 to a +2 and +3 month arrangement.
  - b. Having a consistent timeline for when the letters need to be sent out.
  - c. Send out an online questionnaire to members to see if they are satisfied with the LD SIG and if they have any suggestions on ways to make our SIG stronger. Another online questionnaire should be created for those members whose membership has lapsed.
  - d. Ask for more feedback about the content of the letters from the other SIG Team Leaders at different times throughout the year. Have a timeline of when to update the letters.
- 4) Items for the 2016-2017 budget: None
- 5) Goals for 2016-2017:
  - a. Establish a new renewal system for the letters and schedule for when the letters need to be sent out.
  - b. Be more consistent with sending the letters out..
  - c. Send monthly updates to the LD SIG Team Members and Monthly Get Together Teams.
  - d. Better communication with other Team Leaders within the LD SIG.
- 6) Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017:
  - a. Ann Flanagan - Chairperson
  - b. Barrie Matte- Letters

### **4. Programmes Team**

(submitted by Joël Laurier)

1. Achievements: This year, our three big conferences (JALT International, PanSIG, and JALT CALL) had deadlines for proposals at around the same time in February. The Programmes Team decided to have our presenters submit their LD SIG forum proposals at the same time. This greatly facilitated our job, as most of the year's work was done within a span of two weeks. This formula worked very well.
2. Unresolved Challenges: With PanSIG changing their system, next year's Programmes team

will need to do their work earlier. This should not be a big problem.

3. Recommendations: Have a waiting list system for presenters. For JALT CALL and JALT International, accepted presenters dropped out after being accepted. In most situations, we could get other presenters to fill in vacated slots.
4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget:
5. Goals for 2016-2017: We have started discussions about having a conference with another SIG. This should be done. Or, another idea would be have the SIG team up with a chapter for a mini conference.
6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017: Lee Arnold (Programmes Team Co-ordinator) - JALT International, Blair Barr - JALT CALL, Nicole Gallagher - PanSIG.

## **5. Publicity Team**

(submitted by Robert Moreau)

1. Achievements: This year the publicity team followed the same general course of action as the previous year. At the beginning of the year the team put together short blurbs for the TLG publication. After May however, the publication stopped regular blurbs and the publicity team worked on a new general description for the SIG.

The team also worked on a completely new logo for the one-day conference coming up in December 2016. The previous 2 years used the same graphic, but with different color schemes.

The team has also been involved in updating the LDSIG's Facebook group page as needed. The Facebook group has actually grown quite a bit this year with the total number at 344 at the time of this writing.

2. Unresolved Challenges: It would be a good idea to have an information pamphlet to be able to hand out at conferences if the budget will allow for it.
3. Recommendations: Contact the publicity department as soon as possible when work is needed to allow for revisions and translation work
4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget: Usually this is determined by the type of work the publicity team does for the other teams. The publicity team itself does not, at the moment have any items for the 2016-2017 budget.
5. Goals for 2016-2017: to continue providing services for the SIG as needed
6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017: The team members and their roles are as yet undecided, subject to a vote at the general meeting.

## **6. Publications Team**

(submitted by James Underwood)

2015-2016 LD SIG Publication Report

**Publications Team**

**Publications Coordinator** James Underwood

**Learning Learning team** Alison Stewart (Lead Editor), Andy Barfield (Members' Voices), Arnold Arao (Layout), Chika Hayashi (Translation Coordinator), Monika Szirmai (Layout), Rachelle Meilleur (Shadow Editor), Yoko Sakurai (Grant Awardees), with Arnold Arao becoming the lead editor from LL23(3)

**Learner Development Journal One editors** Darren Elliott & Hugh Nicoll

**Learner Development Journal Two editors** Masuko Miyahara, Robert Croker, Patrick Kiernan, and Chika Hayashi

**Learner Development Journal Steering Group** Tim Ashwell, Andy Barfield, Alison Stewart

### **Achievements**

#### **Learning Learning**

- Spring (23.1), edited by Alison Stewart and Rachelle Meilleur and contained contributions from Agnes Patko, Andy Barfield, Alison Stewart, Bjorn Fuisting, Ken Ikeda, Lee Arnold, Nat Carney, Natsumi Magatake, Paul Arenson together with the regular LL features.
- Special edition (23.2). In early October a special edition of LL was published. It was edited by Lee Arnold, Andy Barfield, Charlotte Murakami and Alison Stewart and contained contributions from Andy Barfield, Charlotte Murakami, Erina Iwasa, Jenny Morgan, Lee Arnold, Mehran Sabet, Stacey Vye.
- The forthcoming Fall Edition (23.3), edited by Arnold Arao, will feature six Members' Voices articles, and a preview of the LD Forum at the JALT 2016 conference, as well as the regular SIG updates.

#### **Learner Development Journal**

- Learner Development Journal Issue One on Visualizing Learner Development Edited by Darren Elliott and Hugh Nicoll is scheduled for publication in April/May 2017.

#### **Learner Development Journal Steering Group**

- We've kept contact with Darren and Hugh through the year and had discussions with them by email and Skype about different questions to do with the production of the first issue. A big thank you to Darren and Hugh for all their work on the first issue.
- We've also approached different members of the SIG to join the Review Network (RN) for the journal. Ann Mayeda, Chika Hayashi, Dexter Da Silva, Fumiko Murase, Jo Mynard, Katherine Thornton, Steve Brown, and Ted O'Neill are the starting members of the RN.
- We've developed a set of simple review guidelines for the RN that we agreed with Darren and Hugh. The RN has also reviewed the guidelines and approved them.
- Masuko Miyahara, Robert Croker, Patrick Kiernan, and Chika Hayashi have formed an editorial team with a thematic focus on Qualitative Research into Learner Development for the second issue. In May Masuko put out a Call for Papers for the second issue of the Journal. The CFP has been posted on the LD website: <http://ld-sig.org/issue-two/>

**Learning Development Working Papers** A small print run of 80 copies was organised in October 2016. 80 copies @ 100,000JPY plus p&p costs. Priced @1500 JPY per copy in Japan, and @2000 JPY for overseas orders (so far, Ireland and Hong Kong). In the past the SIG has had trouble selling publications that have already been published online. This has led to a large surplus stock that has had to be shredded later. With 80 copies, the SIG should not find it difficult to sell something like 75 copies and keep a few as display copies; printing and p&p costs should be more or less covered, too. Expected cost to the SIG: 15,000-20,000 JPY.

**Looking Back: This Past Year after the Earthquake** A small print run of 35 copies was organised in June 2016 priced @2500 JPY per copy for SIG members. This pricing allowed the SIG to donate 12 copies to different people and organisations in Rikuzentakata (including the school, Musashi-san, the local library, the tourist office, and Nakazawa Sensei). A copy was also sent to JALT Central Office for JALT's archives.

## Unresolved Challenges

### Learning Learning

**Members' Voices (Andy)** One of the challenges has been contacting new SIG members soon after they join the SIG. My feeling is that this needs to be done within 3 months of their joining the SIG. Later than that, and the response rate/interest in contributing is much lower. Something to discuss with the membership team when we see each other - much easier to talk about this together than by email.

## Recommendations

**Learner Development Journal Steering Group** We'd like other SIG members to become involved in the steering group. Darren will join the steering group after Issue One is completed.

## Items for the 2016-2017 Budget

### Goals for 2016-2017

### Learning Learning

**Arnold Arao (editor)** 1. Regarding the upcoming Fall Issue of LL, we are looking at publication to coincide with the JALT conference at the end of November. To that end, if you have any information that needs to be published / included in the upcoming issue of LL, could you please send it to me at [arnoldarao@gmail.com](mailto:arnoldarao@gmail.com) or [learninglearning.editor@gmail.com](mailto:learninglearning.editor@gmail.com) by **Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup>**. This will allow us time to format and prepare the journal.

2. Looking ahead, I would greatly appreciate hearing your ideas of where *LearningLearning* should be headed in the future, such things as what you enjoy reading and what you would like included.

Moreover, if you come across anyone who would like to submit a piece of for publication, please ask them to submit it via [learninglearning.editor@gmail.com](mailto:learninglearning.editor@gmail.com) as the current link on our site is inactive.

As I am new to this, I appreciate any help and suggestions you can offer and I am really looking forward to working with all of you to continue the success of the Learner Development SiG.

**Members' Voices (Andy)** I'd like to find a shadow who could shadow me on LL 24(1) - i.e., from JALT2016 - and take over from LL 24(2) - from April 2017.

**Learner Development Journal** Initiation of work for Issue Two in February 2017 and development of research and writing over the rest of the year. Publication of Issue One in April/May. Inviting proposals for Issue Three, and building on experiences and lessons learned with Issues One and Two.

**Learner Development Journal Steering Group** Continue as we have been doing in keeping contact with the editorial teams, and explore possibilities for developing a dedicated website for the Learner Development Journal. Look for other people to shadow us so that other SIG members become involved in overseeing the development of the journal

#### **Team Members/Roles for November 2016 to November 2017**

##### **Changes:**

Publications Coordinator: James Underwood => ?

Learning Learning Editor: Alison Stewart => Arnold Arao

Members' Voices shadow => ?

## **7. Web Team**

(submitted by Hugh Nicoll)

1. Achievements: During the 2015/16 SIG year we have maintained our web presence, email list communications (both for officers and announcements for the general membership), and I have tried to post regular updates on our Facebook page.

The primary web site maintenance and support task for the SIG is publishing new issues of *Learning Learning*. A less demanding -- but more of a moving target challenge -- is regularly updating information pages. In the 2015-2016 year, by the time of the conference AGM in Nagoya, we will have published 3 issues; LL23(1), LL23(2), and LL23(3). I am pleased to now be working with Arnold Arao who stepped in as the *Learning Learning* layout coordinator.

Email communications -- both the LD-Comm (officers list) and the LD-News (announcements) mailing lists are hosted on the ld-sig.org domain, using the oldie but goodie

mailing list software Mailman. Each month as web admin I receive membership updates, and try to keep both subscriber lists up-to-date. Occasionally minor problems -- lapsed email addresses, etc. -- have to be dealt with, but such issues can usually be dealt with quickly and easily. Maintaining the Facebook social media presence is also relatively simple and trouble-free, involving the posting of event and special publications announcements passed on by officers and friends.

2. Unresolved Challenges: There are three primary challenges to be addressed in the next year: (1) The development of a team of editors who will monitor and update web pages in consultation with other officer teams; (2) Developing a shadowing/skills development practice that will allow new members to take over in the near future; and (3) Re-booting the Talking Points Blog for the 2016-17 SIG year. In brief: bodies, brains, and commitment required.

I did get help from James and Billy in 2014 when we moved to Wordpress as a site platform, but for the most part all web site editing/updating is currently a solo effort, with the notable exception of the Grants team and Tokyo Get-togethers group, who mostly add and/or edit content on their own pages. Thanks and a shout out to Kris and Andy. Matthew has also stepped up from time to time to edit the messages from the coordinators and general welcome messages on the site.

The biggest challenge -- in addition to doing a better job of developing an active, collaborative team -- is in rebooting the Talking Points Blog, perhaps working more closely with the Publications Team members to integrate our respective areas of responsibility with the PR aspects of the maintaining the web site, Facebook presence, and publishing efforts. Institutional/personnel crises at my "home" university, combined with the personal challenges I have faced in moving from a tenured position to re-joining the ranks of the wage-slave part-timers proved more than I could manage during the first semester of the H. 28 academic year. Fingers crossed that we can hash out some options in the next month or two, hit the ground running in the new year.

3. Recommendations: See "Unresolved Challenges" above.
4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget: Approximately ¥20,000 for web hosting and domain registration fees.
5. Goals for 2016-2017: see "Unresolved Challenges" above.
6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017: need to be discussed at the AGM

## **8. Grants Team**

(submitted by Jenny Morgan, Kristen Sullivan, Satomi Yoshimuta)

1. Achievements: The grants were advertised via the SIG homepage (<http://ld-sig.org/grants/>), facebook page and mailing list. The results of applications were communicated to SIG members via the mailing list, and to applicants via email. As necessary, unsuccessful applicants were provided with alternative ideas for seeking funding. Details of grants, applicant numbers and recipients are listed below:

PanSIG Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen - No applicants

JALT CALL Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen - 1 applicant - Recipient: Sean Toland

Research Grant - 1 x 25,000 yen - 1 applicant - Recipient: Yoko Sakurai

Project Grant - 1 x 20,000 yen - 2 applicants - Recipient: Nathaniel Carney

JALT International Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen - 1 applicant - Recipient: Daniel Hougham

So far there have been no inquiries or applications for the Subscription and Membership grants.

2. Unresolved Challenges:

- a) The number of Project Grants and JALT International Conference Grants on offer was reduced from two to one due to budget cuts. What should happen regarding this next year?
- b) There were a very small number of applicants for each grant type this year. Why? Is it because the majority of our members receive institutional funding and are thus ineligible for most grants (except the project grant)? Or is it because 40,000 yen still would not cover the out of pocket expenses necessary to attend a conference for our members who do not receive institutional funding? Or some other reason? Is this an issue or not?
- c) For the past two years there have been zero inquiries/applications for the Subscription and Membership grants. Are these grants necessary?
- d) What to do if there are no applicants for a grant? Return this money to the SIG, or use it in subsequent cases where there are multiple applications to one grant category?

3. Recommendations:

- a) Should a survey be conducted to gauge the needs of members regarding grants?
- b) Stop offering the Subscription and Membership grants? Find some other method to attract potential new members to the SIG?
- c) Return the number of project grants to two?
- d) It might be better to have four people on the Grants Team: 1 person acting as overall coordinator/contact person, and 3 acting as vetters of the grant applications.

4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget

- a) PanSIG Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen
- b) JALT CALL Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen
- c) Research Grant - 1 x 25,000 yen
- d) Project Grant - 2 x 20,000 yen = 40,000 yen
- e) JALT International Conference Grant - 1 x 40,000 yen

5. Goals for 2016-2017:

- a) Add information about previous recipients to the Grants section of the SIG homepage, and include a link to the issue of LL which they contributed an article to?
6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017

## 9. Get Together Teams

### A. Tokyo Get-Together

Andy Barfield, Blair Barr and Ken Ikeda

#### 1. Achievements

We have been trying a new approach with workshops and informal discussions for five out of the 7 get-togethers (including the CCLT conference) of the year. Feedback has been very positive, but participation has been variable from one get-together to another.

#### *Get-togethers held so far (date, theme, participants)*

- February 21 Research histories, 14 participants (with 4 people sending their apologies)
- April 24 Exploratory practice (Alison Stewart), 12 participants (with 8 people sending their apologies)
- May 15 Qualitative interviewing (Alex Shaitan, Caroline Ross), 14 participants (with 3 people sending their apologies)
- June 19 Narrative research (Masuko Miyahara), 15 participants (with 1 person sending their apologies)
- July 24 Semester review, 5 participants (with 7 people sending their apologies)
- October 23 Workshop on Diary studies in learner development research (Christina Gkonou), 6 participants (with 7 people sending their apologies)

#### *Extensive reflective reports written up after each get-together*

- Community resource - see <http://ld-sig.org/tokyo-get-togethers/> but we are wondering whether we need to continue doing this.

#### *Final get-together of 2016*

- December 18 Creating Community: Learning Together 3

#### 2. Unresolved challenges

It's really important to get timely membership updates so that we add new members as soon as possible to the Tokyo mailing list. Unfortunately there was a mix-up in the first half of the year and we missed contacting over 20 new members of the SIG until late July. For a couple of years now we have faced problems of continuity in terms of participation from one get-together to another. The core group of people making it to each get-together has become more variable, so there's been less of a sense of a need for research-oriented camaraderie. It could be that this is an unexpected effect of having the Creating Community Learning Together informal afternoon conference in December since 2014. Similarly, the launch of the Learner Development Journal may have shifted research impetuses outside of the meetings. Such factors may have changed the dynamic of the get-togethers, and the three of us are wondering whether (a) we should let CCLT go for a year (i.e., not hold it in 2017), and (b) it's worth having a complete break from the get-togethers for a year and then re-start in 2018 when Ken is back from sabbatical. This in part connects to the third challenge that we face - finding a venue for the 2017 get-togethers. Perhaps all these challenges are pointing to the need to re-think everything together with Tokyo area members, survey them,

and see what the different preferences and proposals people have for continuing.

### **3. Recommendations**

It would be great if other people could step forward to act as get-together co-coordinators. Ken will be on sabbatical in 2017, and Blair will be more involved in LD SIG programmes. We need others to help coordinate the get-togethers. Perhaps we might stop the get-togethers for a year and then re-launch them in 2018, as mentioned above.

### **4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget**

Estimated venue room costs for 2017: 25,000 yen. At Otsuma Women's University we pay a small amount for one room for several hours - about 2,500 each time; with CCLT3 room costs go up considerably, but we cover the increased costs through the 1,000 yen participation fee in December for teachers. CCLT breaks even. If we continue with the get-togethers in 2017 and the venue costs work out to be higher than 25,000 yen over the year, we can ask for donations from participating members as we have done in the past.

### **5. Goals for 2016-2017**

The first is to enjoy what we do and learn as we go - we need to work out how to continue, adapt our expectations, and respond to the changing patterns of interest and activity that we have noted above. Ideally we would continue to develop as a teacher-researcher group committed to exploring together learner development issues. This might involve developing action research or Exploratory Practice projects together, combined with free-wheeling discussions of learner development practices and puzzles around people's interests. Another possibility is to develop a broad book, online, or multimodal project together, and/or work for a special issue of Learning Learning. We have the feeling that it would be helpful to have some kind of greater collaborative project, but we are as yet uncertain as to what that might be. CCLT4 at this point remains a question mark.

### **6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017**

At the time of writing this (late October) it looks likely that in 2017 Blair will be less involved in coordinating the Tokyo get-togethers and more involved in LD programmes. Ken will be definitely be away on sabbatical. Andy will continue, but it would be really appreciated if one or two new people could step forward to co-coordinate in 2017.

## **B. Hiroshima Get-Together**

(submitted by Jim Ronald)

### **1. Achievements:**

We're still going! And it's still worthwhile. In 2016, we have met in March, July, September, and plan to meet in November and December. The annual Scrabble contest gives us a good end-of-year focus, and as we look forward to becoming more involved in a publication-related project, we hope that this will also give us an opportunity to work together in various ways. It's been good working with Ariel Sorensen, while he was in Hiroshima. Monika Szirmai has been our Scrabble manager - preparatory meetings, location, and contest management: the best managed part of our Hiroshima

LD get-togethers!

2. Unresolved Challenges: Finding meaningful ways to meet more regularly - or accepting that 4-5 times in the year is good going.
3. Recommendations: Appreciate the support and encouragement we receive.
4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget: nothing (we have been able to find places where we can meet for free: the prefecture's Ryugakusei Kaikan and rooms in the city campus of Hiroshima International University)
5. Goals for 2016-2017: To keep meeting, and to investigate and proceed with action work / publication-related projects
6. Jim Ronald and one or two more, hopefully! for November 2016 to November 2017

### **C. Kansai Get-Together**

Anita Aden, Agnes Patko (from April 2016 – current) & Chris Fitzgerald (Nov 2015 - March 2016)

#### 1. Achievements:

Kansai Get-Togethers restarted in November 2015 and subsequent monthly meetings have been well attended by Kansai area language instructors. Get Together gatherings have been held at the Hito Machi Koryukan Community Centre in Kyoto. With an average of 6 – 8 people at each Get Together, there has been a positive commitment to meet and support Learner Development in Kansai.

During the ten Kansai GTs that have occurred, the discussions have led to the creation of a student conference called K2W (Kansai To the World) which will held on November 20<sup>th</sup> involving students and language professionals from seven Kansai region universities. The purpose is to invite students from various universities to meet and discuss real issues facing Japan. Within this student centered event, we can encourage the development of communication skills, empathy and cross-cultural understanding. Through poster presentations, discussion and reflection, we hope to inspire students to see themselves as not just learners, but as users of a foreign language, and also see themselves making important contributions to the future of Japan.

\*Monthly meetings have been scheduled for every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday (subject to change)

#### 2. Unresolved Challenges:

We discussed ways to gain more access to LD SIG members that join each month, with the goal of increasing attendance and awareness of the LD SIG activities in Kansai.

#### 3. Recommendations:

We need to connect more with LD SIG local chapters.

Updates for Kansai Get Togethers need to be added on the JALT LD SIG site.

#### 4. Items for the 2016-2017 budget:

Pending the success of the 2016 student conference, we would request 35,000 yen for the rental of 2 rooms needed for future conference (projected venue costs).

#### 5. Goals for 2016-2017:

-When a new LD SIG member joins in the Kansai area, we would like to send a Welcome to message with information about the Kansai GTs.

-Post Conference goal: we plan to write up a conference debrief for the LL newsletter.  
-Consistency of regular meetings and maintain the number of attendees for monthly meetings with hopes for more collaborative opportunities to arise next year.

6. Team members/roles for November 2016 to November 2017:  
Continue to actively participate in the monthly meetings.

## **10. Committee Members at large**