

Event: Astrobiology in Asia 2nd meeting @ AbSciCon19

Date: June 28, 2019 (Thursday)

Venue: BALSAM room at Hyatt Regency Bellevue, WA, USA

Attendees: Maggie, Philip, Kitty, Laura, Martin, Georgia, Bonnie, Yangcheng, Yaoxuan, Howard, Luke, Dehai, Tianfeng, Alananah, Yuanyuan, Jihua, James, Ant, Jonathan, John, Toni, Saehyun [22 in total]

Motivation: Attendees of the original Astrobiology in Asia meeting at 7 pm on June 24 (Monday) showed enthusiasm about (1) promoting astrobiology in their home countries or in the Asia-Pacific countries where their current affiliations are located; (2) the idea of having a regional meeting equivalent to AbSciCon; and (3) the idea of having an organization to facilitate the above activities.

Topics discussed:

- Meetings related to astrobiology that are held in the Asia-Pacific region. Three Astrobiology-related meetings will be held next year in 2019
 - COSPA (Space meeting 20,000 delegates; regular meeting; biannual)
 - AbGradCon (different location each time; next year Sept in Japan)
 - Australasian Astrobiology Meeting, AAM (aim for the Asia-Pacific region; off-year of AbSciCon; began 6 years ago; next year 2019 in Japan, 2 years later 2021 will be in HK)
- It may be difficult to schedule for another astrobiology meeting. Martin, a key founder of AAM, is/will be happy to see AAM developing into a regional conference. Group members expressed that AAM provides a wonderful stepping stone for future regional meetings.
- For longer term planning, further discussion will be need to resolve many issues such as funding, logistics, format, representation and diversity in leadership, etc. From now to 2021, this community can gradually mature to form an executive body with secretarial support for organizing an Asia-Pacific AbSciCon, and in parallel for a functional society. During the coming 3 years, in-person meetings can be held during AAM, AbSciCon, and AGU, and we can also meet virtually and communicate via a digital platform.
- The coming year will focus on community-building done through members' network. One of the ways to promote this group is proposing sessions at relevant meetings at national and international levels. Another way to gain visibility is by setting up a website.
- Ideas for this website include a link to subscribe the listserv, links to other astrobiology groups and meetings, job postings, forum-like platform for idea exchanges, etc. With these are all great ideas in mind, we decided to start from a simple static website. Philip and John volunteered to work on the website, and excitingly, the domain "astrobiology.asia" is available!
- Members of this group will receive news about AAM 2019.

Outcome:

- We have a society - Astrobiology Society of Asia-Pacific (ASAP)
- We (soon will) have a website – <https://www.astrobiology.asia>
- Three goals to be accomplished by next year
 1. A website
 2. A logo through competition
 3. Australian Astrobiology Meeting 2020

Prepared by:

Maggie Lau (maglau@idsse.ac.cn), in case you have questions

(Some personal thoughts from Maggie – How this group formed is entirely driven by the Asia-Pacific communities. It is awesome. It is the highlight of my first AbSciCon meeting. By all means, let us encourage one another to continue to stay active and get involve in AAM and by any creative means to build ASAP.)