

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

IFSW Friends Report General Meeting 2018 by Fiona Robertson, IFSW Friends Co-ordinator

In Jan 2017 I was appointed as the Secretariat IFSW Friends Co-ordinator for 2 years. The aim was to invest in the infrastructure of the Friends Programme, improve Co-ordination and the profile of IFSW Friends.

Statistics for the current Financial Friends of IFSW

Student - 141

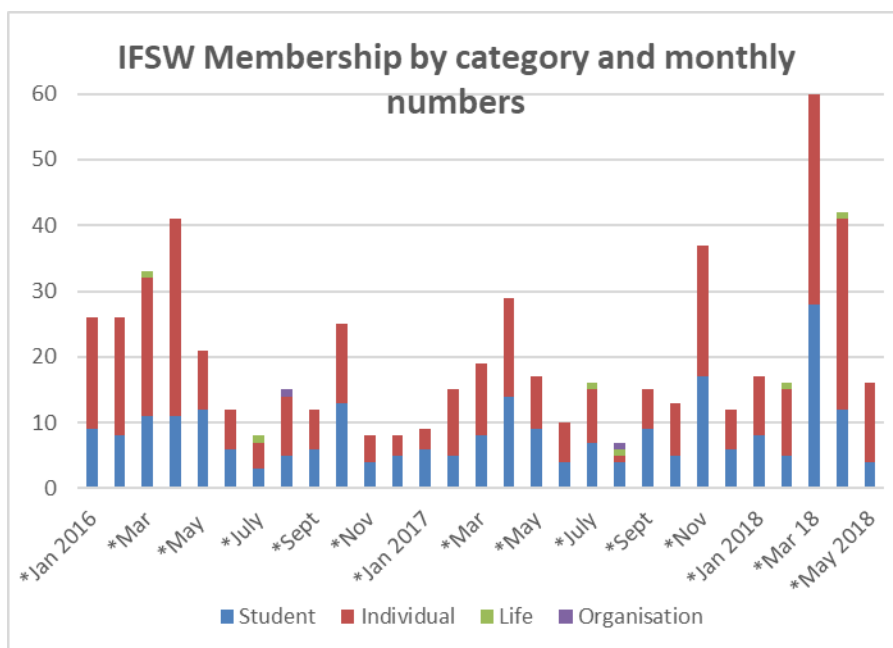
Individual - 187

Life

- Since 2014 - 11
- 2000 – (was the introduction of Life Friends category and IFSW offered a discounted scheme to existing Friends to become Life Friends). 130 people in this category and 57 with current email addresses

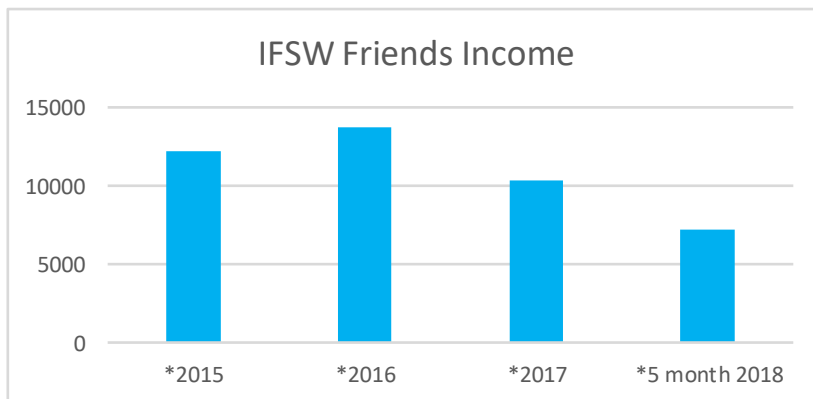
Organisations – 1

Current Members by Country (Life Friends not included)		
Albania – 1	Ghana – 1	Russia - 2
Australia – 48	Hong Kong - 1	Saint Kitts and Nevis - 1
Austria – 2	India – 10	Singapore - 3
Brasil - 1	Ireland – 3	South Africa – 5
Cambodia - 1	Israel – 1	South Korea – 2
Canada – 22	Italy - 1	- 1 Organisation
Colombia - 1	Mexico - 4	Switzerland - 5
Cyprus - 1	Netherland – 1	Sweden - 2
Czechoslovakia - 1	New Zealand - 7	Taiwan - 1
Denmark – 4	Nigeria – 4	United Kingdom – 37
Finland - 2	Portugal – 2	USA – 136
France - 1	Puerto Rico - 1	Zambia - 1
Germany – 5	Qatar – 1	Zimbabwe - 1
	Romania - 2	



Financial

Value to IFSW is monetary as shown in the next diagram. However, it is also non-monetary in the value as IFSW offers the opportunity through Friends for individual membership. The challenge is to how to tap into this potential for financial return.



Communication

- Friends now have regular email contact and the plan is communication 4 times per year. This year on WSWD all IFSW Friends were sent the link to book *Social Work – Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability. Workbook for Global Social Workers and Educators*. Editors Michaela Rinkel and Meredith Powers. There has been positive feedback from this initiative.
- Response to questions and queries (on a number of things) now happen within days.
- The opportunity for connection and conversation at the Conference IFSW Friends Reception is valued.

Current challenges

- Over the previous years there has been discussion from time to time to develop an automatic membership renewal which negates the need for manual processing. The discussion was re-activated again in 2015 and by July 2016, from a technical point of view, there had been no progress in developing this. This re-emerged in July 2017 to be part of the upgrade of the website and it is hoped in the last quarter of this year that an automatic renewal system combined with automatic receipting and production of a Certificate of Membership will be a reality. Emailing people requesting them to renew their membership by re-joining has not been successful in uptake.
- Marketing

Thoughts for the Future

- The potential linking role of the IFSW Co-ordinator and the relationship development with IFSW Friends to develop potential volunteer roles which could be undertaken - observers, consultants, researcher, etc. What would this look like and how to make it happen is the questions. The role of IFSW Friends as volunteers is being explored with IFSW Friends being asked to volunteer time on the Conference Booth roster with a more experienced volunteer. A draft manual has been written to assist volunteers for knowledge as being part of the Conference Booth
- Develop ways to increase the monetary and non-monetary value of IFSW Friends to IFSW.