

BAIS STRATEGY

1 Given the financial state of the Association, one of the main problems will be that of maintaining the BAIS profile and a range of activities against a background of financial stringency.

2 It is vital that the Cultural Subcommittee be reactivated, to fulfill the role which was envisaged for it, in relation to networking with a view to fundraising. One of the main tasks of this subcommittee should be the identifying of cultural events which are in the offing and with which BAIS might be associated. The Treasurer has pointed out to the Officers that, "a high profile cultural event, a concert, an art exhibition, poetry readings, the first night of a new Irish play, or the launching of a new book, could provide the focus of an enjoyable night out for sponsors which would also raise the profile of the Association".

There has to be a framework for fundraising - encompassing the relationship between the Association and the more informal agencies of networking, as well as mechanisms for the setting of targets and reviewing of progress with respect to these. A designated fundraiser would serve as a focus, but would not obviate the need for a framework. The absence of such a person increases the need.

3 Existing subcommittees should identify needs within their constituencies which can be usefully addressed at modest cost, either directly by the Association or in conjunction with/through other compatible agencies. A small number of focused activities is best - in terms of present constraints, meeting real needs, and maintaining the profile of the Association.

4 We need to consider ways in which areas of the Association's activities may be made self-financing. Members can encourage their publishers, organisers of summer schools, etc., to distribute promotional material through the Association at the standard charge, which will reduce the cost of communications with members. Advertising in the Newsletter and the Survey of Irish Studies in Great Britain and Northern Ireland will help to defray the cost of those publications. Last year's Higher Education conference on ERASMUS and the day-schools for Irish language teachers have been virtually self-financing.

5 Points mentioned in 3-4 will help maintain the profile of the Association, enable it to operate more efficiently, and convince potential sponsors that it is addressing the issue of its financial survival. However, the task of obtaining substantial sponsorship(s) for the Association remains vital if BAIS is to continue in its present form.

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19/2/1991