

**Minutes**  
**Executive Council meeting**  
**26 June 2024**  
**16:30-21:15 (GMT+1)**  
**Hybrid**

**Location:**

On-site: University of Limerick, EM010 (main building)

Online: Zoom

**Attending**

**On-site, voting members:**

Caroline Arnold

Marta Castilho

Katherine Chen

Nana de Graaff

Timur Ergen

Elizabeth Gorman

Kathryn Ibata-Arens

Aldo Madariaga

Andrea Mennicken

Eunmi Mun

Kim Pernell

Leonard Seabrooke

Zsuzsanna Vargha

Kevin Young

Natascha van der Zwan

**On-site, non-voting members:**

Nina Bandelj (SASE President)

Yuri Biondi (SASE Treasurer)

Victor Chen (Network Organizer Forum Chair)

Virginia Doellgast (SASE President-Elect)



Tony Dundon (2024 Local Organizing Committee chair)  
Annelies Fryberger (SASE Executive Director)  
Akos Rona-Tas (SER Chief Editor)  
Santos Ruesga (SASE Past-President)  
Roberto Pedersini (SASE Future President-Elect)

**Online, voting members:**

Chiara Benassi  
Elsa Clara Massoc  
Virag Molnar  
Arianna Tassinari  
Elizabeth Thurbon

**Not attending, excused:**

Lucio Baccaro  
Antonio Botelho  
Ying Chen  
Michelle Hsieh

**Agenda**

**1. Welcome (Nina Bandelj, SASE President)**

- a. Thanks to the local organizing committee for the 2024 Limerick conference, chaired by Tony Dundon.
- b. Thanks to outgoing SASE President, Santos Ruesga.
- c. Thanks to outgoing EC members: Katherine Chen, Ying Chen, Eunmi Mun, Zsuzsanna Vargha, and Natascha van der Zwan.
- d. Congratulations to the new SASE President-Elect, Roberto Pedersini.
- e. Announcement of newly elected Executive Council members (their term to begin immediately following the 2024 conference): Tine Hanrieder, Barbara Kiviati, Megan Tobias Neely, Valeria Pulignano, and Matthias Thiemann.
- f. And congratulations to re-elected Executive Council members: Marta Castilho, Timur Ergen, Nana de Graaff.

**2. 2024 Limerick conference (Tony Dundon, Chair of the local organizing committee)**

Tony thanks the SASE staff for their work and expresses gratitude for the good weather. He highlights the traditional music for the conference dinner, provided by students from the performing arts school. Nina Bandelj thanks the organizing committee for their work, and for the opportunity to come to Limerick.

**3. Approve minutes from last meeting (Nina Bandelj, SASE President)**

*Motion: Approve minutes for December 2023 Executive Council meeting.*

Approved, 15 voting in favor, none against, no abstentions.

**4. Executive Director and Treasurer Report (Annelies Fryberger, SASE Executive Director; Yuri Biondi, SASE Treasurer)**

The work to organize the Limerick conference took the SASE team by surprise - we had expected this conference to be relatively smooth sailing, but the sheer numbers of submissions, combined with SASE's flexible, friendly ethos, brought the workload to a peak. A few simple conclusions can be drawn:

- A small conference (up to around 800 participants) and a small association can be managed by a small staff (3 part-time people).
- A larger conference and a larger association need a larger staff (probably minimum 2.5 positions).

A larger conference also implies higher costs, and at the size that SASE is, this means a higher cost per participant, thus higher fees. A conference of 1100-1200 participants means that we need the equipment associated with bigger groups, whether that be professional organizing help, different facility needs, etc., but the additional burden has to be borne by this number of participants, and thus the cost per participant goes up, not down, compared to a conference of 800. If we get to a conference of 2,000+, the cost per participant will likely start to go down again. A bigger conference also implies less flexibility.

The current situation of a large conference organized by a small, non-professional staff, is unfortunately unsustainable. However: we cannot currently afford professional help. We must figure out how to streamline the organizing process so that it is possible for the conference to be organized with current staff levels.

### a. Update on Limerick

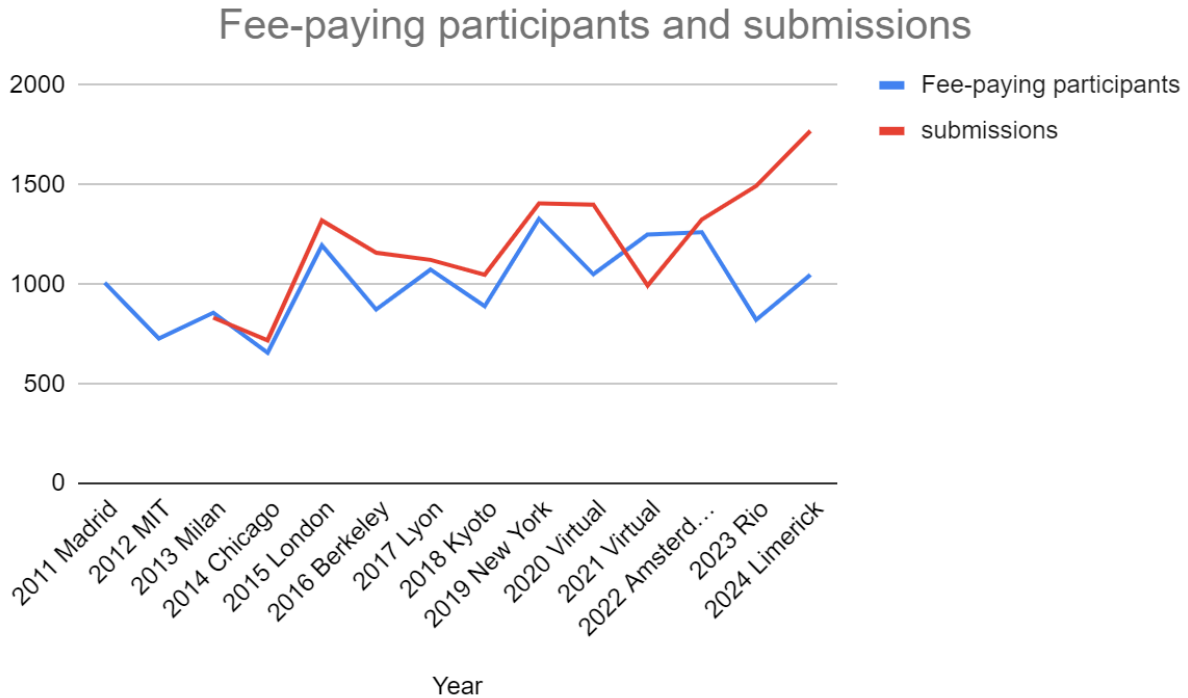


Figure 1: Number of paid participants vs. number of submissions, SASE Annual conferences, 2011-2024 (no data on submissions 2011-2012, this does not include session submissions).

Figure 1 shows an absolute record number of submissions for the 2024 conference by a significant margin, yet the conference itself is by no means one of the bigger SASE conferences. This was due to the fact that many presentations on the program (approximately 325 papers) had to be removed at a late stage, as for most of these, we did not receive confirmation that they were not attending until the registration deadline of May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Of note: session submissions are not included in Figure 1, for two reasons. First, sessions are accepted at a rate of 100% with very few exceptions. Second, attrition from pre-organized sessions is minimal, and of little consequence (sessions typically do not need to be re-organized when attrition happens).

In addition, the following points were noted:

- Pre-conference virtual sessions will still be offered.
- Some flexibility in scheduling and timing would be possible, although we will state to all participants that if they plan to attend the

conference, they must make themselves available for the duration of the conference (in this case, 4 days - with the possibility that this will be reduced to three depending on submission numbers).

- Change in cancellation policy: SASE's 2024 cancellation policy states that SASE shall retain \$50 of the registration fee in the event of a member canceling conference participation within 30 days of the conference start date. Prior to 30 days, a full refund of conference fees is offered. Membership dues are non-refundable, except in the case of an unsuccessful visa application.

*Motion: Change SASE's cancellation policy to the following, starting with the 2025 conference: Refund requests must be submitted by one month before the conference. Refunds for conference fees and catering will be issued minus a 15% processing charge. Refund requests received after one month before the conference will not be issued. Membership dues are non-refundable.*

*Approved, 15 voting in favor, none opposed, no abstentions.*

- An additional point: the call for mini-conferences needs to be backed up by a year or 6 months - as in, the call for 2026 needs to go out in 2024, not in 2025.

Additionally, the timeline for the Montreal conference has been moved back slightly, in consultation with the Network Organizer Forum and the Executive Committee. Important dates leading up to the 2025 are as follows:

- Before 2024 conference: announce theme for 2025 and call for 2025 mini-conferences
- Sep 16 2024 – Mini-conference theme submission deadline
- Mid-October 2024 – Submissions for the 2025 conference open
- Dec 16 2024 – Hard deadline for submissions
- End of January 2025 – decisions communicated
- 1 March 2025 – Preliminary program published

- 9 March 2025 – Early bird registration deadline (10% discount)
- 9 May 2025 – Final Registration deadline
- 8 July 2025 – Early career workshop
- 9-12 July 2025 – Conference

It is noted that those applying for visas should be given more time, and that it may be helpful to ask if individuals need to have their funding approved in order to participate. The exact registration deadlines are discussed, eventually settling on the deadlines above.

*Motion: Motion to approve registration deadlines presented above.*  
*Approved, 14 voting in favor, none opposed, no abstentions.*

#### **b. Partnership with Work in Progress blog**

Elizabeth Gorman, SASE Executive Council member, contacted SASE President Nina Bandelj about the possibility of SASE providing a digital home for the Work in Progress blog, sponsored by four sections of the ASA (OOW, Econ Sociology, Inequality, Poverty and Mobility, and Labor and Labor Movements). After much discussion, also with the SASE Executive Committee and the chairs of the 4 named ASA sections, it was agreed that SASE would take over web-hosting duties of this blog and would be named a sponsor of it. SASE covers the costs of hosting the site, estimated at \$100 per year, and not to exceed \$200 per year. This is detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding between SASE and the 4 ASA sections.

### **Financial items**

- 5. SASE Financials (Yuri Biondi, SASE Treasurer and Annelies Fryberger, SASE Executive Director)**
  - a. Update on Limerick financials**

## Income, Expenses and Participants

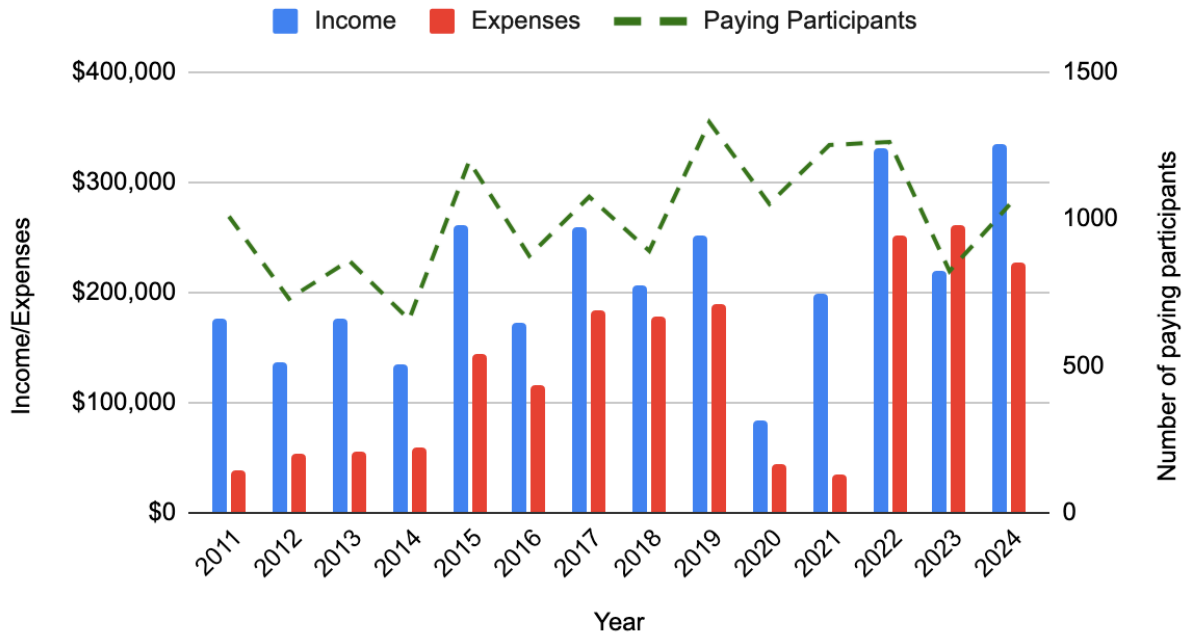


Figure 2: Conferences 2011-2024 - Revenues, expenses, number of paying participants

Figure 2 shows that finances are on track for the 2024 conference, allowing us to meet our reserve provisioning target, and likely generate a small surplus over reserves. This puts us on more solid financial footing, a significant improvement over past years. The decision to raise fees for the 2024 conference thus proved to be a good one. Our reserves after the 2024 conference will be approximately \$204,000 (including the \$100,000 donation from Amitai Etzioni). As a reminder, the reserves target approved by the Executive Council in 2021 is approximately 2 years of overhead + 20% of conference expenses, or an overall sum of \$320,000. This means that, although our finances have improved, SASE does still need to prudently set aside reserves over time.

From a financial perspective, it is also important to understand that the fee structure is not necessarily the only or the most suitable tool to pursue strategic objectives and/or being inclusive. External sources of funding should be sought for these objectives. The fee structure is fundamentally to keep our organization alive and resilient over time and circumstances.



Figure 3: Income by participant type - Non-OECD, OECD, Hardship fee, 2011-2024



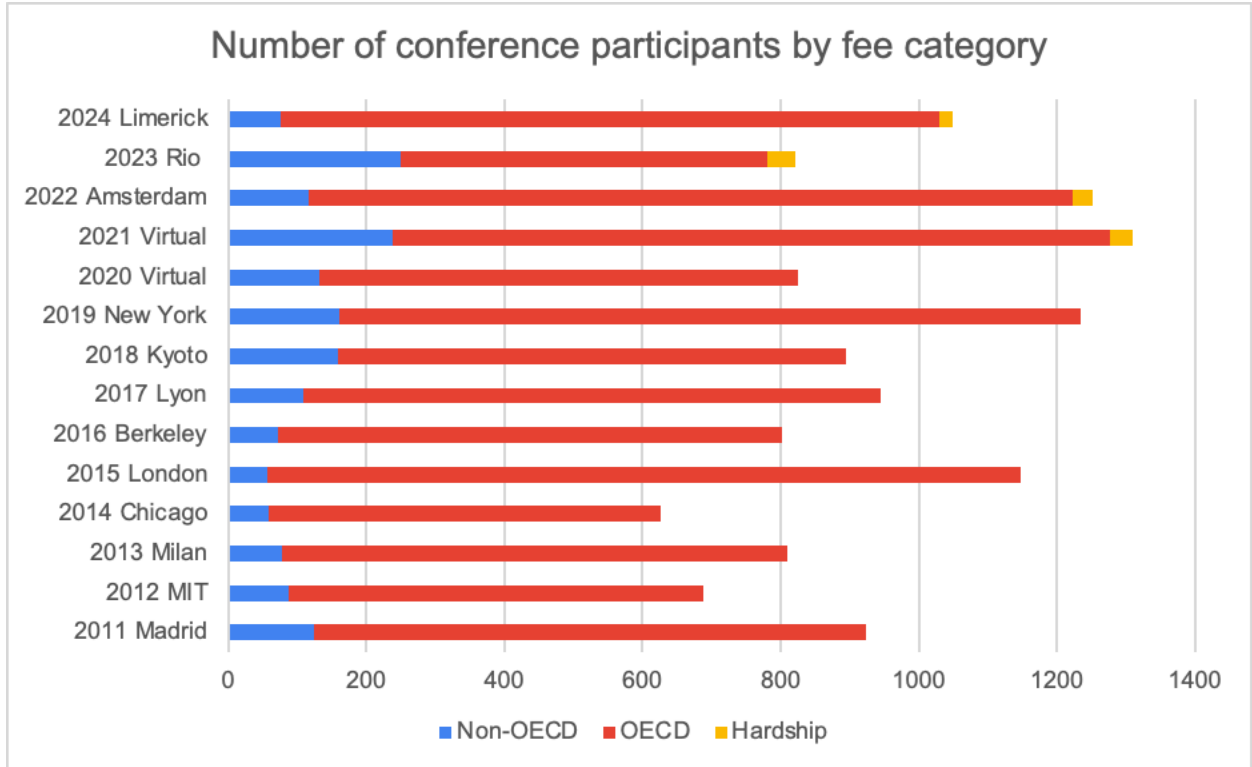


Figure 4: Participants by fee category, 2011-2024

**b. Investing SASE’s reserves**

Executive Council member Kim Pernell volunteered to help with this, with the goal of creating a proposal on this for the Executive Council meeting in December 2024.

**c. Projected budget 2024-2025**

**Montreal conference finances (2025)**

Problem: The A/V costs are much higher than anticipated, and thus, this conference is significantly more expensive than anticipated. Because of this, the Council raised the need to have a template for bids, with quotes from all vendors included.

The budget for Montreal is discussed at length, with the decision to reduce catering for the coffee breaks and the welcome reception to keep the budget in check. It is decided that the travel grants will be financed by the donation from Amitai Etzioni for 2025.

It was agreed that a finalized budget, once A/V costs have been clarified, would be presented for a vote at the next Executive Council meeting in December 2024.

**d. Fee Schedule for 2025 meeting** (Aldo Madariaga, Membership and Diversity committee chair)

Here is a chart summarizing *proposed* conference fees for 2025, with 2024 and 2023 rates by way of comparison:

<b>Category</b>	<b>2023 Rates (Membership + Registration)</b>	<b>2024 Rates (Membership + Registration)</b>	<b>2025 proposed rates (Membership + Registration)</b>	<b>Percentage change</b>
OECD Regular	\$415	\$500	\$580	+16%
OECD Emeritus	\$325	\$470	\$550	+17%
OECD Student registration	\$230	\$280	\$310	+11%
Non-OECD Regular	\$160	\$250	\$260	+4%
Non-OECD Emeritus	\$120	\$140	\$145	+4%
Non-OECD Student	\$80	\$110	\$120	+9%
Community-sponsored reduced fee	\$50 (does not require membership)	\$100 (does not require membership)	\$150 (does not require membership)	+50%
Auditor registration	Free	Membership only (see below for rates)	\$100	+100%
Faculty and staff from host institution	Membership only (see	Membership only (see	\$100	+100%

(University of Limerick)	below for rates)	below for rates)		
Virtual participation	Full rates (registration + membership)	Membership only (see below for rates)	Membership only (see below for rates)	-

Figure 5: Proposed conference fees for 2025, with 2023 and 2024 fees for comparison

This fee structure would allow us to break even, without reserve provisioning, with 1000 fee-paying participants. The advantage, however, is that we would not need to cap the number of participants – this arrangement would allow for 1600 presenters, and thus should be largely sufficient. If we end up at 1300 presenters or below, which is likely, we could hold the conference over three days instead of four, which brings costs down somewhat. This is accounted for in the above fee proposal.

The membership and diversity committee proposes a shift in the way fees are structured, as follows:

Category	Membership	Conference
OECD1: Regular fee	180	365
OECD2/OECD1 postdoc: 75% of regular fee	135	270
NonOECD1/Student OECD1/Postdoc OECD2: 50% of regular fee	90	180
Student OECD2/PostdocNonOECD1: 25% of regular fee	45	90

Non OECD2/StudentNonOECD1: No fee	0	0
-----------------------------------	---	---

Figure 6: Membership and diversity fee schedule proposal.

The proposed groups are detailed as follows:

1. OECD 1: Western Europe + N. America + high-income Asian countries
2. OECD 2: Rest of OECD
3. NonOECD 1: High and High-Middle income non-OECD.
4. NonOECD 2: Low-Middle and Low-income non-OECD.

The specific countries would be listed on the website and updated yearly.

After some debate, the following solution was proposed, offering a slight modification to the proposal of the membership and diversity committee proposal:

	Professo r	Postdoc/Emer itus	Studen t
OECD1 (N. America and W. Europe)	100%	75%	50%
OECD2 (all other OECD countries)	75%	50%	25%
Non-OECD1 (middle-income countries)	50%	25%	0
Non-OECD2 (low-middle and low income)	0	0	0
<b>Membership dues</b>			
	Professo r	Postdoc/Emer itus	Studen t
OECD1 (N. America and W. Europe)	180	135	90
OECD2 (all other OECD countries)	135	90	45
Non-OECD1 (middle-income countries)	90	45	0
Non-OECD2 (low-middle and low income)	0	0	0

<b>Conference fees</b>			
	Professo r	Postdoc/Emer itus	Studen t
OECD1 (N. America and W. Europe)	360	270	180
OECD2 (all other OECD countries)	270	180	90
Non-OECD1 (middle-income countries)	180	90	0
Non-OECD2 (low-middle and low income)	0	0	0

Figure 7: Revised membership and diversity fee schedule proposal.

*Motion: Motion to approve the revised fee schedule proposed by the Membership and Diversity committee.*

*Approved, 13 voting in favor, one opposed, no abstentions.*

One caveat was also discussed and accepted: if A/V charges could be reduced sufficiently, and these fees could be lowered and still break even with 1000 participants, the Executive Committee would have the authority to lower fees accordingly. A tremendous thanks is expressed to the Membership and Diversity Committee for their work on creating this new fee structure.

### **e. Update on contract with OUP**

The current contract with OUP expires at the end of this year, and the Executive Committee, with the current SER chief editors, worked extensively on negotiating a new contract, to take effect 1 January 2025. The new contract includes the following changes:

- Instead of a profit-sharing agreement, we will now receive 17% royalties (up from an initial offer of 15%).
- SASE will no longer be required to pay for individual subscriptions for SASE members (a savings of approximately \$30,000 USD). Subscriptions for SASE members will be accessible through our membership portal.

- SASE will no longer contribute to journal overhead (we previously contributed 20%).
- The editorial budget (paid by OUP) will increase 3% each year.

This is a very positive outcome for SASE, notably in the elimination of the expense of subscriptions for SASE members. The funds paid to SASE from OUP will also likely go up by around 7,000 £ (from 24,000 £ to 31,000 £).

## **Committees**

### **6. Strategic Planning committee (Kathryn Ibata-Arens, committee chair)**

The report from the Strategic Planning Committee is provided in Appendix A. The report was presented by chair Kathryn Ibata-Arens and discussed by the Executive Council. The idea of holding virtual conferences with some regularity (every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year) was discussed, especially given the high participation in the virtual conferences of 2020 and 2021 and the importance of environmental sustainability. It is also noted that 40% of respondents from the 2022 post-conference survey indicated that they liked the idea of alternating physical and virtual conferences.

The issue of the Executive Director position is discussed – this was previously a full-time position and was made into a part-time position when a new director was hired in 2020.

*Motion: Motion to expand resources for the Executive Director position.  
Approved, 14 voting in favor, none against, no abstentions.*

The president-elect is encouraged to continue the reflection of the Strategic Committee.

### **7. Network Oversight Committee (Arianna Tassinari, committee chair)**

The committee apologizes for not providing a written report and agrees to provide one for the December 2024 meeting. No network applications were pending, so the committee discussed a set of proposals on network governance, for instance to create a process for networks to change their names, and how periodic reviews of networks should be conducted. These proposals will be formulated for the December meeting. The committee

hopes to discuss with the Network Oversight Forum when making these proposals – this collaboration is welcomed by the Council. The possibility of asking Network Organizers to submit short, annual reports is raised, to be used as a basis for the review conducted by the Network Oversight Committee, as currently the only data provided is the acceptance rate and the number of submissions per network. It is stated that this review would be a “light touch”, and a closer review could be conducted if needed. It is agreed that this topic specifically will be brought up with the Network Organizer Forum. The point is also raised that Network Organizers might share best practices amongst themselves.

The Executive Council welcomes the future proposals from the Network Oversight Committee.

**8. Membership and Diversity Committee (Aldo Madariaga, committee chair)**

The proposals from the Membership and Diversity Committee regarding the fee structure were discussed earlier in the meeting. The Membership and Diversity Committee adjudicated the travel grants this year, and it is agreed that a written process for that will be provided at the December 2024 meeting. Aldo Madariaga also presented more detail on the composition of the SASE membership base by country, with these charts:

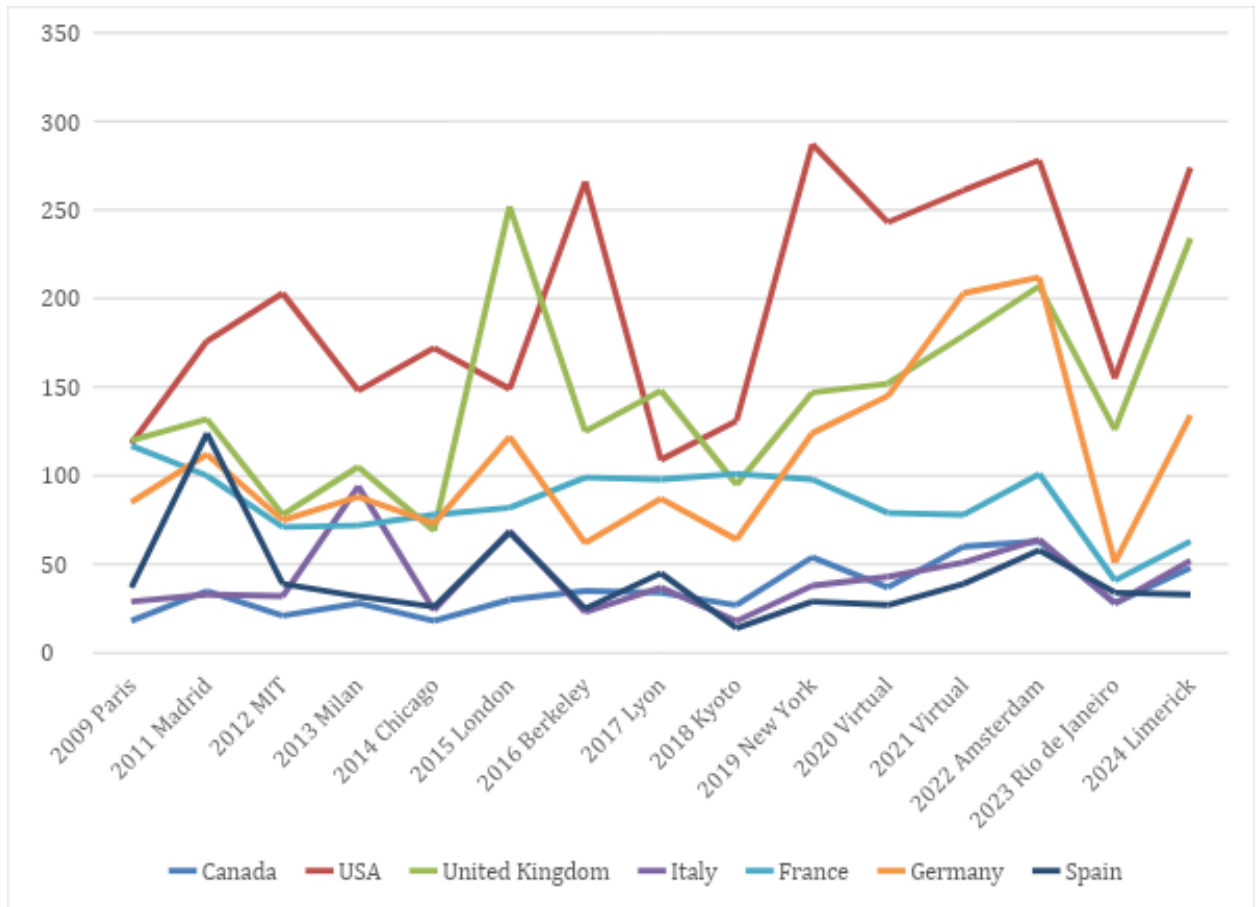


Figure 8: OECD participants in SASE conferences, 2009-2024.



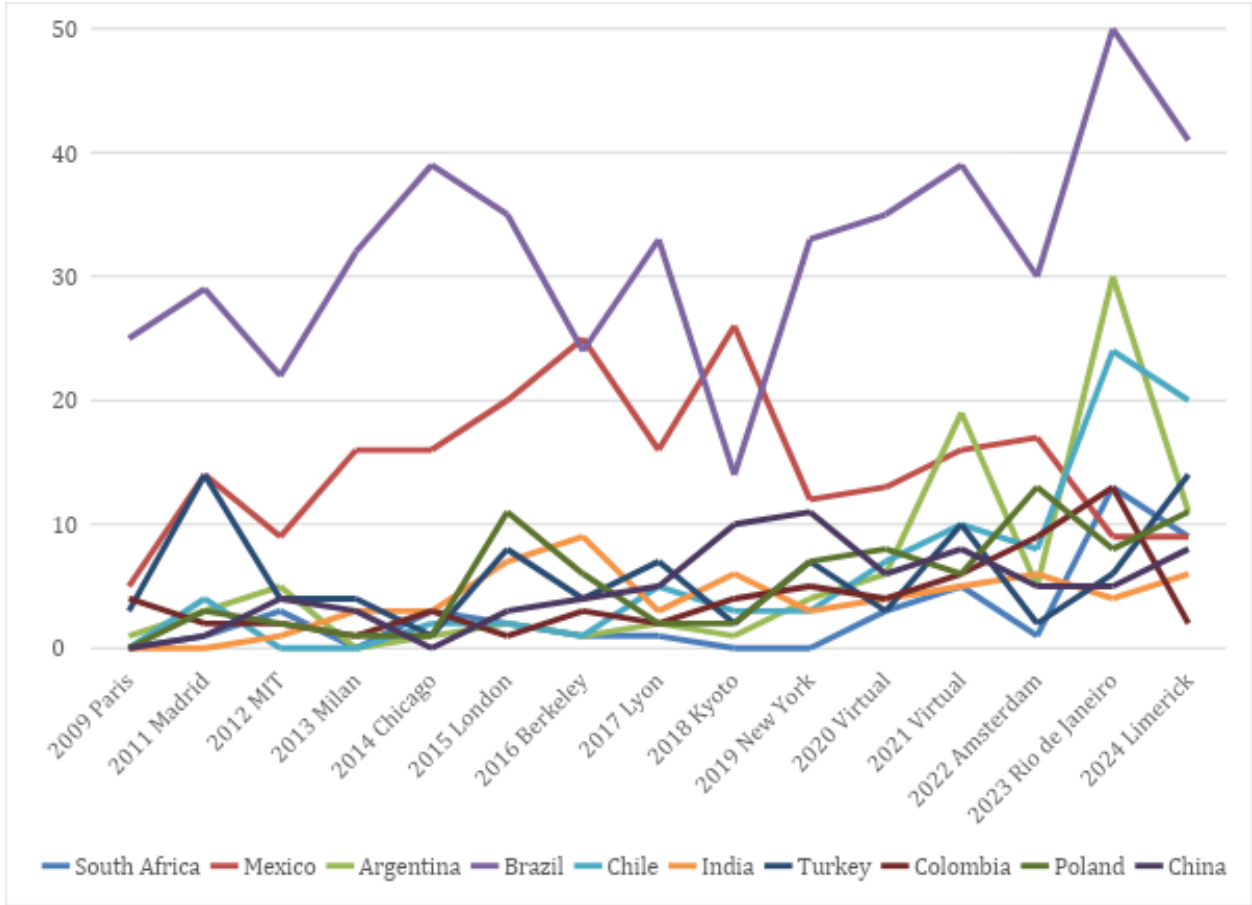


Figure 9: Non-OECD participants in SASE conferences, 2009-2024.

**9. SER Report (Alya Guseva and Akos Rona-Tas, SER chief editors)**

The SER Report for 2023-2024 was presented and discussed. It was noted that submissions continue to increase, by 36% over that period. Upcoming special issues were announced, as was a call for future special issues. Financials are rosy, and the impact factor is doing well, despite taking a small hit due to changes in the way it is calculated. OUP is proving to be a good partner, especially given the shifts in publishing due to open access – it is noted that SASE has a 50% ownership stake in the journal, OUP also 50%.

In the coming year, SER is up for review by a committee appointed by the president, and the terms of the chief editors will expire at the end of the

coming year. The Executive Council warmly thanks the Chief Editors for their work.

### **10. SER Best Article Prize (Eunmi Mun, committee chair)**

The SER best article prize committee (Elsa Clara Massoc, Dustin Avent-Holt, and chair Eunmi Mun) considered all the SER papers published in 2023 as candidates, met multiple times to share thoughts. They recommend the following paper for this year's award:

Horn, Alexander, Anthony Kevins and Kees van Kersbergen. 2023. "The Paternalist Politics of Punitive and Enabling Workfare: Evidence from a New Dataset on Workfare Reforms in 16 Countries, 1980–2015." *Socio-Economic Review* 21(4):2137-66.

Also, they recommend the following two papers for honorable mention:

Knight, Carly R. 2023. "Classifying the Corporation: The Role of Naturalizing Analogies in American Corporate Development, 1870–1930." *Socio-Economic Review* 21(3):1629-55.

Reddy, Niall. 2023. "Liberalization, Democratization and the Remaking of the South African Corporate Network 1993–2020." *Socio-Economic Review* 21(1):213-42.

They appreciated the opportunity to review SER papers and we were deeply impressed with the extreme high-quality of the papers published in SER. While there were many papers they enjoyed reading, they unanimously picked these three papers for their outstanding contributions. They asked substantive questions that have far reaching implications, performed research with high rigor, and offered novel arguments.

### **11. Alice Amsden Prize (Ying Chen, committee chair)**

The committee concluded their discussion and was happy to recommend the following book to be the winner of the Alice Amsden award, along with two honorable mentions.

Winner:

*Spiderweb Capitalism: How Global Elites Exploit Frontier Markets* by Kimberly Kay Hoang

Honorable Mentions:

*Making Women Pay: Microfinance in Urban India* by Smitha Radhakrishnan

*Capitalizing a Cure: How Finance Controls the Price and Value of Medicines* by Victor Roy

### **13. Nominations Committee (Kevin Young, committee chair)**

The Nominations Committee, consisting of Kim Pernell, Elizabeth Gorman and Kevin Young, organized the nominations process and SASE election slate for Spring 2024. 8 positions were to be elected, and the finalized election slate featured 11 individuals on the ballot.

Not including those current Executive Council members who were asked whether they wished to run again for election, the Nominations Committee initially received a total of 10 nominations, including self-nominations. Nominations were of scholars based in Belgium, China, France, Denmark, Qatar, Germany, USA and UK, and from a variety of disciplines and departments/centers. Of these 10 nominations, 8 individuals confirmed after some correspondence that they would like to be on the election ballot. In addition to these nominations, 3 out of 4 current Executive Council decided to run again on the ballot for election.

The final election slate thus contained a total of 11 individuals.

The Nominations Committee considered various dimensions of diversity on the election slate, based on the nominations received and the potential to reach out to others to encourage them to run for election. In this respect the Nominations Committee measured, and deliberated upon, how the election slate compared to the current Executive Council. The current Executive Council had a gender ratio (men to women) of 25%, and the election slate had a gender ratio of 45%. The current Executive Council is composed of scholars based in 12 different countries; the election slate featured 10 different countries. The current Executive Council has 17% of its members from the Global South, while the election slate rose to 27%. The current Executive

Council features 24 scholars from 9 different disciplines, while the election slate featured 11 scholars from 8 different disciplines: economics, political science, public administration, international development, sociology, social science, European studies, and Organization, Work and Technology. With these diversity metrics, the Nominations Committee decided to proceed with the 11 individuals that were nominated by SASE membership rather than reaching out to additional individuals in order to improve the diversity of the election ballot.

8 positions were to be elected, and the election slate featured 11 individuals on the ballot. The election also featured 5 write-in candidates, all to individuals who were not nominated by anyone during the nomination period, and each were written-in by one SASE member only. 13 voting SASE members abstained from the Executive Council ballot. A total of 426 SASE members voted in the election. As SASE members could vote for more than one candidate, 2190 total votes were cast, with SASE voters casting their ballot for an average of 5 individuals on the election ballot.

## **14. Future conferences**

### **a. Update on Bordeaux 2026**

Proposed dates for 2026: 1-3 July (Wed-Fri) or 2-4 July (Thurs-Sat).

These dates were checked against dates of sister organizations for their conferences in 2026. It is also noted that the 1-3 July dates diverge from the SASE tradition of Thursday-Saturday conferences.

*Motion: Motion to approve 1-3 July as dates for the 2026 SASE conference.*

Approved, 13 voting in favor, none opposed, no abstentions.

### **b. Montreal 2025**

It is noted again that the submissions deadline is earlier this cycle: December 16, 2024.

### **c. Glasgow 2027 or 2028**

The issue of Scotland not being in the Schengen zone is discussed – this has implications for individuals with Schengen visas. It is decided to vote on this

in the December 2024 meeting, with the stipulation that details on travel to Glasgow need to be included.

**d. Update on possible future locations**

No specific proposals from the following, but options that might be pursued:

- a. University of Aarhus, Denmark – a local organizer from the University is needed for this proposal.
- b. Copenhagen – this idea is received positively.
- c. Halifax
- d. UBC - Vancouver
- e. UMass Amherst
- f. University of Tallinn
- g. Virtual
- h. Latin America

**All other business**

Virginia Doellgast is welcomed as president, her term to begin directly after the 2024 conference. Santos Ruesga is thanked, his term as past-president is to end at that time.

**End of meeting**

## **Appendix A: Strategic Planning Committee Report**

### **SASE Strategic Planning Committee Report to the SASE**

**Executive Council 25 June 2024, Limerick, Ireland**

**Members: Lucio Baccaro, Kathryn Ibata-Arens (chair), Len Seabrooke, Cornelia Storz**

**Ex officio: Nina Bandelj, Annelies Fryberger**

#### Executive Summary

The SASE Strategic Planning Committee, formed in July 2023, was tasked with developing a strategic vision for the organization. The committee's objectives included examining conference logistics, participant numbers, funding structures, and network organization. Data from annual meeting registrations (2019-2024) and a comprehensive member survey were analyzed to inform the planning process. Key findings from the registration data indicated that most members are from Europe and North America, with higher attendance at conferences held in major metropolitan areas within these regions. The survey, which received 278 valid responses, highlighted priorities such as facilitating the institutional consolidation of socio-economics, fostering career development, and maintaining an inclusive environment. Members suggested managing growth through increased selectivity of accepted papers and expanding conference locations beyond Europe and North America, while addressing our carbon footprint. A focus group meeting on 31 May 2024 emphasized the need for SASE to remain inclusive, especially for junior scholars and those from the Global South, while encouraging greater commitment among paper presenters. The committee recommends reinstating the executive director position to full-time equivalency, considering the need for professional conference planning support, improving online engagement, and reducing redundancy in conference organization. These steps aim to sustain SASE's growth and enhance member engagement.

### Appendix and Appended Documents

- SASE Member Survey Instrument (run in Spring 2024 to 2019-2023 annual meeting registrants)
- Focus Group Meeting Summary Findings
- Anonymized survey responses and summary data (appended)
- Presentation of data images from Annual Meeting Registration and Financial Analysis (2019-2024) (appended, 11 Dec '23 slide deck)

### SASE Strategic Planning Objectives

The SASE Strategic Planning committee was created in July 2023, and in September was charged with the following strategic planning objectives:

*Nina Bandelj, President, and Annelies Fryberger, Executive Director, Strategic Planning Statement (September 2023):*

*SASE is growing and changing as an organization, and this committee is charged with thinking creatively to develop a strategic vision for the organization. Issues such as conference location, virtual vs. on-site conferencing, ideal number of participants, funding structure, network and mini-conference structure - all of these and more are welcome to be on the table for this committee, which will work closely with the Executive Director to assess these pressing issues.*

### Strategic Planning Process

After meeting as a committee with President Nina Bandelj and Executive Director Annelies Fryberger, the committee decided that the next step in the strategic planning process would be twofold: First, in the aim of identifying patterns in SASE's current growth trajectory, data was collected and analyzed on the most recent 5-year (2019-2024<sup>1</sup>) trend in annual meeting registrations (since membership renewal has been bundled with annual meeting registrations, annual meeting registration was used as a proxy for

"membership"). Second, our membership past and present was surveyed to solicit feedback and suggestions for the strategic planning process. Namely, if

<sup>1</sup> Note: only preliminary data for the 2024 annual conference in Limerick was available as of this writing.

and how should SASE continue to grow as an organization. Further, survey respondents who expressed an interest were invited to join an option of focus group meetings in May 2024. After a Doodle Poll was sent to the aforementioned, a focus group was convened on 31 May 2024.

### Annual Meeting Registration Trends

Preliminary findings from the annual meeting registration analysis complemented by financials on revenues were presented to the December 2023 EC meeting by SASE Committee Chair, Kathryn Ibata-Arens. Data was updated with 2024 annual meeting data available as of 10 June 2024. Key findings:

- The majority of annual conference registrants (and thus members) in the most recent five years are from Europe and North America (top six by registration count: US, UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain<sup>2</sup>)
- Conference registrations are highest when the annual meeting is held in major metropolitan cities located in Europe and North America
- U.S.-based members are likely to attend conferences held both in and outside of North America
- Europe-based members are more likely to participate in annual meetings located in Europe than those held in other locations

### SASE Member Survey

The committee, in consultation with SASE President and Executive Director, designed a brief survey instrument in January 2024 that was pilot tested at the time with volunteers from the SASE Executive Council and SASE Network Organizers via the Network Organizers Forum. The survey was made available via email link and sent to all annual conference registrants (2019-2023).

<sup>2</sup> Per 10 June 2024 data, Canada surpassed Spain in meeting registration in 2024. 2019 New York (65% of registrants), 2022 Amsterdam (63% of registrants), 2023 Rio\* (50% of registrants plus \*17.5% Brazil), 2024 Limerick\*\* (60% of registrants) \*\*Preliminary Data, 10 June 2024.





*Survey Method (survey instrument in Appendix):*

Survey opened on March 25th, reminder sent April 18th. Survey closed on April 25th.

Sent to 6,069 individuals - successfully delivered to 5,729. 69.1% actually opened the email, and 36.7% (2104 people) clicked through to the survey. This was not limited to members, it was sent to everyone who participated in the 2019-2023 conferences.

Total number of valid responses: 278

Focus group invites: Doodle sent on May 15th to 41 people (who had indicated on their survey response that they would be willing to participate in a focus group), with a request for a reply by May 21st. 7 people completed the doodle, an invitation was sent to all 41 people on the 23rd of May, 11 accepted the invitation. Focus group held on 31 May 2024. 10 individuals participated. Key Survey Findings (Anonymized survey responses appended in pdf): Among the 278 survey respondents, they:

- Ranked the “most important”<sup>3</sup> strategic priorities for SASE as facilitating the institutional consolidation of Socio-Economics as a discipline (40%<sup>4</sup>), fostering career development opportunities (37%), and fostering an inclusive and diverse environment (37%)<sup>5</sup>
- While 75% of respondents were opposed to “limiting the number of participants per network”<sup>6</sup>, suggested managing SASE’s growth via caps or ceilings by: increasing the selectivity of accepted papers for mini-conferences (51%), increasing the selectivity of accepted papers in networks (49%), and other ways (47%)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup>8-item list of individual Likert scale (1= most important, 5 = least important) items from which respondents could score multiple items as “most important”. Percentages reflect those respondents

choosing a given answer as “most important”. See Appendix for survey instrument.

<sup>4</sup> Percentages rounded up or down.

<sup>5</sup> Weighted averages on the Likert scale, reflected an overall agreement that fostering an inclusive and diverse environment (2.09) and fostering career development activities (2.10) were most important for respondents. “Other” also elicited a 2.09 weighted average. Elaborations on “other” included reduce or otherwise limit cost of member dues and meeting registration fees, focus on the SER journal (e.g. access to), help with publication process, expand membership to Asia and Global South (make the organization less American or European), don’t grow, keep it small and collegial, start with defining socio-economics

as a guide for future growth, keep it interdisciplinary and international.

<sup>6</sup> Additionally, 50% were opposed to “limiting the number of SASE standing networks”.

<sup>7</sup> Comments varied between urging open, inclusive and non-discriminatory growth and the opposite, greater selectivity and limiting mini-conferences while “sunsetting” or otherwise limiting growth via consolidating networks.

- Ranked the priorities regarding SASE’s annual meetings as other (39%)<sup>8</sup>, expanding conference locations beyond Europe and North America (32%), and organizing more regional conferences (27%).
- Noted that the top three aspects that drew/draws them to SASE are its interdisciplinary focus (72%), topical focus (52%), or a specific network (41%)

The Member Survey also asked respondents to share open-ended feedback, which elicited 37 responses, while not necessarily representative of the membership as a whole, provided interesting points for potential discussion. Respondents shared numerous suggestions and ideas including:

- Make an effort to promote the voices of SASE in public debate, social media, and policy
- Improve accessibility by expanding online activities, including annual conferences and networking opportunities
- Provide avenues to integrate scholars from outside the Trans-North-Atlantic corridor, while considering the severity of the visa entry regime.
- Not to increase membership and annual conference fees while [still] making SASE financially sustainable; and increasing the number of staff to manage the workload.
- Enable people to declare membership in network(s) and feel a sense of participation in them

<sup>8</sup> Concerns included reducing SASE’s carbon footprint, selecting conference venues that are affordable and accessible (specific complaints about the inaccessible location of Limerick specifically), maintaining focus on in-person annual meetings in accessible location with some rotation with outside the Global North locales, ensuring intellectual coherence and selectivity in annual meeting topics while not sacrificing inclusivity.

Respondent demographics:

Top three disciplines: Sociology (50%), Political Economy (19%), Political Science (11%)

Positions: Professor (29%), Associate Professor (23%), Doctoral Student (17%), Assistant Professor (16%), Post-doctoral (8%), Other/adjunct (7%)

Region of residency (top three): Europe (49%), North America (31%), South America (14%)

Gender: Male (60%), Female (38%)

Member for 0-5 years (54%), 6-10 years (21%), 10 or more years (25%)

Based on the above analysis of 5-year growth trend and member survey, followed by member focus group meeting, we recommend the following action plan for SASE:

### Summary and Recommendations

Our strategy vision for SASE is as follows:

- We need a **solid infrastructural and conceptual base**.
  - *Infrastructural base*:
    - Return the executive director position to full-time resourced position to enable an appropriate level of administrative staff support (one full-time person or PT executive director with PT staff hire) for a growing organization.
    - Explore the option, via a cost analysis, of hiring a professional conference planning organization to support the increasingly complex logistics of annual meetings having >1,000 participants. Build the cost of such third-party support into the conference registration fees.
  - *Conceptual base*: Who we are at SASE? The membership wants SASE to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of

socio-economics, which implies that monodisciplinary cultures should be avoided. From the survey the main disciplines are sociology and political science. Do we need more on self-identification issues for the association? Should we strengthen the interface of “socio-economic”? This can be done through board representation; keynotes on conferences, but it is an attractive scholarly pursuit?

- We want to be **inclusive and open** to new, in particular young scientists, and **environmentally responsible**.
  - Growth is not a goal per se, but SASE can grow “naturally” by being inclusive and open.
  - To be inclusive (Global South), an increase (must not be drastic) of Western scholars, e.g. in economic sociology and/or of business/management scholars would help.
  - For young scientists, we should have funds to support them.
  - Responding to concerns about carbon footprint, establish a rotation in annual conference locations of two in continental Europe and one outside of continental Europe, as well as requiring potential annual conference hosts to provide a transportation cost-analysis in their proposals.<sup>9</sup> While we acknowledge that this prioritizes the needs of Europe-based members, this approach is inclusive of the greatest number of countries from which our membership has been historically drawn.
- We want to keep and enhance our **dynamic, vibrant, engaged character**.
  - We should not be too exclusive in terms of paper selection (but at the same time keeping quality). This allows early-stage research to be part of SASE.
  - One way to achieve this is to have discussants (plus prior 5-10 pagers for submission) – not obligatory, but as a strong recommendation by the EC. Another suggestion from members

<sup>9</sup> Further, we suggest requiring round-trip economy class transportation estimates including alternate modes of transportation (air, train) to venue location from sample international cities (e.g. Berlin, London, Paris, New York, San Francisco, etc.).



is to encourage greater “commitment” by paper presenters by for example, requiring submission prior to the annual convening, at the minimum an extended abstract, and ideally a full paper, as well as a commitment to read other papers on their assigned panel. This also helps us to keep members in our community. o Improve accessibility and member engagement by offering more online, yet interactive convenings (e.g. paper workshops).

In conclusion, we recommend prioritizing the above action plan into short-, medium and long- term planning by the Executive Council in consultation with key SASE standing committees.

## APPENDIX

### SASE Strategic Planning Survey

Dear SASE members past and present,

A huge thanks to those of you who have already provided your input for the SASE Strategic Planning Survey. This email is just a gentle nudge for those who have not yet responded - we would love to hear from you!

SASE has grown tremendously over the last 2 decades: from a small conference of a few hundred people in the early 2000's, to nearly 2,000 submissions for our 2024 conference in Limerick. While this is good news, it also creates challenges for the organization. Together with our members, we therefore would like to find out how SASE should grow.

To this end, the 2024 SASE Strategic Planning Committee has designed a survey in order to collect your input. The survey takes approximately 7 minutes to complete, and your thoughts would be very valuable to us! [Link to survey](#)

Please take a few minutes to respond - The survey will close on the 25th of April.



Sincerely,

Nina Bandelj, SASE President

Annelies Fryberger, SASE Executive Director

Kathryn Ibata-Arens Chair, SASE Strategic Planning Committee\*

\*Strategic Planning Committee Members: Lucio Baccaro, Len Seabrooke, Cornelia Storz

## SASE Member SURVEY TEXT

1. Ranking Key Priorities: Please rank the following strategic priorities for SASE from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important):
  - a. Growing the organization via recruiting additional members
  - b. Supporting the financial health of SASE via increasing the price of membership dues
  - c. Increasing interdisciplinary collaborations
  - d. Fostering career development opportunities
  - e. Creating an endowment fund (via launching a capital campaign and/or pursuing other funding opportunities)
  - f. Increasing the number of staff positions to support the demands of a growing organization
  - g. Facilitating the institutional consolidation of Socio-Economics as a discipline
  - h. Other. Please indicate: [TEXT BOX]

Please share your comments here: [TEXT BOX]

2. Managing Growth: Answering yes, no, or depends, should SASE manage its growth through placing caps/ceilings in participation via
  - a. Limiting the number of mini-conferences at our annual meeting
  - b. Limiting the size of mini-conferences at our annual meeting (e.g. number of panels or participants)

- c. Limiting the number of SASE standing networks
- d. Limiting the number of participants per network
- e. Increasing the selectivity of accepted papers in Networks
- f. Increasing the selectivity of accepted papers for Mini-conferences.
- g. Other. Please indicate: [TEXT BOX]

Please share your comments here: [TEXT BOX]

3. Annual Meeting: Please rank the following priorities about our annual meetings from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important):
- a. Increasing attendance in the annual meeting
  - b. Reducing our carbon footprint of - e.g. intercontinental air travel to - our annual meeting via offering additional online participation options
  - c. Expanding our conference locations beyond Europe and North America
  - d. Increasing the number of mini-conferences offered
  - e. Increasing the number of panels by SASE networks
  - f. Organizing more regional conferences
  - g. Other. Please indicate: [TEXT BOX]

Please share your comments here: [TEXT BOX]

4. What drew/draws you to SASE? Check all that apply.
- a. Interdisciplinary focus
  - b. Topical focus
  - c. A specific network. If yes, please indicate its letter/name: [TEXT BOX]
  - d. A specific mini-conference. If yes, please indicate its topic and year if possible: [TEXT BOX].
  - e. I was recruited by a current SASE member.
  - f. I saw a call-for-papers announcement
  - g. I received an email about SASE.
  - h. I saw information on the SASE website.
  - i. I saw a social media post about SASE.
  - j. I am part of a group of scholars who regularly attend
  - k. Other. Please explain. [TEXT BOX]



Please share your comments here: [TEXT BOX]

5. Member Focus Group Meetings: How likely would you be to participate in a one-hour online (via zoom) member small group feedback session to discuss and share ideas about the future strategic direction of SASE? 1 Very likely, 2 Maybe 3 Not likely.  
If you are interested in being contacted about participating in a member focus group, please indicate your name and email address:  
NAME (BOX for FIRST, BOX for LAST)  
EMAIL address. [auto-check for valid email address]  
Please share your comments here: [TEXT BOX]
6. Open Feedback: Please share any additional thoughts or ideas you have about the strategic direction of SASE. [TEXT BOX]
7. Member Demographics: It would be helpful to know about your interests and field of study. Please let us know about your:
  - a. Discipline: checklist: Economics, Law, Socio-Economics, Sociology, Political Economy, Political Science, Socio-Economics, Sociology, Other: [TEXT BOX]
  - b. Position/Rank: checklist: Tenured/Tenure Track: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor; Adjunct / Teaching Faculty; Post-Doctoral; Doctoral Student; Other: [TEXT BOX]
  - c. Region of residency: Africa, Europe, North America, South America, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Oceania, Other: please indicate: [TEXT BOX] . • Gender: M/F/nonbinary/prefer not to say/other: [TEXT BOX]
  - d. Primary SASE Network: insert checklist of network letters and names
  - e. SASE membership: checklist: 0-5 years, 6-10 years, >10 years
  - f. Research / Scholarly Interests: [TEXT BOX]

Member Focus Group (10 participants)

31 May 2024

Moderated by Kathryn Ibata-Arens and Annelies Fryberger

### Meeting Summary Findings

The consensus from the group was that SASE should continue to support inclusion, particularly continuing to be a welcoming environment for junior scholars and graduate students, as well as scholars at all levels from the Global South. Focus group participants did not express interest in consolidating or otherwise drawing boundaries around a certain definition of socio-economics and further, did not see the value in such an exercise for the strategic future of SASE. In fact, it was noted that the interdisciplinary, boundary spanning nature of SASE conferences was what was most meaningful and attractive.

It was acknowledged that there is an inherent tension between the aim of inclusivity versus increasing quality of papers via selectivity.

Nobody called for narrowing or otherwise limiting growth through instituting greater selectivity (e.g. ceilings on the number of mini-conferences, networks, limiting number of accepted papers). However, one suggestion that gained traction was that network and mini-conference organizers should encourage greater *commitment* by presenters to read each other's papers (and therefore to have networks require pre-conference papers to be submitted and circulated). Several participants mentioned that the attraction of SASE early on in their careers was its welcoming atmosphere. So, if any barrier would be erected, it could be a commitment barrier. For example, a graduate student could be committed to the process of receiving and sharing feedback on works-in-progress, even if their work was less-developed than that of more seasoned scholars.

Participants expressed surprise that the SASE staff is comprised merely of one part-time executive director and two part-time contract staff, which poses limits on “letting a thousand flowers bloom” unlimited growth as suggested by one survey respondent. NOTE: The executive director

position was full-time under Martha Zuber's tenure but was reduced to part-time after she retired.

Participants noted that there is often confusion caused by overlap between the topics of mini-conferences and networks (and networks with other networks).