

**Mitrany General Members Meeting - Evaluation 2019-2020**

Dear reader,

Hereby, we would like to present the evaluation by the 2019-2020 Mitrany Board. In this document, we firstly evaluate this year’s events and the promotion of these events. Secondly, we provide you with an overview of this year's finances.

Additionally, we have done an extensive evaluation of Mitrany’s functioning in the past seven years. With the conclusions of this evaluation, we have brainstormed, in cooperation with the university, on the future of Mitrany and the role it should have in the IRIO alumni life. We would like to offer you our findings as a starting point for a broader discussion of our association for which we would very much like your input. Please accept our invitation and send your comments, ideas, recommendations and critics to mitrany@rug.nl. In combination with our own evaluation, we hope that your input will provide a steady basis on which the next Mitrany board can continue to build.

Best regards,

Mitrany Board 2019 - 2020

**Evaluation of Events**

This year, several events were organised by Mitrany. While previous Mitrany boards organised drinks on a monthly basis, this year it was decided to only have drinks every second month after the low attendance in September and October. In that way, the Board hoped to be able to increase the number of attendees. Moreover, we decided to organise events in different cities than The Hague as well to reach different groups of alumni. However, after the very low attendance rate at the drinks in Amsterdam, it was decided to focus on The Hague only.

In general, IR alumni of several years attended the events and different people showed up. However, attendance remained low which will be further elaborated upon in the section on the future of Mitrany. Additionally, due to the Covid-19 measures, not all scheduled events could take place this year.

Drinks

* *6th of September (10 attendees) - The Hague (Café Berger)*

The first drinks of the year were organised at the beginning of September and various people of different study years showed up. However, the location was not optimal since it’s relatively small so it was decided to organise the next drinks in The Hague at a different location.

* *4th of October (5 attendees) - Amsterdam (Café Delirium)*

The second drinks of the year were organised in Amsterdam, to reach a different group of IR alumni. However, attendance was very low so it was decided to not continue with organizing drinks in different cities than The Hague for the rest of the year.

* *6th of December - (9 attendees) - The Hague (Café Leopold)*

IR alumni of several study years who had not met each other before showed up at the December drinks, which created a good atmosphere and a great opportunity to get in touch with each other.

* *April & June editions - cancelled due to Covid-19*

Bachelor graduation ceremony

*27th of November - Groningen*

A personal talk was given for IR bachelor students at their graduation ceremony to inform them about Mitrany. In the past, only flyers were handed out. The personal touch was appreciated by both Mitrany and the University of Groningen.

Drinks & Discussion

*7th of February - (15 attendees) - The Hague (Café Leopold)*

Prof. Constant Hijzen gave an interesting insight into the Dutch Security Service. Moreover, attendees could ask questions and, in that way, have a dialogue all together. The event was successful, but more people could have attended.

**Financial Strategy Mitrany**

During the academic year of 2015 - 2016, the IRIO department had decided to cut back funding for Mitrany over the following years. This has subsequently resulted in a low spending strategy in order to establish some financial reserves to guarantee the continuity of the organisation. Later, however, the IRIO department changed this strategy and continued funding of Mitrany, leaving Mitrany with a healthy financial buffer.

Mitrany received a €500 contribution for the academic year 2019-2020 and received the missing contribution from the department from 2018 - 2019, €95, leading to a total sum of 595 EU in received contributions.

Moreover, due to joint sponsor deal with Clio, an additional €75 was raised in sponsoring, bringing the total incoming funds of this academic year to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Contribution department IRIO 2018 - 2019 |  € 95 |
| Contribution department IRIO 2019 - 2020 |  € 500 |
| John Hopkins sponsor deal with Clio |  € 75 |
| Total |  € 670 |

Because of the aforementioned financial buffer, and because of dwindling attendee and engagement numbers, the Board considered using some of these reserves to make some investments in PR material. Some options regarding banners and flyers were researched. Ultimately, some flyers were printed by the University. The plans for ordering a banner were first put on hold due to low attendance of the events and later put off indefinitely because of the coronavirus.

During the ‘Drinks and Discussion’ event in december, the Board decided to promote the event with the announcement of some free drinks and bites. This, and the invitation of an interesting speaker, turned out to be a relatively successful strategy and highly recommended for future events. For this event, the following costs were made;

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Drinks and snacks |  € 130.30 |
| ‘Boekenbon’ - gift for speaker |  € 50 |
| Total |  € 180.30 |

Other costs include the monthly costs for a debit card, transaction costs and service costs, amounting to a total of €88.28. Considering that this is relatively expensive for the little use that Mitrany makes of banking services, it is recommended that the next Board considers changing their account to a different bank.

All in all, the year 2019 - 2020 has resulted in a further increase of financial reserves. Whereas this has been and should continue to be regarded as a healthy and necessary buffer, the following Board can definitely consider making use of some of these reserves for promotional purposes; either by purchasing physical promotion material or by advertising some free drinks. Continuing the search for multiple streams of income is also highly recommended. Due to low attendance numbers, a membership or contribution fee seemed inviable this year. Still, should interest and engagement increase, this option should definitely be researched.

**Future of Mitrany**

This year, it has been seven years since the foundation of Mitrany as the IRIO alumni organisation. Therefore, we decided to organise various board meetings to evaluate the functioning of Mitrany in the past years and to brainstorm about the future of the organisation. From these meetings, we have drawn the following conclusions. Firstly, Mitrany has organised a large variety of events, such as drinks, symposia, discussion sessions and lectures. These events took place in different cities in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. Though some events were more successful than others, attendance has differed largely over the last years between two to thirty persons per event. Consequently, we found that it is difficult to attract a large number of alumni to Mitrany's events, as alumni have spread around the world and have a very busy schedule. Furthermore, we have seen that Mitrany's events are mostly attended by recently graduated alumni, who have just finished their studies and just entered the labour market. It has proven even more difficult to attract alumni who graduated a longer time ago to the Mitrany events.

Following these board meetings, we organised a meeting with Mitrany’s university partners to discuss our conclusions on the functioning of Mitrany and to exchange our views on the role of Mitrany in the IRIO alumni world. This meeting took place on Monday the 25th of May. During this meeting, we discussed the university’s expectations regarding alumni associations with the university representatives present. They indicated that for them, an alumni association should provide two services. Firstly, the organisation should form a bridge between current students and alumni, thereby showing current students the career opportunities after obtaining a degree. Furthermore, by maintaining an alumni database, alumni associations can assist the university in keeping up with the whereabouts of a programme’s alumni.

Given our findings, we believe that the future of Mitrany lies in providing a bridge between current students and alumni. Therefore, the ties with Clio should only be further enhanced, as Clio is the most involved party in IRIO-students’ lives and is consequently very aware of the students’ demands. We would therefore advise the next board to look into new ways to contribute to the bridge function, for example by directly linking current students looking for a possible career in one area to an alumnus working in that specific area. Furthermore, we believe Mitrany should continue to maintain the IRIO alumni database, as we find that many alumni are able to find Mitrany and sign up for it after graduation. Moreover, we believe that the added value of Mitrany does not lie in organising events for alumni, given the relatively low turnout we have seen over the last years. We therefore recommend the next board to critically examine the events offered by Mitrany.