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Dr. Izabela Mironomicz  
Secretary General  
Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP)  
Faculty of Architecture  
Wroclaw University of Technology  
53/55 Boleslaw Prusa Street  
50-370 Wroclaw  
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Dear Dr. Mironowicz

I am writing to let you know that I should like to be considered as a candidate for the position of Chair of the AESOP Excellence in Teaching Award Committee, 2015-2020. This letter sets out some of the relevant experience which I could bring to the role and my motivation for seeking it.

Through working at the University of Liverpool and guest teaching appointments at other institutions I have gained extensive experience of learning and teaching in different contexts. The main substantive focus of my teaching has been in the following areas: international planning studies, comparative planning and urban policy; European spatial planning and regional development; the institutional and governance frameworks for planning in the UK; and, planning theory and its application to the practice of spatial planning. In my teaching I have employed a wide range of teaching methods including formal lectures, tutorial teaching, student-led learning and student supervision. I also strive to adopt innovative modes of teaching including the use of audio-visual resources and online video-streaming.

My developmental work in relation to teaching has been heavily influenced by internationalisation in higher education. In 2011-2012, for example, I developed a new double module 'International Planning Studies'. This aims to enhance the international

dimension of planning education at Liverpool and the broader student experience for home/EU students and the growing cohort of students who are joining programmes from overseas. It seeks to equip students with the knowledge and skills on planning in an international context necessary to enhance their employability in an increasingly globalised workplace. As part of the international orientation of my teaching I have also organised and led 10 overseas field studies since 2005; a time-consuming but extremely rewarding part of my teaching activity.

In 2009, together with colleagues at Brest I received the AESOP Excellence in Teaching Award, and 2014 the new Liverpool module mentioned above - 'International Planning Studies', received the Award. As a result of this I was invited to address the AESOP Heads of School Meeting held in Madrid in March 2015 and contribute with colleagues to the forthcoming AESOP 'Education 3' report. My work on education and internationalisation of the planning curriculum has also led to other publications<sup>1</sup>. In my own institution I have been asked to contribute to institutional reflection and professional development in relation to the internationalisation of learning and teaching by contributing to staff training events, institutional teaching conferences, and liaising with colleagues from Liverpool's partner institution in Suzhou, China. My experience of delivering lectures and training on learning and teaching in an international context would I feel be useful in helping with the preparation and presentation of the results of the Excellence in Teaching Award during the AESOP Annual Congress.

As regards the organisational and management aspects of the role of Chair of the Excellence in Teaching Award Committee, I feel that I would be able to draw on experience gained in my own institution and through external roles such as acting as a Convenor of the AESOP thematic group on French and British Planning Studies. I am currently the Director of Doctoral Studies for the planning discipline at the University of Liverpool and have previously acted as Head of Postgraduate Research Studies in the School of Environmental Sciences. In these roles I have helped to lead and deliver change and enhancement to postgraduate research studies and the research student experience. I have also previously led the inter-institutional collaborative 'Planning and Environment' PhD studies 'Pathway' linking the universities of Liverpool and Manchester. I feel that such experience would stand me in good stead in the organisation of the work of the committee and managing contacts with its members based at different institutions.

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<sup>1</sup>Ferreira, A., Sykes, O., and Batey, P., (2009) 'Planning Theory or Planning Theories? The Hydra Model and its Implications for Planning Education' *Journal for Education in the Built Environment*, 4/2, pp. 29-54; Sykes, O., and Prigent, L., (2010) 'Internationalisation of the planning curriculum through cross-national cooperation: reflections on the AESOP Excellence in Teaching Prize 2009', *Journal for Education in the Built Environment*, 7/1, pp 67-79 (13).

Beyond the experience outlined above, which I feel would serve me well in discharging the functions of the Chair of the Committee; I would like finally to outline some other reasons which motivate me in seeking this position. Having twice been involved in winning bids for the Award I am aware of its value and importance. This is largely because, like many observers, I have become increasingly concerned over recent years at the undervaluing of the importance of learning and teaching and the 'scholarship of teaching'<sup>2</sup> in the wider academic system. Again as many others have noted, I have felt that this is a particularly problematic issue in an internationalising, contextually-conditioned, and practice-related discipline such as planning. I see the AESOP Excellence in Teaching Award as being a valuable initiative which both seeks to recognise and reward those who take seriously, and strive to fulfil, the pedagogical vocation of the academic, and helps to further the Association's own academic mission. In light of the issues alluded to in this paragraph, and my belief in the value and importance of the Excellence in Teaching Award, I would seek to bring a real enthusiasm and commitment to the management of the award process.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further questions regarding this application.

Yours sincerely,

Olivier

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<sup>2</sup> Boyer, E.L. (1996) The scholarship of engagement, *Journal of Public Service and Outreach*, 1(1), pp. 11–20; Campbell, H. (2012), Editorial – Lots of words... but do any of them matter? The challenge of engaged scholarship, *Planning Theory and Practice*, Vol.13, No. 3, pp.349-353.

