



Student Membership Task Force

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Student Membership Task Force – Report to Steering Committee

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Executive summary

The Steering Committee of CIGRE has been reviewing possible further measures to expand the reach of CIGRE and decided at the China meeting in May 2013 to establish a Task Force on the potential new category of Student Membership as part of the Marketing sub Committee. A Task Force was therefore established in October 2013 with participants from China, Finland, Japan, Korea, Russia, Sweden, UK and the USA.

The basic aim of the task force is to make CIGRE well known and established in the student community from Bachelor through Masters and PhD, introducing students to CIGRE, providing a useful resource for their studies and to ultimately increase CIGRE membership and provide members who will improve the sustainability of the organisation.

This report provides the outcomes of the work of the Task Force and recommends that:

- A new category of Student Member is established in time for the subscription year 2015.
- Student Membership would be open for all those in full time education on a relevant Bachelor, Masters or PhD course which lasts at least 12 months, providing that there is at least 6 months of the course remaining at the time of application.
- Membership subscription to Central Office for Student Membership would be free. For those National Committees who normally add a levy to CIGRE membership fees, it is strongly recommended that no such levy is applied for Student Members.
- There be no minimum or maximum age requirements for Student Membership providing that the full time education requirement is satisfied
- Launch material and web site updates will be essential to support the National Committee role in the roll out of the initiative. It is suggested that these can be prepared following approval by the Administrative Council of the Task Force recommendations. This could be done between September and November 2014, this will allow implementation of the new membership category for the 2015 subscription year
- It is suggested that when the Student Member category is established that not only the number of members of this (and indeed all categories) should be monitored but also the rates at which Student members;
 - a) Do not continue with CIGRE membership
 - b) Progress to Individual II status
 - c) Progress to Individual I status
 - d) Progress to Collective I status
 - e) Progress to Collective II status

The number of Student members should also be monitored to ensure that the free membership is not introducing a high level of spurious applications which would need to be adjusted through a nominal membership fee.

- As well as the benefits identified in having an increased number of Student members of CIGRE the Steering Committee, Administrative Council and Technical Committee should prepare for future consideration of engagement of Student members and the role of Student members within CIGRE.
- National Committees must be responsible for the involvement of their Student Members into the CIGRE activity at all the stages of Student Membership. National Committees are therefore encouraged to establish appropriate procedures and responsibilities for dealing with the promotion, recruitment and processing of Student Members following the guidelines that will be prepared in due course.



1. Introduction

Growth in CIGRE membership continues and in particular recent efforts have been made to establish additional Young Member groups within many National Committees.

The Steering Committee of CIGRE has been reviewing possible further measures to expand the reach of CIGRE and decided at the China meeting in May 2013 to establish a Task Force on the potential new category of Student Membership. A Task Force was therefore established in October 2013 with participants from China, Finland, Japan, Korea, Russia, Sweden, UK and the USA.

The basic aim of the task force is to make CIGRE well known and established in the student community from Bachelor through Masters and PhD, introducing students to CIGRE, providing a useful resource for their studies and to ultimately increase CIGRE membership and provide members who will improve the sustainability of the organisation.

It was envisaged that any new category of membership that was established should be easy for students to obtain and relatively inexpensive. Delivery of benefits, access to reports and papers as well as e-CIGRE would be entirely electronic and hopefully have a minimal net cost of zero to CIGRE.

The objective was that proposals should be prepared for the new category of membership to the Administrative Council at their September meeting during the 2014 Paris session together with the details of how any new membership category would be implemented.



2. Task Force Membership and Methodology

Members of the Task Force are:

- Chris Jones (United Kingdom) chris.jones@jacobs.com
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The Task Force was established in October 2013 and operated through email correspondence rather than face to face or telephone conference calls.

Each Task Force member contributed personal views and also collected views from other interested stakeholders including:

- Members of staff at academic institutions
- Full time students
- CIGRE Young Members

Views were gathered during discussions with stakeholders groups and an informal questionnaire. The scope of the new Task Force was to prepare proposals to:

- a) Define the new category of Student member, including
 - a. Qualifying criteria
 - b. Verification of qualifying criteria
 - c. Membership equivalence for national Committee
- b) Specify Membership benefits
 - a. E-CIGRE
 - b. Electra
 - c. Session and Events Registration
 - d. Publication discount
 - e. Working group participation
 - f. Other potential benefits that could be added
- c) Define membership application process
- d) Consideration of Marketing of the Student Membership category
- e) Recommend Membership fee
- f) Outline transfer from Student membership to Young Member/Member status



- g) Identify issues for Central Office and a list of advantages/disadvantages associated with the implementation of the new membership category including impacts on Young Members and Collective II members
- h) Estimate potential impacts on other membership categories
- i) Estimate potential number of Student Members
- j) Estimate financial impact on CIGRE in the short, medium and long term



3. Issues Considered and Discussion

3.1 Guiding Principles

The Task Force considered some guiding principles which should be applied to any Student membership category which could be applied as a test for any proposal:

- Overall benefits for CIGRE must result, but longer term benefits are equally applicable as short term implications
- Membership fee for students should be low or zero
- The definition of who is eligible for Student Membership needs to be universally applicable to all countries and education systems
- The system of application and administration of the membership grade needs to be simple, imposing the minimum demands on Central Office and National Committee staff
- The category of Student Member should not have any negative impact on the growth of CIGRE Young members and indeed should further stimulate this ongoing initiative
- National Committees must be responsible for the involvement of their Student Members into the CIGRE activity at all the stages of Student Membership.

3.2 Student Knowledge of CIGRE

An understanding of the level of knowledge of CIGRE amongst students was assessed through:

3.2.1 CIGRE Membership

A review of current CIGRE membership stands at (2013 numbers)

- Individual I – 6619
- Individual II – 1110
- Collective I – 986
- Collective II – 137

Given that a) Young Members cover the age group up to 35 and it is not known how many of this group are existing students and b) Only 137 academic institutions globally (2012 figure was 157) are Collective II members of CIGRE; the representation of academia within CIGRE membership does not appear strong.

3.2.2 Feedback from Young Members

A short survey of CIGRE Young Members was performed (see Appendix A) to assess:

- a) Their level of awareness concerning CIGRE whilst they were students
- b) Their assessment of the benefit that CIGRE would have been to them during their time as students
- c) Additional feedback on promotion of CIGRE to students and participation of students in events

Results would tend to suggest that:

- The level of knowledge of CIGRE amongst students is presently not high
- Young members tend to find about CIGRE when becoming engaged in full time employment



- Young members believe that access to CIGRE would be of assistance to students, particularly those doing Masters/PhD courses or final year dissertations
- Students would find it difficult to justify paying for CIGRE membership
- Students could realise some benefits from participating in CIGRE Young Member activities

3.2.3 Feedback from Students

Discussion with a limited number of current students reinforced the view that knowledge of CIGRE is not significant amongst existing students and relies on information disseminated by academic staff.

3.2.4 Potential Number of Student Members

Whilst the number of potential of Student Members on a global basis is very large, the anticipated number of students that will seek membership is only a small percentage of this potential group based on;

- The low starting point of existing familiarity with CIGRE
- The low number of academic institutions that are already Collective II members of CIGRE (157) on a global basis
- The relative low popularity of Power Engineering with those studying Electrical Engineering courses
- Increased relevance of CIGRE for those in later years of their courses and those doing PhD and Masters courses

However given that the cost of membership will be low (or free) the take up of membership could be initially high, particularly in those countries with a large population of Power Engineering students.

Estimated number of Student members could therefore be as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 Estimated Number of Potential Student Members

Year	Estimated Number of Student members
2015	250
2016	400
2017	800
2018	1000

3.3 Benefits of Student Membership

Fundamentally the Task Force concluded that Student membership could deliver a number of benefits for CIGRE, and a new group of potential members. These views were reinforced with feedback from stakeholders and particular emphasis was placed on CIGRE Young Members who could more readily relate to the potential benefits they did/could have derived from CIGRE membership during their time as students.

3.3.1 Potential Benefits for CIGRE

Potential benefits for CIGRE identified included:

- Ensure sustainability of CIGRE by engagement of future generations of power engineers and to ensure that future industry leaders know about CIGRE and appreciate the benefits it can bring, thus being more receptive to allowing staff to become involved.
- If we CIGRE can engage more with students then more academic institutions may become more active in CIGRE activities, given that the number of academic institutions involved in CIGRE is a relatively small proportion of the total potential number.



- It is a general belief that new ideas and thinking could emanate from Student Members, in a similar way to what has been seen in those National Committees that have active young member groups within CIGRE that they:
 - Want to challenge the conventional ways of doing things.....they start by saying “ We can do this rather than by listing the obstacles why we can’t”
 - Much more familiar with modern IT and social media tools
 - Have enthusiasm and generally more capacity to take on activities
 - Are willing to expand their personal networks and learn from more experienced engineers and not be constrained by organisational hierarchies
- Early engagement of technical experts in WGs. There is recognition that we need a means of encouraging new blood into WG activities rather than only being accessible to very experienced experts. Young engineers and event students who are active in an area of research could contribute to a WG.

3.3.2 Potential Benefits for Student Members

Whilst it was an option to provide a reduced level of benefits for potential Student members it was considered appropriate that Student members would receive exactly the same privileges as Individual II members e.g.

- Access to e-CIGRE
- Receive electronic version of ELECTRA
- Receive discounts to CIGRE events
- Potential participation in Working Group/Study Committee activities

This would deliver the potential benefits for student members.

- Earlier and easier access to technical information through e-CIGRE This view has been confirmed by CIGRE Young members who only discovered CIGRE after entering full time employment but expressed a view that CIGRE would indeed have helped them during their under graduate and post-graduate studies.
- Networking opportunities. Student Members can find out who the experts are in their particular field of interest and use WG/CIGRE activities to establish contact and find out what’s going on.
- Assist career development.
- Make CIGRE more accessible by potentially offering student rates/discounts for events although these benefits are likely only to be appropriate for a limited number of students.

3.3.3 Other Potential Benefits

Other potential benefits for consideration include:

- Enable CIGRE to assist in the promotion of power engineering as a career. In some countries it is a problem to get youngsters interested in science and engineering, if CIGRE believes it has a role to play in this, such engagement with students would assist this.

3.4 Membership Fee

In considering the potential membership fee for Student membership a number of factors were taken into account:

- a) Whether or not CIGRE should be trying to get financial benefit in the short term from having Student members? It was concluded that this is not the case and the benefits from Student membership should be evaluated long term.



- b) Dialogue with students and CIGRE Young Members suggested that CIGRE should not expect students to be willing or able to pay a membership fee for a category of Student Membership. This is particularly the case where potential student members may not be aware of the potential benefits of membership. Several Young members commented that it is only with the benefit of hindsight that the value of CIGRE membership as a student can be appreciated.
- c) Collective II membership allows academic institutions to access CIGRE benefits and potentially allow students to utilise their Collective II access.
- d) The costs of administration (for Central Office and National Committees) of any membership fee have to be taken into account. Questions were asked of Central Office in this respect. The response was that:

Yes the class of Student membership would increase the workload on Central Office but the feeling is that Central Office are improving the membership process through a more efficient transmission system between National Committees and Central Office, and this should allow to allocate more resources for other improvements and additional services.

On this basis, any aspects of additional workload on Central Office should not be taken into account.

- e) Loss of revenue from Individual II members. Following on from the conclusion that any membership fee for Student members should be zero or very low, there will be a loss of revenue from those existing Individual II members who would then qualify to become Student Members.

Central Office does not have records of the number of Young Members who would qualify as students. The proportion of Young Members who would qualify as students could be estimated by age, but since Individual II members are young engineers under the age of 35, and they can only have this status for two years it was considered that the proportion of Young Member numbers (827) who could become Student Members would be very low.

Even if this percentage was as high as 25%, then the revenue lost would only be $(0.25 \times 827 \times 38€)$ 7876€ per annum in the case of free Student membership.

Hence a breakeven (purely based on additional membership revenue alone) would require 103 new members per annum as a result of the new Student Membership initiative, or potentially 10% of Student member numbers identified in Section 3.2.4.

- f) It was considered as to whether rather than free Student membership it would be more appropriate to have a nominal membership fee of say 5€ or 10€. Considerations were as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Arguments For and against Free Student membership

For Free	Against Free
a) Doesn't exclude students who would find even a nominal fee a barrier	a) Students apply for membership that will not have any interest
b) Maximises membership therefore exposure of CIGRE amongst students	b) Those that will really benefit will pay a nominal fee
c) Raises the profile within universities and other establishments (encouraging staff to promote CIGRE)	c) Potential financial and administrative burden on CIGRE
d) Collection of a small fee (5€ or 10€) would not be cost beneficial	d) Concept that anything worth having is worth paying for



It was concluded that free membership would be the appropriate starting position, but if there is evidence of spurious applications from membership that this policy could be reviewed.

- g) It is suggested that if a new Student Member category is established that not only the number of members of this (an indeed all categories) should be monitored but also the rates at which Student members;
 - a) Do not continue with CIGRE membership
 - b) Progress to Individual II status
 - c) Progress to Individual I status
 - d) Progress to Collective I status
 - e) Progress to Collective II status

3.5 Transition between Student Membership and Young Membership

Individual Members II (Young members), aged under 35, only pay half the fee for their first 2 years of membership, so there needs to be a clear transition between any Student Membership category and Young Members.

The transition needs to have no negative impact on the growth which has been seen in CIGRE Young membership.

Transition should be simple and applicable to all National Committees.

For those National Committees with active Young member groups what would be the implication of having a category of CIGRE Student membership?

- Positive such that Young members could help to engage and recruit Student members?
- Cause confusion and potentially lead to two separate uncoordinated groups?

It was concluded that the situation regarding Young Member groups is different depending on the particular National Committee and how much promotion of the new membership class is given by individual National Committees could vary. Two types of National Committee response are likely:

NC Type A (There is currently no Young Member group active within the National Committee)

- In this scenario the NC would simply accept new Student Members without any coordination with Young Members or specific promotional activities.

NC Type B (There is currently an active Young Member group active within the National Committee)

- The Young Member group would coordinate activities with Student Members including events
- Student members would transition onto young membership
- Young Members would likely assist in the promotion of Student Membership within universities

It was therefore concluded that for those NCs which had no active Young Member group; there would be no real impact of establishing a new Student Membership, whilst for those NCs already with an active Young Member group, the new membership category would likely have positive benefits and those best placed to lead the introduction of students into CIGRE would actually take leadership through the existing Young Member infrastructure.

It should be reinforced however that the category of Student member should be open for all, irrespective of whether or not there is active engagement of a Young Member group within a national Committee.



3.6 Membership Equivalence

At the moment Young members are classed as 0.5 equivalent members based on the reduced membership fee. This decision was established recently on the basis that National Committees which had a high proportion of Young Members were believed to be receiving unfair recognition. On this basis student membership would not be recognised at all in terms of membership equivalence if there was free membership for students.

Whilst it was considered if this was valid approach in keeping equivalent membership directly linked to membership fees received by Central Office it was recognised that any membership equivalence which was not based solely on financial contribution is likely to be controversial.

The Task Force therefore concluded that it would not be appropriate to consider membership of Student Membership differently than the system currently applied.

At some point in the future it may be considered appropriate by the Steering Committee to reward National Committees for initiatives to recruit Young Members and Student Members, recognising that such activities are likely to promote the long term sustainability of CIGRE.

3.7 Definitions

Any definition of the category of Student membership has to be:

- Straightforward so it is easy to understand and apply
- Universal so it can be applied on a global basis
- Consistent with the values of CIGRE

Therefore the Task force had to consider whether:

- There sufficient similarity in the education systems on a global basis to have simple qualifying rules?
- Any difference should be considered between those in part time and full time education
- Treatment of research posts
- Any lower limit e.g. Can those at school / college qualify for Student Membership?
- Perhaps make it simple that anyone in full time education qualifies?

It was concluded that in order to make the system as straightforward as possible, the category of Student Membership would be open for all those in full time education at a nationally recognised (as established by individual National Committees or Central Office) college, university or training establishment. The only other requirement is that the duration of the course / training would have to be more than 12 months and is considered a Bachelor, Masters or PhD equivalent course of study.

There would be no age restrictions (so a mature full time student would qualify) but part time education would not qualify.

Documentary evidence of enrolment on a qualifying course would have to be provided to the National Committee/Central Office along with any application for Student Membership.

3.8 Verification of Qualifying Criteria

For those national Committees which handle membership, then verification of the documentation provided to show that a student is undertaking full time education should be performed by the National Committee.

It is expected that a straightforward letter from the school, college or university would be sufficient for this purpose. The letter would have to confirm:

- The name of the establishment (document should be on letter headed paper)



- The course being undertaken and study basis (full time)
- The name and contact details of the student
- The start date for the study programme and expected end date
- The name and contact details of the person providing the letter

For those counties where Central Office handles the membership applications directly, then the above document should accompany the application for Student membership and would then be assessed by Central Office.



4. Proposal

The proposed new membership class of Student Member is outlined in the following sections:

4.1 Definition of New Student Membership Class

A new CIGRE membership class be defined as “Student Member”. A Student Member would be entitled to the same benefits as an Individual II member.

Membership equivalence would be zero.

It is suggested that the category of membership be called “Student Member” or “Membre Etudiant”

4.2 Eligibility

All those undertaking full time education at a nationally recognised college, university or training establishment. The course should be recognised as Bachelor, Masters aor PhD equivalent level.

The duration of the course / training would have a minimum total duration of 12 months and have at least 6 months remaining at the time of application.

There are no minimum or maximum age requirements.

4.3 Application Process

The application process would follow the normal membership process as for other CIGRE membership classes except that in addition to submission of the membership application form, all membership applicants have to submit a copy of proof of status of full time education which is provided by the establishment which is providing the full time course.

The Student membership application form is submitted either direct to Central Office (in case of countries without a National Committee) or to the National Committee as appropriate.

In the case of applications through a National Committee the National Committee is responsible for confirming validity of the application and in particular the proof of full time education document provided. Applications via a National Committee could be made using a hard copy form, or on-line, depending on the usual arrangements for the particular National Committee.

Applications can be made at any point during the calendar year and membership will last for the remainder of that calendar year. Where an academic year is completed before December, then Student Membership will continue for the remainder of the year.

A new Student Membership form will be required which in addition to the information required for Individual II applications also specifies the details to be provided in the supporting letter from the academic institution:

- The name of the establishment (document should be on letter headed paper)
- The course being undertaken and study basis (full time)
- The name and contact details of the student
- The start date for the course and expected end date
- The name and contact details of the person providing the letter



It is anticipated that the on line version of the form would only be required by Central Office, with the facility to upload the supporting letter.

4.4 Membership Fee

The cost of Student Membership is free for the duration of the period of eligibility.

Upon completion of full time education the Student Member will qualify for Individual II membership providing that age requirements (less than 35) are satisfied.

4.5 Launch of New Student Membership

It is proposed that the Student Member category be launched as soon as possible after approval by the Administrative Council so that it can be implemented for the 2015 membership period. Confirmation that this is feasible will need to be provided by Central Office.

In addition to approval of the Administrative Council the following additional material tasks would be required to support National Committees and other stakeholders in the role out of the initiative:

- Update of CIGRE Statutes (following Administrative Council approval)
- One page flyer aimed at Student members outlining
 - Benefits of CIGRE membership
 - Application process
 - Details required from academic institution
 - Links to application form
 - Links to Young Member groups
- Briefing pack for all National Committees
- Briefing pack for all Collective II members
- Updates to CIGRE web pages
- New on line application form



5. Recommendations

- The Task Force recommends that a new category of Student Member is established in time for the subscription year 2015.
- Student Membership would be open for all those in full time education on a course which last at least 12 months, providing that there is at least six months of the course remaining at the time of application.
- Membership subscription to Central Office would be free. For those National Committees who normally add a levy to CIGRE membership fees, it is strongly recommended that for the class of Student Members, that no such levy is applied.
- There is no minimum or maximum age requirements for Student Membership providing that the full time education requirement is satisfied
- Launch material and web site updates will be required. It is suggested that these could be prepared following approval by the Administrative Council of the Task Force recommendations, between September and November 2014, this will allow implementation of the new membership category for the 2015 subscription year.
- It is suggested that when the Student Member category is established that not only the number of members of this (an indeed all categories) should be monitored but also the rates at which Student members;
 - a) Do not continue with CIGRE membership
 - b) Progress to Individual II status
 - c) Progress to Individual I status
 - d) Progress to Collective I status

The number of Student members should also be monitored to ensure that the free membership is not introducing a high level of spurious applications which would need to be adjusted through a nominal membership fee.

- As well as the benefits identified in having an increased number of Student members of Cigre the Steering Committee, Administrative Council and Technical Committee should prepare for future consideration of engagement of Student members and the role of Student members within Cigre.
- National Committees must be responsible for the involvement of their Student Members into the CIGRE activity at all the stages of Student Membership. National Committees are therefore encouraged to establish appropriate procedures and responsibilities for dealing with the promotion, recruitment and processing of Student Members following the guidelines that will be prepared in due course.

Appendix A. Simple Questionnaire

Questions
1) Were you aware of Cigre as an organisation whilst you were:
a. An undergraduate?
b. A post graduate (Masters or PhD)?
c. Only when you became employed post FTE?
2) If you knew about Cigre, before entering FTE how did you find out about it?
a. Fellow students?
b. Professors/Lecturers
c. Sponsoring organisations
3) Given what you know now, do you think that student involvement in Cigre would be beneficial to students?
a. Yes, for access to eCigre and the technical brochures for research
b. Yes, for career development
c. Yes, for networking
d. No, I do not think student membership would be useful
4) Do you think that a student membership class would be beneficial? (recognising that Cigre Young Membership normally cost 50% of the normal Individual fee, the free NGN membership is subsidised by CIGRE UK)
a. Yes I think that a student membership class would be useful
b. No, I don't think a student membership class would be useful as it can be covered by Young member group membership
c. No I don't think student membership is necessary
5) Would eCigre have been useful to you when you were a student?
6) Would free entry to Cigre UK / Cigre events be useful for Students?
7) What do you think a Cigre Student membership fee should be
a. Free
b. Minimal amount say (€5 to €10)
c. Same as Young Member membership (€38)
8) Any suggestions as to how Cigre would best promote itself to students
a. Through a very strong NGN type organisation that could link with students
b. By targeting Professors/lecturers to promote the benefits of Cigre
c. Through IEEE/IET student groups
d. Other, please indicate