



Long Report of the IDEALiStiC Online Conference 2020-1

Stella Harper, Marco Guerini, Benjamin Witmer
November 23, 2020

Contents

1	General Information	2
2	Member Universities and Abbreviations	2
3	Workshops	3
3.1	Re-branding the IDEA League: IDEALiStiC as key Influencers	3
3.1.1	Description	3
3.1.2	Output	3
3.2	Student Well-being	5
3.2.1	Description	5
3.2.2	Mental health - Introduction	5
3.2.3	Mental health - Outputs	6
3.2.4	Diversity and Inclusion - Introduction	9
3.2.5	Diversity and Inclusion - Outputs	10
3.2.6	Financial Aspects - Introductions	12
3.2.7	Financial Aspects - Outputs	12
3.3	Panel Discussion on Distance Teaching	16
3.3.1	Description	16
3.3.2	Conclusion	16
4	General Assembly	17
4.1	Decisions	17
4.2	Elections	17
5	Acknowledgement	18

1 General Information

This report summarises the results and workshops of the IDEALiStiC Online Conference which was held on May 22nd, 23rd and on October 26th, 2020. Due to COVID-19 situation, the Conference Milano 2020-1 has been transformed into the first Online Conference of IDEALiStiC.

The main topic of the conference was **Student Well-being**. The main goal was to discuss equal opportunities diversity through students, financial aspects that lead to equal rights and mental health problems caused by the unexpected situation of the pandemic and by complications of life before COVID-19. We had the opportunity to have a workshop also on "Re-branding the IDEA League", learning new tools to use to reach students.

Within the scope of this year's conference, we have decided to promote a panel discussion, inviting rectors and vice rectors from each university to talk about Distance Teaching and what we will keep and learn from the experiences provoked by this difficult time away from our university campuses.

During the course of the conference two interactive workshop sessions took place, where current situations were shared, problems were discussed and solutions were worked out.

2 Member Universities and Abbreviations

UNIVERSITY	ABBREVIATION
Chalmers University of Technology	Chalmers
Delft University of Technology	Delft
Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen	RWTH
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich	ETH
Politecnico di Milano	PoliMi

3 Workshops

3.1 Re-branding the IDEA League: IDEALiStiC as key Influencers

3.1.1 Description

We had the chance to talk about the IDEA League identity and the IDEA League brand promise (what engagement with IDEA League brings you). Then, our re-branding company "Walvis and Mosmans", worked with us to explore how to reach various students at our universities through digital means and in real life. We did this with a number of mind-mapping techniques and exploring how to take students on the journey from being 'unaware' of IDEA League through to 'orientation' and 'action/engagement' with IDEA League staff and students. Finally explored what tools IDEALiStiC would need in order to be true IDEA League ambassadors within our universities.

We started from 2 key questions:

- Which tools do you use to reach your students? And how do you reach your students the best?
- How are your students organised, what is the student 'landscape' at your university (for instance private: housing, communal housing etc, and social life: students / sports associations etc).

3.1.2 Output

Throughout the workshop, the participants were split into 5 groups, one per university, trying to respond to the 2 key questions related to each university and then, divided only in 2 groups, working out different ideas on how to reach students more effectively and efficiently. The output is summarised in the following bullet points.

Ways of promoting IDEALiStiC among students trough out the year:

- First semester welcome week where students get a lot of info,
- Bachelor and Master's open days (IDEALiStiC could have a stand on its own),
- During general conferences (twice a year),
- One month after semester starts (march-april).

IDEAs - when how?

- Share the information about IDEA League in the beginning of the semester / term,
- Use the official channels of the universities to reach out to students,
- Reach out to students when deadlines are approaching (e.g. deadline for geophysics master, student grants, etc.),
- Information on social media can be shared by student associations / councils according to their preferences,
- Make IDEA League visible on campus! (e.g. ETH Link, Screens on campus, flags),
- Use the international fairs (exchange fairs) to promote the projects.

Tools to communicate with students:

- Introduce some days of seminars/webinars/conference, where people can come up to you and discuss idea,
- Can be handed out gadgets, stickers and merch,
- Promote it through students who go to summer schools, doctorate schools and challenge programs,
- During Erasmus and other international programs meetings,
- During association events (stands),
- Open sessions during IDEALiStiC conferences, also inviting international guests.

Challenges in reaching students:

- The semesters / terms start at different times at (nearly) each university.
 1. Plan the announcements at the start of the terms where students are still open to new information.
 2. Avoid sending information at the end of the terms, as students are focussing on exams.
- Information coming from student unions / student associations / etc. are often not considered as “serious”.
 1. Students want to separate between “fun” and “serious study stuff”.

3.2 Student Well-being

3.2.1 Description

The Workshop started with introductory presentations (in total 45 min) about well-being and the solutions the single universities currently apply at their university. The presentations were held by each university who were asked to fulfil certain requirements. The key questions below were supposed to be answered and the length of the presentation was to stay in the framework of 5 minutes (+ 2 minutes for questions):

- When it comes to student well-being: What are the measures your university / your student council takes? Are there any platforms?
- Do you think your university is good at student well-being? Why or why not?
- The COVID-19 situation does influence student well-being. In what ways? What does your university do to help? How does the student council help?
- What are the major issues your students face in the context of student well-being (in times of COVID-19)?

After the introductory presentations, we worked in three groups on different aspects: Mental Health, Diversity and Inclusion, Financial Aspects.

3.2.2 Mental health - Introduction

The workshop “mental health” had twelve participants in total. As mentioned in the handbook, the workshop had the goal of defining mental health and further finding solutions to the problems involved with this topic. The participants were also asked to include their personal stories, which allowed the pin-pointing of mental health characteristics. The handbook said:

In this workshop we want to start from scratch, defining mental health in the context of student well-being, evaluating the problems and finding solutions or ideas on how to tackle them. We plan to spend a decent amount of time with the definition as this is most likely a tough task. As the workshop focuses on student well-being during COVID-19, we will try to put this into perspective. In order to prepare for this workshop, we ask you to think of as many situations as possible where you or someone you know has been in touch with a “mental health” situation in the context of student life. What are the describing factors? How does your university aim at solving mental health issues, is there a platform or even a person you can approach?

Because of the fact that personal stories were included in this workshop, it meant that it was very important to stay sensitive and retain an atmosphere that was respectful. The topic was a very difficult one to grasp, so it was very important that participants had prepared their statements beforehand.

The first task that was asked of the group, was to try to define mental health. With a combination of research and personal opinions, the group came up with the following definition:

“A state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Here, external factors like acceptance, respect and support from the community have to play a secondary role.”

After defining the broad meaning, the next steps would be in the direction of taking a closer look at the variety of mental health issues. In virtual break -out rooms on zoom, participants were put into smaller groups to start the discussion. Here many shared their own stories regarding mental health, or gave an overview of situations that they knew were happening at their own universities. Individuals were very honest, and the atmosphere allowed open communication between all parties. Through a virtual brainstorming tool, the different stories were grouped so that one was able to allow a better structure. Problems and issues- were grouped either under “general problems”, “extreme cases and their issues” and “covid-19 induced issue”. The latter was included since it was at the time extremely relevant to the well-being at universities and was important to include in the discussion.

3.2.3 Mental health - Outputs

Defining the General Problems

As a general problem, the brainstorm identified sexual harassment as an issue that presented itself at every one of the 5 universities. It was discussed that the personal stories usually reflected the view of women. Inequality and discrimination, especially regarding groups such as LGBT+, race and gender were also found to be pressing issues. All of these issues were found to be problems at all universities and showed that there was a lot of work needed to be put into finding solutions.

Another aspect that was mentioned by many participants was the academic pressure that was felt by many students, with the worst cases also leading to mental disorders and burnouts. Students were able to differentiate the source of this pressure between internal pressure (put on by oneself or by other students) and external pressure created by the universities’ structures,

the general societal framework and other factors such as the family. It was possible to pinpoint one reason for these problems as being the lack of support given by the university as a whole, and another reason being a lack of support from peers in one's given environment. Individuals told stories about the lack of cooperation between students and the amount of pressure this competitive environment creates. Not only internally, but also on a societal level, studying at one of the five universities seemed to be tainted by a specific image of what studying meant in the framework of society. This leads to students believing their lives should be structured based on the "work, work, life balance", creating an extra component that takes up precious time for students to focus on their social lives. This, mixed with the internal effects like pressure regarding the passing of exams, can lead to mental health issues for students.

It was also found in the discussions, that points of contact as well as communication about mental health issues needed to be extended to show students that every problem has its validity, and that no problem should be seen as a "small problem". Additionally it also seemed to be difficult to receive support for students who came to the university with pre-existing conditions.

Defining Extreme cases and their issues

In the process of trying to define the general problems regarding mental health for students, specific critical issues were mentioned that clearly needed to be addressed above all others. Stories from participants included cases of suicide cases or attempted suicide. Shockingly, it was found that students felt like their universities were trying to cover up/hide cases of suicide, which created a feeling that the universities were not taking topics like this seriously enough. Through the lack of communication, it was perceived by the participants that the universities put more focus on their public image than on the physical and mental health of their students.

Defining COVID-19 Induced Problems

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the first half of the year 2020, the physical conference could not take place and had to be substituted by a virtual option. But not only the conference had to be changed, the daily lives of students in all Europe were severely affected. Many had to switch from lectures in real life, to virtual classrooms at home. Home Office and the limits put upon most students' lives, resulted in problems with concentration, as well as a general lack of interaction with other people. Many found it difficult to split work and free-time spaces, when forced to live and work in a limited space. The change in the study format seemed to create an emotional imbalance for many students, resulting in mental health issues as described above.

Finding Solutions to the Issues

After brainstorming and sharing personal experiences between the participants, the group was able to create a sheet on the tool Trello board where all the problems discussed were grouped and visible. The variety and the amount of issues were shocking; however, the parallels between the five different universities were obvious. Students all over Europe who are studying at a technical university, were facing similar problems regarding mental health and general well-being. Recognising the mental-health issues of the students was only the first step in this process. It was now important to use the input of the students to try to find solutions to the issues and allow them to share their knowledge from the different study environments.

Looking at the larger picture, some issues could be solved by changing specific structures of the universities. One example given during the workshop was the need to expand and invest in counselling infrastructure. This would allow students to get help in case they were facing one of the problems mentioned above. In general, it was revealed that the transparency and communication between the university and students should be seen as a priority. This could be reached by awareness campaigns about mental health, and also by creating the academic space to talk about these issues e.g. in lectures.

On an internal level the issues revealed that students often share similar problems. Therefore it would be helpful to support students in helping each other. An example to support this idea would be to create or provide a platform that allows students to exchange their experiences with each other. If this were available, it would aid in the communication and awareness of mental health issues. In general, it was found that creating contact points and awareness was the key. It is therefore important that all actors involved work on these measures.

Another aspect that the discussions showed was the need for support and awareness for peer opportunity and equality. The fact that the IDEA League consists of five universities from the technical sphere makes it especially important to support and be aware of the need for gender equality. Students expressed their hope that the universities will create measures in the future that make closing the gender gap a priority.

Our plans for the future

We are fully aware that this topic is far too big to thoroughly discuss within the framework given in these two days of virtual conference. But in addition to having all participants taking this input back to their universities, a possible added approach would be to carry the information to the Joint Board Meeting of IDEA League.

3.2.4 Diversity and Inclusion - Introduction

As a result of the IDEALiStiC conference held in Gothenburg in November 2019, this topic found its way into the first online conference as well. In Gothenburg, a workshop on Diversity and Inclusion was held in the framework of the topic “internationalisation;” and, it was then noticed that this topic was one that needed more time and attention. For this reason it was included in the session on Well-being as well.

The participants of the Gothenburg conference decided to produce a position paper on the topic of diversity and inclusion. A working group has been installed, which is led by Charlotte (TU Delft). Diversity is a very difficult topic and demands in-depth discussions.. The working group has already come forward with detailed presentations about how diversity is handled at their respective universities. Nevertheless, a position paper needs more attention and consequently, we decided to use the framework of student well-being to make a follow-up discussion to work with further on this paper. The goal of the following workshop was to create an action plan for writing the position paper on Diversity Inclusion. As a preparation, students were asked to fill out the following leading questions:

- Describe the status of DI at your institution: policies/strategies; the presence or lack of a Diversity Office/ Diversity Officer; allocated hours and budget for DI specific actions; etc.
- Is your educational institution active in taking action on DI issues, and if so: why? What is their main motivation to take this up?
- Indicate the 3 most pressing issues at your institution and describe them/illustrate them
- Are these issues specific for your institution only or could they be general challenges for most technical universities?
- Describe what you think is the best approach for a technical university to approach the matter of DI

Using the Trello board tool, the answers to these leading questions from each university were summarised. In the following texts, some of the important output in regards to diversity and inclusion will be discussed.

3.2.5 Diversity and Inclusion - Outputs

ETH Zürich

A huge problem regarding the gender gap exists at the ETH Zürich. The gap is seen in the unequal numbers of male and female students at the university; however, the gender imbalance in scientific staff members and professors is most shocking. In addition to this, the participants of the workshop that represented the ETH university observed that there is a problem with discrimination at the university and a lack of integration of foreign students. Also LGBTQ+ Students are affected by discriminating acts. Overall, it seems that the student-representatives of the ETH Zurich found that the university lacks a long-term gender strategy, and has no vision for supporting diversity in the future.

Chalmers

The Chalmers university seemed to face similar challenges in regards to integration of foreign or international students into the structures of the university. It seems one of the aspects lacking at the institution was the communication of diversity as a topic with all its substance. Whereas the topic of the gender imbalance, specifically the inclusion and support of women in engineering programs has gained importance at the university, the other topics of diversity are hardly presently being discussed. Therefore, the students at Chalmers find that the treatment plan which is created every year, should focus more on diversity with all of its facets.

RWTH Aachen

Similar to all of the other five universities, the RWTH Aachen has to deal with the issue of gender imbalance. Aachen actually is the city with the highest ratio of male over female inhabitants in Germany, mainly because of the RWTH (about 65 percent of the 47k students are males and the university accounts for 1/4-th of the population - including staff). In the university they specifically seem to lose many female students in the process of working their way up to degrees. For example, even though departments like medicine or philosophy are characterised by having 60 percent female students taking part in their program, the number of females sink when with regard to professorships. In this field the RWTH Aachen has a lot more male professors than female professors. Generally, it seems they have a low percentage of women in almost all parts of university, with the exception being the student bodies of the faculties of medicine and philosophy which changes depending on the higher degrees. Even though the gender imbalance is a huge issue that most technical universities in Europe seem to face, similarly to Chalmers, the RWTH seems to link this problem with the meaning of diversity primarily being seen as a topic of gender. Disabilities and nationalities are almost always considered second or third on the priority list. However, the participants in this workshop are aware that diversity is much more than only the gender imbalance and propagate that universities should try to create measures focusing on all subgroups.

The RWTH Aachen is actively trying to reach more international students to make the university more diverse, but since legal documents are all in German, it poses a great challenge. RWTH does make a great effort to integrate international students, but they still seem to struggle more in finding accommodations more than German students. This might also be due to societal issues, but the problem deeply affects international students.

TU Delft

The Tu Delft seems to particularly struggle with the implementation process of supporting diversity at their university. Because of the lack of expertise and time in the diversity office, the topic is not given the priority it deserves. Student representatives from the TU-Delft find it important to create more measures to support the topic of diversity at their university.

Polimi

...

Common Issues and Future Recommendations

The collection of issues at the five universities show that many of them are similar to each other. One issue that seems to be a pressing concern of all, is the gender imbalance and the need to try to close the existing gender gap. Specifically in the field of engineering, new ideas and active measures are needed to close the gap.

Another issue is the discrimination of sub-groups; for example, students that belong to the LGBTQ+ community. The participants of the workshop recommend that measures worth analysing include creating gender neutral toilets, and adding a gender-neutral option for enrolment at the university.

As a reaction to the difficulty of integrating foreign, or international students, a measure we recommend is the active effort of help in translating legal documents. This way one could break down a huge barrier that exists for these students. In addition, the universities should try to integrate these students into the system by involving them with students that are native to the specific country. Therefore cultural goals and strategies should carry a high priority in moving forward to achieve diversity goals in the future.

3.2.6 Financial Aspects - Introductions

In this workshop students were asked to work on the financial aspects of the overall topic of well-being. Financial aspects are an important part of social and mental security, and therefore also relevant to all students at the university. In recent days, many students and families are having increased economic difficulties due to the COVID-19 situation. It is fundamental to share the best practices and work on new ways together to tackle this situation. Because of the pandemic, students are feeling more disadvantaged today and this can have a direct affect on their mental health. The Workshop started off by allowing the student representatives of each university to hold short presentations about the financial support and workings in each of the universities. In a following step a discussion should be held on the question of how to increase the students' chances of being involved in reorganising these expenditures. The debate should focus both on the benefits and issues that could be affecting students well-being.

To be able to pinpoint the main problems that are concerning the financial issues of students, a cluster was created with the answers of the workshops participants. The main message that is revealed is that students have difficulty getting a stable income and often do not have the financial infrastructure to carry on their student lives in a secure manner. The workshop participants were also asked to reflect on how well their universities are dealing with this currently and to judge them d on a state on a scale of 1-6: 1 meaning that the universities were doing very badly and 6 meaning that universities have almost no current problem with these issues. PoliMi, TU Delft and Chalmers all rated their university with mid-option number 3. From this , one can interpret that there is a lot of room for improvement;however, the situation seems to not be critical. RWTH Aachen gave their university the lowest score of the 5 universities giving them a 2, and the ETH achieved the highest rating with a 4. Not one university achieved the highest score which shows that this is a valid issue and needs attention. In another perspective, the present situation at each university was shortly described for the other participants. It is important to remember that the Covid-19 pandemic is at the centre of the discussion, since it is creating new problems in the financial aspect of well-being.

3.2.7 Financial Aspects - Outputs

PoliMi

At Polimi there are two main aspects that are prominent in regards to the students' financial aid: students' food and student-loans. To allow students to have enough money for a meal, a part of the state scholarship is taken from the university and used as a daily amount for the student to buy food. With the closing of canteens during the Covid-19 lockdown and students being forced to stay at home, many were not able to use their part of the scholarship.

We negotiated to refund 50 percent of the daily amount, which allowed the students to access this directly. Some money to cover this measure will also come from the reduction of associations' journeys and activities.

During the present time the funds from the monthly government are being used to allow more scholarships. In addition, money sourced from the act of reducing the associations' journeys and activities are helping as an extra contribution to students whose families are struggling financially due to covid-19 situation. At the moment there are two different grants: one of about 2200 given to students in dire situations; and 250 for anyone struggling with the digital divide (missing a laptop or devices to follow lectures online).

ETH Zurich

At ETH Zurich the tuition fees have been raised during the last year. At the present time they are around 700 Euro/Semester. Even though this does not seem like a large amount, the financial problem in Zurich is the high cost of living. An estimate of living costs for a student is around 9.500 Euro/Semester. To support students in financial aid, scholarships are given to national students with a low income. These usually take over 45-65 percent of the estimated living costs, depending on the personal case of the student. However, only nationals have a chance to apply for this scholarship. International students must pass the first year in order to apply for this scholarship. In addition to scholarships, the ETH also gives out loans to their students. Since ETH is regulated at a federal level, it can lend money.

Chalmers

At Chalmers university the normal system allows grants of 311 Euro/month and loans for 715 Euro/month with a merit level requested to both nationals and internationals. Scholarships are not given to nationals, since there's no tuition fee, but only to international students if their economic situation is unstable. Because of the current Covid-19 situation, the Chalmers student union has created a "crisis packet" which covers the costs of any student associations wanting to plan events. In addition they have created exceptions for student housing which guarantee students that they can stay during the pandemic without the rents changing.

RWTH Aachen

There is not much the university administration of the RWTH can do in regards to the financial aspect; therefore, a lot of work regarding student financing has to be done by the student council. The student representative at the workshop explains that this is the reason for the low rating for the question of how well each university is dealing with student financing. In total there are 47.000 students studying at the university, so there is a high potential of people suffering because of job loss during the pandemic. In contrast to other countries, 57 percent of

all students in Germany rely on their side job to finance their studies. Through the Covid-19 pandemic and the loss of many jobs, this poses a real financial problem for many students.

The normal system that includes state-assisted student financing (BAFöG) is functioning as usual, but only 12 percent of students qualify. Students' lives are also made difficult because of all the pandemic limitations imposed on them. Dining halls are closed due to state law, meaning students do not have access to cheap food. Cooking at home can be more expensive for many students, considering the fact that it should be healthy food. AStA, the student union, had tried to negotiate a "To-Go" option for students, but the caterers have until this point not been willing to. The Students body offers funds for quick financial help for students.

At RWTH Aachen, scholarships are realised via donations. ProRWTH recently collected 100.000 for scholarships. The student body has 70.000 for loans, and allows a time-frame of 10 years for the repayment process. The university has tried to ease the financial burden for students by splitting the loan into half loan/half scholarship. For example, a student can apply for 1200, so 600 are given as a loan and 600 as a scholarship. However, the problem the RWTH faces is that there is not enough money to deal with the scale of the crisis.

TU Delft

The TU delft has arranged for specific financial aid for the current corona situation. If a student has not asked for the maximum amount of their loan, they are allowed to request this. Also there is now the possibility to extend a loan payment period for 5 years. In addition to the changes in the loans, the DUO (the governmental institute that grants student loans) offers the students personalised help.

Probably the biggest change is that if you obtain your bachelor/master between September 1. 2020 and January 31 2021 (in which case you would have obtained earlier if not due to corona) you can receive a tuition fee refund for up to 3 months.

The TU Delft is trying to show leniency towards students paying their tuition fees and has also created a solidarity fund for extreme cases with financial problems.

New Ideas and Measures

After sharing this knowledge with each university, it was now up to the participants of the workshop to find new ideas of possible financial support for students. This resulted in the following output:

-
- Helping with the rent/living costs for students in need (Fonts) and investing in new student housing.
 - Official deferment of payment (at least) for international students (Allow universities with enough liquidity to officially delay the payment-deadline for the tuition fee.)
 - State subsidies/grants instead of debt through loans. Students as a low-income group should not be in debt if avoidable, especially if they are already in financial trouble.
 - Criteria for the government's unemployment fund could be lowered for newly graduated students; for example, if the requirement was that you have to pay for 2 years to qualify, newly graduated should only have to pay for half a year.
 - University or the government funds are needed to cover summer rents as long as it is not safe during the pandemic to take on usual summer jobs.
 - Universities should allow access to infrastructure and technical equipment for education even during the pandemic.
 - The university could provide dedicated spots for students graduating from courses or programmes (for example graduated bachelors students on M.Sc programmes and graduated masters students on courses) to avoid their unemployment until the job market bounces back.
 - There should be a fund created for national students that have lost their source of income.
 - International students should have lower tuition fees due to an actual decrease in the quality and cost of education during the pandemic (first analyse whether or not the cost has actually decreased)

3.3 Panel Discussion on Distance Teaching

3.3.1 Description

The board of IDEALiStiC also decided to have, for the first time, a plan a panel discussion on Saturday, 23rd of May, inviting special guests from each university to talk about a topic that is becoming more and more of current importance: Distance Teaching. The panel discussion was held on Zoom and it was open to all students of our five universities, like a town hall session. There were three main reasons motivating this panel:

- To involve students in such a challenging time, building a sense of community;
- To promote the IDEA League across students, also with a short talk of the IDEA League Secretary General and a students competition;
- To debate on a matter of current importance, as Distance Teaching, having challenging questions for the guests.

At the beginning of the event, we had a students competition with an online quiz, to attract students to the panel discussion and to introduce them to the IDEA League. Around a hundred of students participated at the competition and at the following panel discussion.

The panel discussion has been carried on starting with asking individual questions to our guests and then ask to them questions that came from the audience of students, through the zoom chat, collected by the Secretaries General of IDEALiStiC.

3.3.2 Conclusion

Since we were very impressed by the amount of proactive ideas coming from the rectors and vice rectors during the panel, the Secretaries General of IDEALiStiC decided to transcribe all the dialogues that took place.

All content is available in the attached file named as "Panel Discussion on Distance Teaching transcription". This link can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F4bUmpqg9rMvxvpTA09LTi0V4TuY2VJ5/view?usp=sharing>.

4 General Assembly

Because of the Covid-19 emergency, the General Assembly of IDEALiStiC took place after the summer 2020, on October 26th. We discussed about several topics and aspects that concerned us during the past half year. The following decisions and elections have been carried out.

4.1 Decisions

- The next conference will be held online again, due to Covid-19 situation, on the third week of December 2020 or at the beginning of 2021. The exact dates will be decided by the IDEALiStiC Board with a doodle during the next few weeks. [Update: the IDEALiStiC Board decided to have the next online conference on the 18th and 19th of December, 2020. The overall topic will be: "Students life during and after Corona Virus"]
- We did not write any position papers from the conference in May. We decided to publish this long report and preparing position papers after next conference.

4.2 Elections

- Marco Guerini (PoliMi) and Stella Harper (ETH Zürich) were elected unanimously as Secretaries General.
- Benjamin Witmer (TU Delft) was elected unanimously as PR Manager.

The following students have been appointed as Board members for the year:

- Tecla Paul Heuermann for RWTH Aachen, and Jannis Koesling as his proxy;
- David Welander for Chalmers;
- Sam Vijlbrief for TU Delft;
- Luca Dahle for ETH for the time being [update: Kolja Frahm became the official member few weeks after the General Assembly];
- Tecla Trifilò for PoliMi.

5 Acknowledgement

The student unions of IDEALiStiC would like to thank the IDEA League and the member universities for their support. A special thanks goes to Leslie Zachariah and the 5 rectors and vice rectors that participated at the panel discussion.

The Secretaries General would like to thank all the participants for their active engagement and all the helpers that supported the organisation team.