



The European Consortium for  
Accreditation in Higher Education

**ASSOCIATION  
EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM FOR ACCREDITATION IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION (ECA)**

**Annual Report 2022**



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## 1. Balance sheet at 31 December 2022

	<u>31th December 2022</u>	<u>31th December 2021</u>
<i>Current assets</i>		
Accounts receivable	0,00 €	3.350,00 €
Other currents assets		
Cash at bank	243.671,53 €	240.088,88 €
	243.671,53 €	243.438,88 €
<b>Total assets</b>	<b><u>243.671,53 €</u></b>	<b><u>243.438,88 €</u></b>
<i>Equity</i>	271.484,15 €	265.739,05 €
<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Accounts Payable		
Current accounts	0,00 €	156,55 €
Prepaid income	4.000,00 €	4.000,00 €
	4.000,00 €	4.156,55 €
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b><u>243.671,53 €</u></b>	<b><u>243.438,88 €</u></b>



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## 2. Statement of Income and expenditure 2022

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Income</b>			
Contribution members	65.300,00 €	64.000,00 €	56.000,00 €
Contribution observers	4.000,00 €	6.000,00 €	2.750,00 €
<b>Total income</b>	<b>69.300,00 €</b>	<b>70.000,00 €</b>	<b>58.750,00 €</b>
<b>Services &amp; Projects Income</b>			
CeQuint Fees	2.400,00 €	4.400,00 €	3.600,00 €
Training Fees	5.484,81 €	11.200,00 €	0,00 €
QA Students project	0,00 €	17.770,00 €	0,00 €
SUCTIA project	0,00 €	792,60 €	11.109,20 €
CALOHEEx project	0,00 €	1.860,00 €	740,00 €
CALOHEE2 project	0,00 €	1.200,00 €	1.200,00 €
Qual--AI-ty	6.322,00 €	6.322,00 €	6.322,00 €
ImpEA project	0,00 €	0,00 €	46.630,00 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	2.822,48 €	0,00 €
STACQ project	0,00 €	1.664,26 €	0,00 €
<b>Total Services &amp; Projects Income</b>	<b>14.206,81 €</b>	<b>48.031,34 €</b>	<b>69.601,20 €</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>83.506,81 €</b>	<b>118.031,34 €</b>	<b>128.351,20 €</b>



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	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Expenses</b>			
Coordination costs	37.000,00 €	37.000,00 €	9.250,00 €
Information and Communication	7.686,20 €	6.000,00 €	8.049,10 €
Contribution to ECA events	3.577,86 €	11.000,00 €	0,00 €
Travel expenses	666,37 €	2.000,00 €	0,00 €
Other expenses	5.046,41 €	8.000,00 €	8.418,55 €
<b>Total fixed expenses</b>	<b>53.976,84 €</b>	<b>64.000,00 €</b>	<b>25.717,65 €</b>
	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Services &amp; Projects Expenses</b>			
Cequint costs	0,00 €	300,00 €	0,00 €
Training costs	5.065,41 €	10.000,00 €	0,00 €
QA Students	0,00 €	14.000,00 €	0,00 €
SUCTIA	15.104,46 €	15.200,00 €	8.163,00 €
CALOHEE project	0,00 €	1.300,00 €	0,00 €
CALOHEE2 project	0,00 €	1.200,00 €	0,00 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	2.822,48 €	0,00 €
Qual-AI-ty	3.615,00 €	6.322,00 €	964,00 €
ImpEA project	0,00 €	0,00 €	44.810,00 €
eQuatic project	0,00 €	0,00 €	13.496,00 €
AR-NET project	0,00 €	0,00 €	1.279,00 €
e-VALUATE project	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
EQ-ARTS evaluation	0,00 €	0,00 €	6.000,00 €
STACQ project	0,00 €	1.664,26 €	0,00 €
Internal strategic projects	0,00 €	0,00 €	4.750,00 €
<b>Total Services &amp; Projects Expenses</b>	<b>23.784,87 €</b>	<b>52.808,74 €</b>	<b>79.462,00 €</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>77.761,71 €</b>	<b>116.808,74 €</b>	<b>105.179,65 €</b>
<b>Net Result</b>	<b>5.745,10 €</b>	<b>1.222,60 €</b>	<b>23.171,55 €</b>



### 3. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

#### a. About ECA

The Annual Report 2022 is the ninth one of the association. The European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA) was incorporated as an association in The Hague, The Netherlands on 15 April 2014. The Annual Report 2022 covers the period from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. Prior to the incorporation ECA was not a legal entity but a project consortium set up by accreditation agencies in 2003 in Córdoba. The existence of this project consortium ended with the incorporation of ECA as an association.

The membership of the association ECA consists of **accreditation and QA agencies**.

Eligible for Membership shall be an organisation:

- a. which has its registered office in a country which participates in the Bologna Process ("Bologna Countries");
- b. which has been established as a corporate body or is based on national and/or regional regulations and/or agreements;
- c. which has accreditation or accreditation-like practices as one of its principal functions;
- d. which contributes actively to the objectives of the association; and
- e. which fulfils the ECA Code of Good Practice and/or the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

The member organisations participating in ECA meet at least once a year in a plenary General Meeting. The General Meeting also decides on the admission of a new Member. The next Annual Meeting will take place in June 2023.

The association has a Board appointed by the General Meeting and consisting of three to seven members, including a Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. The members who are not Chair or Vice-Chair need to represent five different Bologna member countries. The Board had the following composition in 2022:

- **Solange Piszcz** (CTI, France), Board member from 28 June 2018; Interim Vice-Chair since 19 February; Vice-Chair since 6 June 2019, renewed on 16 June 2020; Interim Chair from 20 March 2021 until 30th of June 2021; Chair since 30 of June 2021.
- **Eva Fernandez de Labastida** (Unibasq, Spain), Board member from 28 June 2018 and renewed on the 16 June 2020; Vice-Chair since 30 June 2021.



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- **Ronny Heintze** (AQAS, Germany), Board member from 28 June 2018, renewed on the 16 June 2020 and on the 7 of June 2022.
- **Klemen Subic** (SQAA, Slovenia), Board member from 28 of June 2018, renewed on the 16 June 2020 and on the 7 June 2022.
- **Luut Kroes** (NVAO, The Netherlands), Board Member from 16 of June 2020, renewed on the 7 June 2022, and Treasurer from 8 July 2020, renewed as Treasurer on 30 of June 2021 and on 7 June 2022.

The Board met **seven times in 2022**, six times by virtual means and one time in person (Paris, France): 4 of February, 18 of March, 25 of May, 8 of July, 11 of September (Paris, France), 28 of November.

The Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Association, under the supervision of the Board.

The Secretariat is led by the coordinator who is appointed by the General Meeting and operates under the responsibility of the Board. On a virtual General Meeting on 30 of June 2021 Sanja Grobovsek was appointed as Coordinator for the period of one year and renewed on 7 of June 2022.

The objectives of the association ECA are:

- to achieve mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions, to enhance the conditions for such mutual recognition, especially for joint programmes;
- to provide a platform for mutual learning and disseminating experiences with accreditation and accreditation-like practises;
- to provide transparent information on quality;
- to facilitate the internationalisation of institutions and students;
- and, furthermore, to perform any and all acts relating to the foregoing in the broadest sense.

The Association does not have the objective to make a profit. The Association cooperates with other relevant networks.



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To achieve the objectives of ECA the Members agree to undertake activities in Working Groups. In 2022 the following working groups were in place:

- Joint programmes, recognition and innovation Working Group and
- Certification Group, which is responsible for the methodology and due process to award ECA's Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation CeQuInt.

In addition, one standing committee of ECA has been operating:

- The Appeals Committee which has the task of handling appeals regarding the ECA Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation, as specified in the Appeals Procedure of CeQuInt.
- Communication Committee (CC) as an ad-hoc committee.

Working group Joint Programmes, Recognition and Innovation met on 21 of April by virtual means and on 12 of September in Paris, France.

Certification group met on 10 of March by virtual means and on 12 of September in Paris, France.

The strategy of the association is defined in the [ECA strategic management plan](#). On 28 of June 2018 the members adopted the "ECA Strategic Update 2018-2023".

The strategic vision of ECA is to act as an internationally recognised driver of innovation in quality assurance. With its expertise, networking, and services ECA contributes to the implementation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), promotes internationalisation of higher education and assures "state of the art" activities of its members.

ECA contributes to the EHEA implementation and to international QA developments through innovative project work. Projects in which ECA participates are discussed in the working groups and/or the Board. In 2022 ECA was involved as project partner or expert in:

- Systemic University Change Towards Internationalisation for Academia (SUCTIA, 2019-2022).
- Automatic Recognition in the Networks (AR-Net, 2018-2022).
- Quality Assurance Student Experts (2019-2022).
- Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe – Phase 2 (CALOHE2, 2020-2022).
- Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe - Extension. Phase 2 (CALOHEEx, 2019-2022).
- Implementation of automatic recognition in the networks' (I-AR, 2020-2022).
- Stacking credits and the future of the qualification (STACQ, 2020-2022).
- Fostering Student Engagement through AI-driven Qualitative Quality Assurance Practices (2020-2023).



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## b. Summary of Significant Accounting Principles

### **Basis of Preparation**

These financial statements, express the information for the year 2022.

These financial statements, which are expressed in Euro, are prepared in accordance with accounting principles mentioned below.

The net result is added to the reserves.

### **Assets**

Assets are stated at nominal value net of a provision for doubtful debts.

### **Cash at bank**

Cash at bank are at the disposal of the consortium and are interest bearing at prevailing market rates.

### **Current liabilities**

Current liabilities are stated at nominal value.

### **Income and expenses recognition**

Income and expenses are accounted for in the period to which they relate.



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#### 4. Notes to the balance sheet at 31 December 2022

##### a. Current Assets

The current assets comprise other current assets and cash at bank. These items are amounts still received.

##### b. Equity (reserves)

Statement of movements:

	<u>31th December 2022</u>	<u>31th December 2021</u>
As at January 1	265.739,05 €	242.567,50 €
Net result reporting year	5.745,10 €	23.171,55 €
As at December 31	<u>271.484,15 €</u>	<u>265.739,05 €</u>

The net result is demonstrating a balanced budget. The net amount that has been increased in 2022 will be used in 2023 mostly to compensate the work being done under the EU granted projects in which ECA is involved.

##### c. Current Liabilities

There is one prepaid invoice for a membership in 2023.



## 5. Notes to the statement of income and expenditure 2022

### a. Income

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Income</b>			
Contribution members	65.300,00 €	64.000,00 €	56.000,00 €
Contribution observers	4.000,00 €	6.000,00 €	2.750,00 €
<b>Total income</b>	<b>69.300,00 €</b>	<b>70.000,00 €</b>	<b>58.750,00 €</b>
<b>Services &amp; Projects Income</b>			
CeQuint Fees	2.400,00 €	4.400,00 €	3.600,00 €
Training Fees	5.484,81 €	11.200,00 €	0,00 €
QA Students project	0,00 €	17.770,00 €	0,00 €
SUCTIA project	0,00 €	792,60 €	11.109,20 €
CALOHEEx project	0,00 €	1.860,00 €	740,00 €
CALOHEE2 project	0,00 €	1.200,00 €	1.200,00 €
Qual-AI-ty	6.322,00 €	6.322,00 €	6.322,00 €
ImpEA project	0,00 €	0,00 €	46.630,00 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	2.822,48 €	0,00 €
STACQ project	0,00 €	1.664,26 €	0,00 €
<b>Total Services &amp; Projects Income</b>	<b>14.206,81 €</b>	<b>48.031,34 €</b>	<b>69.601,20 €</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>83.506,81 €</b>	<b>118.031,34 €</b>	<b>128.351,20 €</b>



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### Fixed Income

In 2022 a membership contribution has been 4.000 € and was invoiced to:

1. Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), Croatia
2. Commission des Titres d'Ingénieurs (CTI), France
3. Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales (AHPGS), Germany
4. Agentur für Qualitätssicherung durch Akkreditierung von Studiengängen (AQAS), Germany
5. Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur (ZEvA), Germany
6. Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO), the Netherlands and Flanders
7. Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA), Poland
8. Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education (ACPUA), Spain
9. Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA), Slovenia
10. The Danish Accreditation Institution (AI), Denmark
11. Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University (ACSUG), Spain
12. Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKA), Sweden
13. Higher Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres), France
14. Agency for the Quality of the Basque University System (Unibasq), Spain
15. Agencia para la Calidad del Sistema Universitario de Castilla y León (ACSUCYL), Spain
16. Academie Information Centre / Latvian Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA), Latvia.

In September 2022 the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) joined ECA. They were charged a correspondingly lower membership fee.

The observer fee in 2021 has been 2.000 € and was invoiced to:

1. International Centre of Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality Education (THE-ICE), Australia.
2. Council for Higher Education (CHE), Israel

In December 2022 ECA has **17 members and 2 observers**. By 31 of December 2022 all membership fees were paid.



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### Services and projects income

- Three applications for CeQuInt programme assessment (800 euro each).
- Fees of 5.484,81 euro in total were collected for organising one training (Assessing Joint Programmes, 13-14 September, Paris). ECA trainers also conducted the Assessing Joint Programmes training in the Basque Country, Spain and the host of the training covered their fee and travel expenses.
- ECA collected grants from Qual-AI-ty project as planned. The grants from other projects ECA that were foreseen in 2022 (SUCTIA, CALOHEEx, CALOHEE2, QA Students, STACQ) are expected in 2023.



## b. Expenses

### Cost of Coordination

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Expenses</b>			
Coordination costs	37.000,00 €	37.000,00 €	9.250,00 €

ECA Secretariat coordinator is delegated with a contract to provide and coordinate the Secretariat activities of ECA, including the financial administration. The tasks of the Coordinator and the Secretariat are listed in the Statutes (articles 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17). The contribution for hosting the Secretariat amounts to 37,000 euro per year.

### Services and Project Expenses

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Services &amp; Projects Expenses</b>			
Cequint costs	0,00 €	300,00 €	0,00 €
Training costs	5.065,41 €	10.000,00 €	0,00 €
QA Students	0,00 €	14.000,00 €	0,00 €
SUCTIA	15.104,46 €	15.200,00 €	8.163,00 €
CALOHEE project	0,00 €	1.300,00 €	0,00 €
CALOHEE2 project	0,00 €	1.200,00 €	0,00 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	2.822,48 €	0,00 €
Qual-AI-ty	3.615,00 €	6.322,00 €	964,00 €
ImpEA project	0,00 €	0,00 €	44.810,00 €
eQuatic project	0,00 €	0,00 €	13.496,00 €
AR-NET project	0,00 €	0,00 €	1.279,00 €
EQ-ARTS evaluation	0,00 €	0,00 €	6.000,00 €
STACQ project	0,00 €	1.664,26 €	0,00 €
Internal strategic projects	0,00 €	0,00 €	4.750,00 €
<b>Total Services &amp; Projects Expenses</b>	<b>23.784,87 €</b>	<b>52.808,74 €</b>	<b>79.462,00 €</b>

The costs for participating in projects were in general matched with the revised budget – some costs foreseen in 2022 will be incurred in 2023, when the grants from projects are proceeded.



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Information and Communication Expenses

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Expenses</b>			
Information and Communication	7.686,20 €	6.000,00 €	8.049,10 €
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7.686,20 €</b>	<b>6.000,00 €</b>	<b>8.049,10 €</b>

The information and communication costs in 2022 were allocated to the website maintenance and domains, a fee for Zoom, printing of ECA folders and new year gifts for members and observers.

Contribution to ECA Events

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Expenses</b>			
Contribution to ECA events	3.577,86 €	11.000,00 €	0,00 €
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.577,86 €</b>	<b>11.000,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>

In 2022 ECA organised the Members' Seminar in Paris (12 of September 2022), hosted by Cti. ECA covered the costs of meals (light lunch and dinner) for participants and the social event costs.

Travel Expenses

	Actual 2022	Revised budget 2022	Actual 2021
<b>Fixed Expenses</b>			
Travel expenses	666,37 €	2.000,00 €	0,00 €
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>666,37 €</b>	<b>2.000,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>

The ECA covered the travel expenses of the Secretariat for the Members' Seminar in Paris (12 of September 2022).



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### Other Expenses

	<u>Actual 2022</u>	<u>Revised budget 2022</u>	<u>Actual 2021</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Other expenses	5.046,41 €	8.000,00 €	8.418,55 €
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.046,41 €</b>	<b>8.000,00 €</b>	<b>8.418,55 €</b>

Other expenses include ENQA affiliate membership fee, Board insurance, bank charges and data protection costs.



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## 6. Report of the Financial Committee

*To: The Annual Meeting of Members of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA)*

The ECA General Meeting will appoint, each year, a Financial Committee consisting of at least two members, who may not be Members of the Board. The Financial Committee will audit the Annual Report and will report to the General Meeting on its findings.

We have audited the ECA Draft budget 2023 and the financial statements 2022 of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA), which comprise the balance sheet as at 31 December 2022, the statement of income and expenditure 2022, and the notes, comprising a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

### **Responsibility of the Board**

The Board is required to provide the Financial Committee with all the information requested by it for the benefit of its audit, to show it the cash and assets if it so wishes, and to make the books, records and other data carriers of the ECA available to it for its inspection.

### **Responsibility of the Financial Committee**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. This requires that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. Our audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. Our audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the accounting policies selected and disclosed by the entity, as set out in the notes to the financial statements.

To begin the FC wishes to make some general observations regarding the financial performance of ECA in 2022:

- Total assets increased by just 220€, less than 1% (31 December 2021 to 31 December 2022)
- As full membership fees were once again charged in 2022 (following reductions offered during the Covid pandemic), fixed incomes rose by over 10,000€ (18%) in 2022 compared to the previous year.



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- Fixed expenses more than doubled, from 25,717€ in 2021 to 53,976.84€ (31 December 2021 to 31 December 2022), mainly due to the full costs of the new coordination contract being paid for the first time.
- However, total expenses actually decreased considerably (27%), from 105,179,656€ to 77,761.71€, as a result of the significant fall in service and project expenses.
- Overall, there was a light rise in equity of 5745,1€ (31 December 2021 to 31 December 2022).
- Moreover, notwithstanding the ECAs status as a not for profit organisation, the FC wishes to note that the ECA made a small net profit (of 5,475.10€), which continues the trend of gains made in 2020 and 2021.

The FC recognises that, as a result of the lingering impacts of the global pandemic, the ECA, in common with the majority of IQAs worldwide, continued to face a volatile operating environment in 2022. Furthermore, we appreciate that this environment has continued to have impacts, and particularly on expenditure in 2022.

As a consequence of new surpluses generated in 2020 and 2021, equity of the ECA increased dramatically to nearly 0.27 million euro. The FC expected that the part of the surplus would be being utilised in 2022 to pay for work carried out about EU projects in which ECA is partner between 2021 and 2022 (and in future projects). However, there was actually a significant fall in the expenses associated with services and projects in 2022, meaning the equity of the ECA actually increased slightly in 2022.

Given this and the fact that several projects came to a conclusion in 2022, we consider it is important to emphasise our opinion that the ECA should focus on development of projects, and other events (training seminars, webinars and other dissemination activities, etc), in order to utilise some of its equity to add value to its agency members.

Given the above, the FC recommends the following actions to the ECA Board;

1. Insist on the development of projects and other events (training seminars, dissemination activities, webinars etc), in order to add value to the ECA members. The Board and the Secretariat should have updated information of these activities and inform all the ECA members of the benefits and usefulness of the activities.
2. The importance of the projects in ECA is even more relevant, taking into account that the majority of current projects ended in 2022. Therefore, the possibility of building new consortiums and investing funds in project preparations should be urgently considered for the future.
3. The calls for internal strategic projects (started in 2021) are seen as an excellent measure for the involvement and mutual collaboration of ECA members. The FC fully supports the future continuation of this activity.
4. Whilst a small discount is currently offered to ECA members participating in training seminars and other activities organised by the consortium, the size of the current discount does not seem sufficient to really incentivate the inclusion of new members in ECA. Therefore, the FC suggests to reconsider the size of discounts offered in the near future.



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5. As the world continues to emerge from the global pandemic, we support the ECA in organising events in person (considering the importance and duration of them) to recover the normality in ECAs operation.

\*\*\*\*

Pending approval at the General meeting on the **23 of June 2023**.

**Signatures of the Board members:**

Solange Pisarz  
Chair

Eva Fernández de Labastida  
Vice-Chair

Luut Kroes  
Treasurer

Ronny Heintze  
Board member

Klemen Subic  
Board member

**Signatures of the Financial Committee:**

Craig Thompson

Luis Velón

