

Minutes of 99th EC meeting held online on March 30,2021

The 99th meeting of the Executive council of the Society for Scientific Values was held online at 4 pm on 30th March, 2021.

The following members attended the virtual meeting:

Prof. K.L.Chopra	(Patron)
1. Dr. R.K.Kotnala	(President)
2. Dr. Vikram Kumar	(Vice President)
3. Dr. Santa Chawla	(Secretary)
4. Dr. Ved Varun	(Joint Secretary)
5. Dr. Hari Kishan	(Treasurer)
6. Dr. B.D.Malhotra	(EC Member)
7. Dr Rakesh Singh	(EC Member)
8. Dr. Ashish Agarwal	(EC Member)
9. Dr. Jyoti Shah	(EC Member)
10. Dr. Sanjeev. Srivastava	(Special Invitee)
11. Dr. Shubhrama Ghosh	(Special Invitee)

The agenda of the meeting was following plus any other point raised by members:

1. Future course of action of SSV
2. Should time bound responsibility be assigned to individual/ group of EC and other SSV members for various SSV activities such as creating awareness of academic ethics in various scientific and academic institutions, forming committees to look into the cases of plagiarism and unethical actions and suggest necessary action.
3. The special issue of News & Views [March, 2021] on 'Guidelines of Academic Ethics'.

President, SSV welcomed the members. Prof. Chopra talked about the need of SSV making Ethics document subject wise e.g., Physics, Chemistry, Bio science etc. regarding the procedure that academic institutes must follow to tackle the cases of scientific misconduct. Dr. Vikram Kumar opined that SSV should take care of Scientific Ethics in general but not subject wise. Dr. Santa Chawla expressed similar opinion as most of Science organizations, UGC and CSIR have already formulated their Ethics guidelines and many written documents are available from international organizations and authors. Dr. Rakesh Singh informed that he is writing SSV Ethical Guidelines and shall finalize the document in a months time with the help of Dr. Jyoti Shah.

The issues of Scientific Ethics, plagiarism and credit sharing in publications were discussed. In order that SSV not merely waiting for such cases being reported to them, Dr. Vikram Kumar suggested that a proactive action must be taken by SSV by initiating a membership drive and try to have influential members by writing to Academy fellows, Bhatnagar awardees, Infosys fellows and engineering academy members. It was deliberated that SSV needs to be a stronger organization and must try to have watchdogs in different institutes to report unethical practices so that cases of such scientific/academic misconduct come to light and proper action may be suggested. Prof. Chopra and President, SSV must write letters to scientists/academics for being SSV member. Draft letter is to be drafted by Secretary, SSV and the list of organizations with e- mail ids of prospective members to be compiled by Dr. Shubhrama Ghosh. The draft letter would be circulated to EC members for their input before finalization.

Prof. Chopra expressed his concern about the leadership positions in high profile academic institutions not being filled for a long time and how to guard against candidates with plagiarism cases not being selected/appointed. It was deliberated that road map for role of different organizations and appointments can be made by Dr. Vikram Kumar with Dr. Hari Kishan assisting him.

The need for holding webinars for creating awareness on the Ethics issues on scientific research and related topics, in the pandemic situation, were also discussed. President SSV asked Dr. B. D. Malhotra & Dr Ashish Agarwal to take responsibility of conducting webinars on scientific ethics. It was proposed that younger SSV members can give detail talk after senior SSV members like Prof. Chopra, Prof. Vikram Kumar and President, SSV give introduction in the webinar. President, SSV asked Dr Rakesh Singh and Dr Jyoti Shah to collect lecture news conducted on ethical science.

The March, 2021 issue of News and Views – a special issue on 'Guidelines of Academic Ethics' was discussed and it was agreed that the issue comprising international and national ethical guidelines with references and web links should be widely circulated among academic institutions so that they have a ready reference to follow.

Lastly, the issue of highlighting SSV's contribution to Indian Science in the 75th year of India's independence, was raised.

R K Kotnala
(President, SSV)

Santa Chawla
(Secretary, SSV)