

Report of CPSA Membership Committee on Lifetime and Multi-Year Membership Options

March 2023

The CPSA Membership Committee, composed of Genevieve Fuji Johnson (Simon Fraser, CPSA Vice-President), Julia Rodgers (Dalhousie, Student Representative), Nikola Brassard-Dion (Privy Council Office, Practitioners' Representative), and André Lecours (University of Ottawa, CPSA President), met on 13 February 2023 to discuss lifetime and multi-year membership options for the CPSA. The possibility of creating such membership options was raised by some members over the last couple of years. André Lecours tasked a research assistant at the University of Ottawa, Silvana Gomes, to prepare a survey of other professional associations' practices in relation to lifetime and multi-year membership practices (entitled "CPSA Membership Models Brief").

The committee first considered the lifetime membership option for the CPSA. The CPSA Membership Models Brief found that some professional associations have differently-priced lifetime membership options for non-retired and retired faculty. The committee judged that a lifetime membership option for non-retired faculty was likely to deprive the CPSA of revenues in the long-term. Should CPSA membership retention levels remain constant, the long-term costs of these forfeited revenues would likely outweigh the short-term increase to CPSA revenues that lifetime memberships (which range from approximately CA\$2,000 to CA\$5,500 in other associations) would provide.

However, the benefits likely outweigh the risk in the case of retired faculty and practitioners since many CPSA members cease to renew upon retirement. Therefore, a lifetime membership for retired faculty and practitioners could help keep these colleagues in the CPSA fold. Recognizing their long-standing contribution to the CPSA, the committee felt membership fees for this option should be kept relatively low, like the fee charged to retired members (\$750) by the Canadian Association of Geographers for lifetime membership. This option would be available for CPSA membership only, as opposed to a joint CPSA/SQSP membership.

Next, the committee considered the option of a multi-year membership. Some other professional associations offer such membership (for 2, 3 or 4 years), with a special pricing for students. Because multi-year memberships offer financial incentives through a reduced overall subscription fee compared to annual memberships, should CPSA membership retention levels remain constant, the committee finds the cost of these forfeited revenues likely outweigh the benefits of a multi-year membership, in terms of convenience for members and stable revenue base over that multi-year period. Rather, the committee finds the CPSA should continue to promote automatic membership renewal, since people who would use a multi-year membership appear likely to renew annually based on CPSA membership retention figures.

However, the committee felt that students could find attractive having a 2- and a 3-year membership option (dovetailing with the core of Master's and Ph.D. studies and catering to typical graduate students' finances, with more grant funds available in the first year of their studies) at a discounted annual price. For the CPSA, offering such an option could mean greater retention of students, both during their studies and thereafter. The committee felt that, since the annual membership fee for students is 60\$, the CPSA could offer a 2-year membership for \$100 and a 3-

year membership for \$150. This option would be available for CPSA membership only, as opposed to a joint CPSA/SQSP membership.

Recommendations

Therefore, the membership committee makes the following two recommendations to the CPSA Board of Directors:

- 1) That the CPSA create a membership option for retired faculty and practitioners for a one-time fee of \$750.
- 2) That the CPSA create a 2- and a 3-year membership option for students for \$100 and \$150 respectively.

Genevieve Fuji Johnson
Julia Rodgers
Nikola Brassard-Dion
André Lecours