



## *Open Philately Working Group*

### **Open Philately Working Group Report to the FIP Congress 2026**

During the FIP Board meeting in Cape Town (November 2022) the decision was taken to appoint a Working Group (WG) that would be responsible for temporarily leading Open Philately until the next Commission elections at the FIP Congress in 2026. Peter Suhadolc had already been appointed as Liaison Officer (August 2022), and he was nominated to be Co-Chair of the WG with the Co-Chair to be selected from a group of invited members. The following members of the Open Philately WG were then appointed by the FIP Board in December 2022: Co-Chair: Birthe King (UK), Secretary: Iva Mouritsen (Germany), Members: Elisabeth Hisey (USA) (FIAF), Kazuyuki Inoue (Japan) (FIAP), Jari Majander (Finland) (FEPA).

The WG has operated throughout by Zoom meetings, arranged by Kelly Ong, with the first meeting held on 15 February 2023. Eight meetings were held during 2023 and seven in 2024. In 2025 the WG met six times, partly because the bulk of the work on the Guidelines had progressed very well.

#### **Guidelines**

The item that has taken up most of the time at our meetings has been the Guidelines, very much based on the WG members' experiences as jurors at national and regional exhibitions and questions at our seminars. The members might express strong opinions, and with all of the members having English as their second language, care was taken that the wording of the Guidelines should be as clear and unambiguous as possible. The aim of the WG has continued to be to keep the Guidelines as 'open' as possible, to keep the Guidelines to four pages A4 with the addition of a small section on Synopsis.

#### **Seminars**

The FIP Open Philately Working Group Qualifying Seminars were created to interest Open Philatelists to become jurors, a step on the road to become an Open Philately FIP Juror, but also to encourage collectors and exhibitors to learn more about Open Philately. The following seminars have taken place during 2023-2025: IBRA, Essen May 2023, presented by Peter Suhadolc (Open Philately Guidelines) and Birthe King (explaining several examples from successful Open Philately exhibits) (28 participants). Thailand, December 2023, presented by Peter Suhadolc (30 participants). EFIRO, Bucharest, April 2024, presented by Peter Suhadolc and Francisc Ambrus. Mare Balticum, Tartu, Estonia July 2024, presented By Peter Suhadolc and Jari Majander. Uruguay, February 2025, presented by Peter Suhadolc assisted by Jari Majander (48 participants). The Organising Committee had enquired if the WG would present a seminar to raise interest for Open Philately at their exhibition. Peter distributed a translation of the Guidelines into Spanish.

Two seminars without FIP recognition, but to create interest for Open Philately, were also arranged: **GASS Cleveland, Ohio**, September 2023, presented by Birthe King and Liz Hisey (15 participants). **HAFNIA, Copenhagen**, October 2024, presented by Birthe King.

FIP Open Philately Qualifying Juror Seminars are planned for **Dubai**, February 2026 and **Boston**, May 2026.

### **Open Philately Jurors**

The WG is pleased that there now are three FIP qualified jurors, Iva Mouritsen, Francisc Ambrus, and Bruce Chadderton, but the process is very long, and we have looked at FIP jurors with OP exhibits who might be interested in cross-accrediting. The WG has also been pleased to see that the number of Open Philately exhibits at exhibitions has been increasing, particularly in Europe, e.g. 23 OP exhibits were shown at the **EFIRO 2024** Exhibition (FIP), and 14 at the **HAFNIA 2024** Exhibition (FEPA).


In order to get more FIP Open Philately jurors as quickly as possible, the WG has studied replies from the attendance list from the seminars to find FIP jurors of other classes with Open Philately exhibits, who might want to be cross-accredited.

### **Website**

Kazuyuki Inoue had agreed to become the webmaster to set up a website for Open Philately within the FIP Website. A report about the activities of the OP WG was published in Flash 135. In it an appeal was made to all Federations, which have not yet done so, to appoint a delegate to the future Open Philately Commission. WG members have contributed to the text and changes are continuing to make the website interesting and informative, and easy to follow. It is available at: [openphilately.f-i-p.ch](http://openphilately.f-i-p.ch)

A website is an ever-changing entity, and the latest addition will be a variety of examples of Open Philately exhibits. It is expected that links to websites with Open Philately exhibits will be added in the future.

The Open Philately Working Group welcomes the election of an Open Philately Bureau and Commission and trusts that the members will continue the outreach work in the future by attending exhibitions, international, national, and regional, to encourage philatelists and other collectors to learn more about this class, which has so much to offer with its combination of philatelic and non-philatelic material together in one exhibit.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature on the left is 'Birthe King' and the second signature on the right is 'Peter Suhadolc'.

Birthe King and Peter Suhadolc

(Open Philately Working Group Co-chairs)