



## NWTN – Chair’s Report Membership Year 2019-2020

Dear NWTN members,

This last membership year has brought unexpected and unprecedented challenges for us all. I hope that you and your families are all healthy and coping reasonably well with the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of the NWTN Committee, and the fact that most our members are used to working in a virtual environment, the network has never been more active and vibrant.

At last year’s AGM, we were awaiting the results of the ITI Regional Network Awards with bated breath, and as you all know, a week later at the ITI Conference our Social Saturdays enabled us to bring home the coveted trophy. The NWTN Committee and many members played a very active role at the ITI conference in Sheffield, and we certainly managed to raise the profile of the network and recruit a number of new members.



The award has indubitably contributed to an increase in membership applications. However, the real deciding factors are the tireless work of the NWTN Committee, and that our members offer such a supportive and welcoming space for all translators and interpreters.

Academic Liaison, Bakeoffs, Bookchat and last but by no means least this Thursday’s “War of the Roses”, the very first of possibly many ITI Regional Network Pub Quiz Battles— with so many ground breaking activities to choose from, I have high hopes that the network might again field a winning Regional Awards entry in the coming years.

This time last year, we were still bedding in our new website which has become a hub of activity, showcasing the many members who have participated in our Member Monday campaign. I must admit that I stole the idea for this campaign from the ITI WRG, but this again illustrates the importance of close cooperation with other networks.

The NWTN Committee has found that the new website is relatively easy to manage and update, and the move to WordPress and Fasthosts certainly has made the NWTN largely independent of website developers and hosting companies. Besides having the flexibility to upload and edit our own content as needed, this has also resulted in reducing the website operating costs.

One of the Chair's objectives for this membership year had been continued progress in leveraging the website, and I would like to thank all members of the committee for embracing and developing this platform. We managed to use the website to advertise the network and our events programme very effectively, encourage membership growth and active participation. On the strength of this, we are in the process of setting up a members' forum on the website for members to share and discuss industry relevant news, ask questions and share and exchange information and experiences.

Regular communication with the ITI's Bulletin Editor ensured that the NWTN was represented with an events report in nearly every edition, and maximised the use of free adverts for our events in the Bulletin. Close cooperation with the ITI staff and officers led to a successful application for an NWTN session at the unfortunately postponed ITI and Friends event in Bristol, and the participation of the NWTN events team in a recent ITI Virtual Coffee Morning (a recording is available for download from the ITI website for ITI members).



By supporting the marketing of their events in the North West, the Chair also managed to open new and improved lines of communication with the Chartered Institute of Linguists.

Social media marketing was another focus point for the Chair's activities this last year. The Chair has regularly updated the network's Facebook page with posts and pictures, and some weeks we are now achieving nearly 1 posting every day with a record of 25+ likes for some posts. On Twitter, @NWTN\_UK has now reached 768 followers and follows 192 organisations and colleagues. In total, the network has now achieved 1666 tweets, many of our tweets are achieving up to 20 likes and most are being retweeted. The NWTN LinkedIn page has currently got 108 members. On LinkedIn, we have been publishing new posts at least once a week, which are also being shared and liked. The active support by the events team and a number of members have helped the network gain traction in the social media, and by introducing HootSuite, our new Communications Officer Kat Slater has introduced a joined-up approach for the network's social media presence.

A smaller but nevertheless very important task was the continuation of the NWTN mentoring programme. I'm pleased to report that the Chair managed to broker a further four successful mentor/mentee pairings.

In the last years, the network has grown exponentially. This is especially pleasing in view of the fact that many translators and interpreters have been leaving the UK due to the impending Brexit, and fewer newcomers have entered the profession due to the closures of a number of translation and interpreting courses at our local universities, in particular Salford University. However, thanks to committee member Katell Sevellec we have strengthened our ties to Manchester University, and the NWTN was also invited to introduce the network to the MA students at the University of Central Lancashire. As you will hear, all NWTN events have been extremely well received and attended. None of these achievements would be possible without the hard work of our volunteers and the support of our members.

This year my special thanks go to Mike Hanson who did an amazing job keeping the so far largest NWTN events team on task with frequent meetings, rapid minute taking and dogged dedication; to Laurence Bisot for not only maintaining membership data, but also organising the first joint NWTN

and ITI French Network event, co-organising the unfortunately postponed 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, co-chairing co-working sessions and NWTN Bookchat, and generally having her fingers in many pies; to Kate Lo for making NWTN events go virtual, #NWTNBakeOff go viral, Word Wizardry happen and putting the NWTN team not only on the map but also on Microsoft Teams; to Janice Crossfield for keeping us current with the new monthly NWTN Updates, for being instrumental in the new NWTN Bookchat, for working with Katell Sevellec on the NWTN Academic Liaison Programme, for stepping in wherever needed, and having her fingers in nearly as many pies as Laurence. Further to Katell Sevellec for helping us bring the NWTN to students and students to the NWTN, and for taking NWTN events planning to the next level with Trello; to Kat Slater for making the Member Monday campaign a roaring success, and for being a total game changer for NWTN communications; as always to treasurer Andrew Wilson for keeping an eye on the money and both eyes on the ball, to member Hilary Wilson for validating the network's accounts, and last but by no means least to Minutes Secretary Andrea Dewhurst who keeps not only detailed but also the most entertaining committee minutes. Thank you for your meticulous work and delightful edits!

You will find out more about the achievements of this amazing NWTN steering committee in the reports of the individual functions. I could not have wished for a more dedicated, innovative and hard-working team in my final year as NWTN Chair. I am incredibly proud and grateful for having been part of so many different NWTN teams over the years. As many of you will know, this is my 30<sup>th</sup> year of membership, and in total, I have been on the NWTN Committee for 23 of those years. Now it is time for me to take a break and a less active role in the network, and give the network a chance to take a break from me.

**THANK YOU** for trusting me to lead this network into the 2020's.