

Pitch, Partner, Promote

V International Training Meeting | 21st of September 2025



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Agenda

- External Relations in a nutshell
- Group Work & Feedback
- External Relations and Key Areas
 - Competitions
 - Professional Development
 - Seminars & Conferences
- Let's practice!



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External Relations in a nutshell



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The importance of External Relations

External Impact

- Resources → financial support, expertise, services
- Visibility & Credibility → boosts ELSA's standing in the legal and academic world
- Member Value → access to opportunities, benefits, and professional connections

Internal Impact

- Structured Dialogue → ensures groups coordinate before approaching externals
- Unity → presents ELSA as one cohesive network
- Reputation → consistent, professional outreach strengthens our credibility



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Choosing Your Partner

- **Do your homework** → research organisations, map opportunities, and shortlist entities with real potential.
- **Think long-term** → prioritise sustainable, strategic relationships over one-off gains.
- **Vet carefully** → confirm the partner's reputation, values, and alignment with ELSA identity.
- **Mutual value** → ensure you can offer clear benefits (visibility, access to students, expertise).
- **Diversify** → look beyond law firms: publishers, tech, NGOs, and consulting firms, etc.
- **Conflict of Interest Check** → respect the ERR (more on this soon)



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Making the First Move - How to Approach Partners

Good preparation is key: Research the organisation's background, identify the right contacts, and prepare professional materials such as booklets, partnership packages, and a clear proposal.

First Contact: When reaching out, keep your introduction brief. Present ELSA clearly and aim to secure a meeting where collaboration can be discussed in more detail. Always explain who we are and our scope and objectives.

Negotiation Phase: Start by finding common ground with your potential partner. Offer solutions and packages that fit their capacities and interests, and put forward a clear proposal for collaboration.

Ongoing Partnership: Keep the connection active through regular check-ins. Review the relationship periodically and explore ways to strengthen or upgrade it over time.

External Relations Regulations



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External Relations Regulations

It's important to **know the rules**, they exist for a reason!

Why rules? They protect ELSA's image, reputation, finances, and ongoing partnerships

Regulated in: Decision Book (Part 2, Chapter 3).

Purpose: To provide clear guidance and a common framework for all Groups in external engagement.

Breaches: harm both the Group & the Network, and can lead to **sanctions** for the responsible group.

So always pay attention to the regulations!



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CAF - Contact Approval Form

The Contact Approval Form (CAF) is a requirement of ERR and must be submitted before reaching out to an external partner (or when an external partner initiates contact with you), whenever the potential contact requires approval. **Presidents are responsible for insuring this process is followed.**

But...

The key question is "when is approval needed?"



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CAF - When, Where, How?

When? International/national externals, partners of ELSA, ICM/ISM/MCC partners, entities in countries w/o ELSA groups.

Where can you find CAF? via [Officers' Portal](#)

How? Submit the form → 7 days reply → if silence = approval.

Exceptions to this requirement: promo materials, paid services, public visits*.

Note: Partnerships are only protected if listed in ERD



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Group Work



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Group Work task:

Within your groups, please answer the following questions:

- How do you work with projects fundraising within your Group?
- What are your challenges with funding your projects?
- What are your good practices in this area?



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Feedback from Group Discussion

Group 1: 1) some groups have governmental money, other many partners, discussed how to engage with projects and sell them e.g. media cards; differences between projects and what makes them unique; 2) in terms of challenges, the discussion was diverse as there are groups that count with govern funding and it makes them easier but in the other side there are also other groups with solid partnerships already that they can rely on; it's important to keep in mind other sources of fundraising that are not that direct e.g. gift bags, logistical questions and other expenses that can be covered; there is a need to be creative and persistent; 3) applying for grants if possible; engage with partners to retain them within the projects; in-person meetings to acknowledge the partners with the current goals and projects; invitation to partners to NCM's/Partner Fairs/Presentations; selling packages make easier the internal discussion within law firms.



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Feedback from Group Discussion

Group 2: 1) Created one big plan; set a goal, how much they need, breaking down the budget. After identify potential sponsors, companies, institutions, etc. Create a sheet with a list, and ensure it is personalised for the area or the project. After the research point, researching each potential sponsor. Identify right contact person. Create materials. Email including information about ELSA and the project. Highlight selling points. Should reach out by different means. Invite to meeting. 2) Divided it into countries. In Georgia when contacting individuals forbidden by Data Protection, in Switzerland there is a linguistic issue. 3) Mentioned it with the plan.



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Feedback from Group Discussion

Group 3: 1) Different practices how to approach sponsors and fundraising, approaching institutions or law firms that are relevant to the project; explain what we want to do; explain everything; 2) people don't really understand what we want to do ex: the projects in general (conferences is easier, but a competition might be hard to understand); 3) we talked about building personal connections with people.



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Feedback from Group Discussion

Group 4: 1) Everything has been said. Partnerships on concrete projects vs. general. 2) Lack of communication, interest, contacts, other associations' partners. Be prepared that some partners withdraw. 3) Good sponsorship packages focusing on strength, being prepared for all scenarios.

Feedback from Group Discussion

Group 5: 1) Lot of it was already covered; priority of previous partnerships as they are easier to access and are already familiar with the project; 2) ELSA Projects e.g. the International ones need to be explained; there is a need to translate our ELSA language to partners to make sure they understand our message; Local Groups are closer to the student society so they have easier access to partners; 3) Marketing use but not overwhelming them; be creative with funding sources - small partners can give us less work than a big one and can also mean equal amount of money or even more and they represent as much potential; involvement in meetings with partners;



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Feedback from Group Discussion

Group 6: 1) Concerning fundraising, different ideas. E.g. having participation fees for projects to cover the budgets. Some get grants from governments or universities. Widespread way of fundraising is general sponsorships. Some have partnerships with Bars. Even sponsorship with other enterprises that aren't law firms. Locals and nationals have their own partnerships - some cross funding. 2) Lacking support from universities, competing with other associations. Sometimes the participation fees do not cover the events. Some associations have better contacts and steal partnerships. Lack of understanding of ELSAs benefits. 3) Participation fees for events, sells international aspects and connections of ELSA. Sponsorship packages. Convenient if you have packages with specific sets of offers. NB can of course support LB or the other way around depending on who has more money. You can aid the sale of Partnership packages with booklets. You can present what has been done recently and underscore the benefits. Get feedback from ongoing sponsors to adapt the partnerships.



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External Relations and Key Areas



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Competitions



The benefits

Value for participants: *it's the future generation!*

- Skills development (hard- and soft skills)
- Exposure to potential employers
- Networking opportunities
- Professional opportunities such as Courses and Internships

Value for sponsors/partners: *you're helping building the future generation!*

- Brand visibility
- Fulfillment of corporate goals such as social responsibility
- Lead generation
- Access to targeted audiences
- Access in first hand to possible students to be recruited



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The selling points: let's look at the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition

- Global outreach!
- Niche field of law: targeted audience
- Regional Rounds all around the globe allowing several offices from the same law firm to participate
- Collaboration with the WTO: Visibility of the Partners within the WTO
- Promotion of Courses, Academies and other educational programmes in the field of International Trade Law



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Oh, and there are so many partners!

Institutional Partners - The prestige of Academia! The involvement of Universities in the form of ensuring academic quality such as forming an Academic Board and drafting Cases.

Corporate Partners - The easiest way to gather financial support but they can also provide much more such as Human Resources in the form of their professionals as Judges.

Logistics Partners - Venues and infrastructure & Merchandising as it is not all about financial sponsorships.

Other organisations - It's important to recognize that even though we are the largest Law Students Association in Europe, there are some very useful associations focused on e.g. a specific field of law (Society of International Economic Law) to which network can also help our own!



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Tips & Tricks

- Numbers, numbers and more numbers! Data, statistics, university representation, country representation, etc.
- Testimonials of success cases
- Different levels of Partnerships highlighting the different benefits, the visibility and exclusivity that is being given

Professional Development

The selling points of our different projects:

- ELSA Traineeships: Access to **European Law Students**, simplified **administration**
- National Traineeship Programmes: **National Law Students**
- Lawyers@Work: Very direct **interaction** with students
- Professional Development Workshops: Demonstrate **thought leadership**, recognition
- Career & Job Fairs: Direct access to **local students**, brand **recognition**
- Legal Tandem: Demonstrating **thought leadership**, recognition
- Legal Clinics: Working **directly with** students, pro bono

Other tips and tricks



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Professional Development Partnerships

Career Focus -> Broader Spectrum of potential Partnerships

Consider potential partners:

- Law Firms
 - National Law Firms
 - International Law Firms
- Institutions
 - Public Institutions
 - Supranational
- Other Corporations and organisations



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Tips & Tricks for Professional Development

Utilise the room for **creativity** in our area

- Custom events together with firms
- Develop new ideas in collaboration

Consider partnership packages together with other areas:

- E.g. “international” package with **ELSA Traineeships + ELS**
- E.g. “Competitions” package with **PD Workshop on Negotiation + NC**

Sell different solutions of PD Projects



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Seminars & Conferences

The selling points of our different projects:

- **ELSA Law Schools:** 6000+ applications every year, international students, 50+ ELSA Law Schools every year.
- **ELSA Delegations:** Academic output of the sessions, internationality.
- **International Conferences of ELSA:** Big focus on the academic development of the participants, international project.
- **ELSA Webinars:** accessible to 60.000+ members Europe-wise, no logistical costs.



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What makes S&C unique when pitching?

- Tangible & time-bound → clear outcomes (event date, audience, deliverables)
- Experiential → **immersive international experience** for students & partners
- Direct access → networking, speaking slots, branding opportunities
- Prestige → ELSA in itself (40+ national groups and 60.000+ members)!

Seminars & Conferences are concrete, meaning that they have a fixed timeline, clear outputs and measurable impact. That makes it easier for partners to see what they gain.



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The Partner Ecosystem

- Law firms → talent recruitment & visibility
- Universities / academic institutions → knowledge providers
- International organisations → relevance, credibility, speakers
- Public institutions → significance & funding

For S&C is important that we look for different types of partners, not just sponsors. Some bring knowledge, some bring speakers, some bring funding. Together they create the ecosystem that makes an event successful



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The Playbook of S&C

- Tailor the pitch → focus also on their benefits, not just our needs
- Show past successes → participants, speakers, impact
- Flexible packages → sponsorship, speaking slots, branding
- Stress international reach → ELSA Network in 40+ countries
- Think long-term → build partnerships beyond one event

The most important thing is to think like your partner: show what's in it for them. Combine that with flexibility and professionalism and you'll stand out



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Let's Practice



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Competitions Cases

- A long time partner of your Competition suddenly wants to drop out as they no longer see benefits in the project. **How would you sell it in order for them to stay?**
- A well-known law firm has shown initial interest in partnering with your project because it aligns with their corporate social responsibility goals. However, they're also considering other collaborations. **What makes your project the one that should be chosen?**
- You're organising a Regional Round of JHJMCC/Helga and to ensure financial sustainability, you need to approach an unexpected type of partner (e.g., a sports club, a travel agency or even a cultural institution) who doesn't normally fund or collaborate with projects like this. They don't immediately see the relevance. **How would you reframe your project so that it resonates with this partner's priorities, audience, and language? What angle would you use to make the partnership mutually valuable?**



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Professional Development Cases:

- You are hosting a Career Fair at your home university, and you want to contact an EU institution to participate in it, **how would you approach this?**
- While inviting a Partner Firm associated to your ELSA Group to be an ELSA Traineeship Provider, they ask what the benefits to their firm are. **How do you sell the project to them?**
- Your ELSA Group is planning a study trip to another country, and you want to do a Lawyers@Work event at a prestigious law firm as part of the Academic Programme. **How do you plan this?**



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Seminars and Conferences Cases:

- You are organising an ELSA Law School on Sports Law. You find a boutique law firm specialised in this field that is the perfect fit to be your Academic Partner. **What would you negotiate to get from them?**
- You will host an International Conference of ELSA in your University, but there are other students associations hosting “regular” conferences. **How do you sell the project to them?**
- You find a fantastic grant that would allow ELSA Members from your country to get funds to participate in ELSA Delegates. **How do you sell this project?**



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End of Workshop

Thank you for your attention and participation!



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