

# BEE HANDBOOK

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BOARD MANAGEMENT, EXTERNAL  
RELATIONS, EXPANSION  
2019/2020



*elsa*

The European Law Students' Association

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## **I. Acknowledgement**

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## II. Foreword

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Dear BEE Family,

Every year, our dear association welcomes hundreds of new Officers with the aspiration to volunteer and give their time and creativity to ELSA. Newly elected Presidents look for guidance and inspiration from their predecessors, in discussions during International Internal Meetings, in the documents created by ELSA International.

This document aims at giving an understanding of the BEE area, one of the most complex areas in our association. While reading it, the BEE Officers walk down “the BEE lane”; Board Management, External Relations, Expansion and Strategic Planning are only some of the pillars which are analysed in this Handbook.

And because Handbooks can never replace human contact, please do not hesitate to approach us at [president@elsa.org](mailto:president@elsa.org), or at [coordinator.beetoolkit@elsa.org](mailto:coordinator.beetoolkit@elsa.org).

Our only wish? Enjoy the deep waters of BEE, dear friend. “BEE” patient, empathetic and assertive.

**Diomidis Afentoulis**  
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ELSA International 2019/2020

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### **III. Glossary**

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<b>AA</b>	Academic Activities
<b>BEE</b>	Board Management, External Relations & Expansion
<b>CI</b>	Corporate Identity
<b>DB</b>	Decision Book
<b>EDF</b>	ELSA Development Foundation
<b>EI</b>	ELSA International
<b>ELSA</b>	European Law Students' Association
<b>ERD</b>	External Relations Database
<b>ERS</b>	External Relations Strategy
<b>FM</b>	Financial Management
<b>IB</b>	International Board
<b>ICM</b>	International Council Meeting
<b>IM</b>	Internal Management
<b>LB</b>	Local Board
<b>LG</b>	Local Group
<b>MKT</b>	Marketing
<b>NB</b>	National Board

<b>NCM</b>	National Council Meeting
<b>NG</b>	National Group
<b>OYOP</b>	One Year Operation Plan
<b>SecGen</b>	Secretary General
<b>SP</b>	Strategic Plan
<b>SotN</b>	State of the Network
<b>SSO</b>	Statutes and Standing Orders
<b>STEP</b>	Students' Trainee Exchange Programme
<b>S&amp;C</b>	Seminars & Conferences
<b>VP</b>	Vice President
<b>WM</b>	Working Materials
<b>WS</b>	Workshop

## **IV. ELSA**

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ELSA, the European Law Students' Association, is the world's largest independent law students' association. It is an international, independent, non-political, non-profit organization established in 1981 by and for law students and young lawyers.

ELSA offers law students and aspiring legal professionals across the 44 member countries the perfect platform to develop their interpersonal, academic, and professional skills, and create a diverse network of like-minded individuals.

### **Vision**

A just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity.

### **Purpose**

To contribute to legal education, to foster mutual understanding and to promote social responsibility of law students and young lawyers.

### **Means**

- To provide opportunities for law students and young lawyers to learn about other cultures and legal systems in a spirit of critical dialogue and scientific co-operation;
- To assist law students and young lawyers to be internationally minded and professionally skilled;
- To encourage law students and young lawyers to act for the good of society.

## **V. BEE**

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### **A. BEE in a nutshell**

BEE is a supporting area that coordinates the work of board members, and communication with the external environment. It mainly covers External Relations, Expansion and Strategic Planning of the association.

The supporting identity of the BEE Area is evident in all of its functions. In Board Management with the coordination of the communication and the mediation between the Board Members that find themselves in conflicts. External Relations with the representation of the Board and the connection of the Supporting and Key Areas with the external environment for the fulfilment of their activities. In Strategic Planning and Expansion with the creation of a common direction through the coordination of strategic and evaluation meetings.

### **B. BEE history**

BEE has been the first area properly developed on the international level of ELSA. The first International Presidents' Meeting (IPM) took place in 1990 and had a huge impact on the creation of the first ever Three Year Tactical Plan (the first-ever Strategic Plan ELSA adopted), which introduced the vision, purpose and means of ELSA, as well as the philosophy statement of our association.

In 2020, during the first online International Council Meeting, the International Council voted in favour of the creation of an International Strategy Meeting, which will replace the second IPM of the year, focusing on Strategic Planning and the evaluation of every calendar year.



## VI. Board Management

### A. The written rules

Board Management can be defined as actions or structures that solve real problems and frustrations, improve team performance directly or indirectly and adapt to the objectives and sensitivities of each team member.

In the ICM Decision Book (DB) of ELSA, Board is defined as follows:

### CHAPTER 2. BOARD MANAGEMENT

#### Article 1. Definition

- 1.1 Board Management involves organising and coordinating the work of the board, including:
- a. Coordinating the fulfilment of activities of the board;
  - b. Mediating when conflicts arise within the board.

As you will realise very soon, Board Management does not necessarily translate into actions, but into small gestures on a daily basis, with attention to each member. As a President you are responsible for the effectiveness of the Board and its operation in all its aspects. You should ensure that the Board takes part in Board discussions and ensure that sufficient time is given to the exchange of ideas before a decision is made. You guarantee that the Board defines and respects the interest of the Association, its vision, and its strategy through quality communication within the Board and you also make sure that they are informed properly, clearly and on time. Last but not least, you and your team members are responsible for creating a climate of trust within the Board, which is conducive to frank debate, constructive criticism, and solutions.

### B. The unwritten practices

#### Board Management

- Have a clear understanding of all areas and projects of ELSA;
- Think one step ahead;
- Respect and support the aims of your team members;
- Be an example and represent your board and the association while being humble;
- maintain a system of checks and balances alongside the Secretary General of the Board

<b>External Relation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draft, review and implement the External Strategy of ELSA;</li> <li>● Negotiate partnerships that aim at the financial sustainability of the association;</li> <li>● Maintain contact and flow of information with sister associations;</li> <li>● Maintain contact and flow of information with other students' associations;</li> <li>● Maintain contact and flow of information with other organisations (NGOs and Bar Associations).</li> </ul>
<b>Expansion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have overview of the educational institutions (law faculties) and its future in your country, and assess where expansion is feasible;</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coordinate the creation of the OYOP of your team;</li> <li>● Draft, review and implement the Strategy Planning of your Group;</li> <li>● Draft Strategic Plan Implementation Plans, in order to implement with success your Strategic Plan;</li> <li>● Draft Strategic Plan Yearly Reports, in order to monitor the implementation of your Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>

## C. Cooperation inside an ELSA Board

What is the recipe for a successful board cooperation? Is there only one leader? Is everyone an expert of their own? Well-functioning teams rely on constant communication and understanding, leadership and experience, patience, and diligence.

<b>Internal Management(IM) and BEE</b>	<p>The relationship between the Secretary General and the President of a group reflects the one of a President and a Vice President in an executive organisation structure.</p> <p>The respective areas are interlinked in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Management and Board Management;</li> <li>● Expansion and Network Management;</li> <li>● Legality and External Relations;</li> <li>● Alumni and External Relations;</li> </ul> <p>Their collaboration should aim at the forging of team spirit and the fostering of a friendly and collaborative environment among colleagues which encourages trust, comfort and finally confidence.</p>
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<b>Financial Management (FM) and BEE</b>	<p>The respective areas are interlinked in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial management and External Relations (partnership, sponsorships, donations);</li> <li>• Legality and the signature of contracts, the financial engagement of the association;</li> <li>• Public funding (e.g. grants) and External Relations;</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing (MKT) and BEE</b>	<p>The respective areas are interlinked in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Relations and External Relations of the association (partner relations, fundraising);</li> <li>• Communications' strategy and the representation of the association.</li> </ul>
<b>Project management and BEE</b>	<p>The Presidents and the Key Areas (AA, S&amp;C, STEP) work together on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of projects, initiatives, campaigns;</li> <li>• The creation of an external relations' strategy for a project, event, or campaign;</li> <li>• The conduct of the fundraising for the respective project;</li> </ul> <p>As every President is working with the project managers of the team it is especially important that the President:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn the ins and outs of the projects undertaken;</li> <li>• Keep up to date with how the projects are developing;</li> <li>• Update the project managers about the interests of partners for ongoing or future projects.</li> </ul>

## VII. External Relations

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External Relations is one of the fundamental pillars of the Presidents' duties. It includes the ability of our Association to expand its outreach and its visibility. To this date, External Relations has also served as ELSA's most important means of funding.

### A. Fundraising & tools

The process of fundraising has been thoroughly presented in the [External Relations Manual](#). The Manual focuses on every step of the fundraising process, from approaching an external to establishing and maintaining a partnership.

Additionally, there is a plethora of tools that ELSA International has created to supporter every officer in their efforts to approach externals and have a successful negotiation:

- [Editable Partnership Booklet of ELSA](#)
- [General Sponsorship Editable Packages](#)
- [Project Sponsorship Editable Packages](#)
- [1<sup>st</sup> Communication Tools](#)
- [Email Tips & Tricks](#)
- [Telephone Tips & Tricks](#)
- [How to sell a webinar – Fully digitalised events and promotion of partners](#)

Translating, or creating such materials from scratch is essential for the knowledge management and professional image of the association. A uniformed external relations' strategy can improve ELSA's image in relation to professionals in the field of legal profession and education.

### B. External Relations' Database (ERD)

Having an External Relations' Database (ERD) is essential on every level of work of the association, local, national, and international. The main advantage of working on an ERD is achieving continuity in the external relations of the association; contacts and negotiation results are saved and transitioned from generation to

generation. Continuity guarantees professionalism and hence successful External Relations in the future of the association. However, it is of paramount importance that the database is in line with and abides with the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into effect in 2018.

Over the last two years, ELSA International has created an International External Relations' Database, which will soon be published on the [BEE Officers' Portal](#).

### **C. Alumni & ELSA**

External Relations are not only connected to financial support. Creating a strong network of external stakeholders plays a significant role in establishing credibility and fostering the knowledge management of the association.

Such a network are the alumni of an association. The alumni association of ELSA is [ELSA Alumni](#) and it was officially established in 2019. ELSA International and ELSA Alumni have signed a cooperation agreement in June 2020 aiming at supporting ELSA with:

- Legal issues (pro-bono support);
- Expertise in different fields (legal affairs, policy, education, business etc.);
- Knowledge management and Strategic Planning;
- Networking, partnerships, and credibility;
- Sustainability matters (crowdfunding initiatives, scholarships etc.).

It is then that every President and Secretary General alongside the rest of their colleagues need to invest time in harvesting this potential and connect alumni of ELSA with the membership of our association, on local, national, and international level.

## VIII. Expansion

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As newer Local and National groups are established, the more ELSA grows and thereby has a bigger impact on today's society. Since the beginning of ELSA in 1981, we have focused on expanding. Today, ELSA is present in almost every country in Europe, spreading to universities and faculties in the furthest outskirts of the continent.

It is in these times that our focus should be on the qualitative expansion of the association. As ELSA is a faculty-based association, forming new ELSA groups is a cornerstone for ELSA in gaining a bigger impact on the society. ELSA International has created the [Expansion Manual](#), where every officer can read what the regulations, the tips & tricks and the biggest difficulties behind establishing new Local and National Groups are.

What we often forget, as expansion is under the BEE area, is that we cannot expand without also focusing on Human Resources, meaning that the SecGen must be an integral part of any Expansion process. The Internal Management area has excellent tools and the [Human Resources Manual](#) and the [Transition Manual](#) have been referenced in several places.

## IX. Strategic Planning

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### A. The meaning of Strategic Planning

When drafting a Strategic Plan (SP) of an organisation, there are three questions to answer:

- Where are we currently?
- Where do we want to go and why?
- What do we have to do to get there?

The SP 2023 of ELSA was adopted at the International Council Meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, in spring 2019. The 2019/2020 term was the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan 2023. The International Board of ELSA 2019/2020 focused on creating a sufficiently strong foundation to achieve the goals that were set for ELSA for the upcoming four years. Strategic Planning is a dynamic, ongoing process. That being said, ELSA does not see this SP as a complete product, but as an ongoing process of assessment of the existing aims and setting of new ones.

You can learn more on the essence of Strategic Planning by reading the [Strategic Planning Handbook](#).

## B. The current Strategic Plan in ELSA

The ELSA Strategy House depicts the goals we have set to achieve in the next four years.



The SP 2023 of ELSA has three pillars:

- 1) Good Governance;
- 2) Living Vision;
- 3) Engaging Association.

The three pillars can be viewed as the three overarching goals that are aligned with the mission of ELSA. Every goal has several objectives associated with it. The International Board of ELSA is focused on achieving the goals through the objectives described in the graph below.

You can learn more about **the current Strategic Plan** in ELSA by reading the:

- [Decision Book of ELSA \(pp. 4–8\)](#)
- [Strategic Planning Implementation Handbook](#)
- [Strategic Plan Yearly Report \(2019-2020\)](#)
- [Strategic input on Member Value \(May 2020\)](#)
- [Strategic input on refocus \(May 2020\)](#)
- [ELSA Advocacy Survey \(January 2020\)](#)



## X. BEE Family

As a BEE Officer, you can be sure that there are other local and/or national BEE Officers facing similar issues as you are throughout the year. There is a lot we can learn from each other, and thus effective communication and collaboration is crucial for securing sustained success in all areas

### A. ELSA International BEE Team

The ELSA International BEE Team can be considered as an important source of knowledge and a contact person in the field of external relations and knowledge management. They join the International Internal Meetings, participate in the knowledge exchange, and often give workshops.

### B. Communications checklist

<b>A. ELSA International &amp; National Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGs must contact EI when they want to approach an international contact;</li> <li>• EI must contact the NG when it wants to approach that NG's national contact;</li> <li>• EI sends important updates to all NGs via the BEE mailing list.</li> </ul>
<b>B. National Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most National Presidents may be facing the same problem, and thus it may be beneficial to share the problems and potential solutions with others by contacting the respective BEE Officer directly, messaging the BEE mailing list, or in the ELSA BEE Team Facebook group.</li> <li>• You will meet most of the National Presidents at ICMs, and you may consider visiting the National Council Meetings (NCMs) of other NGs.an international contact;</li> </ul>
<b>C. National Groups &amp; Local Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Presidents should keep a close track of the activities of the Local BEE Officers in order to be there to support and maintain quality standards, which could happen through e.g. a national BEE mailing list, a messenger group, a Slack workspace, or a Facebook group</li> </ul>

**C. Local  
Groups**

- NCMs are a good way to provide training in areas related to the BEE work, and it is beneficial to try to meet Local BEE Officers in person whenever possible and organise different training events (even online).
- Local BEE Officers should communicate any problems and questions first to the National President who may refer the matter further to EI if necessary.
- Local BEE Officers should keep closely in touch with each other, sharing problems and the solutions as the challenges faced may be similar for the LGs of a NG.

### III. Communication tools

#### 1. BEE mailing list

The BEE mailing list ([ELSA-BEE@listserv.elsa.org](mailto:ELSA-BEE@listserv.elsa.org)) reaches the inbox of each local, national and EI BEE Officer. To subscribe to the mailing list, simply send an email to the President of EI ([president@elsa.org](mailto:president@elsa.org)). Generally, only national Presidents write to the list, and thus local Presidents wanting to reach out to the list should approach their respective national President first. Be cautious when responding to a message sent from the list – your reply is sent to everyone on the list as default. Avoid attaching large files to your emails and rather provide a link to any documents, if possible.

Examples when to use the BEE mailing list:

- Introducing yourself to the other BEE Officers
- Disseminating your NGs autumn and spring activity reports before the ICMs;
- Sharing events available to international participants in your country; and
- Discussing BEE-related proposals before an ICM.

#### 3. Facebook

The ELSA BEE Team Facebook group is open for all local and national BEE Officers. The group is used to post BEE-related reminders, information, and more informal content. However, please avoid contacting the President of EI on Facebook, and rather resort to sending the message on Slack or via email to avoid your message being unattended. Moreover, whenever EI shares a publication on Facebook (and other social media alike), make sure to share the post with your ELSA network!

## XI. Transition & knowledge management in the BEE area

### A. Components of Transition

Giving a thorough transition is one of the most important things we do as Presidents. It lays the foundation for the future. All the hard work we put in during our term suffers when we are not able to pass our knowledge on in a thorough yet not overwhelming way.

<b>General and specific area knowledge</b>	Every President needs to be aware of the general history of the association, the BEE area, and the responsibilities that the position brings.
<b>Board communication and management</b>	It is crucial that you spend time getting to know your team, discussing their aspirations and fears. Personality tests, training sessions and time spent outside of ELSA can be beneficial.
<b>External Relations: the status quo and the strategy of the next year;</b>	It is important that transition gives you the time and space to understand the partners your group cooperates with, to set the objectives of the next year and lay a strategy for new potential supporters.
<b>Advocacy</b>	Advocacy has become an especially important pillar of our association. Understanding the value and aim behind the ELSA Advocacy Manual, setting advocacy objectives and strategy is crucial for every group to follow the vision of ELSA. Transition is a great time to set or create a plan for the continuation of advocacy objectives.
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Creating and following the Strategic Plan of our association and/ or our LG's/NG's is a responsibility of the BEE area. It is crucial that transition dedicated time to transfer this knowledge and create an implementation plan.
<b>Expansion &amp; network management;</b>	Being aware of the status quo of your National or Local Network, as well as the potential of expanding in new universities is invaluable; hence, it needs to be a part of every transition process.
<b>Soft skills and hard skills.</b>	Last but not least, understanding your strengths and weaknesses will help you develop during the year. This

can be achieved by training sessions, honest discussions and interactive workshops with your predecessor.

## B. Transition & knowledge management tools

ELSA International has created a [BEE Transition Checklist](#). This document is meant for anyone who is entering or leaving a BEE position. Through this document you can hopefully find what knowledge you need to pass on, or what knowledge you need to acquire to start your term.

At the same time, there are several tools that ELSA International has created, which can be used by any new BEE Officer to understand the BEE area. The structure of the BEE Officers' Portal is the following:

+	<b>Forms &amp; Templates</b>
+	<b>Handbooks, Manuals &amp; Reports</b>
+	<b>BEE Newsletters</b>
+	<b>Webinars &amp; Presentations</b>
+	<b>Strategic Planning</b>

In case you have any questions, please do not hesitate to approach the President of EI, or the respective EI BEE team member ([coordinator.beetoolkit@elsa.org](mailto:coordinator.beetoolkit@elsa.org)).

## XII. Contacts

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### A. President of ELSA International

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Email            [president@elsa.org](mailto:president@elsa.org)  
Skype            President of ELSA International / [president@elsa.org](mailto:president@elsa.org)

### B. ELSA International

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Facebook        <https://www.facebook.com/elsa.org/>  
LinkedIn         [https://www.linkedin.com/company/elsa\\_org/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/elsa_org/)  
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