

# ONE YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN

INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF ELSA 2025/2026





#### **FOREWORD**

Dear Network,

We are delighted to share with you our One Year Operational Plan for the term 2025/2026.

During our candidacies, you allowed us to discuss our visions, plans, and motivations for ELSA. However, this process has been an individual one, and ELSA is about a Group, a Network, a Board. In the next few pages, you will read the outcome of this process: from eight individuals to one Board, from eight different visions to a common one.

Therefore, we want to present you with the values that we all relate to and that reflect who we are as a Board. INTEGRITY, PURPOSE and GROWTH will be our companions for this journey, which will guide us to achieve our ideas, and to strengthen our Network.

INTEGRITY: Integrity is at the heart of a strong and sustainable ELSA. In the upcoming year, the International Board will focus on fostering unity, engagement, and empowerment across the Network. By strengthening collaboration, supporting members in their roles, and promoting a healthy working culture, we aim to ensure that every officer feels valued, connected, and equipped to contribute meaningfully to ELSA's mission.

PURPOSE: The International Board is committed to ensuring that ELSA continues to grow as an innovative, inclusive, and sustainable Association. In the upcoming year, our focus will be on strengthening accessibility, securing financial sustainability, and working on digital infrastructure to support both our members and projects across Europe.

GROWTH: Growth is about shaping the future of ELSA by expanding opportunities, developing projects, and increasing the Association's reach and influence. In the upcoming year, the International Board will focus on supporting innovation, strengthening skills, and cultivating strategic partnerships to ensure that ELSA continues to evolve and thrive across the Network.

We hope that this direction will be as inspiring for you as it is for us, and we look forward to working all together, as a Board and as a Network, in order to achieve these goals.

ELSAfully yours,

Inds Ribeiro Hedin R. Indregard

Tommos yondaro

Rodrigo Relling

Gabriel, Lucie, Tommaso, Kat, Anastasios, Inês, Hedin & Rodrigo International Board of ELSA 2025/2026



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#### **INTEGRITY**

Integrity is at the heart of a strong and sustainable ELSA. In the upcoming year, the International Board will focus on fostering unity, engagement, and empowerment across the Network. By strengthening collaboration, supporting members in their roles, and promoting a healthy working culture, we aim to ensure that every officer feels valued, connected, and equipped to contribute meaningfully to ELSA's mission.

## Unity

The ELSA International Team is the cornerstone of ELSA International. Over the years, it has been invaluable to the work of successive International Boards. It is therefore essential to reaffirm its importance, ranging from talent acquisition to recognising and celebrating its contributions across the Network.

#### 1. ELSA International Team management

The work of ELSA International could not be done without the ELSA International Team. For this reason, its effective management is a priority for the International Board. Strengthening the relationship between the International Team and the Board will foster a healthier, stronger, and more sustainable working environment. We aim to achieve this by:

- Instituting the Human Resources Strategy, by continuing the work of previous years in developing ELSA's Human Resources;
- Developing and implementing a Recognition Protocol within the ELSA International Team to strengthen talent retention;
- Offering occasions for teambuilding and teamwork within the ELSA International Team, creating stronger connections between Officers of the same and different areas, and with the International Board of ELSA; and
- Including the ELSA International Team Officers in the **preparation of Workshops** for **International Internal Meetings**, as well as their presentation.

## 2. Officer Development by Training

More tools mean more prepared Officers. By investing in their development, we invest in the quality of our events, the support we give each other, and ultimately, in ELSA's image. Striving to empower Officers to be more capable on every front is paramount to building a stronger, more prepared, and more competent Association. We aim to achieve this by:

- Advancing Officers' Development by increasing awareness of and access to opportunities, including initiatives such as the ELSA Skills Academy and ELSA Training;
- Developing the **International Trainers' Pool** by acquiring more Trainers with different backgrounds and experience; and



• Implementing more training moments during **International Internal Meetings** to enhance Officers' skills, foster knowledge-sharing, and ensure continuous growth within the Association.

## **Engagement**

ELSA thrives on the active contribution of its members. Without engagement, there is no Network. To ensure our Association continues to grow, we must encourage participation at every level, from the international down to the local officers and members. The International Board plays a key role in this by supporting National and Local Groups through coaching, training, and providing platforms for dialogue. By strengthening officers' ability to take part in discussions and contribute to projects, we build a more connected and sustainable Network that delivers stronger projects for our members.

## 1. Network Management

To ensure engagement translates into action across the Association, the most important aspect of engagement is managing the ELSA Network. ELSA International relies on the National and Local Groups to create dialogue, advance our Association, and engage as active officers. The Network consists of a wide variety of groups, each with its own background and challenges. The role of ELSA International is therefore to assist the Network in finding tailored solutions together. We aim to achieve this by:

- Having an open communication with the Network through Open Calls, Workshops, and continuous dialogue;
- Involving groups that cannot be present in ICMs, by giving concrete follow-up and a recap of the most important discussions for those unable to attend;
- Fostering discussion between groups that are facing similar issues by addressing common problems in our workshops and avenues of communication;
- Providing tailored support to groups who need it, by being available for support for National and Local groups, particularly groups who have not completed the AA/C board reform; and
- Involving Local Groups in ELSA International's work and opportunities, by making them aware of ELSA International's ongoing projects, without overstepping on National Groups.

### 2. Strengthening our Human Resources

Alongside network management, supporting the people behind the work is essential. The foundation of ELSA's engagement lies in its people. A strong Human Resources approach ensures better engagement and the long-term development of our Association. By addressing challenges across the Network and strengthening our image, we enable officers and members to thrive within ELSA. We aim to achieve this by:



- Providing support to groups that are facing major challenges, and continuing to provide assistance through ELSA International for their stability and growth; and
- Strengthening ELSA's image in nations where ELSA is present by representing the Association and its values, and actively encouraging promotion of ELSA's opportunities.

## 3. Project & Area Coaching

Building on our human resources, targeted support in the daily work enhances both projects and engagement. Even with strong officers, furthering projects and activities in ELSA requires continuous support in their daily work. By coaching and assisting in the training of officers, ELSA International can strengthen both knowledge and engagement across the Network. We aim to achieve this by:

- Tailoring support to the needs of the officers, providing individual and area guidance, resources and follow-up on challenges the officers face; and
- Expanding the BEE academy with joint sessions on common issues, giving the Presidents the necessary tools to aid the other officers with their work and ensuring a better bird's-eye view of the activities in the Association.

#### 4. The ELSA Alumni Network

Finally, the experience of our Alumni provides a unique opportunity to further reinforce the Association's growth. With their accumulated knowledge and professional experience, ELSA Alumni are invaluable to the Association. Strengthening the relationship between ELSA and its Alumni Community not only contributes to the growth of the Association but also strengthens its ties to the professional network across generations. We aim to achieve this by:

- Strengthening the JHJMCC and HPMCC Alumni Community by implementing Get-Togethers, researching the option of newsletters, and enhancing communication;
- Fostering Alumni participation in ROLE: As key stakeholder and co-organiser of the ROLE project, ELSA Alumni will be given improved access to the ROLE Training Conference and supported in finding additional avenues for active involvement;
- Engaging ELSA Alumni in more ELSA projects by involving them in opportunities such as supporting job hunting for ELSA Traineeships; and
- Strengthening collaboration with ELSA Alumni, especially in light of the 45th anniversary of ELSA.

#### **Empowerment**

By investing in the development of our Network and strengthening knowledge management, we ensure continuity, promote engagement and foster a culture of learning and innovation among our members. Through these efforts, empowerment ensures that ELSA remains a learning organisation that evolves with its members, while providing the foundation for long-term stability and innovation across the Network.



## 1. Enhancing Human Resources across the Network

Empowering members and ensuring continuity in leadership are key to a strong Network. By making the International Board more approachable, supporting Groups with structured strategies, and guiding potential candidates, we can foster engagement and growth across ELSA. We aim to achieve this by:

- Improving the visibility and attractiveness of the International Board through documentation and proactive solutions;
- Showcasing life in the International Board to make it more approachable and transparent for prospective candidates;
- Supporting Groups in adopting Human Resources strategies by creating a model Human Resources Strategy;
- Continuing the initiative of creating **guidelines for potential candidates** to ease the running process;
- Sharing information consistently and adopting an open approach to the candidates to support them during the whole process; and
- **Promoting Human Resources opportunities** through workshops and Open Calls to encourage broader participation and engagement.

## 2. Knowledge Management

Maintaining and sharing knowledge effectively is essential for a strong and resilient Network. By improving resources, reworking platforms, and ensuring materials are practical and accessible, the International Board supports Officers in performing their roles efficiently. We aim to achieve this by:

- **Developing improved materials** for knowledge management and **reworking existing platforms** (e.g. Study Visits Portal and SOS Portal), to make them more efficient and user-friendly;
- **Promoting projects** internally through media cards, fact sheets, and grassroots-level communication to increase awareness and participation across the Network;
- Creating materials that are concise, practical, and directly useful for Officers in their daily work (e.g. Packages and Handbooks);
- Updating and improving the Officers' Portal and ELSA Wiki, ensuring that content is continuously restructured, accessible, and relevant;
- Regularly reviewing and updating materials to maintain accuracy and usefulness; and
- Holding Open Calls focused on knowledge transfer, to actively encourage sharing of best practices and innovative approaches.



### **PURPOSE**

The International Board is committed to ensuring that ELSA continues to grow as an innovative, inclusive, and sustainable Association. In the upcoming year, our focus will be on strengthening accessibility, securing financial sustainability, and working on digital infrastructure to support both our members and projects across Europe.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility is a cornerstone of ELSA's mission to provide opportunities for law students and young lawyers across the Network. By removing barriers—financial, digital, or structural—we ensure that participation in our activities is not limited by personal circumstances or geographic location. Accessibility means enabling equal opportunities for all, fostering a truly inclusive environment where every member can engage meaningfully and contribute to ELSA's vision

#### 1. Financial Support

Ensuring broad participation and long-term stability requires removing barriers and supporting members and organisers alike. By facilitating funding, strengthening partnerships, and providing practical guidance, the International Board enables more equitable engagement across the Network. We aim to achieve this by:

- Facilitating access to the ELSA Development Foundation by developing clear and cohesive application guidelines to simplify the process and encourage members to apply;
- Updating and enhancing Financial Management toolkits to provide Officers with clear, reliable points of reference, ensuring consistency, efficiency and informed decision-making in financial processes;
- Supporting Regional Round Organisers by exploring grant opportunities to assist with the accessibility of the Competitions, both for organisers and participants;
- Improving International Council Meeting accessibility by exploring the possibility of a targeted funding scheme to cover travel and participation costs for selected participants at International Council Meetings, modelled on the Alumni scholarship approach, to ensure broader and more equitable participation across the Network; and
- Strengthening and expanding partnerships by deepening collaboration with current partners while actively seeking new strategic relationships to support ELSA initiatives.

#### 2. Website Infrastructure

Ensuring that ELSA's digital infrastructure is accessible means creating platforms that are user-friendly, reliable, and inclusive for all members, partners, and stakeholders. We aim to achieve this by:

• Overhauling ELSA's websites to address technical challenges and ensure modern, user-friendly platforms aligned with the needs of the Network;



- Securing a new, modern STEP Online System supported by stable financial solutions to guarantee that ELSA Traineeships remain reliable, accessible, and impactful;
- Exploring opportunities offered by Artificial Intelligence to simplify internal processes and provide faster, more effective support to the Network; and
- Promoting cybersecurity awareness through workshops, trainings, and knowledge-sharing opportunities that empower members to engage safely in the digital environment.

## 3. Diversity & Inclusion

As a student-led international organisation, ELSA bears both the privilege and responsibility of fostering a culture that embraces diversity and promotes inclusion at every level of our work. Advocacy for equal opportunities and social responsibility lies at the heart of this mission. We aim to achieve this by:

- **Promoting inclusive events** by exploring the need for supporting documentation for organising accessible events, covering venue selection, hybrid participation options, and inclusive communication practices;
- Raising awareness and building capacity by offering trainings and workshops for organisers across the Network on how to accommodate and support participants with disabilities;
- Integrating accessibility standards by incorporating accessibility considerations into all major ELSA projects and events, ensuring they meet the needs of participants with different abilities; and
- Celebrating inclusion by highlighting and sharing success stories of accessible initiatives within the Network to inspire replication and create a culture of inclusion across all levels of ELSA.

#### Sustainability

Sustainability in ELSA means ensuring that our network not only survives but thrives. It is about creating accessible opportunities, embracing innovation, and building the financial and structural stability that allows every member to take part. A sustainable ELSA is one where our projects remain impactful, our groups feel supported, and our community continues to grow stronger with each generation.

#### 1. Host Attraction

Successful flagship projects and International Internal Meetings rely on engaged, well-supported hosts. By providing guidance, sharing best practices, and recognising their essential contributions, the International Board ensures hosting remains accessible, effective, and attractive across the Network. We aim to achieve this by:



- Continuing Open Calls and Workshops during International Internal Meetings, with insights from current hosts to clarify any doubts and foster a culture of sharing experiences;
- Updating and improving the Handbooks for International Internal Meeting and Regional Round hosts to ensure they remain practical and up to date;
- Actively promoting hosts on social media, highlighting their work and inspiring others;
- Promoting International Internal Meetings to countries not traditionally involved in hosting;
- Encouraging the "half-and-half" hosting model for International Internal Meetings, separating accommodation and plenary and workshop venues to make hosting more affordable and flexible;
- Managing expectations within the Network, highlighting that events can be successful without elevated requirements;
- Recognising and appreciating hosts for their essential role in bringing ELSA's projects to life;
- Attaching a comprehensive booklet to the Calls for Hosts, including quality standards, FAQs, and a clear explanation of the hosting process;
- Taking a proactive approach by reaching out to National and Local Groups; and
- Holding structured discussions with previous organisers to **identify recurring challenges and develop solutions** at the network level.

## 2. Digitalisation

For ELSA, sustainability in digitalisation means creating systems that last, remain secure, and support continuity across generations of the Network. A sustainable approach reduces risks of disruption and avoids short-term fixes, allowing us to focus on long-term growth. At the same time, it reflects our responsibility to choose efficient, reliable and financially sustainable solutions that strengthen both our projects and our organisation. We aim to achieve this by:

- Safeguarding and updating ELSA's digital infrastructure through migration to reliable providers and the implementation of sustainable solutions that ensure security and continuity;
- Exploring long-term cybersecurity measures to protect members, partners, and projects from disruption; and
- Enhancing partner and member experience by building digital platforms that reflect ELSA's professionalism, reliability, and forward-looking vision.

#### 3. Financial Strategy

Long-term growth and resilience depend on careful planning, diversified resources, and strengthening financial support for projects and administration. Through efficient management,



solid partnerships and an Investment Statute that reflects our shared values and is built collectively, ensuring a common agreement, the International Board strengthens ELSA's stability and capacity to deliver impactful initiatives and projects. We aim to achieve this by:

- Outsourcing accounting, if financially feasible, to increase efficiency and focus on strategic initiatives;
- Actively looking into new grant opportunities and applying for well-known yearly grants, including structural and international grants;
- **Updating the Grants Database** and improving the Grants Team's structure and term length;
- Drafting and regularly updating an Investment Statute to guide low-risk, ethical investments aligned with ELSA's values, with the possibility of outsourcing investment management;
- Expanding partnerships and diversifying income streams to increase financial resilience and reduce dependency on any single funding source;
- Acting as the coordinating body for the ROLE project to provide financial support for National Groups, ensuring organisers face no obstacles in delivering high-quality events;
- Enhancing revenue from projects such as ELSA Traineeships, Career Launch, and ROLE, while exploring advertising opportunities, additional project grants, and other innovative funding streams
- Approaching financial planning, hosting, digitalisation, and project management with sustainability in mind to ensure efficient resource use and long-term network strength;
- Improving the ELSA House living conditions, including heating, insulation, hardware, and general facilities, while ensuring continuity and financial stability by evaluating costs, prioritising maintenance, and securing future accommodations, to create a safe, functional, and sustainable environment for Board Members; and
- Exploring liability, health, and home content insurance for Board Members, where funds allow, safeguarding their well-being and responsibly managing risks.

## Visibility

Strengthening visibility remains a central priority for ELSA, as it allows us to reinforce our image, engage new audiences, and ensure that the value of our initiatives is recognised both within and beyond our Network. This year, our approach is to enhance communication strategies, give greater prominence to our academic outputs, and consolidate advocacy as a core tool for promoting ELSA's mission. By doing so, we aim not only to highlight our Flagship projects but also to provide space and visibility to all initiatives organised across the Network.



## 1. Maximising Outreach through Effective PR

Improving the impact of our Public Relations is essential to reach a broader and more diverse audience. By investing in more dynamic and creative formats, with a strong emphasis on audiovisual materials, we can ensure that ELSA's image remains fresh, modern, and appealing. We aim to achieve this by:

- Encouraging flexibility in branding to allow innovative and tailored communication while ensuring coherence with ELSA's visual identity, thereby combining creativity with consistency across the Network;
- Supporting Officers and Groups in developing PR strategies and audiovisual tools to strengthen outreach capacity and ensure that promotional activities remain professional, engaging, and aligned with ELSA's objectives; and
- **Promoting the use of audiovisuals** as a core element of ELSA's communication approach, making our content more dynamic and appealing to a wider audience.

## 2. Developing and Implementing Advocacy within ELSA

Advocacy plays an increasingly important role in amplifying ELSA's voice and impact. By building clear frameworks for Groups and exploring new opportunities, we can expand and professionalise our advocacy efforts. We aim to achieve this by:

- **Developing Advocacy Guidelines** to provide a clear framework and practical tools that support Groups in designing and implementing effective advocacy initiatives;
- Exploring ways to expand ELSA's advocacy reach, both internally and externally, by identifying new areas of engagement and building partnerships that enhance our credibility and influence; and
- Exploring methods to advocate more effectively, ensuring that ELSA's voice is impactful, consistent, and adapted to different stakeholders and audiences.

#### 3. Flagship and non-Flagship Promotion

Promoting ELSA's academic work is key to reinforcing our reputation as a leading platform for legal research. By diversifying our channels and ensuring balanced promotion, we can strengthen our presence in both academic and professional environments. We aim to achieve this by:

- Ensuring balanced visibility for both Flagship and non-Flagship projects so all initiatives receive recognition and engagement across the Network;
- Exploring promotion channels beyond social media and targeting academic circles to reach professional and educational audiences;
- Highlighting the ELSA Law Review and Local and National Research Groups as core contributions to ELSA's academic reputation; and
- Using enhanced visibility to support financial stability, foster project development, and expand ELSA's reach to new audiences.



#### **GROWTH**

Growth is about shaping the future of ELSA by expanding opportunities, developing projects, and increasing the Association's reach and influence. In the upcoming year, the International Board will focus on supporting innovation, strengthening skills, and cultivating strategic partnerships to ensure that ELSA continues to evolve and thrive across the Network.

## **Development**

Development is about shaping the future of ELSA through innovative, sustainable, and ambitious projects that can reach further. By laying strong foundations for new initiatives, improving existing ones, and providing resources to support their growth, we ensure that ELSA continues to evolve with the needs of our Network.

## 1. Flagship Projects

Launching and sustaining new projects ensures that ELSA continues to expand its impact and relevance across the Network. By providing vision, guidance, and strategic planning, the International Board lays the foundation for long-term success. We aim to achieve this by:

- Exploring the future of the Annual Human Rights Campaign and Rule of Law Education initiatives;
- **Drafting the first development strategy** for the Annual Human Rights Campaign and Rule of Law Education;
- Expanding ELSA Delegations to different sessions and institutions (e.g., UNCTAD) to diversify opportunities for participants;
- Finding a publisher with a sustainable, future-oriented approach for the ELSA Law Review; and
- Strengthening the ELSA Law Review as a core academic output and promoting it to increase visibility and engagement.

## 2. Professional Development

Enhancing learning and skill-building opportunities strengthens members' personal and professional growth. Fostering creativity and developing practical resources ensures high-quality, engaging experiences. We aim to achieve this by:

- **Developing new materials** following the codification of the Professional Development events in the Decision Book.
- Promoting creativity and innovative approaches to Professional Development events.



#### **Impact**

Impact is at the heart of a value-driven association such as ELSA. It is about ensuring that our projects and initiatives create tangible values – both for our members and for society. This year, we want to strengthen the impact of our work by developing key projects such as Rule of Law Education, Annual Human Rights Campaign and ELSA Training, allowing our members to strengthen their skills and personal growth, and spreading our values and embracing our social responsibility throughout society.

## 1. Project Support

Ensuring the success and continuity of ELSA's projects while promoting learning beyond formal education requires guidance, engagement, and practical skill-building. Supporting Coordinators, coaching National Groups, and delivering targeted workshops ensures better project outcomes and fosters personal growth across the Network. We aim to achieve this by:

- **Providing structured coaching to National Groups** for initiatives such as Rule of Law Education and Annual Human Rights Campaign;
- Offering tailored support to each Coordinator;
- **Highlighting the social responsibility impact** of Rule of Law Education as a European educational initiative;
- Equipping Officers with the knowledge and tools necessary to sustain the International Focus Programme;
- Continuing to deliver workshops that develop non-formal education skills; and
- Enhancing **personal connection and interactivity with Coordinators** for the Annual Human Rights Campaign.

## 2. Reinforcing ELSA Training

Enhancing accessibility, engagement, and the quality of ELSA Training ensures that members across the Network can develop skills effectively. Promoting opportunities, supporting trainers, and integrating ELSA Training into diverse activities strengthens learning and capacity-building initiatives. We aim to achieve this by:

- Promoting training opportunities through workshops, open calls, and social media;
- Maintaining engagement between Train the Trainers cycles by developing the International Trainers' Pool;
- Restructuring the ELSA Training website to make training resources more user-friendly and interactive;
- Integrating ELSA Training into diverse areas such as the ELSA International Team, Organising Committees, and Key Area events;
- **Developing new topics** based on feedback from the Network;



- Encouraging National Groups to establish their own National Trainers' Pools, and supporting them by updating the National Trainers' Pool handbook;
- Building a closer connection with the International Trainers' Pool; and
- Exploring the possibility of **organising the Refreshment Weekend**.

#### **Outreach**

Outreach, as the final pillar of growth, aims to embody ELSA's ambition to strengthen its financial sustainability, expand our current partnerships, provide new opportunities for the Network and stabilise our projects. By creating tailored external relations and fundraising strategies, cultivating meaningful partnerships, and opening new avenues of collaboration, we can ensure that ELSA's growth is not only internal but also visible and impactful.

## 1. Strengthening External Relations and Fundraising

To strengthen ELSA's growth and ensure long-term stability, the International Board focuses on creating meaningful partnerships and supporting National and Local Groups in developing effective fundraising strategies. By expanding external relations and providing tailored guidance, the Network can access new opportunities and sustainable resources. We aim to achieve this by:

- Expanding external relations and fundraising initiatives by identifying partners, grants, and diverse sources of funding; and
- Supporting the Network through workshops and individual sessions to develop tailored external relations and fundraising strategies.

#### 2. Enhancing Partnership Strategies for Competitions

To ensure the long-term sustainability and success of ELSA's flagship Competitions, the International Board focuses on strengthening partnerships and providing practical support to organisers. By developing strategic approaches and sharing best practices, we help the Network secure reliable resources and foster lasting collaborations. We aim to achieve this by:

- Designing a targeted strategy to approach potential partners with tailored proposals that reflect their interests and values and that align with our Competitions Flagship Projects;
- Developing best practices for sustainable partnership management to **strengthen long-term stability**; and
- Assisting Regional Rounds Organisers in their search for partners by providing centralised tools, templates, and guidance.

#### 3. Ensuring Financial Sustainability of Professional Development

To ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of Professional Development as a Key Area, it is important to focus on maximising project revenue, expanding outreach, and creating



long-term strategic frameworks. By strengthening platforms, partnerships, and financial planning, we ensure that Professional Development remains impactful and resilient. We aim to achieve this by:

- Positioning Career Launch as a **financially surplus-generating project**;
- Positioning ELSA Traineeships as the main platform for traineeships and developing Career Launch as the main platform for job opportunities; and
- Strengthening outreach to potential partners to increase participation and revenue.

## 4. Expanding Cooperation with Student-led Organisations

To enhance ELSA's visibility at the European level, the International Board focuses on strategic cooperation with key continental organisations. By exploring targeted partnerships and sharing experiences with other student associations, we aim to strengthen ELSA's presence, learn from best practices, and foster new opportunities for collaboration. We aim to achieve this by:

- Assessing opportunities to strengthen ELSA's visibility through cooperation with the European Youth Forum;
- Exploring ways to collaborate with other European student associations to exchange experiences, ideas, and good practices; and
- Identifying potential joint initiatives or events that can raise ELSA's profile and create added value for members.