



The European Law Students' Association

ONE YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN

INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF ELSA 2026/2027



FOREWORD

Dear Network,

We are delighted to share with you our One Year Operational Plan for the term 2026/2027.

As we begin our term, we do so with a shared motivation to contribute to the Association and build on the work that is already being done across the Network. Since stepping through the blue door in Brussels, we have taken the ideas that brought us here and worked together to define where we want to place our focus during the year ahead. This One Year Operational Plan is the result of that process and sets out the direction we want to pursue together as a Board and with the Network.

Three Cs came to reflect the direction we want to take: **Clarity, Connection and Contribution.**

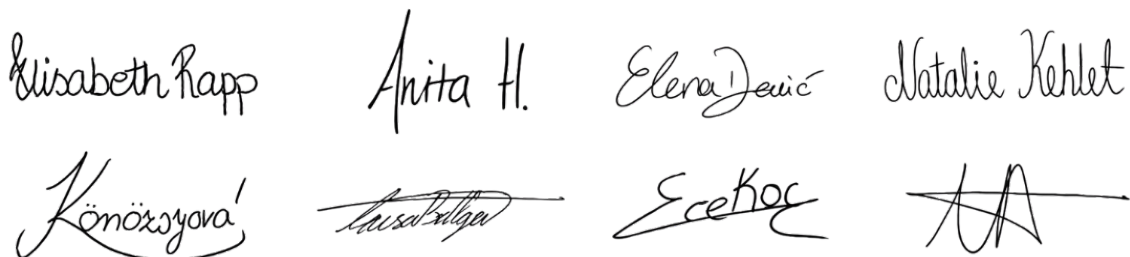
Clarity: A shared understanding of our direction, priorities, and objectives can help our Members engage meaningfully in ELSA. Clarity provides direction and creates a common understanding of what we want to achieve, while clear priorities, effective communication and reliable systems help us turn our ambitions into achievable goals. By strengthening the foundations of how we plan, communicate and operate, it will be easier to understand where we are and how we can achieve our goals together.

Connection: ELSA is built on the people who contribute to it and the connections that bring them together. A strong Network depends on creating an environment in which Officers feel supported, opportunities remain accessible, and cooperation is encouraged across all levels of the Association. Connection allows us to learn from one another, reach those who can contribute to and benefit from our work, and strengthen the Network as a whole.

Contribution: ELSA develops through the efforts and ideas of its Officers and Groups across generations. Each term offers different opportunities to build upon this work, strengthen what already exists and explore where ELSA can develop further. Contribution lies at the heart of what ELSA seeks to achieve and what we, as the International Board, aim to bring to the Association during our term.

We hope this One Year Operational Plan not only provides clear direction for our work, but also inspires engagement, ideas, and conversations throughout the year!

ELSAfully yours,



Elisabeth, Aníta, Elena, Natalie, Enara, Caisa, Ece & Adamantia
International Board of ELSA 2026/2027

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CLARITY

A shared understanding of our direction, priorities, and objectives can help our Members engage meaningfully in ELSA. Clarity provides direction and creates a common understanding of what we want to achieve, while clear priorities, effective communication and reliable systems help us turn our ambitions into achievable goals. By strengthening the foundations of how we plan, communicate and operate, it will be easier to understand where we are and how we can achieve our goals together.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning remains the framework through which we provide direction and support continuity in ELSA's long-term sustainability. It is equally valuable in enabling National Groups to establish their own priorities and contribute to the broader development of the Association. As the Strategic Plan of ELSA 2023-2028 enters its fourth cycle, it is an important opportunity to assess progress toward the Strategic Goals and evaluate their effectiveness.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Ensuring continued implementation of the current Strategic Goals;
- Gathering relevant information and recommendations to help with the drafting of the new Strategic Plan 2028-2033;
- Regularly including direct references to the Strategic Plan to the Network through International Internal Meetings, Open Calls, and Monthly Reports;
- Support National Groups in developing and implementing their own strategic plans and facilitate the exchange of best practices and experiences.

Communication

A well-functioning Association is built on communication and exchange of information. Communication plays a critical role in ensuring that Members remain informed and connected, while providing opportunities for the Network to share its experiences, needs and ideas. Throughout our term, we will focus on establishing effective communication and mutual support with and across the Network.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Establishing a consistent and structured approach to communication with the Network;
- Ensuring recognition of the work and contribution of the ELSA International Team through means, including communication channels, workshops, and presentations;
- Aligning the Coaching System according to the needs of the National Groups;
- Maintaining the fruitful cooperation with ELSA Alumni and the Alumni Community.

Data Protection

In recent years, significant progress has been made in strengthening Data Protection practices in ELSA. Nevertheless, our approach to Data Protection requires continuous attention and regular evaluation, particularly as technology changes. Maintaining a proactive approach is therefore essential to ensure that personal data is handled securely and that Data Protection remains an integral part of ELSA.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Reviewing and updating Privacy Policies and Data Processing Agreements for events and projects organised or coordinated by ELSA International;
- Continuing to strengthen data protection safeguards and compliance across all Areas and Projects;
- Raising awareness across the Network about Data Protection responsibilities and the importance of compliance.

Information Technology

In light of longstanding challenges with ELSA's digital infrastructure and the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence, finding efficient and sustainable ways to utilise technology remains important. As digital tools and practices continue to evolve, we aim to ensure that ELSA approaches technological developments in a practical, responsible and informed manner.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Continuing to search for new possibilities and solutions for the technical difficulties of the ELSA websites;
- Further exploring how Artificial Intelligence can simplify internal processes and promote responsible and safe usage, while raising awareness of its risks;
- Raising awareness across the Network about cybersecurity.

CONNECTION

ELSA is built on the people who contribute to it and the connections that bring them together. A strong Network depends on creating an environment in which Officers feel supported, opportunities remain accessible, and cooperation is encouraged across all levels of the Association. Connection allows us to learn from one another, reach those who can contribute to and benefit from our work, and strengthen the Network as a whole.

Network Management

A strong and well-connected Network is the foundation of ELSA. Meaningful engagement between Officers, National Groups, and the International Board is essential to foster cooperation and ensure that the needs and perspectives of the Network are heard and reflected in the work of the Association.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Encouraging ELSA International Team Members and Officers to share their good practices and achievements through active participation in Workshops and Open Calls;
- Facilitating exchange of information and cooperation between National Groups;
- Tailoring Workshops and discussions to the needs of the Network, taking concerns and topics of relevance into account.

Visibility

A strong presence allows ELSA to reach a wider audience and ensures that our projects and opportunities reach those who can benefit from and contribute to them. Visibility is therefore important both within the Network and beyond, allowing us to communicate ELSA's values, highlight the contribution of our Members and strengthen our recognition among externals.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Strengthening the visibility of ELSA in a way that reflects the diversity, impact, and values of the Network;
- Supporting the visibility of ELSA and its projects through increased public relations efforts and targeted communication;
- Providing the Network with accessible resources that facilitate a consistent and engaging presentation of the Association.

Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability is essential for ensuring that ELSA remains accessible, impactful, and capable of growing. It directly influences our ability to provide meaningful opportunities to our Members, support the work of National and Local Groups, and continue developing our activities and projects. In light of the increasing financial pressures across the Network, balancing sustainability with accessibility has become an important consideration.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Working towards balancing financial accessibility with the long-term sustainability and quality of ELSA's activities and events;
- Exploring new funding opportunities and increasing awareness of financial opportunities to the Network, such as grants, ELSA Development Foundation, partnerships, and investments;
- Encouraging responsible financial planning and budgeting for ELSA events and projects.

Human Resources

ELSA is built upon the people who dedicate their time, knowledge, and skills to the development of our Association. Ensuring that Officers are supported, recognised, and given opportunities for growth is essential to maintaining a motivated Network. The development of the Human Resources Strategy 2027-2029 provides an opportunity to evaluate our current approaches and establish a framework that supports the Association and our Officers in the years ahead.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Recognising Officers' dedication and commitment to the Network;
- Utilising the fullest potential of our human resources;
- Developing the Human Resources Strategy 2027-2029 to meet the evolving needs of the Network.

CONTRIBUTION

ELSA develops through the efforts and ideas of its Officers and Groups across generations. Each term offers different opportunities to build upon this work, strengthen what already exists and explore where ELSA can develop further. Contribution lies at the heart of what ELSA seeks to achieve and what we, as the International Board, aim to bring to the Association during our term.

Project Development

Our projects contribute directly to fulfilling ELSA's mission. Strengthening project management practices can further support National and Local Groups in implementing ELSA's projects more effectively. Ensuring their continued development is therefore an ongoing responsibility, allowing our projects to remain relevant, valuable, sustainable and recognised.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Continuing to work towards the long-term recognition and visibility of ELSA's projects;
- Utilising the 15th Anniversary of the Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition and the 25th Anniversary of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition as a strategic opportunity to advance their long-term development;
- Assessing how to strengthen ELSA Law Review, Career Launch, and International Conferences of ELSA;
- Continuing the development of the new Academic Activities project focused on Social Responsibility.

Advocacy

Advocacy is an integral part of how ELSA fulfils its vision and contributes to society. Through objective, fact-based and non-political initiatives, ELSA raises awareness of legal and societal issues and creates opportunities to engage with topics that shape the rule of law, human rights and society. Following continued discussions on ELSA's approach to advocacy and the recent introduction of the Advocacy Guidelines, there is now significant potential to strengthen our advocacy efforts.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Continuing the Advocacy efforts in the Key Areas while evaluating their impact;
- Further developing the Advocacy potential of ELSA Delegations;
- Continuing to advocate for human rights and the rule of law through the Annual Human Rights Campaign and Rule of Law Education;
- Increasing awareness and understanding of the Advocacy Guidelines.

External Relations

As a student-led non-profit organisation, ELSA relies on external relationships to access valuable opportunities, resources and expertise. Maintaining meaningful relationships through regular communication with existing partners, while actively seeking new connections, is essential to strengthening these relationships and ELSA's ability to benefit from them. A coordinated approach to External Relations and effective knowledge sharing across the Network are therefore important for supporting ELSA's activities and opportunities.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Continuing to strengthen relationships with existing partners;
- Taking a proactive approach to identifying and establishing connections with potential partners and collaborators;
- Ensuring effective functioning and further development of the newly launched External Relations Regulation Platform.

International Internal Meetings of ELSA

Hosting an International Internal Meeting of ELSA (IIM) requires significant financial, organisational, and human resources, but at the same time, it provides valuable opportunities to strengthen connections within the Network and develop organisational skills. This term, we are fortunate to have all Hosts for the IIMs secured. Supporting the Hosts throughout the organisational process and working towards making hosting attractive and feasible are important to maintaining the continuity of the IIMs.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Continuing to work towards accessibility for Participants and long-term sustainability for Hosts;
- Promoting the benefits of hosting, for example, through the Mentorship Programme;
- Facilitating a balanced implementation of the new structure of the IIM fees.

Knowledge Management

Every term, Officers gain new experiences, develop solutions, and create practices that can benefit those who come after them. Maintaining effective Knowledge Management and facilitating a smooth Transition are essential to preserving continuity and stability within ELSA. Knowledge Management is therefore not only about retaining information, but also about making it accessible and useful to our Officers and ensuring that knowledge can be passed on, adapted, and put into practice.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Providing tailored support to ELSA Officers through Academies, Trainings, and the Area-specific Coaching Systems;
- Raising awareness of knowledge management tools, such as ELSA Training, ELSA Wiki, Training Weekends, and project-specific Handbooks;
- Facilitating platforms for Officers to exchange knowledge, good practices, and experiences.