

These documents were shared with/approved by the SLSA Board in Jan 2024

## **EDI Strategic Response Document**

The SLSA conducted an EDI survey at the end of 2021 and published the results in a report in March 2022. A number of issues were raised by the survey, which the Board, with the leadership and advice of the EDI Subcommittee, is seeking to address. This Strategic Response Document reports on the issues raised in the survey and the progress made so far to address them.

1. Ensure SLSA membership records are accurate and up to date.

The SLSA Membership Secretary is working on this, and much progress has been made to improve the accuracy of our membership records. For example, steps are being taken to identify and delete duplicate membership records and to ensure that PGR members are transitioned to full membership once their PhD is complete.

2. Collect and monitor data on who applies for and receives SLSA funding through its various grants and seminar funding schemes.

Starting in January 2024, a link to a confidential and voluntary data collection form will be sent to members who: apply for funding through one of the SLSA's funding schemes, nominate someone or are nominated for a book or article prize, or act as conference stream convenors. The form will not be connected to, or have any bearing on, the outcome of an application for funding, prize nomination or stream convenor application, but collecting this data will help the SLSA monitor and progress EDI issues.

3. Help members build connections with groups beyond legal academia, e.g., academics from other disciplines, activist groups, and legal practitioners.

The SLSA's Learned Societies Initiative was launched at the Ulster conference in 2023 with a roundtable on interdisciplinarity. The panel reflected on the challenges of interdisciplinary working and the role of learned societies in supporting and encouraging colleagues to collaborate across traditional boundaries. In addition, the PGR Reps to the SLSA Board have expanded their recruitment efforts to include PGRs in other potentially relevant departments beyond law (e.g. sociology, criminology, psychology, history).

4. Collect views from and increase support for precariously employed members.

In late 2023, the Precarity Rep to the SLSA Board conducted a membership survey to build a picture of the challenges precarious colleagues face and identify ways the SLSA can better support them. A report on the results of the survey was published in 2023. One initiative following the survey has been to ringfence funding for precariously employed members and to update the text of application packages for the next funding round to make this clear. Heads of Law Schools and other interested bodies like the Academy of Social Science, UKRI and UCU were provided with a copy of the report. The report authors filmed a short summary of the report for the SLSA's YouTube channel and a blog post written by a precariously employed member was published on the SLSA Blog in 2023.

5. Create a pilot mentoring scheme.

Both the EDI Survey and the Precarity Survey highlighted the need to improve community inclusion and diversity by creating opportunities for connection and channels for the transfer of

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knowledge from more established socio-legal scholars to those in earlier stages of their careers or those wishing to return following career breaks. To that end, the Board launched a pilot mentoring scheme that paired 10 mentees with senior academics in 2023 and concluded at the 2024 conference. Feedback is being collected from scheme participants and will inform how the scheme is structured going forward.