

**12 May 2022**

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| **Present**  John Harrington (JH), Chris Ashford (CA), Anna Bryson (AB), Marie Burton (MB), Beverley Clough (BC), Richard Craven (RC), Neil Graffin (NG), Philip Bremner (PB), Colin Moore (CM), Simon Flacks (SF), Sabrina Germain (SG), Elisabeth Griffiths (EG), Matthew Howards (MH), Smita Kheria (SK), Emma Milne (EM), Rebecca Moosavian (RM), Vanessa Munro (VM), Flora Renz (FR), Mitchell Travis (MT), Clare Williams (CW), Daniel Bedford (DB), Caroline Hunter (CH), Arwen Joyce (AJ), Jed Meers (JM), Maddy Millar (MM), Marie Selwood (MS), Mark Simpson (MSi) |  |
| **1. Apologies**  Emma Jones (EJ) |  |
| **2. Approval of minutes**  Agreed. |  |
| **3. Officer Reports**  **3.1 Chair’s report (JH)**  JH wished to record appreciation of the work that Rosie Harding did as Chair between 2015 and 2022.  A warm welcome to the five new trustees: Marie Burton, Anna Byson, Richard Craven, Elisabeth Griffiths, and Matt Howard.  Charity commission/ Gift Aid  We are registering the SLSA for Gift Aid status, carrying on from the work that Ed and Rosie had done on this. Once in place that will add to the total amount we retain as a result of prize sponsorship and other donations.  Academy of Social Sciences  JH attended the Learned Societies CEOs meeting of the AcSS on 25th April 2022.  Nominations for the AcSS Fellowships to go to Vanessa. The next deadline for nominations to the AcSS is 1 June 2022. Erika Rackley was nominated in the last round and was awarded the Fellowship.  Conferences  JH wishes to extend thanks to the York team for their report and for a stimulating, diverse, and welcoming conference.  Ulster 2023 – DB and JH to visit Ulster at the Magee campus in Derry-Londonderry, with PB feeding-in on budget and planning.  We are looking to open the bidding for future conferences in the Autumn. JM has agreed to lead a Task and Finish group to manage the call/ bidding process for this over the coming year.  REF 2021 – CA and JH have discussed the SLSA’s response to results and panel feedback. There will likely be a series feedback session from chairs of panels, including law. We consider the need for a specific socio-legal focussed event in the Autumn. It is noted that there were quite a few socio-legal scholars on the panel.  \*\*Committee nominations covered at the relevant section below.  Shared membership with SLS  JH mentioned that the President of the SLS has approached the SLSA to see if we might consider a shared membership option.  There was a negative response to this proposal – responses included that:  -It waters down out distinct contribution in the area.  -It had arisen for discussion in the past and the Board/ Exec thought that administratively it would be difficult to proceed with – e.g., issues with budgeting.  -Our membership numbers are healthy and increasing (with good PGR contribution) and it may not actually benefit us.  -The SLS are not a charity, and it may cause issues with charity law/ our constitution.  -The SLS have institutional membership. We have a one-member/ one-vote policy in our constitution – this may cause complications (and we have previously agreed not to proceed with institutional membership).  -The proposal might end up giving people of the two organisations discount, rather than attracting new members.  -It may affect our identity as an organisation.  It was emphasised that we should not close off other mechanisms of collaboration with SLS in the future where our interests as organisations align, as they do in many areas.  Future meetings  JH suggested that we should have two meetings out of three in-person in the future. JH proposes in-person meetings in January and September. One third of each of these two meetings would be used for group work in break-out format.  CW asked whether the in-person meetings would have hybrid facilities.  MS proposed that one in-person meeting a year might achieve our aims.  A query was raised about whether the SLSA CIO constitution required that we meet in-person. (In fact, as per 19(4)(a) of the constitution meetings ‘may be held by suitable electronic means’).  JH states that we would look for feasible hybrid options for the in-person meetings.  A number of members voiced support for 2/3 meetings in-person.  NG suggested that one trustee nominee from outside of UK but was put off by London meetings and would have attended hybrid.  JH will speak to RH and EKD regarding the constitution.  Provisionally agreed that there will be two in-person meetings, and these will be in London by default. NG and JH will look into rooms and hybrid options. Officers should submit their reports two weeks ahead of the meeting, so we do not need to discuss the detail of reports in the meeting but can instead focus on issues within them which require discussion. The latter should also be raised at an early stage. There will be three breakout groups per meeting.  **3.2 Vice-chair (CA)**  CA attended a meeting of the Academic Associations Forum organised by IALS, alongside JH. The meeting provided an update on the work of IALS and BAILII and included a briefing on the desire of IALS to work with the Subject Associations on a new summer school to launch in 2023 focused on ‘teaching tomorrow’s teachers’ as part of an ambition that IALS should be known as a hub for the study and practice of legal education. The Summer School will provide 20 places per annum and have an interdisciplinary focus, working with the humanities. CA suggested there is detail to be worked out.  **3.3. Treasurer (PB)**  PB would like to thank VM for help with the handover and for staying on committee to continue to support. PB suggested we are due a good contribution from York.  **3.4. Membership & data protection (CM)**  CM stated that we would like people becoming members after one week of paying but we need admin support. We also need better support with overdue subscriptions.  MT – we should make sure the Board members pay their fees. CM suggests that technically Board members do not have to be members of the Association (SLSA CIO Constitution Art 12(2)), but of course we encourage it.  It should be noted that 360 members are overdue by 6 months on their renewals and are liable to be removed from the membership roll.  MS – 360+ people is a large number. Can we email these people? CM suggests quite a few are PGRs. JH suggests we should email then prior to any removal.  **3.5. Recruitment (RM)**  RM is still having problems getting on to membership database.  RM would like to highlight recent work with EDI committee with specific relevant to recruitment; this will be discussed with respect of EDI (below).  JM – will send a list of conference attendees to RM to see if we are able to recruit more members  **3.6. EDI (CW)**  CW stated that the report of the recent EDI survey of the SLSA membership is now available. It is a large and comprehensive document, and it will need to be rewritten and restructured. CW asks if trustees can look at it and provide feedback. That would be appreciated.  It has been agreed that there will be 2-3 pages to summarise and set out recommendations.  CW would like to develop an EDI strategy for SLSA moving forwards – i.e., repeating EDI survey bi-annually or tri-annually and working on specific themes and initiatives over a longer period. As a charity who awards grants we also need to see who is applying and what their characteristics are.  JH – would like to thank CW and EDI committee for the quality and comprehensive nature of the report.  MT suggests, with respect to the report, that highlighting characteristics of, e.g., race and disability is important and also the ringfencing of grants in discussions. MT suggests that the second part of the report regarding recruitment is more challenging– e.g., the possibility of opening membership up to activists and legal practitioners. For example, activists may not engage due to resource and time issues. We could look at other mechanisms to achieve our EDI goals in this area, e.g., collaborative working. It may be better, MT suggests, to work through co-production.  CW – do the board agree with furthering work on the categories of race + disability, recruitment, and employment and contract status? **All agreed** – those working on the areas should report back to the September meeting.  CH says she is happy to get involved in bringing in third sector organisations – but suggested this may be difficult because they would need to be clear about the advantages to them of linking up in this way.  MB agrees with MT regarding resources and collaboration. MB states that third-party organizations having to pay for conferences can make it prohibitive for them to attend.  SK suggests that it is good to get activist communities to work with us – e.g., getting members to reach out. SK suggests that we should track who is applying for pots, as we need more data before we can decide on ring-fencing pots of money for different groups.  AB chairs the Committee for the Administration of Justice in Northern Ireland. They often have discussions concerning extending links to academics, and suggested organisations like the CAJ would attend the SLSA conference if they thought it could raise their profile.  NG notes that there has been an inconsistent approach in the past regarding extending free places to third party organisations at conferences and it usually depends on the conference organisers, rather than the board.  MSi – agrees the conference would be a good vehicle for extending access for third-party organisations and suggests this should happen.  VM suggests that stream convenor impact funding will allow up to £1k per request which can be used to subsidise or cover conference fees for third party orgs. Any requests would need to be made through stream convenors.  BC stated that it was not usually the norm for third-party orgs to have to pay for conference attendance. One third-party she had worked within the past was quite surprised to be asked to pay conference fees. BC suggests that an SLSA seminar grant she had applied for in the past was designed to encourage collaboration with third parties and this helped when she organised a seminar to promote their attendance. Therefore, there may be indirect ways to engage with third parties.  JH asked whether we could we look at waiving fees for the Ulster conference? MSi suggests that this could be addressed at the site visit.  JM notes that there were some ad-hoc arrangements in this regard at the York and Leeds conferences.  JH suggests we could have some leeway to do some EDI focused-activity with differential conference rates for third sector.    CW will send emails to chairs of different committees to put in place mechanisms to collect EDI-relevant data on applications and awards.  Responding to CW’s proposal JH agrees that we will constitute three sub-groups of the EDI committee to work on each of the key areas identified in the survey. These are 1) Race & Disability; 2) Recruitment; 3) Employment & Contract Status. Membership of each will be constituted after the meeting, and will be composed of other members of the EDI committee, with other Board members warmly invited to join too. These groups will work on outline strategies to be discussed at the next Board meeting in September, with a view to implementing them over the coming year. Each sub-group will have a named head, with CW co-ordinating.  **3.7. Precarity (AJ)**  Nothing further to add. JH introduced AJ to the rest of the trustees.  **3.8. Newsletter and web editor (MS)**  Following the discussion at the January meeting, VM and MS have made a push to chase up all the invoicing and late payments, and also to keep all the sponsors on board. This has led to several contributions being made.  **3.9. PG Student Representative (MM)**  There was strong, positive feedback on PGR activities at the conference and also some suggestions for the future.  MM noted that we need to recruit a second PGR representative to replace Vicky Adkins. A call for applications will be included in the forthcoming SLSA Newsletter. MT offered to join JH and MM in running the recruitment process, which will follow the model used in the last round.  MM has had discussions with Linda Mulcahy at the University of Oxford regarding the January PGR Conference. Linda is keen to host the Conference in-person at the University of Oxford and we have started to discuss the type of sessions that would be beneficial for PGRs. MM will continue discussions over the Summer.  **3.10. Webmaster (DB)**  DB would like to flag the last section of his report where it mentions changes to the website: ‘I am interested in hearing suggestions on refreshing the style, content, or functionality of the SLSA websites. We may not implement this until after the migration, but I am keen to hear suggestions’. Please send any thoughts to DB.  There was a query whether PayPal could be used for the PGR conference – DB will look at this.  DB states that we will need to begin the process of migrating to Joomla 4 (stable version) in Autumn 2022. DB is in discussion with Lewis (who works on the website) about a precise date for the transition.  **3.11. International liaison (SK)**  SK mentioned that SLSA will be participating with other Associations in the Global Meeting at the forthcoming LSA conference in Lisbon.  SK is looking into the options for running a social event showcasing SLSA at Lisbon.  SK suggests we could organise a social event for members, but we would be unable to sponsor drinks.  MS – asks if we could include recruitment leaflets/ PDFs in the LSA pack? SK will speak to the LSA about this.  **3.10. Social Media (vacant)**  Nothing to report.  **3.11. Publisher’s liaison (PB)**  Nothing to add. | ALL  JH  NG, JH  MS, CM  JM  ALL  BC, PB, SJ, SG, JH, AJ, MM, CM. FR, CW  JH, DB, MSi  CW  JH, BC, PB, SJ, SG, JH, AJ, MM, CM. FR, CW  ALL  DB  SK  SK |
| **4. Conferences**  **4.1.a. York (JM/ CH)**  JM would like to extend thanks to everyone for their support for the York conference. At present we are track for 40-45k for donation to the SLSA.  Issues for future conferences:   1. stream and theme convenorships being uncontactable. CH and JM to put together a short policy for convenors for discussion at the September meeting. 2. Question over hybrid – maybe a partial hybrid approach may be better or affordable? (i.e., having some streams as hybrid and others not).   Stream convenors  JH – To date the running of streams has been devolved to convenors, rather than being something which the board oversees directly. Therefore, we would need to change working practices to exert more direct guidance over convenors, and to ensure the efficient running and renewal of streams. The latter would also allow us to widen opportunities consistent with our EDI policy.  VM would like to have someone from the board to oversee it.  MS suggests that there is info on the role of convenors going back to old newsletters that she could try to obtain.    DB would be happy being part of a committee to look at this issue, as well as CM and MS, BC, JM, PB.  On the issue of overlapping streams  SK suggests that there were a lot of overlapping streams/ themes at the York conference. MSi suggests that it would be good to look at this issue.  JH suggests that there should be capacity to wind some streams up.  MSi suggests there may need to be a cap on current topics. JM suggests there can be low attendance when there are too many streams.    SK suggests that some streams could be merged.  CA – merging of streams can be more difficult than sometimes thought. Some people will be protective over their streams.  JH suggests that not all streams need to run for whole conference, and this may be a way of dealing with the issue, rather than merging streams.  On the issue of hybrid conferencing  JM said that hybrid costs were expensive – it will always remain an expensive option.  SK suggests we ask stream convenors about experiences of hybrid as well as asking whether they want to continue with their convenorships (i.e., survey).  EG suggests that it is hard to do a good hybrid conference but suggests that hybrid should carry on for accessibility purposes.  CW suggests we keep this decision on review for a couple of years.    VM echoes what has been said – noting reservation that hybrid puts a lot of pressure of institutions that are hosting conferences.  SF asks whether it is reasonable to think most institutions will need decent hybrid and things will change organically anyway?  MSi suggests that we need to work on the assumption that the preference needs to be something hybrid.  MT asked what was the experience of the people out of the room?  CW suggested it worked well but it wasn’t as good as being there.  AJ suggests v good second best.  CH suggests that feedback suggested the price was high for the hybrid option. However, CH suggests there is a good reason we do not permit hybrid to be an inexpensive option (i.e., it discourages F2F participation).  MSi suggests that hybrid also adds additional pressures on volunteers at conferences.  JH suggests that for future bids, we have to look favourably on hybrid, but we will not require it. We should not reduce the fees greatly for hybrid option.  CW suggests that where price becomes problematic for some attending online, we can encourage attendees to apply for bursaries. We also need better communications regarding why hybrid is priced as it is.  RM – in-person should be the priority, but online participation increases resilience in being able to host the conference.  NG asked whether the cost of paying for hybrid is covered by the fees paid by those attending via hybrid means. JM explained that this was the case, and we would lose a proportion of attendees should we not have a hybrid option.  **4.1. b. Ulster (MSi)**  MSi indicated that the site visit with JH and DB is going ahead, and planning is underway. Wraparound social activities are in the process of being organised as well.  **4.1.c Future Conferences (CA)**  Nothing to add.  **4.2 Postgraduate conference (SK)**  The question about how we ensure that PGR students attend the conference was raised. Previously students had to submit a cheque of £50 which was returned to them at the conference, but it has been raised previously that cheque books are not widely used nowadays.  SK suggests that if PGRs transferred money via PayPal you would lose a transaction fee.    SK suggests that we could ask institutions to pay the £50.  Could we take a bank transfer in and give cheques back?  MS – could we take an authorisation rather than a deposit? MM and JH to have a chat with Linda Mulcahy.  **4.3 One Day Conferences (JH)**  Nothing to add | CH, JH  MS  DB, CM, MSi, BC, JM, PB  MM, JH |
| **5. Prizes and Competitions**  **5.1. Book prizes (CA)**  Nothing to add  **5.2 Article prizes (JH)**  Nothing to add  **5.3. Grants (RM)**  Nothing to add  **5.4. Seminars (FR)**  Nothing to add.  **5.5. Covid recovery fund (JH)**  JH suggests we discuss this at the next meeting.  **5.6. Contributions to the socio-legal community (JH)**  This will be advertised in summer newsletter and the deadline is usually the first week in September. Nominations to be sent to Nathan Emmerich. | NG |
| **6. Committee positions**  Appointed to relevant committee positions include:  Grants committee – RM (chair) SF, MH, RC, EG  Book prize – MH, MT, AJ  Impact committee – VM (chair), AB, MB  EDI committee – SG, MM, BC, AJ, EG  Open access – SK to chair  Research ethics – SG to chair  Social media – MM to share (but we need another appointee)  Conference bids – MB, CM, JM  PGR reps recruitment – JH, MM, MT |  |
| **7. Academy of Social Sciences**  See above. |  |
| **8. Future board meetings and their format**  NG to send a Doodle poll with available dates. | NG |
| **9. Any other business**  YouTube videos  EM suggests that we still have a few spaces for people to be interview. She has requested that we please email her if we are interested.  The oral history of SLSA has not been discussed. NG to move further up the agenda for the next meeting.  MT expressed a preference to interview one prize winner. | EM  NG  MT |