

# Socio-Legal Studies Association CIO

## Trustees' Annual Report

### 1 January 2024–31 December 2024

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## Chair's Report

### **Board Membership/ Charity Commission**

Dr Sabrina Germain stepped down as an SLSA Trustee at the AGM in 2024. The Board is very grateful to Sabrina for her very valuable contribution. The following Trustees were elected at the AGM: Alex Powell and Andra Le Roux Kemp. We have benefitted from their input and fresh insights.

Lara MacLachlan stepped down as Postgraduate Representative, and we are grateful to her for contribution in this important role. From a strong field we selected Diskha Sanyal as her replacement.

Along with SLSA Honorary Secretary Emma Milne and Precarity Representative Arwen Joyce, I am standing down at this AGM. It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of the Association, and a pleasure to work with such a dedicated and hardworking Board. The SLSA is sustained by deep reserves of goodwill across the socio-legal community, at all career levels and in all sorts of institutions, and I have benefitted from this support too.

SLSA's annual return to the Charity Commission was submitted in July 2024.

The Board initiated a process to review SLSA policies (adopted over four years ago) consistent with Charity Commission requirements. All of these, as well as two new policies (on Serious Incident Reporting and Internal Risk Management), were completed and scheduled for consideration and approval by the Board in early 2025.

### **Financial Sustainability/ HE Funding**

The SLSA Board views the impact of the current HE funding crisis on our membership and on the field of socio-legal studies with concern. Building on discussions at the 2024 AGM and conference, we initiated a joint initiative with the two other learned societies in law, drafting and co-signing a letter stating our regret that some universities have mandated cuts to conference support, and setting out the essential role played by our associations in sustaining individual research careers and the field as a whole. This was received and discussed at the Committee of the Heads of University Law Schools (CHULS). Further to it, we invited the Chair of CHULS, Penny Carey, to address the SLSA Board meeting sharing insights and receiving feedback from members as regards responses to the crisis.

An SLSA Working Group examining impact as regards our conference, funding, and capacity to support members has been in place since September 2024. We have also gathered information on this through specific questions in our EDI survey of members, re-run this year. Practical steps in response have included keeping the cost of membership and the early bird rate for the conference fixed again this year, increasing maximum award sizes and overall funding pots for our competitions, consistent with financial prudence, and working with conference organizers to maximize the number of bursaries awarded.

These pressures come at a time when the SLSA benefits from a strong financial position, finishing the year with a surplus of over £300,000. As is set out in the Treasurer's report we have had transfer of surpluses from Ulster and Portsmouth, a significant increase in back payment of membership dues, ongoing sponsorship of the Newsletter by law schools, and generous support from law journals, particularly *Journal of Law and Society*, *Social and Legal Studies*, *Modern Law Review*, and *International Journal of Law in Context*. The SLSA Fundraising Group, directed by the Vice-Chair, is promoting the work of the Association and linking it specifically with support for bursaries. In 2024 this allowed us to support 48 conference bursaries and to award £38,000 in grants for research projects, fieldwork, seminars, impact and internationalization.

There is reason for some caution in relation to this financial situation, however. It can be doubted that conferences will generate surpluses on the scale of recent years. Support for conference attendance remains a low priority for university leaders, redundancies threaten our membership base, and the ability of schools to support us through conference organization or direct sponsorship has been weakened, at the same time as the need for support has increased significantly. While inflation has declined, earlier price rises remain a factor in the costs of the Association.

The SLSA Board remains committed to supporting the membership flexibly, intelligently, and as fully as possible, while managing the resources of the Association prudently, ensuring that adequate reserves are in place, and costs are managed. For example, we now run two out of three Board meetings on-line, and work to deliver SLSA events and initiatives on a low-cost basis. I am confident that the Board will remain vigilant and pro-active on this crucial issue.

## **Annual Conference/Hybrid Delivery**

SLSA 2024 at the University of Portsmouth was a notable success, with nearly 500 delegates participating across 25 streams and current topics. Delegates commented very favourably on the intellectual vitality and lively social programme. We are very grateful to Dan Bedford, Emily Walsh and colleagues for the hard work, commitment, and vision which they brought to organizing the conference. Generous sponsorship, along with direct investment from SLSA funds, allowed us to award 48 bursaries covering conference fees.

The team at Liverpool have engaged closely with the SLSA Board in organizing the 2025 conference. Aware of growing financial pressures on institutions and individual members, they opened the period for registration as early as possible. Every effort has been made to ensure prudent expenditure in detail, so as to save resources for bursaries and to secure the surplus which SLSA needs to run, while running a lively and enjoyable conference.

SLSA Treasurer Philip Bremner and I have liaised with the organizers of SLSA 2026 at Sussex, assisting in the negotiation of favourable (or no) rates for administrative support and rooms for panels and plenaries, as well as venues for social events.

A call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) in hosting SLSA 2027 and 2028 will be launched and decided ahead of the conference at Liverpool. A working group of the

Board reviewed and overhauled our call documentation, reflecting on the likely impact of financial pressures in HE, and learning from the emerging experience of the Liverpool organizers. A notable change in the call is the option for organizers to retain a portion of any surplus generated over £50,000, as long as a plan has been submitted with the EOI specifying how this will be invested in order to promote socio-legal studies in the host organization. This regularizes a process which the Board approved *ex post* in relation to unanticipated costs incurred in organizing SLSA 2023 at Ulster University.

The hybrid option has been taken up by an ever-smaller number of conference delegates (less than 80 at Portsmouth), and we are no longer able to cover the cost of delivering this from fees. The imbalance would have been even greater in relation to Liverpool on the basis of costs quoted, and the Board resolved to move away from hybrid in 2025. Most learned societies in the AcSS have done so for these reasons.

Nonetheless we know that some members are excluded from attending in person and have been reflecting on ways to address this. As a result, in the call for EOIs relating to conferences in 2027/28 we have asked for information regarding capacity to include full or partial hybrid elements, as well as reminding potential organizers of the need to meet specific requests for reasonable adjustments. Alongside this, the renewal of the SLSA website will allow us to run dedicated on-line events, focused on conference streams/current topics for example. The EDI Committee has begun reflection on this, as noted in their report, and work will commence in 2025.

## **Postgraduate Conference**

The SLSA Postgraduate Conference 2024 was organized by Laura Graham and colleagues at Northumbria. Attendees commented on how much they benefitted from sessions with expert and experienced scholars, as well as opportunities for socializing and informal discussions.

We ran an open call for EOIs in hosting the PGR conference in 2025 and in 2026, with successful applications from Manchester Metropolitan and Cardiff. I am grateful to the Vice Chair, Smita Kheria, for leading this process, given my own conflict of interest. Further to our collaboration with VSR – Dutch-Flemish Socio-Legal group – we continue to support reciprocal participation by PGR researchers in each other's events. We will look to open the very successful SLSA PGR Writing Group sessions (initiated this year by PGR reps Mini Saxena and Diksha Sanyal) to partners as well.

## **Academy of Social Sciences**

SLSA continues to play an active part in AcSS through its Learned Societies CEOs meeting and Conference Group. This has been a very important source of exchange and learning in relation to format of conference delivery, and more recently the impact of the HE funding crisis on Learned Societies. SLSA has also engaged with AcSS in its work with ESRC on EDI. This has helped us showcase and also fine tune our work on precarity within the socio-legal community, for example, through mentoring, earmarking awards, and data collection.

SLSA successfully nominated 14 members for the AcSS Fellowship in two rounds during 2024. Consistent with our record in 2023 and 2022, this is clear recognition of the strength of our field and the individual quality of socio-legal scholars.

## **Membership System/ Website Renewal**

We are pleased with the outcome of our investment in administrative support to overhaul our membership records and support systems. The consistent work of SLSA Administrator Emma Milne, advised by Membership Secretary Colin Moore, means that we now have a reliable database of current members, and a system to enable them to remain in good standing, enjoying membership benefits related to conferences, prize- and grant-eligibility.

Recognizing the need for a renewal of the SLSA website, now over 10 years old, we commissioned Lewis Gowers to review options for a new website, including the SLSA blog, and Customer Relations Management (CRM) system, along with backup support. Given the nature of the investment in the work (c.£3,500) and our obligations of due diligence, Lewis worked with SLSA Board members (Emma Milne, Colin Moore, Andra Le Roux Kemp, Marie Selwood, and me) to determine a set of alternatives with specifications and costs. Reviewing these, the Board commissioned Evo Web Designs to carry out the work. As current Board member, Dan Bedford, is the director of that firm, we took care to eliminate conflicts of interest and to document this.

The new website and CRM will offer a more engaging source of information for members and the wider public on the aims and work of SLSA, showcasing our very popular blog and enabling us to carry out fundraising. The members area will enable SLSA to run and host study events and seminars, expanding our on-line offer and, thus, advancing our goal of inclusivity. The new CRM will dramatically cut the costs of administration in supporting members. It will also allow entry of details into a register of SLSA members which can be made publicly available, as recommended to us at the 2024 AGM.

## **REF 2029**

We were pleased that Research England made changes to the format and criteria for REF 2029 in line with the proposals made by the sub-group of the SLSA Board in its responses to their consultation exercise in late 2023.

Unlike in previous exercises, it was decided that learned societies would not be involved directly in the process whereby REF panel members are nominated. We raised concerns relating to REF 2029 through AcSS. We also responded positively to an invitation from Research England to signal willingness to advise and be consulted on ongoing REF planning (eg. as regards People, Environment and Culture).

## **Impact/Internationalisation**

Our impact award schemes are now well 'bedded-in', with a notable increase in the number and quality of applications. This was enabled by dedicated pieces in the Newsletter on 'how to apply' and a roundtable on 'demystifying impact' at Portsmouth 2024, where Mitch Travis (SLSA Impact Subcommittee) gave guidance on funds and

prizes. Rob Street and Ash Patel (Nuffield Foundation) presented on funders' understanding of impact, and Caroline Cox (University of Portsmouth) spoke on her 4\* rated impact case study.

The internationalisation funding scheme has now completed its second year with a similar increase in the number and quality of applications. We are grateful to *Social and Legal Studies* for annual support allowing us to earmark awards within this scheme for applicants building socio-legal collaboration with institutions in the Global South.

SLSA has continued to develop partnerships with VSR (Netherlands/Belgium), ALSA (South/East Asia), and LSAANZ (Australia/New Zealand), as well as working with Ukrainian colleagues to develop socio-legal studies there. We organized a plenary at Portsmouth in collaboration with CARA (the Council for at Risk Academics) and the *Modern Law Review*. Recently migrated scholars from Ukraine and Afghanistan addressed the conference about their research and journeys to the UK. Stephen Wordsworth, Executive Director of CARA and former UK Ambassador, spoke on the migrant contribution to the academy from the 1930s on.

## **EDI/ Mentoring/Archives**

The EDI group continued its work on precarity, mentoring, and renewed data collection. These are discussed more fully in the committee's report. I am grateful to the committee for its advice on the range of initiatives taken by the Board, ensuring that EDI perspectives are consistently included in our decision-making.

We ran a successful pilot mentoring scheme this year, with direction from Bev Clough. Building on lessons learned, a full scheme was launched (and oversubscribed) in autumn 2024. This year's programme, led by Elisabeth Griffiths, will include one-to-one mentoring of ECRs and precariously employed members by senior socio-legal scholars, as well as two workshops, on impact and publication respectively.

The SLSA Board voted funds to support the time-limited work of a professional archivist to review our holdings at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, to advise on our procedures for retaining materials (hard copy and digital) for deposit in the archive, and the retrieval of material held by former members of the Board/Executive. The position will be advertised and filled in spring 2025. Raza Saeed has led on this with advice from Anna Bryson, and IALS Archivist Clare Cowling.

## **Article Prize**

We received 17 eligible nominations for the SLSA Article Prize 2023-24. I chaired a group of 13 Board members (ie all those not involved in judging the SLSA Book Prizes). Following a calibration exercise and guided by REF output criteria, we scored all nominations, arriving at a shortlist of three, which was opened for voting on by the whole Board. We were pleased with the high quality of nominated papers.

John Harrington, Chair

## Vice-Chair's Report

### **SLSA Annual Book Prizes**

As Vice Chair, I continued to co-ordinate the work of the Book Prize Committee (for the Hart SLSA Book Prize, the Hart SLSA Prize for Early Career Academics, and the Socio-Legal Theory and History Prize). For the 2023/24 round, the committee reviewed 59 books, and drew up three shortlists which were relayed to the Chair, and then announced through SLSA communications. The committee then identified the prize winners, which were announced at the Gala Dinner at the SLSA Annual conference in Portsmouth in March 2024. The committee's work for the 2024/25 round is underway.

### **Review of rules for SLSA Prizes for Books and Articles**

In the first half of 2024, I undertook a review of the rules for SLSA Prizes for Books and Articles. The review included an update to the rules, as well as a consideration of the type of queries received during the administration of these prizes, views and experience of the article and book prize committee chairs, as well as recommendations from the EDI committee. I proposed a range of revisions to the prize rules which were discussed and approved by the SLSA Board in May 2024. I also proposed the development of an FAQ section on prizes for the SLSA website, containing common queries and answers which are updated from year to year, and would be helpful in ensuring both clarity and consistency in practice in interpretation of the rules and requirements across years. The changes to the rules and FAQs were subsequently finalised and published, and came into effect for the prizes for the 2024/25 round.

### **Future SLSA PGR Conferences**

In 2024, the call for expressions of interest for future SLSA PGR conferences in 2025 and 2026 was issued. This was only the second year when the PGR conference hosts were being selected through an open call. I chaired a group to review the expressions of interests received. The group reviewed, ranked, and discussed the expressions of interest as per the criteria of the call and recommended Manchester Metropolitan University to be the hosts for the 2025 PGR conference, and Cardiff University to host the 2026 PGR conference. I wrote to both the successful applicants with the decision and the next steps, and also informed all the unsuccessful applicants of the outcome along with brief points of feedback.

### **Fundraising group**

I continued to chair the work of the fundraising working group to improve SLSA's fundraising activities, with a focus on attracting donations, use of gift aid status, as well as receiving legacies, and aiming to formalize, expand and give more prominence to our fundraising efforts. The mechanism for donation was simplified and streamlined i.e. there is now a simple 'donate' button that gives the option to make a one-off donation or regular contribution, via easy payment methods. The group agreed that it would be prudent to focus fundraising efforts towards donations on conference bursaries, due to its urgency as a result of cuts to conference funding in universities. Accordingly, the text for the [fundraising webpage](#) was developed and finalised, and shared with the 2025 Liverpool conference team for publicity. The



SLSA fundraising policy was also reviewed in 2024 and updated as part of the broader review of SLSA policies.

### **Miscellaneous**

I participated in the working group for preparation of call for expressions of interest for future SLSA Annual conferences. I also participated in an ad-hoc group led by the Chair to consider issues around the challenges within UK HEIs and the impact on funding for learning societies and conferences. As and when requested by the SLSA Chair, I also provided input on various other matters arising including finances, future conferences, and website redevelopment.

Smita Kheria, Vice-Chair

## International Liaison Report

I continued to chair the International subcommittee, and organise internationalisation work to be progressed on the basis of previously agreed three key strands: 1) contributing to global and multilateral developments and discussions involving socio-legal associations; 2) developing bilateral relations with other socio-legal associations; and 3) developing initiatives that enable SLSA members to develop, sustain and widen their international networks.

### International collaboration funding scheme

The new International collaboration funding scheme was launched in 2023 to support SLSA members to undertake international collaborative activities that are specifically aimed at building connections with socio-legal scholars and socio-legal communities beyond the UK. The first award under this scheme was made in 2024 and publicised through the SLSA newsletter no102. I co-ordinated the work of the international subcommittee in reviewing the operation of this scheme in its first year, with a view to refining the guidance and application process for scheme, and reviewing the size of the funding pot in light of broader discussions around SLSA funding schemes. A range of amendments to the scheme's guidance, funding size, and the application form were proposed to and approved by the SLSA board in May 2024 and came into effect for the 2024/25 round.

### International Collaboration on Promoting Socio-Legal Studies in Ukraine

I planned and co-ordinated with USAID Justice for All Activity, and Professor Pavlo Fedorchenko-Kutuyev (Head of the Sociology Department, Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute), the organisation of a collaborative online event aimed at facilitating exchange between academics from the UK and Ukraine on teaching and research in the field of socio-legal studies. This joint event, titled 'Developing International Collaboration on Promoting Socio-Legal Studies in Ukraine: Tools and good practices', took place on 30 May 2024, with over 30 scholars from Ukraine as attendees. Since the event, based on further interest from scholars in Ukraine in developing socio-legal studies as a field, Professor Fedorchenko-Kutuyev has been working on plans to establish a Ukrainian socio-legal studies working group under the auspices of the national sociology association. A full report of the event has been published in the SLSA newsletter no 105.

### PGR exchange with the Dutch and Flemish Law and Society Association (VSR)

The collaboration with the Dutch and Flemish Law and Society Association (VSR), in the form of a PGR exchange at our respective postgraduate conferences, completed its first successful run in early 2024. Thereafter, I co-ordinated review of this exchange along with respective representatives from SLSA and VSR, to discuss the experience from the first year including challenges and next steps. A continuation of the exchange had the strong support of both VSR and SLSA PGR representatives as well as the SLSA International committee. Consequently, a proposal to continue the scheme for another year, along with some changes in the communications and administration of the exchange, was made to and approved by the SLSA board in

May 2024. The changes have been implemented since and led to improvements in the operation and uptake of the scheme for its run in 2025.

Smita Kheria (International Liaison Officer)

## Treasurer's Report

The SLSA's finances are in a very healthy position following receipt of donations from the very successful conferences in Ulster and Portsmouth. As a result of these large donations, our income this year was £227,389 and our expenses were £ 92,464. We also continue to benefit from increased income from newsletter sponsorship by law schools and payment of membership fees that were owing from previous years.

As a result of the healthy state of our finances, we are in a position to reconsider how we can most effectively invest in socio-legal studies through our various funding schemes. This year we have been able to increase the funding available through our schemes on an ad-hoc basis (as well as increasing the size of individual awards). In consultation with the chairs of the various funding sub-committees, I will bring a proposal to the May board meeting for increasing the overall funding available across our schemes in order to make most effective and fair use of our current surplus. We are also actively considering how best to support engagement with our annual conference through bursaries and support for stream convenors.

It has been a long process ensuring that our financial reserve is spread across different accounts and thereby benefiting from advantageous interest rates and the financial services guarantee. Currently the reserve is spread across two current accounts with separate banks as well as a single savings account. We are in the process of opening a second savings account with one of our existing banks as well as an account with a third bank (Unity Trust Bank) to spread the risk across different institutions.

The SLSA's annual accounts (which are available as part of the AGM documentation) were signed off in March 2025 by the Kelvin Partnership for independent examination in line with the requirements of our CIO registration with the Charities Commission. Below is a proposed forecast budget for 2025 (2024 Actuals in Red) based on last year's forecast. At the board meeting in May 2025, the board will discuss whether any changes to the budget might be made in order to maximise the use of our current surplus. The board would welcome any views at the AGM or via e-mail ([treasurer@slsa.ac.uk](mailto:treasurer@slsa.ac.uk)) in advance of our meeting about changes to the budget in relation to particular spending priorities.

Philip Bremner, Treasurer

## Income

Membership	33000	[67,923]
Annual Conference Donation (Liverpool, 2025)	45000	[146,223]
Newsletter Sponsorship	17000	[7,700]
Prize/Other Sponsorship	3600	[3,100]
Flyer Inserts	1200	[1,100]
Interest	200	[598]
Grant Underspend Refunds	0	[645]
Miscellaneous	0	[0]

## TOTAL

**100,000 [227,389]**

## Expenditure

Executive Committee Expenses	6000	[3614]
PG Conference Expenses	8000	[670]
SLSA Admin Support	6500	[6257]
Newsletter: Editing	28000	[28010]
Production	7500	[7220]
Small Research Grants	12000	[10902]
Seminar Competition	7000	[8004]
Fieldwork Grants	5000	[5000]
Impact & Engagement Grants	7500	[15000]
Annual Prizes	1600	[900]
Website & Database	3000	[2338]
AcSS membership	700	[652]
IALS Storage Fee	100	[99]
Charities Insurance	600	[506]
External Auditor Fee	1500	[1320]
Internationalisation Award Scheme	5000	[1000]
Miscellaneous	0	[0]

## TOTAL

**100,000 [92,464]**

## Membership and Data Protection Officer's Report

### Membership Secretary

#### Overall Membership Numbers:

As of 17/01/25 our membership database holds information for the following members whose subscriptions are current. Changes are since September

	<b>Number</b>
CARA Academics	4 (-1)
Full Members (UK)	795 (-62)
Full Members (Overseas)	118 (+7)
Honorary Life Members	16 (+2)
PG Members (Free)	196 (+8)
PG Members (Paid)	227 (+62)
Retired Memberships	28 (+12)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1315</b>

- My key contribution this year was the procurement of a new SLSA IT system – including a new website and membership database. With the aid of the Board of Trustees a specification was developed, and this was then passed to potential suppliers via the SLSA IT consultant who arrange appropriate demos.
- The new system promises greater stability, and a range of new facilities, including a membership directory.
- Thanks to Emma Milne (again!) for all of her excellent work as SLSA Administrator and for chasing lots of membership fee debts.
- The reduction in full member numbers is, again, attributable to the removal of long-term debtors. This process is now approaching completion.
- We are all looking forward to switching away from the current database supplier when the new system is ready.
- Thanks Marie Selwood for helping to supply the data for this report.

#### Data Protection Officer

- No requests received.

Colin Moore, Data Protection Officer

## Grants

### Awards made in January 2025

The committee graded 3 distinct sets of awards this year:

Name of award	Maximum award amount [increased since 23-24]	Total pot size [unchanged since 23-24]	Number of applications received
Research grants	£3,000	£10,000  [£2000 of which is ring-fenced for applicants on precarious contracts]	16
Fieldwork grants	£1,500	£5,000	19
New for 23-24: Internationalisation award	£2500	£5,000  [£2000 of which is ring-fenced for global south collaborations]	7

The maximum award amounts were increased for this 2025 round, but the total size of the award pots was not increased. This means we made fewer awards but of higher value for this round.

The board agreed to go slightly over the indicative maximum pot totals for both the fieldwork and internationalisation awards so that we were able to make 11 awards in total for this round.

### Small research grant winners:

Winners –

- (1) Anna Katila, City University, London, 'Legal and Social Frames of Sámi Experiences: Narrative Construction of Discrimination in Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Finland', £2,980
- (2) Kate Falconer, University College Cork, 'The scope for alternative body disposal techniques in Ireland: A socio-legal review', £2846

- (3) Teresa Sutton, University of Sussex, 'Perspectives on the Gender Pension Gap: The Old Age & Widows' Pensions Act 1940 and The National Spinsters' Pensions Association (1935-1958)', £1190
- (4) Jonathan Collinson, University of Sheffield, 'Exploring how the statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children features in the work of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration', £2900

**Total awarded: £9916**

### **Fieldwork research grant winners:**

Winners –

- (1) Sophie Quist, UiT Arctic University of Norway, 'Encountering Blue Transformation: A legal ethnography of small-scale fishers' resistance against salmon farming in Norway and Chile', £1475
- (2) Preeti Pratishruti Dash, University of Cambridge, 'Criminal law as a site for feminist reforms: Analysing the enactment and enforcement of rape laws in India', £1,500
- (3) James Campbell, Oxford University, 'The Laws of Motion: Towards a Sensational Jurisprudence of Movement within the Court', £1500
- (4) Vendula Kolarik Mezeiova, Oxford University, 'Are Behavioural Regulatory Tools Legitimate? A Post-structuralist Analysis of Tools to Promote MMR Vaccination in France', £1500

**Total awarded: £5975**

### **Internationalisation grant winners:**

The winners were –

- (1) Koldo Casla, Essex University, 'Strategic Litigation on the Progressive Realisation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights', £2500 (top score: 3.8)
- (2) Jill Dickinson, Leeds Beckett University, 'Pracademia in Law Schools – An International Community of Practice', £2286 (2<sup>nd</sup> top score: 3.6). This entails a project with a Mauritian law school so it is also a Global South project and gets the ring-fenced money for Global South projects.
- (3) Zainab Lockhandwala, Essex University, 'Laying the Groundwork & Building Collaborations for Multi-Scalar Studies in the Field of Environmental Law through a Socio-Legal Mapping Exercise of Sanitary Waste Management Systems in the Eastern Himalayan Region, India', £2048. (Global South project).

**Total awarded: £6834**

Rebecca Moosavian, Chair of Grants Committee



## Seminar Competition

In the time period 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024 the SLSA Seminars Sub-Committee awarded eight seminar grants out of 13 applications. All were awarded due to their extremely high quality, demonstrating the significant range of socio-legal research activities taking place among members, and the availability of funds to reward the quality of applications. We were pleased to see a continuation of the increase in number of applications following low numbers since Covid 19.

At the AGM in 2024, the decision was made to increase the maximum funding available for each individual grant to £3000. This reflected the healthy state of the SLSA's finances, and our wish to maximise opportunities for sharing and developing research, particularly in light of the funding situation affecting many universities.

We were pleased to see applications rise again for the December 2024 deadline to 18. This followed attempts to advertise the scheme more widely and enthusiastically on social media and other channels.

We were also able, as last year, to offer an extra award to an applicant on a precarious contract, reflecting our commitment to EDI and the work undertaken by the EDI committee in the last year or so.

### Grants Awarded:

Lead Applicant Surname	Lead Applicant Name	Title of Proposed Seminar	Amount req
Costello	Róisín	Representing Minority Language Voices in Court	£1,000.00
Graffin	Neil	Contemporary challenges to migration	£1000.00 (adjusted)
Jaber	Nora	The Juridification of Justice: Potentials and Limitations	£1,000.00
Lindsey	Jaime	Law's Role in Shaping and Responding to Disability and Motherhood	£1,000.00
Luoma	Colin M.	Climate Change Mitigation and Human Rights	£985.58
O'Rourke	Catherine	LAW And Global Justice: Research Centres Without A Research Field?	£980.00
Pelliconi	Andrea Maria	Climate Change & Migration: New Challenges, Legal Responses, and Policy Solutions	£999.95
Shah	Sahar	Calculating Climate Reparations: Legal Perspectives	£996

Total: 7,961.43

Simon Flacks, Chair of the Seminar subcommittee

## Open Access

In 2024, SLSA's open access working group continued to keep abreast of UKRI's new Open Access policy and updates.

Members have been kept informed about the Working Group's activities via the Socio-Legal Newsletter, the weekly SLSA ebulletin and the SLSA blog. This has included informing members about updates to UKRI policy.

The main piece of work concerned our response to Research England's consultation on OA for the next REF, based on a new set of proposals. The consultation closed midday 17 June and we submitted a detailed response after input from both the OA committee and wider body of SLSA trustees. That included reservations about the proposed changes on monographs and books, in particular, as well as suggestions for modifications in other areas.

The proposals on longform publications were, in the end, postponed, as a result of objections including ours.

Simon Flacks, Open Access Working Group Chair

## Impact

The Impact Grant Committee was newly constituted in 2022, to carry out activities related to the series of new ‘Impact’ funding streams announced at the 2022 Annual Conference. These include, specifically – (1) an Impact Grant Scheme; (2) an Annual Impact Prize; and (3) liaising with Annual Conference Stream Convenors regarding funding to facilitate Impact – <https://slsa.ac.uk/index.php/news/socio-legal-publications-2?id=400> . The Annual Conference Stream Convenors fund has now been retired due to a lack of applications.

The Committee was chaired by Vanessa Munro up until the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and since May 11<sup>th</sup> 2023 has been chaired by Mitchell Travis. The committee is also comprised of – Anna Bryson, Marie Burton, Rebecca Moosavian, Mini Saxena and Emma Milne. Mitchell Travis and Rebecca Moosavian will retire this April. We meet on MS Teams to assess applications received throughout the year in respect of the schemes above, making reports on our decision-making for the approval of the Board of Trustees at our meetings.

### Impact Grant Scheme

In its third round, we received a total of 13 applications (up from 6 the previous year) with 3-4 from applicants on precarious contracts.<sup>1</sup> Each application was scored (out of 5) with feedback provided from each committee member on their scoring, in accordance with the criteria for the awards as advertised. 5 awards were made (see below), creating a total spend of £7285.60. In addition to the quantity of applications, the quality of the applications has risen substantially since previous years with at least 9 fundable projects set out below.

• PI Last	• Amount	• Title
• Fejős	• £1,460.00	• Training credit unions on the Guide on Affordability Assessment for the British Credit Union Sector (the ‘Guide’)
• Yong	• £1,500.00	• Domestic abuse in a new immigration landscape – creating a community of practice for migrant victim-survivors of domestic abuse in England & Wales
• Greenwood-Reeves	• £1,495.60	• Law’s a Drag Research Principles Design Lab
• Gokani	• £1,332.00	• Developing international standards on alcohol labelling to improve consumer protection and public health

<sup>1</sup> One of them seemed to be on a precarious contract but did not tick the box for being on a precarious contract.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perry-Kessarais</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1,497.00</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activating Imagination in an Island-wide deliberation for Cyprus</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1,250.00</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate Research Sex Work Network: Interdisciplinary Conference and Workshop</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kamil</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1,340.00</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity/Project: Navigating Justice: A Guide for Interpreter-mediated Hearings in the Immigration and Asylum Tribunals</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yaqub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1,200.07</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can legal developments in adoption law across Muslim states increase child adoption in the UK?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tongue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1,400.00</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reproductive Futures: A Zine-Making Project</li> </ul>

Given the underspend by the Impact committee in previous years, coupled with the previous year's underspend and the closing of the Stream Convenors Impact Fund, the committee queried whether we could fund additional projects. Chair's action was taken in consultation with the Treasurer to release an extra £5,000 allowing us to fund an additional four excellent projects, ie each of the projects listed in the above table. The Committee extends their thanks to the Chair and the Treasurer for this decision.

## Demystifying Impact

The committee had a successful event at the Annual conference on Demystifying Impact coupled with an article in the newsletter. The event featured Rob Street and Ash Patel from the Nuffield Foundation who are keen to work with us again. Feedback from the event was positive and hopefully it helped to improve the quality and quantity of the applications above.

Nick Hopkins from the Law Commission had been interested in speaking but the dates clashed with the law Commission's own board meeting, a representative of the CPS had also shown some interest in attending. It may be possible to build a separate event around this in the future.

## Annual Impact Prize

Seán Columb won the 2024 Annual Impact Prize for his project 'Exposing the Organ Trade: Seeking Truth in Violence'. Nominations opened for this year's prize opened in July and end on the 31<sup>st</sup> October. The annual prize is fixed at £250.

The 2025 Annual Impact fund has now also been decided with seven applications. The results will be announced at the Annual conference in April.

## **General**

We believe that the introduction of this funding support and recognition for Impact activity within the socio-legal community has been a useful innovation, and that there has been a strong interest in it given its novel status as a funding stream for the SLSA. Guided by our advice sessions (see above), the quality of the applications under the existing schemes has increased, with a spread of applicants at various career stages and at a range of institutions. We anticipate that the schemes will go from strength to strength as awareness of their existence continues to develop. In the coming year we will look to build community awareness of the fund.

Mitchell Travis (Impact Committee Chair)

1/3/25

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

In 2024 we continued to strengthen and evaluate the strategic initiatives that were developed after undertaking a members' survey in 2021, the results of which were published in the 2022 EDI Survey Report. The EDI Committee then published an EDI Strategic Response Document and EDI Strategy, which were approved by the Board in January 2024 and now appear on the SLSA's website.

### **Mentor scheme**

Our pilot mentor scheme for members kicked off with a plenary session in October 2023, continued with one-to-one meetings, and concluded at the SLSA Conference at the University of Portsmouth in April 2024. We had over 30 applications for mentees, and 20 volunteers willing to act as mentors. All of this reaffirmed to us the real need and appetite for mentoring within the SLSA community. In the end we created 10 mentor-mentee pairs.

Feedback on the scheme was collected from both mentors and mentees and reviewed by the EDI Committee. Overall, the mentees were very happy with the scheme, all saying that they found it a positive experience and that they would recommend it to others. Some issues were raised in relation to setting clear expectations about the purpose of the scheme and the role of a mentor, the short duration of the pilot, and the lack of opportunities to meet other mentees. In response to feedback from the pilot scheme, we amended certain elements of the scheme and relaunched it in September 2024. This included changing the eligibility criteria to exclude PhD students except those nearing completion and extending the scheme to cover a full year period rather than October-April. We paired a further 10 mentors and mentees for the 2024-25 mentor scheme.

### **2024 EDI Members' Survey**

We re-launched the EDI Members' Survey in October 2024. The SLSA committed in the 2022 Report to keeping our data current by surveying SLSA members every two to three years. As a learned society and Charitable Incorporated Organisation, it's important that we understand and represent our members, and the survey results will inform the SLSA's equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives over the next few years. We will analyse the responses and publish an updated EDI Report and Strategy in 2025.

### **EDI Data Collection**

In 2024 we continued to collect, on a confidential and voluntary basis, EDI data from 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 take up a conference stream convenor role. The form is not connected to, nor does it 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 and identify whether our funding schemes and prizes are being allocated in an equitable manner. We will only begin to review the data after it has been collected for at least three years, in order to ensure anonymity of the respondents and to base any initiatives we develop on a significant and meaningful sample.

## **Funding application**

The SLSA applied for funding from the Academy of Social Sciences in 2024 for proposed EDI initiatives focused on addressing academic precarity – a growing trend in the sector and something that our members expressed concerns about through the 2021 EDI Members' Survey and the 2022 Precarious Employment Survey. The proposed project included developing our mentoring scheme with a series of capacity building workshops and community development networking events. Our application was unsuccessful but nevertheless we continued to develop our mentoring scheme in 2024, albeit in a more limited way. We also continued to engage with the Academy of Social Sciences EDI events.

## **EDI Policies**

The SLSA's EDI Policies were reviewed and updated by the Committee in November 2024. The Committee will investigate further whether the process for recruiting and electing new Trustees to the Board aligns with Principle 6 of the Charity Governance Code re Trustee recruitment and Board diversity. More work will be done on this in 2025.

## **Developing a broader offering of inclusive events**

For budget and institutional capacity reasons, the annual conference will not be fully hybrid in 2025 or 2026 and presenting remotely will only be facilitated when a member requires a reasonable adjustment to participate. As a result, the EDI Committee was tasked with considering how to increase the number of engaging and inclusive events organised for members throughout the year so that there are more opportunities to connect, develop and share our research outside of the annual conference, especially for those who cannot attend the conference in person. The Committee began this exercise by mapping the activities members currently have access to, as well as drawing on the expertise of the Committee and wider Board in thinking through how to make these more inclusive, and how to utilise online or hybrid events to support members. This work will continue in 2025.

Bev Clough and Arwen Joyce, EDI Co-Chairs

## Precarity

The Precarity Representative to the Board also currently serves as a Co-Chair of the EDI Committee and many precarity-related initiatives are advanced in that forum. See the EDI Report for additional information on the mentoring scheme and work being undertaken to make the SLSA and its events more inclusive, including for precariously employed members.

### Funding schemes

In 2023 funds were ringfenced in our funding pots for precariously employed members and in 2024 the Board completed the process of updating the application forms for research funding, impact grants and the seminar competition with guidance and a voluntarily disclosure box re the employment status of an applicant who is precariously employed in order to more easily allocate these ringfenced funds.

The forms now say:

- Joint applications are welcome and particularly encouraged where permanent members of academic staff are partnering with precarious/unaffiliated researchers.

The voluntary disclosure box appears in this way:

Voluntary disclosure [provide if desired/applicable or delete]  <i>Providing this information is voluntary. Doing so will not impact your chances of being awarded funding but will help us to target extra funding to precariously employed members.</i>	[Applicant] is employed on a precarious (e.g. zero-hours, temporary, fixed-term or non-permanent) basis or is not currently employed by an HEI.
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We also encourage those who apply for seminar funding to include in their proposed budget some funding to cover the cost of travel and attendance for precarious and/or unaffiliated researchers who would be otherwise unable to attend or participate in the proposed seminar.

We will continue to monitor how often this 'precariously employed' disclosure is being utilised in each of the funding schemes and how often ringfenced funds are being awarded.

Arwen Joyce, Precarity Representative to the Board of Trustees



## Postgraduate Activities

### PGR Conference

The SLSA PGR Conference was held at Northumbria University on 11-12 January 2024. The conference was very successful. We had significant interest, and the allocated 50 spaces were filled very quickly. This demonstrates the high demand for this type of event in the socio legal space. There was also a high registration to attendance conversion. Feedback from the event was very positive. The PGR representatives are grateful to the team at Northumbria University in planning and delivering the sessions, as well as to the delegates for their contributions throughout.

### PGR Activities at Annual Conference

The PGR Activities at the SLSA Conference at University of Portsmouth were a great success. There was a total of four sessions delivered by a range of facilitators including academics from the University of Portsmouth as well as those with experience of researching in different contexts such as sub-Saharan Africa and India. PGRs also presented their work at the Annual Conference and participated in the Poster Competition. Their submissions this year were of particularly high quality and demonstrated the wide range of research interests within the SLSA community.

### PGR Representative

In May, Lara MacLachlan stepped down from her role as PGR representative. Lara was a wonderful colleague who made very worthwhile contributions to the SLSA community during her time in this role. The SLSA Board would like to express their gratitude to Lara for her work. Mini Saxena remained in her role as PGR representative. In June, Diksha Sanyal, based at UCL, was recruited as the new SLSA PGR representative.

### PGR Writing Group

In 2024, we continued with our tri-annual writing group for PGRs. For every group, sign-ups were collected via a google registration form with a cap of 25. Each session saw a positive response from the community in relation to registration. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and participants repeatedly mentioned that they found the groups incredibly useful both for writing and for building community. We now plan to hold the next sessions in February and May 2025, but we are trialling some new formats, including a hybrid session with an in-person component in London, and having a socio-legal expert from the Law and Society Association of Australia and New Zealand join us to speak about her experiences.

### Recruitment

The PGR representatives conducted a recruitment drive to encourage new PGRs to become SLSA members. Socio-legal PGRs from across the UK and Ireland were contacted through their institutions and invited to become a member. This year, building on work from the last two years' recruitment drives, we continued to include a more diverse range of disciplines. The PGR representatives now maintain a list of approximately 134 contacts. This supports the development of aims identified in both our EDI survey and our precarity survey to widen participation amongst the socio-legal community and create a more inclusive environment.

Across November and December, the PGR Representatives helped to support preparation for the 2025 PGR Conference. The PGR Representatives also prepared for the PGR Activities for the 2025 SLSA Conference at University of Liverpool. These include a session on publishing, a session on research impact, a session on post-PhD pathways, and finally a session on arts and humanities in socio-legal research. These sessions were guided by feedback from the 2024 conference and include speakers from both inside and outside academia.

Mini Saxena and Diksha Sanyal (PGR Representatives)

# SLSA Newsletter, Ebulletin and Website Editor's Annual Report

## Overview of role and responsibilities

To work closely with SLSA Board – including attending Board meetings, Annual Conference and running Board email list; to keep SLSA members up to date with SLSA activities and important deadlines via website, newsletter and ebulletin; to gather socio-legal news from multiple sources, including from members, to circulate via SLSA website, ebulletin and *Socio-Legal Newsletter*; to deal with or forward as appropriate any other relevant SLSA business eg general enquiries from members and other individuals/organisations, and to liaise with individual SLSA Board members/officers.

## Socio-Legal Newsletter

The [Socio-Legal Newsletter](#) is published termly – spring, summer and autumn/winter. During 2024, we published three 16-page newsletters (nos 102, 103 and 104). The newsletter is mailed to all SLSA members in the UK and Europe. Members in other parts of the world receive a link to an online version. Members who receive a paper copy have the option to change to the online version if they prefer. The current mailing list is approximately 1200 (an drop of about 250 on last year). The newsletter sponsors (see below) also receive five copies each for circulation to non-SLSA colleagues and students to promote the SLSA's work and aims to a wider audience. The newsletter was launched in 1989 and has been published without interruption since then. Electronic versions dating back to 2002 are available on the [SLSA website](#).

### *Content*

The newsletter content is focused on the activities of the SLSA Board and SLSA members. Members are actively encouraged to contribute material for each issue. From January 2024 to December 2024, we covered, among many other things: announcement and details of SLSA AGM and Trustee nominations and elections news arising from SLSA Board meetings, including coverage of key SLSA initiatives, eg grants, seminars and prizes, the new socio-legal journals initiative, support for CARA migrant scholars, funding scheme article, postgraduate reading group etc; SLSA 2024 Annual Conference at the University of Portsmouth– call for papers, details of conference in advance and a comprehensive report afterwards; SLSA 2025 Annual Conference at the University of Liverpool – call for papers and advance details; reports of other SLSA events – for example SLSA Postgraduate Conference 2024 (Northumbria University ) and SLSA seminar – 'The Juridification of Justice' (Exeter); announcement of the winner of the SLSA Annual Prize (Professor Joanne Conaghan) and shortlists and prize announcements for the SLSA Book and Article Prizes and the Impact Prize; announcement of all new award holders for research and fieldwork grants, impact grants, seminar competition and new international collaboration scheme; numerous summaries and reports from SLSA grantholders (research/fieldwork/impact) and regular sections featuring research, events and publications news from members and other relevant organisations.

### *Newsletter sponsorship scheme*

As mentioned in previous annual reports, a large portion of newsletter printing and production costs is covered by our sponsorship scheme which has been running since 2008. During that time the newsletter has been supported by sponsorship from about 20 UK Law Schools which commit to making an annual financial contribution per year for three years. The current three-year cycle is in its final year. The sponsorship scheme currently consists of 29 institutions from across all four UK nations who are committed to an annual sponsorship payment of £700.

### **SLSA website and ebulletin to members**

The website carries full details of all SLSA activities, including funding schemes, events and prizes, the SLSA Board of Trustees and its subcommittees and an extensive 'Socio-legal News' section which is the basis for the weekly ebulletin. The website is updated weekly during termtime to ensure that members have access to the latest information.

During the second half of 2024, the Board set up a working group to put together a plan for the website to be relaunched and combined with the membership database and weekly ebulletin (see below). This project was ongoing at the end of the year.

We also provide a weekly ebulletin service to members during term-time which is a key component of the SLSA's relationship with members, keeping them informed about Board activities and also offering them an opportunity to share their own news with colleagues. The final ebulletin of December 2024 was sent to 1050 recipients (a drop on the previous year due to the SLSA administrator's work cleaning up the database and closing dormant accounts). The ebulletin is extremely popular with members and now regularly achieves an opening rate of between 70% and 80% and a constant stream of membership news for inclusion. The SLSA also uses its electronic mailing list to send one-off messages about important events/news, for example the announcement of our AGM and the call for papers and posters for the Annual Conference.

### **In summary**

The popularity of the hardcopy newsletter and weekly ebulletin and other e-announcements during 2024 show that the SLSA Board's commitment to communicate with members is as strong as ever. I hope to continue to work with the Board over the coming months to build on this work to make sure that members are fully informed of all SLSA activities and initiatives while also offering them numerous opportunities to share their own news, events and activities with socio-legal colleagues.

Marie Selwood, SLSA Newsletter and Website Editor

## SLSA Blog

The SLSA Blog was created in 2016 as a venue for academics and practitioners with an interest in socio-legal issues. During 2024 the SLSA blog published a total of 47 new posts.

Individual posts covered a wide range of topical issues, for example, rights of the unborn child, protest camps on university campuses, judicial craft, and regulation and the common good.

Following a successful call for guest-edited blog series, a total of five series were also published across the year. These included an [Institute for Crime and Justice Policy Guest Series](#), [Right-Wing Extremists in Power: Party Bans in Europe under Focus](#), [Contracts in Life and Law](#), [Empirical Approaches to the Rule of Law](#) and [Preserving Public Values in Privatised Digital Systems](#).

Emma Jones and Kay Lalor, SLSA Blog Editors

## SLSA YouTube Channel Report

The [SLSA YouTube Channel](#) was launched in 2021 to celebrate the winners of SLSA prizes; allow those who have been awarded SLSA grants to discuss the outcome of the award; showcase conference plenary panels; explain the role of an SLSA Trustee.

At present, there are 54 published videos on the channel and we have 172 subscribers, an increase of 70 subscribers since end 2023. Since 1 January 2024, approximately 15 videos were published on the SLSA YouTube Channel. The last published videos were in June / July 2024.

Some of the notable videos that were published during the 2024 calendar year include interviews undertaken by SLSA Trustees with winners of SLSA prizes, such as Dr Richard Craven interviewing Dr Natalie Ohana, winner of the 2023 Socio-legal Article Prize Dr Kay Lalor interviewing Dr Silvana Tapia Tapia, winner of the 2023 Hart-SLSA Book Prize

Subsequent the handover to a new YouTube Channel Editor on 20 September 2024, a review of our SLSA YouTube Channel documents were undertaken to ensure that all SLSA prize winners and grant holders have received an invitation to make a video contribution to the SLSA YouTube Channel. This is important not only in terms of showcasing the contribution of SLSA to socio-legal studies, but also to showcase the important socio-legal work and achievements of all our members. The focus has specifically been on SLSA prize winners and grant holders from 2019 to 2022. There are at present 28 active invitations and communications for video contributions to the SLSA YouTube Channel. Finalised videos will be published on the SLSA YouTube Channel as these become available.

Invitations for video contributions from our 2023 and 2024 SLSA prize winners and grant holders are sent out on a bi-weekly basis to ensure a steady and consistent income of new video recordings to the SLSA YouTube Channel. These invitations include interview video recordings with 6 SLSA prize winners from 2023/24, as well as 44 invitations for “90-second highlight videos” from SLSA grant holders, including the winner and runner-up of the 2024 poster prize.

Dr. Andra le Roux-Kemp  
SLSA YouTube Channel Editor

## Social Media Report

As in previous years, social media has been an important means of keeping members updated and engaged with both the SLSA postgraduate conference and the SLSA annual conference and other member events. X (formerly Twitter) has been used to publicise calls for session convenors for the PG conference, registration for both conferences, call for current topics for the annual conference, as well as pushing out the CFPs for the annual conference. However, in January 2025 the Board made the decision to stop posting on X due to the political situation that was unfolding on that platform. This is in line with other organisations, learned societies and members of the SLSA. We have kept a presence on there, so our account is not hijacked, and we have informed followers what is happening.

We have since started an account on Bluesky and we are slowly building up our profile on there. We have a LinkedIn group and are in the process of setting up a LinkedIn page for dissemination.

Social media continues to play an important role in disseminating information about surveys, grants, competitions, prize winners, and so on. Social media has also continued to be used to promote engagement with the SLSA blog, publicising new posts and encouraging broader dissemination. It has also been an important route for dissemination of our new YouTube channel which hosts short lightning talks and more in depth, 'in conversation pieces, with prize winners and members of the SLSA Board of Trustees.

Elisabeth Griffiths, Social Media Officer

## Conference Stream Secretary Report

SLSA 2024 was held in Portsmouth on 26-28<sup>th</sup> March. Beverley Clough stepped down as Stream Secretary and Kirsten McConnachie took over the role in June 2024. Stream Secretary activities have been focused on preparing for the SLSA 2025 conference in Liverpool.

This has included: ensuring that all streams have convenors, advertising for and appointing replacement convenors where needed; communicating with convenors around the call for papers, review of abstracts and allocation of papers into panels. A Stream Convenor policy was updated and approved by the SLSA Board in January 2025. Minor changes include specifying that both Stream Convenors and Current Topic convenors should be SLSA members in good standing and establishing a procedure for informally appointing convenors outside of the annual cycle. The call for papers for SLSA 2025 closed on 6<sup>th</sup> January. This was a slight extension on the original timeline, which was to close the call for papers before Christmas. The final number of submissions was exceptionally strong, with close to 1000 abstracts submitted and 923 accepted. Stream Convenors finalised selection of papers and panels by early February 2025 and a full draft conference programme was complete by mid-March 2025.

The timing of calls overall worked fairly successfully though in future years we may want to be mindful of semester start/end dates as our recruitment of convenors and selection of Current Topics clashed with the start of autumn teaching at many institutions.

Another issue to keep under review for future years is the impact of financial problems across the university sector. A number of stream convenors are unable to attend SLSA 2025 due to the withdrawal of institutional research funding for conference attendance. The impact on SLSA 2025 is not yet clear (in terms of both stream convenor and wider delegate participation) but this is an issue that we should consider for future conferences, including through measures to offer bursaries or fee reductions to facilitate stream convenor activities.

Kirsten McConnachie, Stream Secretary