# Minutes

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| **Present**  In person  Marie Burton (MB), Beverley Clough (BC), Richard Craven (RC), John Harrington (JH), Marie Hutton (MHu), Arwen Joyce (AJ), Smita Kheria (SK), Kay Lalor (KL), Lara MacLachlan (LM), Maddy Millar (MM), Emma Milne (EM), Colin Moore (CM), Rebecca Moosavian (RM), Raza Saeed (RS) Marie Selwood (MSe)  Online  Anna Bryson (AB), Ciara Fitzpatrick (CF), Sabrina Germain (SG), Kirsten McConnachie (KM), Mark Simpson (MSi), Mitchell Travis (MT) |
| Apologies Daniel Bedford (DB), Philip Bremner (PB), Simon Flacks (SF), Alex Green (AG), Elisabeth Griffiths (EG), Matt Howard (MHo), Emma Jones (EJ), Emily Walsh (EW) |
| Approval of Minutes and outstanding Action Points  * 1. Meeting 12 January 2023   Board approved the minutes.   * 1. Meeting 24 February 2023   Board approved the minutes.   * 1. Action points from previous minutes   Board reviewed the action points and were satisfied with the outcomes. |
| 1. **New Initiatives and Policies**     1. On-line membership/gathering EDI data   This will be followed up after the meeting and taken forward to a future board meeting.  **Action**: CM to progress and reported back to the board.  **Action**: EM to place on the agenda for the September Board Meeting   * 1. Mentoring scheme   The proposal for the pilot scheme was presented to the Board. The Board was broadly in support, but a number of queries were raised. The scheme is approved with tweaks outlined below.  The Board agreed that these timelines should be reviewed to ensure sufficient notice is given to mentors and mentees to attend the plenary.  SK suggesting that the final meeting should be at the conference and then the feedback/evaluation can be provided prior to the May meeting so it can be analysed and a report can be produced for the Board.  This suggestion was agreed by the Board.  **Action**: EDI sub-committee to review and amend timeline in light of Board feedback.  AB asked what consideration has been given to who is a mentor and who is selected as a mentee. Also raised concern about the workload of being a mentor and how this would be recognised. Should the SLSA consider having a “Mentor” Prize?  JH advised for the pilot EDI sub-committee can select mentees on the basis of the answers provided on the application form. Mentors will only be asked to mentor one person. EDI sub-committee will approach mentors.  The Board will keep the idea of a “Mentor” Prize under review.  **Action**: MSe to print names of mentors in the Newsletter that follows launch of the scheme, with their consent.  The Board discussed whether individual mentoring or group mentoring (allowing mentees to network with each other and for mentors to deliver specific expertise to the group of mentees) would work best.  SK suggested the feedback form includes a question asking participants if the individual arrangement or a group arrangement is preferable. This suggestion was agreed by the Board.  **Action**: EDI sub-committee to review and amend feedback questionnaire in light of Board feedback.  JH raised a concern about costs of the scheme, suggesting amending the language to advise that mentees will be eligible to apply for a conference bursary.  EM asked if the conference bursaries are available for mid-careers (who can also make use of the mentoring scheme).  CF and MSi advised that at the Derry conference bursaries were reserved for PGR and ECR. However, the criteria can be tweaked.  **Action**: EDI sub-committee to review and amend the language around the provision of bursaries in line with Board feedback.  **Action**: Portsmouth conference bursaries to be discussed at September meeting in light of draft budget and the Mentoring Scheme.  MSe noted that the deadline for the Newsletter is 22 May and she will need to know by the first week of June what the Board would like to include in this issue re launching the mentoring scheme.  **Action**: EDI sub-committee to work with MSe to include content about the Mentoring Scheme in the Newsletter.  **Action**: EDI sub-committee to work towards implementation of the Mentoring Scheme over summer 2023.   * 1. Socio-Legal Education   The Board are very supportive of the initiative outlined in the paper and the proposed work. The Board did raise and discuss a number of concerns.  The timeline for the work, notably that the Board would not be able to review the survey before released, as with the EDI and precarity surveys.  MHu raised concern that there the timeframe to obtain ethical approval might not be sufficient.  The Board agreed that further information is needed to understand what the survey aims to obtain and consequently who will be targeted to participate, e.g. staff/members, as well as Heads of School.  The Board expressed huge support for the focus of the Plenary at the 2024 conference.  **Actions**: DB and EW to revise the proposal for the September Board meeting in line with feedback from the Board.  **Action**: DB and EW to draft the survey. JH and SK happy to chat with them about this and review drafts, before returned to the Board at the September meeting. |
| Breakout groups  * 1. Review impact scheme   Summary of discussion:   * Grants – applicants not always referring to guidance. * Future initiatives for Impact sub-committee “demystifying” impact through the Newsletter and YouTube channel. * The winners of the Impact Prize and those awarded Impact funding should be included among the YouTube videos created.   **Action**: BC to highlight the Stream Convenor Impact Fund to stream convenors, outlining the types of activities that it is intended for and encourage applications.  **Action**: Impact sub-committee to meet and plan work on activates “demystifying” impact.  **Action**: Impact sub-committee to liaise with MSe and EM to provide text for Newsletter and produce a YouTube video to support applicants for the Impact Grant: what looking for in applications and tips for applicants.   * 1. Awards and competitions   Summary of discussion:   * EDI concerns with aspects of forms * Possible blind assessment of competitions * EDI survey (anonymous) with applications * Diversity of participants/panelists.   **Action**: CM to compile EDI survey to accompany grants and funding schemes applications. EDI sub-committee to review, bringing to September Board for approval ahead of 2023 calls (excluding Impact and International Fund).  **Action**: CM (liaising with RM and SF) to prepare paper for September on blind applications for grants and seminar funding schemes for the Board, and to review if changes to guidance, application forms and assessment criteria is required.  **Action**: EDI sub-committee (liaising with RM and SF) to review guidance for conferences and seminars, emphasising importance of diversity among participants, panellists etc.   * 1. Media/communications strategy   Summary of discussion and suggestions:   * Embed YouTube videos in e-bulletin, website. * Further enhancing blog; future of Facebook page. * Possible survey of membership re communication preferences   **Action**: MSe embed YouTube into bulletin.  **Action**: MSe to discuss possibility of embedding rolling YouTube videos on the webpage with DB and website team.  **Action**: MHu appointed as second blog editor, to liaise with EJ.  **Action**: MSe to update the website accordingly.  **Action**: EG to give notice announcing the closing of the SLSA Facebook page on Facebook and then close it a month later.  **Action**: MSe to include a “dates for diary” section in the Newsletter.  **Action**: Grants and funding awards sub-committees to consider if a blog post or YouTube video should be the required outcome, rather than a report for the Newsletter. |
| Committee positions Sub-committee positions were discussed. See the SLSA website for the current SLSA sub-committee and working group members.  **Action**: MSe to update the SLSA website in line with agreed roles. |
| Officer Reports  * 1. Chair (JH)   JH suggested that for the September meeting of the Board we could invite a charity lawyer to talk to talk about the role of a trustee in a charity. CM suggested the practice reality of the role, rather than the legal aspects, might be more helpful.  **Action**: The Board to contact JH with potential speakers who could brief the Board on the legal or practical elements of being a charity trustee.  The Board discussed the nomination for Fellow of Academy of the Social Sciences. JH left the room for the entirety of the discussion due to a conflict of interests. The Board Agreed that the proposed nominee is a suitable candidate for the SLSA to support, and his credentials are in keeping with the other members nominated in the past.  **Action**: JH to progress nomination.  The Board briefly considered if the procedure for how the SLSA Board receive nominations is clear. JH suggested we discuss this further at the September Board meeting.  **Action**: EM to include nomination for Fellow of Academy of the Social Sciences on agenda for September Board meeting.   * 1. Vice-Chair (SK)   Nothing to add to the report.  Will be emailing the book prize sub-committee with proposed timeline.   * 1. Treasurer (PB)   EM queried if we have already over-spent on Executive Committee Expenses for the financial year.  **Action**: PB to advise Board about Executive Committee Expenses.  SK advised we need to prioritise the process of determining where the reserve is placed.  **Action**: PB to progress movement of the reserve quickly to take advantage of interest rates.  MSe asked if should announce an increase of funds for the grants and funding awards. The Board agreed that we would not announce, given the need to retain flexibility within the budget given the contingency of conference revenue.  **Action**: Chairs of grants and funding awards to review and update the policy/guidance for their award if the amount of funds appears in the document.   * 1. Membership and data protection (CM)   **Action**: CM and MSe to update the Privacy Policy in line with Board approved changes, as outline in CM’s report.  **Action**: MSe to check all governance document and SLSA policies contains the correct contact address for the charity.  **Action**: EM to email the Board with the current postal address for the charity.   * 1. Recruitment (RM)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. EDI (*TBC*)   No report submitted or discussion due to appointment of new chairs.   * 1. Precarity (AJ)   Nothing to add to the report.  The Board offers AJ and the team who worked on the Precarity Report our congratulations on an excellent report that has been very well received.   * 1. Newsletter and Web Editor (MSe)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. PG Student Representative (MM/LM)   The Board offered their warm thanks to MM for all her work for the Board and for her contributions across the range of SLSA activities.  The process will now begin to recruit a new PGR rep.  **Action**: PGR Group to recruit a new PGR rep.  6.9.2. SLSA PGR Writing Session Proposal  The Board received a proposal for SLSA to organise an on-line PGR writing group, and discussed video platform options for the session.  The sustainability and ‘workload’ implications of the initiative we also discussed, with assurances from MM and LM, including re managing numbers of participants.  SK wondered if the outcome could be to share email addresses with those who join the first session so they can arrange their own future sessions.  CM noted that selecting and limiting numbers will be time-consuming and potentially limits opportunities/causes EDI and access issues. Suggested taking everyone for the first session, then perhaps limit for future sessions. Also advised he could offer support with the tech.  JH suggested that the sessions should not be limited to members, but that the opportunity be used to promote joining the SLSA.  The Board approved the proposal, suggesting that their comments and feedback are taken on board during implementation.  **Action**: LM and the new PGR rep to progress the proposal, with potential tech support from CM.   * 1. International Liaison (SK)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. Webmaster (DB)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. Social Media (EG)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. Blog Editor (EJ)   The Board considered the proposed changes to the SLSA Blog.  Recommendation 1: the Board agreed the name should be changed.  **Action**: Blog Editors create a list of potential names of the Blog for the Board to consider.  Recommendation 2: the Board agrees.  **Action**: Blog Editors to explore changing the control/hosting of the website.  Recommendation 3 and 4:  The Board discussed if undergraduates should be invited to write for the blog.  KM suggested that PGT students could be encouraged to send a blog post that captures their PhD proposal.  MHu noted that currently the wording on the blog website does not limit those who can apply and that submissions should be in line with socio-legal work and of the right quality.  MM advised that the yearly SLSA promotion email for PGRs could include a section on the blog and call for submissions.  **Action**: LM and new PGR rep include promotion of the blog in yearly communications to PGRs across law schools.  RS enquired if we know how many people read the blog.  **Action**: MSe to collate clicks through from e-bulletin to the blog.  **Action**: Blog Editors to see if they can obtain website data on interaction with blog posts.  **Action**: Blog Editors to consider and discuss comments from the board and implement into the guidance on who is welcome to submit a blog entry.  **Action**: Blog Editors MHu to consider the idea of a competition (including accessibility and EDI issues), present at September Board.   * 1. YouTube Channel (EM)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. Publisher’s Liaison (EJ)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. Open Access (SK)   Nothing to add to the report.   * 1. Administrator (NE)   **Action**: Portsmouth Conference Team to take note and action the points raised by NE in his report that relate to the conference. |
| 1. **Conferences**    1. Annual conference       1. Ulster (MSi/CF)   JH and the Board offered their sincere and warm thanks to the conference organising team, led by MSi and CF, for an running an excellent and lively conference, which has been highly praised in feedback.  The Board also offered its thanks to Visit Derry for their important support throughout the organisation of the conference.  MSi thanked the Board and will provide formal reflections and feedback. He noted the positive impact the conference had on the city of Derry/Londonderry.  CF noted 80 bursaries were awarded; the team believe this is one of the largest number of bursaries awarded at a SLSA conference. CF and the Board warmly commended MM and LM on the PGR activities. In light of institutional funding constraints, CF suggested that Portsmouth look at scope of bursary awards.  MSi advised that while finances are still being processed, the team is confident that they can provide the expected surplus to the SLSA.   * + 1. Portsmouth (DB/ EW)   JH and PB had visited Portsmouth on 04.05.23, meeting with DB, EW and staff involved in supporting SLSA 2024. JH reported he and PB were reassured that considerable progress has been made across all elements of the conference. The challenges raised by the hybrid format in particular were considered during the visit.  The Board discussed hybrid provision, including purchasing or renting of equipment, and the challenges of cost/obsolescence.    **Action**: Portsmouth Conference Team to submit a proposal for how to address hybrid provision to the Board meeting in September.  The Board discussed the need to ensure reasonable rates for rooms, as well as availability, especially for PGRs.  **Action**: Portsmouth Conference Team to consider how hotels and PGR accommodation will be available to book.  BC asked if 400 delegates is a reasonable estimate considering the numbers at Derry. Suggested this needs to be monitored and asked if a contingent plan was in place.  **Action**: Portsmouth Conference Team to review proposed numbers and advise the Board of a contingent plan if the numbers increase significantly.  CM suggested the SLSA should employ a standard email (for example, [conference@slsa.ac.uk](mailto:conference@slsa.ac.uk)) to continue over different conferences.  **Action**: Portsmouth Conference Team to consider the suggestion of an SLSA conference email.   * + 1. Future conferences (JH )   JH informed the Board that a group led by Jed Meers, along with JH and MB, had reviewed four applications, making two awards: Liverpool (2025) and Sussex (2026).  JH and PB met with the Liverpool organising team on 10.05.23 advising on finance and accommodation needs, as well as the timetable for submission of themes and papers.   * 1. Postgraduate Conference (MM/LM)   Nothing to add.   * 1. One Day Conferences (JH)   RC confirmed that WINIR are enthusiastic about co-badging with the SLSA.  JH remined the Board of the role of the one day conferences: to offer endorsement (but not financial support) to Board members who wish to hold a conference but are ineligible to submit an application to the seminar competition. |
| 1. **Prizes and Competitions**     1. Book prizes (SK)   Nothing to add.   * 1. Article prizes (JH)   Nothing to add.   * 1. Grants (RM)   The Board agreed RM’s approach to non-reporting grant winners:  **Action**: RM to send emails in line with Board approval and suggestions.  8.3.1. to 8.3.3.  The Board approved the proposed changes to the grants and competition guidance, with one change:  ‘If the above condition is not fulfilled (i.e. the applicant does not provide a report on the project) then the SLSA will approach the applicant’s institution to seek a refund of the award. Furthermore, the applicant will be barred from applying for future **~~grants~~ SLSA funding and prizes** until the report is provided.’  **Action**: Chairs of grants and competitions to amend wording of policies/guidance in line with Board comments. Updated documents to be added to the website.  **Action**: Chairs of Impact sub-committee and International sub-committee to review respective funding guidance in line with agreed changes to grants and competition funds, update accordingly.  **Action**: Chairs of grants and competitions sub-committees to keep a list of funding winners who have not reported and so are barred from future SLSA funding and prizes until the report is provided.  8.3.4.  The Board discussed the proposed demo online application for grants. It was agreed that a save button is needed to make the from more accessible and to prevent multiple application id numbers being generated.  **Action**: CM to add save button.  The Board approved the use of the online form, with the addition of the save button. The Board also agreed for an EDI form to be added (see 4.2.).  **Action**: Grants and Seminar Competition to move to online form with EDI questions. CM to revise the form and sending to Board for approval. CM to liaise with MSe about dates to allow for publication in Newsletter.  **Action**: Impact and International fund to move online for the 2024 round.  SK raised concerns about data protection and where the data is stored, noting that the Qualtrics account being used is held by the University of Essex. The Board may need to consider obtaining their own Qualtrics account.  **Action**: CM, with assistance from Board members, to present paper on the need for an SLSA Qualtrics account at January Board and whether Qualtrics is the best platform in terms of performance and pricing for our needs.   * 1. Seminars (SF)   Nothing to add.   * 1. Impact Fund Awards (?)   Nothing to add.   * 1. Contributions to the socio-legal community (JH)   Nothing to add. |
| 1. **Future board meetings and their format**   The Board agreed that due to the nature of business at the January meeting, it makes sense for this to be an online meeting.  The following dates have been provisionally agreed for future Board meetings:   * Thursday 14th September * Thursday 11th January * Thursday 16th May   **Action**: EM to check September and January dates with Portsmouth conference team.  **Action**: EM to confirm dates, organise venue and communicate with the Board. |
| 1. **Any Other Business**   None |