

Present:

- Marlene Eskind Moses (President)
- Thomas Sasser (President Elect, CHAIR)
- Sandra Verburgt (Vice President)
- Carolina Marín Pedreño (Vice President)
- Suzanne Todd (Secretary)
- Heather Hostetter (Treasurer)
- Mia Reich-Sjögren (Immediate Past President)
- Reneaux Collins (USA Chapter President)
- William Massey (European Chapter President)
- Corinne Remedios (Asia Pacific Chapter President)
- Karon Bales (Canadian Chapter President)
- Katharine Maddox (Counsel)
- Jason Walker (Parliamentarian)
- Jason Naimi (Assistant Treasurer)
- Peter Buchbauer (USA Chapter President Elect)
- Rachael Kelsey (European Chapter President Elect)
- Alberto Perez Cedillo (European Chapter next President Elect)
- Geoff Wilson (Asia Pacific Chapter President Elect)
- Nancy Zalusky Berg (Past President)
- William Longrigg (Past President)
- Cheryl Hepfer (Past President)
- Ed Freedman (Amicus Committee Chair)
- James Carroll (Communication with Fellows Committee Chair)
- Amanda Humphreys (Communication with Fellows Committee Member)
- Amanda Trigg (Communication with Fellows Committee Member)
- Arnaud Gillard (Forced Marriage Comm Member)
- Isabelle Rein Lescastereyres (Communication with Fellows Committee Member)
- Donna Goddard (IAFL Executive Director)
- Ali Massey (IAFL Executive Assistant)

1. Welcome and Announcements

Tom Sasser welcomed everyone and thanked the Communication with Fellows Committee for their hard work on the Fellows and Non-Fellows surveys which had provided the input to this meeting.

Marlene Eskind Moses thanked everyone for attending with special thanks to the Communication with Fellows Committee for the surveys and to Tom Sasser for setting the agenda and facilitating this meeting.

1.1 Anne-Marie Hutchinson Memorial

Marlene announced that IAFL will organise a Hague webinar each year in memory of Anne-Marie Hutchinson OBE, QC (Hon) and to recognise her contribution to Family Law and Hague matters. The webinars will raise money 100% of which will be passed on to the US Friends of the Hague Foundation to fund studentships. Tom added that the webinar format had been chosen in order to reach a worldwide audience.

1.2 IAFL Meeting 1-5 September 2021

Marlene announced that IAFL hopes to hold an in-person meeting in London from 1-5 September 2021. London has been suggested as it is easy to travel to and most of the Executive Director's team are based nearby.

2. Brainstorm

The meeting participants brainstormed topics for discussion in the second set of breakouts. The following were discussed:

- Education Programmes, nature & content. It was noted that many Fellows do not attend the CLE sessions at meetings. It was suggested that smaller concurrent sessions might make the programmes more attractive
- Membership Criteria and qualifications. It was noted that there is a large group of Fellows from London and that there was discussion about whether AAML Fellowship should be a pre-requisite for US Fellows
- Demographics. It was noted that the Non-Fellows surveyed were quite experienced family lawyers – why are they not Fellows?
- Interest Groups. In addition to geographical, Chapter, groupings there was discussion about Special Interest Groups, to get Fellows more involved in IAFL
- Policy making, shaping the law, taking positions & issues. When should IAFL step in and how?

The first set of breakouts ended up taking up the whole meeting as there was much to discuss, so the above points were not discussed fully within the groups, or more widely.

3. Breakouts

The meeting split into small groups and discussed the following topics

3-A Increasing Fellow Involvement

- Find out which Fellows would like to be involved either in committees or in presenting in education programmes
- Appoint buddies to new joiners as soon as they join, do not wait until they come to a meeting
- Education sessions for new (<3 years) Fellows at meetings – how to get involved
- Set up Interest Groups. These would be bigger than committees and would be topic focussed, e.g. public policy, abduction/relocation, finance and property, applicable law and jurisdiction. The groups could produce education programme sessions, have dinners at meetings, meet during coffee breaks etc
- Continue to use Zoom & webinars

Suggested Actions

- **A survey** should be sent to all Fellows annually asking how they would like to be involved in the coming year resulting in a bank of people who may be invited to participate in committees or education programmes. Take care not to promise what we can't deliver. Has been tried in the past without success

- **Consider smaller education sessions/workshops** at meetings – could be led by interest groups and would use volunteer speakers
- **Engage Early with New Fellows** many good ideas have been suggested to connect early such as allocating buddies on joining, new Fellows seminars at meetings (and webinar), a new member education committee, new Fellow handbook, tapered dues for new fellows
- **Interest Groups** appoint someone to oversee these and define what an interest group does. May not be actioned immediately

3-B Digital Communication and Services

- Balance: Desire for in person v. continuity of digital options while we are not travelling
- Choice will be available in the future (London 2021?)
- Anticipate possible digital hybrid for London (necessity or accommodation? Distraction or benefit if the live meeting is occurring)
- Digital as advantage for engagement of otherwise unavailable Fellows (schedule, financing, other commitments)
- Consider continuation of partial or full digital options. Advantageous to membership. Preserve value of the work that has been done in recent months to create digital flow; encourage engagement with new possible Fellows through digital access.
- Between meetings: connections maintained. Use for advertising and encouragement. Anticipate that attending in person is the preferred method of engaging at a conference. Advance introductions of New Fellows (new registrants) so if they then attend the conference in person, they already recognize and know others.
- Asia Pacific – aligned with other major groups in the region. Model for marketing that we could usefully use. Develop working with other aligned organisations
- Webinars: timing always difficult to balance offerings world-wide
- Digital and on-line does not have to detract from face-to-face events. E.g. “chats” can continue.
- Query value vs. risk of recording chats and other presentations. If we record, how do we archive and distribute/ share those? We need to be careful about consent- we don’t get formal consent at the moment (c/f with AAML). Risk of things becoming out of date.
- Group feels like recording informal “chats” or other discussions would be detrimental. Range of content/ styles available for recorded content. Confidentiality; candour. Query value of archiving content that will not later be accessed
- Query cost of doing a hybrid meeting (tech fees of a conference centre/ hotel)
- Marketing: Use recorded segments to promote IAFL and make available to Fellows as value added. E.g. keynote speakers. Recordings can be extracted
- Preserve digital options
- CLE/ Chats: Use digital / remote presentation to present topics that are specific to a location
- Website: Use archive or highlighting of digital content (like archived CLEs or segments of CLEs) for SEO
- Collaborate with other groups to allow for travel as soon as possible, depending upon geographic restraints. Hybrid insofar as IAFL + other groups. “Pods.” Consider cost saving measures like going to universities to market and use existing f/b resources on campus
- On-line resources: E.g. Asia Pacific news sheet. Also introduce new fellows at chats and in news sheets
- Purpose: advertising IAFL and/or share content. How to mix both/ run parallel?
- Guest recruitment for chats (potential candidates). This was generally thought to be unwise- not the function of fellow only chats. There will be non-fellow speakers and there can be virtual programmes deliberately designed for non-fellows.
- Knowing that we have fellows engaged now who were previously silent shows the benefit of the digital content

- Social media: Survey suggests support for the concept of “presence” but is the organization prepared to commit the resources to populate the profiles with meaningful content, to strengthen the profiles? Note: Team A (Fellow involvement) is discussing topical “interest groups”. Those interest groups could have footing in social media, be task oriented as to “chats.”

GOALS/ ACTION ITEMS - HYBRID!

Digital/ remote component of any future conference. CLE to include recordings and/or live opportunity to use videoconferencing for digital/ remote breakout rooms at the same time as participants on site are moved into breakout rooms.

1. CLE committee
2. Meetings / Budget committee
 - a. Cost of arranging the technological support
 - b. Cost of attending / viewing the content for the remote participant
 - c. Sponsorship (access to small groups for promotional opportunity in exchange for funding)
3. Marketing committee
4. Membership committee (break down any perception of “cliquey” per survey)

Keep it simple? Someone on site to volunteer to host a small Zoom session for those who wish to log in. Share link in advance to get the remote participants committee to showing up (improve engagement).

Webinars: Improve engagement on digital platforms. Estimate 60% turnout of those who register for any webinar. Include some type of face-to-face interaction with the speakers or each other, market that in advance.

Creating digital content from presentations: separately recorded segments and/or extracts of live presentations.

Social media as method of promoting awareness of digital content (website) and marketing events. Not immediately viewed as platform of Fellow-to-Fellow communication, as per prior methodology of using it. Mindful of survey result that reflects lack of use / knowledge of website content.

3-C Chapters (new chapters and/or consolidation of existing chapters)

Overview:

- Value to geographically organised chapters remaining
- We should actively encourage new chapter development
- We should be slow to consolidate existing chapters because it was thought that that would reduce engagement and create practical difficulties with meetings, which it is clear fellows regards as being central to our character and development of the organisation
- None of this precludes other thematic, cross-chapter, groupings within the IAFL, which we regard as a very positive possibility
- We can think about being creative with one off ‘super meetings’ to link the chapters and allow for cross-chapter integration

Goals:

- Is it our goal to have SA and Africa chapters? Probably, yes - if there is demand, definitely and even if there is not obvious demand initially, some encouragement, in due course, may well be the best thing to do to aid development and growth

- What does it mean for ROW if that shrinks? What can we do to make sure that fellows in, say, Israel and ME don't get left out e.g. regional meetings and considering place on Exec

Canadian view:

- Need 50 to have enough representation, aiming for 60
- Focused primarily on particular places in Canada for the most part and that's ok
- Used Donna for support with hosting etc and officers do other stuff- given the size and what has been done to date, that has been ok for the chapter and meant that there is no need for separate admin support
- 6 time zones in Canada, so having chapter is helpful for managing that
- Could easily do some one-off, 'super-chapter' meetings- civil law and language issues connect to EU and Americas, for example
- SA chapter?
- African chapter?

Different considerations:

- Already have people in SA who are engaged and active, in a way that that we don't have in Africa yet
- Language issues in SA are a potential barrier
- Finances- SA may require less support, in Canadian vein, but Africa would need more Exec director team support
- Admin- dues and meeting costs are an issue in both places where there may be practitioners with fewer resources

What do you need to make it happen?

- Crucial to be demand led - no point in pushing without interest and engagement
- How many people? 50, ideally 60. Note, if pushed by us, we think we really need 60, but if led on ground, 20 is fine if they are committed. No change required to bylaws
- Organisation? Local is doable, with support from mothership without own exec director. Planning about practicalities and budgeting would be crucial
- Planning around meetings would be required- IAFL meeting in early days to support (e.g. like Melbourne) and regional meetings in early days

Actions:

- How do we find out what the demand is?
- How do we stress, and then promote, the value of what we offer other than meetings - it should not all be focused on value deriving from the meetings?
- How do we develop local connections geographically in absence of chapter - i.e. how do we look after the ROW?
- Think about dues - tiered over, say, three years
- Provisional chapters to get engagement and structure

3-D Meetings (location and frequency)

- Recommend 4 meetings per year
- Independent AGM to reach out to non-chapter jurisdictions
- Emphasise that Fellows are not expected to attend all meetings
- Admin load
- Carbon footprint – more local meetings, less long-distance travel

- Give Fellows options
- Smaller, more intimate meetings
- Continue all 3 types of mini meetings
- Officers do not need to attend all Exec meetings in person. Consider having some or all Exec meetings by Zoom. Encourage and facilitate involvement
- Teach Fellows what is on the website
- New Fellow education at local meetings

4. Action Plan

Tom Sasser and Marlene Eskind Moses thanked all participants for a very productive meeting. They will review the suggested actions and develop a long-range plan for IAFL.