

## **ILPA STRATEGIC PLAN (2021 – 2024)**

### **Background**

ILPA's last strategic plan ran from 2018 to 2021. This plan will run from October 2021 until September 2024.

### **ILPA's Core Objectives**

The Immigration Law Practitioners' Association is a membership organisation established in 1984 by a group of leading immigration law practitioners to:

- Promote and improve the advising and representation of immigrants
- Provide information to members and others on domestic and European immigration, asylum and nationality law
- Secure a non-racist, non-sexist, just and equitable system of immigration refugee and nationality law practice

### **ILPA's Vision**

To be a member led organisation that enables practitioners to deliver high quality immigration advice.

To provide members with excellent information and training and to effectively influence policy and practice.

### **ILPA's mission**

To provide the services and support needed by our members to enable them to practice effectively. To work with partner organisations and other stakeholders to influence and develop policy and practice.

### **ILPA's Charitable objects**

To advance for the public benefit education and training on the law and related subjects and in particular in the fields of immigration, asylum and nationality law and legal advice and the representation of persons who are or may become immigrants to any part of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man (together "the United Kingdom") from whatever part of the world whether coming or intending to come to the United Kingdom for settlement or for some more limited purpose and for immigrants and emigrants of whatever nationality to or from any other part of the world.

To promote for the public benefit

- i. human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration Of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations, the European Convention On Human Rights and the Human Rights Act (1998), with particular reference to the rights to asylum, to a nationality, to freedom of movement and residence and not to be subject to torture or to slavery;
- ii. equality and diversity as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and similar instruments and international human rights treaties concerned with the elimination of discrimination and in particular with the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race or sex; in particular by all or any of the following means
  - Monitoring abuses
  - Research into applicable law policy and practice
  - Educating the public
  - Contributing to the sound administration of the law
  - Raising awareness

- Promoting public support
- Promoting respect for human rights
- Promoting respect for the rule of law with particular reference to the law pertaining to immigration, asylum and nationality
- Coordinating the work of immigration, asylum and nationality law practitioners.

To prepare, edit, print, publish issue acquire and circulate any newspapers, magazines, periodicals, books, pamphlets or other publications in whatever medium that the Company may think desirable for the promotion of its objects.

To organise, maintain and promote courses, conferences and the like in connection with the objects of the Company.

To establish and maintain a bureau of information for the benefit of the company and the members of the Association.

To take such steps by personal or written appeals, public meetings or otherwise as may from time to time be deemed expedient for the purpose of procuring contributions to the funds of the Company and/or the Association in the shape of donations, annual subscriptions, grants or otherwise.

### STRATEGIC AIMS AND PRIORITIES

All strategic aims and priorities identified will need to be measurable and baseline data will be collected in order that ILPA can monitor progress against the priorities during the life of the plan.

#### **1. Increase ILPA membership so that a greater proportion of practitioners in immigration, asylum and nationality law are ILPA members**

- Increase the number of ILPA members and contacts, both senior or eminent practitioners and junior practitioners. In the next three-year period ILPA will continue to focus on junior practitioners building contacts with law schools and universities to increase ILPA's youth membership and connections. We are also planning a range of outreach activities to schools and colleges.
- To work to improve access to the sector to counter the limited diversity among immigration practitioners particularly in senior roles, to address the systemic racism prevalent in the sector both within immigration systems and workplaces, and to help foster a more welcoming environment for racialised practitioners by supporting and implementing the recommendations from our Racial Justice and Equality working group
- To increase the diversity of our membership by supporting and implementing the recommendations from our Racial Justice and Equality working group
- To continue to develop stronger links with existing ILPA members who are based outside London and encourage more individuals and organisations outside London to join ILPA to increase the geographic diversity of membership.
- To increase the level of engagement of barristers and barrister chambers
- To review our fee structure
- To enable practitioners to commit to improving the quality of immigration advice through sharing best practice, accessing ILPA's information and updates, attending working group meetings and ILPA training sessions and using the Member of ILPA logo
- Increase the number of OISC practitioners who are ILPA members – especially as many staff in Non-Governmental Organisations are OISC regulated

- Promote the Strategic Legal Fund via regional and thematic working groups to reach wider network of practitioners
- Use the Strategic Legal Fund to help grow ILPA membership by spreading information about ILPA to a wider network of organisations that qualify
- Promote ILPA membership through the use of social media, marketing materials and joint working with other relevant organisations

## **2. An essential information resource for our members**

- Continue to develop and improve the website as a one stop shop where members can access resources.
- Information provided to members via e mail focuses on:
  - Guidance
  - Home Office updates
  - Home Office correspondence
  - Case notes
  - NGO reports
  - Papers from meetings.
- Maintain a bureau of information for our members and update our library resource
- Develop our communications function so that more information is disseminated via social media channels in particular
- To continue to develop our Google Group
- To develop further networking, collaborative working and peer support models to the benefit of our members.

## **3. Deliver a high quality training programme that meets the needs of our members**

- Use our training programme to raise standards of advice and representation and to establish a community of learners amongst ILPA's membership and to attract non specialists. Offer training at all levels.
- Deliver a training programme that is responsive to recent legal developments and includes core elements that members can rely on being run at certain times of the year to enable them to plan attendance in advance
- To deliver an agile and flexible training programme that is member led and responsive
- Continue to deliver the majority of our training on-line and a mix of all day annual conferences and seminars/workshops alongside our traditional training programme. To also pilot hybrid sessions that involve a mix of on line and in person attendees
- Continue to deliver some free training to those who need it most and are least able to pay.
- Continue to expand pool of tutors and offer more skills based training
- To review our training fees

## **4. ILPA's influencing work makes best use of its resources and reputation**

Key legal policy themes:

- a) Post Brexit immigration system and New Plan for Immigration. Including focus on:
  - Aftermath of the EUSS deadline
  - Front End Services
  - Divergence within routes
  - Right to work checks
  - Innovator and ICT routes
  - No Recourse to Public Funds
  - Simplification of the Rules Taskforce

- Cost implications of immigration applications especially Immigration Health Surcharge, fees more generally and fee waivers
- b) Nationality and Borders Bill and Judicial Review and Criminal Justice Bill
- Co-ordinating role for ILPA
  - Input into Home Affairs Select Committee inquiries
  - Briefing on the Bill
- c) Asylum
- ILPA role on Asylum Strategic Engagement Group – and working with other key partners especially Asylum Reform Initiative
  - ILPA work with Home Office teams and senior officials to improve quality of decision making
  - Assisting the Home Office to reduce the asylum backlog in a manner that is not harmful to people
  - Ongoing work on asylum accommodation
  - Independent support to UASCs
- d) Support access to justice, through legal aid, the Strategic Legal Fund and the wider availability of publicly funded advice
- ILPA role on new Legal Aid stakeholder group
  - New Legal aid contracts
  - ILPA participation in Civil Contracts Consultative Group
  - ILPA joint working with Legal Aid Practitioners Group and others (especially Law Society)
  - ILPA input into All Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
  - ILPA management of the Strategic Legal Fund
- e) Detention and deportations
- Detained duty advice scheme
  - Detained Fast Track Scheme
  - Tribunal Procedures Rules Committee
  - Charter Flights
- f) Rights of Appeal
- Work to ensure rights of appeal are effectively maintained across all aspects of the immigration rules including the PBS and for domestic violence applications
- g) Wendy Williams Review
- h) Modern Slavery and trafficking

*How we go about influencing:*

1) Parliamentary work

ILPA influences the outcome of parliamentary debates and parliamentary scrutiny of legislation; developing parliamentary contacts; building relationships; focusing on key amendments and MPs case workers and the four staff employed by the RAMP project.

Initial focus will be:

- Nationality Borders Bill

- Judicial Review and Courts Bill
- Other relevant Bills
- Home Affairs Select Committee
- All Party Parliamentary Groups – Legal Aid; Refugee; Migration; and Visas and Immigration.
- Other Parliamentary Committees
- Other Parliamentary events

2) Home Office

ILPA influences Home Office policy, practice and decision making through attendance at official meetings and bilateral meetings and by responding to consultations – key focus of our work – need to continue to involve wider group of ILPA members; develop further contacts etc.

- 3) ILPA influences the policies and practices of official bodies and courts and tribunals
- 4) ILPA involves our members in our influencing work and we work more closely with other organisations

***Outcomes of our influencing work***

1. To make the immigration system fairer and more effective by providing regular feedback and evidence to the Home Office to improve their decision making
  2. To use our technical knowledge and expertise to inform others in the sector and outside of it
  3. To support strategic litigation so that some aspects of government policy can be effectively challenged in the courts to benefit a wider group of migrants.
  4. To facilitate quality access to justice by ensuring our members are kept informed of changes and are offered relevant training and support
- 5. Support legal analysis and publications that will lead to improvements in practice**
- To further develop our Monthly on line publication commissioning articles and case notes
  - Continue to make better use of the Journal of Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Law
- 6. Support litigation that will promote respect for the rule of law**
- ILPA to inform the Strategic Legal Fund (SLF) and the expert panel on emerging legal issues highlighted by members and working groups
  - SLF to help ILPA by highlighting legal issues emerging from applications, and from calls for specific applications from the expert panel to inform ILPA's work
  - Evidence gathering and witness statements to support cases being led by members
- 7. Ensure that ILPA is an accountable and effective organisation**
- Finance***
- Maintain the financial stability of ILPA through the monitoring of our financial strategy, reserves policy and fundraising strategy. New fundraising post will help us review our fundraising strategy and approach to income generation.
  - To develop and adapt how the Strategic Legal Fund interacts with our work and decide on our fundraising strategy for the SLF after the current round of grants run out in 2024
  - To adopt an income generation and fundraising strategy to secure future viability. By the end of the three year period ILPA needs to be running with a balanced budget and with a reserves level that continues to meet our reserves policy

**Governance**

- To ensure that ILPA is an organisation that is accountable to its members through the implementation of our annual survey of members and other feedback tools and meetings with members
- To develop and improve the governance of ILPA including further reviews of our constitution and ensuring we are adhering to the ACEVO code of governance.
- To monitor our reputation and the use of our logo.
- Adhere to the principles of our anti-racism pledge that set out our key action points about what we will continue to do to challenge prejudice and racism. Including supporting our members to make complaints against racial injustice and inequality.
- Develop cross-sector links with other charities and organisations working towards a fair and equal society.

**Premises**

- ILPA's current lease expires on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 but the landlord and ILPA have a break clause in January 2023. So need to review ILPA's premises needs in the new COVID world and what steps we then need to take.

**As an employer**

- Ensure that ILPA both as an employer and a membership organisation respects equality and diversity principles and that we effectively represent all our members.
- That ILPA is an exemplar employer that looks after its employees. ILPA is also now an accredited employer with the Living Wage Foundation
- Look at other causes that ILPA could sign up to as an organisation

**ILPA supporting functions**

- Develop and implement a communications strategy to effectively support our work. Issue press releases and staff to collect quotes and comments.
- Produce a Digital Strategy and then review it regularly and ensure that ILPA has the necessary IT structure in place.