



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

## Candidate's presentation form for EAEA PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS ELECTIONS 2021

Please introduce yourself with this form and make your motivation known to the members of EAEA who will elect the new executive board in June 2021

***To be returned to EAEA until 22 May 2021***

***to Gina Ebner [gina.ebner@eaea.org](mailto:gina.ebner@eaea.org) AND***

***Sari Pohjola [sari.pohjola@kvs.fi](mailto:sari.pohjola@kvs.fi)***

<b>NAME</b>	Alex Stevenson
<b>TITLE</b>	Mr
<b>ORGANISATION</b>	National Learning and Work Institute
<b>NOMINATED BY</b>	National Learning and Work Institute
<b>RUNNING FOR</b>	<input type="radio"/> President <input checked="" type="radio"/> Board member

Please attach your ID picture to the e-mail.





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1. Please describe your current position.

Since 2014, I've worked as a Head of Programme at Learning and Work Institute (L&W), an independent policy, research and development organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. L&W works in England and Wales, and as the UK's national coordinator for the European Agenda for Adult Learning, has close links with partners in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

At L&W, I lead two key programmes of work linked to our strategic priorities. The first of these is **essential and life skills**, where I lead research and development projects on adult basic skills for the Department for Education (DfE), local government and other clients and funders. This work has included the development of L&W's 'Citizens' Curriculum' model for local, participatory and integrated basic and life skills learning, and contributions to European collaborations on basic skills, such as EAEA's Life Skills for Europe project. The programme also includes our work on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and learning for refugees and migrants. I recently worked on national projects to develop teaching and learning materials to support the integration of refugees with low English language and literacy skills (for the Home Office) and on materials to support volunteers to organise non-formal English language conversation clubs for migrants (for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government).

The second programme of work focuses on **learning in communities**. I manage L&W's network of local authority adult education services, and through the EAEA / EARLALL REGALE project, will be working with this network to explore how capacity for adult education can be strengthened at the regional level. In England, adult education budgets are devolved in nine large city regions. I have worked with the Greater London Authority to develop an outcomes framework for London's adult education budget, and with other city regions to support them to take on their future responsibilities as commissioners and funders of adult education. A number of my recent projects have focused on supporting adult education providers in the use of social metrics tools to measure the impact of non-formal learning, looking at a wide range of outcomes such as improved health and wellbeing, increased social capital and greater employability. I am currently working on a new project for the Greater London Authority, exploring how social prescription to adult education opportunities can benefit adults with mental health needs.

2. How would you like to contribute to the work of EAEA, based on your experience in your organisation?

I believe that I am well placed to contribute to EAEA's work, as much of my experience and expertise in policy and practice aligns well with current priority areas for EAEA.



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I have recently taken over responsibility as the UK's National Co-ordinator for the European Agenda on Adult Learning, which provides a broad overview of current issues and trends in adult learning in all four UK nations, as well as access to opportunities to engage with the European Commission and policy makers from other European countries through regular peer learning activities. This means that there is the opportunity to advance and advocate for EAEA policy positions through this work.

I have a particular specialism in adult basic skills and life skills – a topic which is of particular importance to EAEA, and which is now high on the EU policy agenda. I contributed as a partner in EAEA's Life Skills for Europe project, leading on the development of the Life Skills for Europe framework output, and presenting on this at a project event in Patras, Greece and at the launch event in Brussels in October 2018. The project has since achieved considerable impact across Europe, and I recently represented it at a workshop organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, Seville to help inform the development of the new European Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Competency framework (LifEComp). I have extensive knowledge, contacts and networks in adult basic skills in the UK. In 2020, I was elected to the Executive Committee of the European Basic Skills Network, so I am well placed to work collaboratively to ensure that the work of EAEA and EBSN is complementary.

Finally, the work that I have led on new approaches to measuring the impact of non-formal adult education can benefit the full range of EAEA's work to promote the impact and benefits of adult education on active citizenship and participation, basic and life skills, social cohesion and employment.



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### 3. What are your motivations as a candidate?

I have been involved in adult education for almost 20 years, and my background is primarily as a practitioner. I hold a post-graduate certificate in post-compulsory education, and a master's degree in teaching English for speakers of other languages. My first experience as a teacher came whilst working as a foreign language assistant in a secondary school in Hellersdorf, Berlin as a university student. I began my career as an adult educator on a temporary basis, teaching English to asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants whilst looking for graduate employment in other fields. However, I began to become more and more interested in language teaching and learning, but most importantly in the transformational impact that learning has on people's lives. Throughout my subsequent career in teaching, and in developing and managing the curriculum adult education services, further education colleges and independent training providers, I have always tried to keep a focus on providing the kinds of learning that meet the diverse needs of different kinds of adult learners, and helps them achieve their aspirations in learning, work and in life.

More recently, since joining the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) in 2013 and subsequently at L&W, I have been privileged to work at a national and European level undertaking research and development work to promote better policy and practice in adult basic skills and learning for refugees and migrants, and to make the case for adult education more broadly. Since my first teaching experiences in Berlin, I have always had an interest in international co-operation and partnerships, and have been particularly pleased to contribute to EAEA projects and events, as well as other European initiatives in L&W's role as the UK national co-ordinator for EAAL. I firmly believe in the value of sharing experiences, effective practices and developing common approaches to shared challenges across national boundaries – something that I believe will continue to have value, and which I am keen to support, whatever the eventual future relationship of the UK with the European Union.

### 4. Which other information would you like to share with the EAEA members?

Away from my duties at L&W, I pursue a range of interests which include history, reading, Manchester United Football Club, England's national cricket team, hiking, good beer and live music, and occasionally dust down my Fender Telecaster to jam funk and soul with a few friends.