

Candidate's presentation form for EAEA President and Executive Board elections 2023

Please introduce yourself with this form and make your motivation known to the members of EAEA, who will elect the new Executive Board in Zagreb, Croatia on 6 June 2023. We kindly ask you to submit the nomination latest on 30 April 2023 so that we can include it in the EAEA General Assembly papers, to be shared with members in early May. Please note that the information that you include below will be displayed on a dedicated page of the EAEA website.

Full name of the candidate Alex Stevenson

Title Mr

Organisation National Learning and Work Institute

Nominated by National Learning and Work Institute

Email address (of the member introducing the nomination) alex.stevenson@learningandwork.org.uk

Running for

Please upload an ID picture.



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 has close links with our 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 and life skills, such as EAEA's Life Skills for Europe project (2016 - 18). 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 contribution to EAEA's RegALE project consortium, working with this network to explore how capacity for adult education can be strengthened at the regional level. In England, adult education budgets are now devolved to large city regions. I have worked with a number of city regions to support adult learning opportunities in local communities, including on social prescribing to adult education in London.

How would you like to contribute to the work of EAEA, based on the 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. Until the UK programme ended in December 2021, I acted as the UK's National Co-ordinator for the European Agenda on Adult Learning, providing me with a good overview of adult learning in the UK.

My specialist expertise in adult basic skills and life skills is topic of particular importance to EAEA, and one which is now high on the EU policy agenda. 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.

During my previous two terms as an EAEA Executive Board member, I have contributed to a range of activities, including shortlisting applications for the Grundtvig award, helping to review EAEA's membership fee structure, providing feedback on EAEA policy positions and joining working groups on quality and for non-EU members of EAEA. I have a full attendance record at EAEA board meetings, online and in person, and make an active contribution to Board discussions and decision-making.

I have the full support of Learning and Work Institute for my nomination, and am able to share insights from across the range of our work on adult learning, employment and social inclusion.

What are your motivations as a candidate?

I have been involved in adult education for over 20 years, initially as a practitioner and latterly working in policy research. 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.

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 always have value, and which I am keen to support.

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What other information would you like to share with 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.