

REPORT ON THE 2013 E.MALUMNI GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE LAUNCH OF THE GLOBAL CAMPUS NETWORK

The E.MAlumni Association 3rd General Assembly (GA) was held at the Monastery of San Nicolo in Lido from 25 to 26 January. The event drew 60+ participants to the Monastery of San Nicolo and more than 140 people followed the event online through the live web-stream of as well as on Facebook and Twitter.

The General Assembly was followed by the launch of the Global Campus Alumni initiative, which held its first working meeting on Sunday 27 January 2013.

Please find the link to the agenda [here](#).

General Assembly

One of the major annual events, the GA was this year held in Venice with the goals to re-live the E.MA experience, to reconnect with former colleagues and to refresh our thinking on what's going on in our field!

The three-day sequence of events commenced on Friday 25 January with the E.MA Career Day which counted on the participation of four former graduates as guest speakers from different sectors. In its third year, this important cooperation between the EIUC and the E.MAlumni Association has proven particularly popular as it provides current students with valuable insight into possible career paths after graduation and a chance to quiz alumni about their experiences.

The E.MAlumni General Assembly started on Saturday 26 January with welcoming speeches of Cristiano Gianolla and Lydia Malmedie (E.MAlumni Board 2.0), Professor Florence Benoit-Rohmer (EIUC Secretary General – video message) and Doctor Angela Melchiorre (E.MA Programme Director).

The GA continued with the presentations of members of the Board 2.0 (the Board), elected in July 2012. Members of the Board first presented the goals of the Association which include community building, institutional strengthening and enhanced cooperation between EIUC, E.MA and the Global Campus. After this, each member of the Board 2.0 presented selected ongoing activities. The presentation of these activities started with the briefing on the E.MAlumni Association career services, which include mentoring, access to job postings and to alumni profiles. The recently employed Executive Officer will manage the existing resource list, update it and publish it on the website.

The current Mentoring Programme finished its first pilot cohort and has been evaluated. There were some very positive comments along suggestions for further

improvement. The new Executive Officer will take play an important role in taking this Programme to its next stage and the call for applications will be posted soon.

With regard to the E.MAday programme, the Board stressed that hitherto this activity was very successful in Utrecht and Maastricht and added that some students asked for more of these events to take place.

The Board also discussed fundraising and stressed that it was important to determine the target group and raise money from our network. The main donor of the Association is EIUC, but more sponsors are needed to ensure greater independence and diverse sources of income. It was also noted that it is necessary to find new ways to expand membership and retain members.

This first section in the GA programme was ended with brief presentations of the following activities: E.MAAlumniInTheField, E.MA hubs and E.MA Ambassador, E.MA Activism, E.MA Arrivals and E.MA Ag.

For more details, please see the [E.MA Alumni Association Workplan](#) and the presentations.

Short Introduction of Global Campus (GC) Alumni Associations

Following the GA, representatives of the GC Masters Programme from Eastern Europe (Sos Avetyan), the Asia-Pacific region (Laura McManus) and Latin America (David Medina) presented their respective programmes which are part of the [Global Campus](#) Alumni initiative.

Unfortunately, three representatives were not able to be present in person due to reasons beyond the control of the Board, despite great efforts by the Board and EIUC to make it possible. Niaz Ahmed, representative of the Asia-Pacific region, was unable to attend himself due to visa issues but was able to send Laura McManus as a representative stepped in at very short notice and Niaz was able to participate in part of the GA via skype link. Similarly, the representative of the Balkan regions, President of the Association Alumni of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies (ACIPS) Lajla Zaimovic Kurtovic from Sarajevo, was unable to attend due to unforeseen health issues. Attendance of Horace Adjolohoun, alumni coordinator for the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria for the African region was jeopardised by visa issues.

Working Groups (WG) – exchange of ideas and draft of recommendations to strengthen strategic aims of the E.MA Alumni Association

After the short introduction of GC Alumni Associations, the GA continued in a more

participatory way by breaking out into working groups on different themes:

- Community Building. Ongoing initiatives: E.MAAlumni in the field, E.MAHubs, E.MAG;
- Career Service
- Institutional Strengthening (Including the Statute); Enhance cooperation between EIUC and the GC

Following group discussions, each group presented its recommendations as follows:

Community building:

- Integrate GC in the E.MAHub programme (software to ensure to integrate new projects like E.MAHubs...);
- Necessity to centralize communication through FB and email;
- Majority of people do not know about the website;
- Importance of getting information instantly and to know what is going on;
- Issue of E.MAHubs and E.MAmbassadors—it would be good to centralize membership on country level. One person should be in charge of all members in one country who would coordinate the group;
- Ambassadors in certain countries should be differently coloured on the website so that they would be more easily identified;
- Setting up couch-surfing possibilities for E.MArrivals.

Career service:

- Raise awareness that everybody can post job opportunities
- When your internship finishes alert E.MAAlumni
- People can email info@emalumni.org if they themselves do not want to post, so that the admin can do it for them
- Advertise profiles in digest (only for active members)
- Lobby/target specific alumni organizations
- Sell log-in to recruiters in agencies
- Data on which institutions employ Alumni
- Exclusive job opportunities

This WG also provided us with suggestions for the mentoring programme:

Most feedback received from the results achieved in the pilot year was positive but there is room for improvement. More detailed guidelines for mentors should be given (provide them with some sort of a co-coaching manual, but also organize online seminars) as well as more attention should be paid to choose mentors and

pairing of mentors and mentees. Finally, pairs should share their good practices with others as well as there should also be a website forum area to share the practices.

One of the alumni suggested: "traffic lights system" for alumni profiles: green if you are available immediately; orange if you have a job, but are looking for a new one and red if you have a permanent job and are not interested. She also suggested that it would be good to divide (filter) profiles into sections (according to specialties).

Institution building:

Strengthening the cooperation between EIUC and GC:

- Have links with other alumni associations members of GC;
- Publish some joint announcements, disseminate and publish common statements;
- Share publications; contribute altogether to these publications; share call for papers for these publications;
- Common database for readers;
- How we can level all associations; some of them are newly established or how to make the associations stronger and more established?
- Raise visibility of GC before other institutions (also good for more job opportunities)
- Create one unified network (we can co-exist, but share strategies);
- Have common forum where alumni, students can post issues, jobs...;
- Really important to establish project management system (so that alumni can also launch their own projects...).

One of the suggestions was also an internship exchange programs between universities.

Defining the Annual Theme for 2013

Following the WG, the GA discussed the annual theme for 2013 and suggested the following topics which will be published on the website for members to vote on.

1. "Human rights and the financial crisis"
2. "Forgotten crisis: no news, is not good news"
3. "Immigration and borders"...
4. "Human Rights of regression after the Arab spring" (follow up with E.MAlumni annual theme 2011). As regression after the progress of the Arab Spring.
5. "Communicating and educating youth for Human Rights"

6. "Crisis, social upraise and Human Rights"
7. "Right to participation in public life and inclusion"
8. "Full participation through all Human Rights?"
9. "Solidarity, charity or cultural imperialism? - Promoting Human Rights abroad"

Podium debate on "Intercultural Human Rights or Playing God in the South?"

Moderators: Cristiano Gianolla and Lydia Malmedie

Participated by: Sos Avetyian; Niaz Ahmed (skype); Laura McManus; David Medina, Emilia Venetsanou (E.MAAlumni) and Iune Baravalle (E.MAAlumni).

The afternoon events ended with the podium debate "Intercultural Human Rights or Playing God in the South." The discussion, moderated by Cristiano Gianolla and Lydia Malmedie, started off with short statements by each of the podium members which included the three GC Alumni representatives present and Niaz via Skype as well as two alumni selected on the basis of their international profile (Emilia Venetsanou; Lune Baravalle). The debate was subsequently opened to the floor.

Unfortunately, Niaz Ahmed could not fully participate in the discussion due to insufficient quality of internet connection. However, he was able to understand the audience present in the Aula Magna and his interventions were eventually summarized in writing through skype chat.

Global Campus Alumni Associations Network Launch

The GA concluded with the launch of the Global Campus Alumni. Marco Baldan, EIUC Global Campus Project Manager, gave an introductory speech on "Global Campus of Regional Masters: a truly global programme." He stressed that the mission of the programme was to educate the next generation of human rights defenders. The project involves 80 universities on 5 continents. Its aims are: alumni networking; involvement of alumni, development of a long-term perspective as well as to create a learning platform for everybody.

Founder of the E.MA Programme, Professor Antonio Papisca from the University of Padua, concluded the official programme of the day with a keynote speech on 'Human Rights in the Global Perspective – Intercultural Achievement in the Regional Context' which can be viewed [here](#) in full.

All the participants of the GA were invited to conclude the day at the Nicelli Airport and were later joined by Professor Florence Benoit-Rohmer and Professor Fabrizio Marrella.

Global Campus Alumni Associations Meeting

The meeting started with short presentations of each regional master and was followed by ideas for cooperation and identifying the priorities. Based on those, the following short, medium and long-term objectives were suggested:

Short-Term Objectives (6 months)

- Institutional strengthening (training of coordinators through the skype meetings on best practices);
- Newsletter cooperation
- website assessment (working group will be established to see if it is possible to replicate the E.MAlumni website for other GC at 3 levels: whether it is possible technically, politically and whether E.MAlumni Association allows it at all);
- E.MActivism prize (we will try to coordinate the prize; i.e. we organize the selection process and then students elect);
- Sharing the link of other associations website.

Medium-Term Objective (1 year)

- Create common website of the 3 associations that do not have one (Latin America, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe);
- Joint memberships; associate membership (opening network to non-alumni. We want them to enrich our alumni network in order to increase the number of members, however, we concluded that we should be careful who these new members will be);
- Concrete steps in institutional building of the association.

Long-Term (more than 1 year)

- Unified newsletter;
- Unified website;
- Rotation of representation at GC Council meeting

Conclusion:

The Board would like to thank EIUC once again for all their support, financially and in kind, to realise these meetings. We would also like to thank everyone for their contributions and efforts to making these events very productive and positive. Please stay connected and get involved in the exciting projects or propose your own. We look forward to hearing from you and to seeing you

again next year.