



Strategic Plan 2012-14

VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Seeking to build on the valuable experiences gained, ideas explored and knowledge acquired as participants in the many and varied exchange programs sponsored by the United States and, further, by way of making a meaningful contribution to Ireland and its people and developing the warm and extensive links that exist between Ireland and the United States, the Ireland United States Alumni Association hereby sets forth its vision and mission for the future:

Vision Statement:

The Ireland United States Alumni Association aims to be the pre-eminent network in Ireland for advocating and promoting the positive contribution of strong Ireland-United States social, economic and cultural relations.

Mission Statement:

By means of establishing a vibrant, sustainable, influential and giving community of alumni, the mission of the Ireland United States Alumni Association is to mobilise and utilise the power, talents, experience and leadership of its alumni in order to make a beneficial contribution to Ireland as a whole. It seeks, in particular, to do this through a number of specific objectives.

Objectives:

Recognising that members are both self-interested (e.g., networking) and altruistic (e.g., looking to give something back), the Association's objectives are to:

- A. Celebrate, promote and champion the mutuality of the Ireland-United States relationship.
- B. Provide opportunities to contribute to Irish society.
- C. Provide a link between alumni and the United States Embassy.
- D. Secure the active participation of alumni.
- E. Foster a sense of belonging to the Association.

CHALLENGES

A major challenge confronting the new Board, office holders and members is to continue the work of the interim Board in building a strong, dynamic and representative alumni association. In this regard, it is of particular importance that members and prospective members are made fully aware of both the Association's objectives and what the Association has to offer them.

Alumni come from a diverse range of established programmes, some of which already have a strong and developed relationship with their alumni. This presents a challenge in

that the Association needs to establish a bond with all of its alumni, while at the same time recognising the attachment alumni may have to specific programmes. In conveying what the Association is capable of offering, therefore, the Board must convey, in clear terms, the value and strength in having an association that transcends specific programmes, thus meeting the needs of a diverse membership, while also recognising the common bond of the Ireland-United States connection.

The funding of the Association's activities constitutes another challenge. In the main, this stems from a core objective of the Association to organise a prestigious programme of high quality events. The costs associated with mounting such a programme are unlikely to be met out of members' dues alone, nor would it be advisable to seek to defray costs by charging for attending events (although some exceptions, such as the annual Conference and Alumni Congress, may apply). This suggests that sponsorship will have to be sought, which, in turn, may have a bearing on the content of any programme of events.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan 2012-14 (inclusive) represents a three-year rolling plan, which will be reviewed and revised at the end of each calendar year to inform the next three-year outlook. Appendix 1 contains the implementation plan for 2012.

Operational Objectives

At an operational level, the Association strives to:

1. Deliver on the Association's vision, mission, and objectives.
2. Build and maintain the membership base.
3. Develop a programme of high calibre and prestigious alumni focused activities and events that provide opportunities/space to network.
4. Communicate effectively with alumni.
5. Develop and maintain links with other alumni associations and organisations.

Build and Maintain the Membership Base

In light of an approximate base of 3,000 beneficiaries of United States' Government funded educational and professional exchange programmes over the past seven decades, the following membership targets have been set to the end of 2014:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Start Year</i>	<i>New Alumni*</i>	<i>New Members</i>	<i>Non-renewals</i>	<i>End Year</i>
2012	100	100	60	-40	220
2013	220	100	80	-60	340
2014	340	100	100	-80	460

* Approximately 100 new alumni participate in exchange programmes each year

In delivering on the objective to build and maintain the membership base, the Association:

- Implements an annual membership drive, led by the Membership Secretary.
- Signs up new alumni at their orientation programmes each year, led by the Membership Secretary.

Programme of Events and Networking

The Association aims to deliver the following main events annually:

- 3 large events
 - Congress and Conference
 - IUSA Annual Lecture
 - Fun/Family Event
- 4 smaller events, which will be promoted as exclusive
 - Prominent Alumni Lecture Series (quarterly)
 - Joint Sessions with Ireland-US Speakers

The Association also leverages opportunistic events (e.g., through the US Embassy) as they arise.

Possible themes for events / activities include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philanthropy • Media • Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship • Culture • Community Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transatlantic Relations |
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Events are monitored to assess their success or otherwise using the following metrics:

- Objectives met
- Numbers attending
- Media coverage (where appropriate)

Communicating with Alumni

Led by the Association’s Communications Secretary, the Association communicates with members through:

- A monthly e-letter
- A dedicated and regularly updated IUSA website
- Emails, as necessary and appropriate

Financing

Financing comes from membership dues and from fees charged for certain, high cost events. Dues are charged as follows:

- Single membership (full) – €40
- Single membership (student) – €15
- Single membership (new alumni) – complimentary for first year
- Block fee paid by IFAA provides its members with IUSA membership

Annual membership covers the following (and any additional benefits as may accrue):

<i>IUSA Benefits</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Non-members</i>
Free and priority access to all IUSA events/activities	Yes*	No
Access to members-only section of IUSA website	Yes	No
Monthly e-letter	Yes	No
Reduced registration fee for annual conference	Yes	No
Access to select partner association events/activities	Yes	No
Priority access to US Embassy events/activities	Yes	No

* Except where a fee may be required, which will be discounted for members.

Opportunities for sponsorship of the Association and of individual activities/events will be pursued, as appropriate.

Links with Other Alumni Associations and Organisations

The Association partners with the Irish Fulbright Alumni Association (IFAA), the Washington-Ireland Program Alumni Network (WIPAN), and the US Embassy to mutual benefit.

The Association will become a member of the European Network of Alumni Associations (ENAM), subject to the Board ratifying same when membership terms and conditions become available.

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Responsibility for implementing the Strategic Plan lies with the Association's Board of Directors. As provided in the Articles of Association, the Board comprises a maximum 12 members, plus an *ex officio* from each of the Irish Fulbright Alumni Association (IFAA) and the Washington Ireland Program Alumni Network (WIPAN). The board meets at least six times per year or as frequently as business requires.

Board Office Holders

In terms of structure, the Board comprises the following office holders:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Secretary
- Communications Secretary

In accordance with the Articles of Association, the Association may approve the establishment of such additional office holders as it deems necessary.

Board Office Holder Duties and Responsibilities

1. President
 - a. Responsible for the conduct of meetings of the Association
 - i. Preside over meetings of the Board and the Association
 - ii. Establish the agenda for Board meetings
 - iii. Arrange dates, times and venues for meetings
 - iv. Decide points of order
 - b. Oversee the implementation of any strategic plans agreed by the Association
 - c. Preside over election of office holders and the appointment of Board members
 - d. Prepare and submit an annual report on the Association at the Association's AGM
2. Vice-President
 - a. Assist in the preparation of the annual report
 - b. Chair meetings in the absence of the President
 - c. Assist in the drafting of the Association's strategic plans

3. Secretary
 - a. Take minutes of Board meetings and other meetings of the Association, including the AGM
 - b. Maintain communications between the Board, the Association and the Embassy of the United States in Dublin
 - c. Look after general correspondence
 - d. Distribute agendas in advance of meetings of the Association
 - e. Co-ordinate meetings of the Association
 - f. Assist the Chair in structuring meetings
4. Treasurer
 - a. Keep and maintain the accounts of the Association
 - b. Lodge all monies in the Association's bank account as soon as is practicable following their receipt
 - c. Pay all authorised outlays on the part of the Association by cheque, signed by at least two members of the Board one of whom should be the Treasurer
 - d. Have all payments by the Association approved and authorised by the Board
 - e. Prepare a Statement of Income and Expenditure for presentation at the AGM of the Association
5. Membership Secretary
 - a. Maintain a current database record of members' contact details, payment of membership fees, and resignations
 - b. Coordinate and execute the annual membership drive
 - c. In conjunction with the Communications Director, communicate and promote events to members
6. Communications Secretary
 - a. Lead planning and implementation of a communications strategy for the Association
 - b. Develop a newsletter for the Association's alumni and make this available for the Ireland Alumni Community on the website State Alumni
 - c. Seek to generate publicity for the Association's activities and programme of events
 - d. In conjunction with the Membership Secretary, communicate and promote events to members

Committees

As provided for in the Articles of Association, the Board may establish such committees as are necessary to deliver on the Association's mission, vision and objectives. These committees may be theme based (e.g., education) or task based (e.g., planning annual conference). The Board approves the purposes for which a committee is to be established, along with its membership, the Chair, and reporting arrangements.

Current theme committees:

1. Economic
2. Education

Possible theme committees:

1. Community/voluntary sector
2. Culture
3. Politics

Possible task based committees:

1. Planning annual conference
2. Planning annual lecture
3. Planning prominent alumni lecture series

In terms of governance, each committee is to:

- Be chaired by a member of the IUSA Board.
- Consist of up to 12 members, including non-board members.
- Elect a Secretary to prepare minutes and assist the Chair with communications for the working group.

In terms of objectives, each committee is to:

- Ensure its work delivers on the Association's strategic objectives.
- Act as a point of contact for interested alumni within the alumni network.
- Solicit ideas from the alumni network for possible events and activities.
- Make recommendations to the Board for alumni events and activities.
- Organise at least one alumni event – project, speaker, focus group – each year.
- Organise a themed parallel session for the Annual Alumni Conference.
- Highlight alumni working in the field through State Alumni.
- Publicise relevant events of interest through State Alumni.

Appendix 1 – Ireland United States Alumni Association Implementation Plan for 2012

Event/Activity	IUSA Objective	Operational Objective	When	Cost	Responsible
Inaugural Alumni Conference	A, B, C, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4	January		IUSA Board and US Embassy
IUSA e-letter	A, B, C, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Monthly		Communications Secretary
Promote events effectively through website, monthly newsletter, State Alumni	D, E	2, 4	Ongoing		Communications Secretary
Planning for 2013 Alumni Conference	A, B, C, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4	Ongoing		IUSA Board and US Embassy
Pathways to Parental Involvement Seminar on Irish education system	B, D, E	1, 2, 3	February		Mary Ryan and Education Committee
Entrepreneurship Seminar	A, B, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	March		Siobhan Byrne Learat and Economic Committee
Redesign IUSA website	A, D, E	1, 2, 4	Quarter 1		Leah Yeung (WIPAN), Communications Secretary and IUSA Board
US – Ireland Trade & Investment Relationship: Regional alumni outreach to Limerick, Cork and Galway (Waterford may be included as well)	A, B, C, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4	Quarter 1		Brian Cotter (IUSA) and Katie Keogh (US Embassy) with support from regionally-based alumni, partner institutions and local county/city councils
Prominent Alumni Lecture Series (politics; economy; culture; sport; media; community/voluntary sector)	A, B, C, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4		IUSA Board and US Embassy
Education and Poverty Seminar	A, B, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	April		Declan Dunne, Kevin Haugh and Education Committee
Technology Transfer Seminar	A, B, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Quarter 2		Brian Cotter and Economic Committee

Event/Activity	IUSA Objective	Operational Objective	When	Cost	Responsible
Fun/Family Event: Quiz Night/Social Event – possible charity fundraiser	B, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4	Quarter 2/3		IUSA Board
IUSA Annual Lecture	A, B, C, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Quarter 3		IUSA Board
2013 membership drive	D, E	2, 4, 5	November		Membership Secretary
Best Practices in Economic Development	A, B, D, E	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Quarter 4		Ken Germaine and Economic Committee