



International Guidelines

October 2013

The international Guidelines for the English Speaking Unions, ESUs, are to offer guidance, good practice, advice and information, and to provide a source of ideas for officers, committee members and members. It is understood that the operation of each ESU will be dependent on local conditions and needs so we do encourage flexibility and an innovative approach. However each ESU must, of course, operate within the legal constitution, charitable status and general aims of the English Speaking Union.

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1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of The English-Speaking Union is to promote friendship and understanding through the use of the English language. As English becomes more and more widespread throughout the world the ESU is in a unique position to expand its message and make a worthwhile contribution to the stability of diverse nations and cultures worldwide.

Within this framework, however, it is vitally important that each ESU has clear aims and identifies a method of working towards them. The direction of the ESU should be a primary concern both during the forming of the Steering Committee and once the ESU is fully launched

2 THE INITIAL STAGES

Forming an ESU is a task that requires a methodical approach. It is important to be patient and careful to ensure that initial enthusiasm will lead to a successful ESU.

This document explains the procedures that need to be followed in order to set up an ESU. Outlined below is a short timetable towards creating an ESU. (Please remember that this is a guide and the reality may be different for each ESU).

a) Initial contact with Dartmouth House

As international headquarters of the ESU, it is important to start by contacting Dartmouth House and discussing your ideas with the Head of Membership Development.

b) Discussion

This initial discussion will allow you to identify the needs and objectives of the ESU both in global terms and specifically for the country in question. Targets can be set and the parameters of setting up an ESU explained. A Viability and Sustainability Assessment should be undertaken with the support of the Head of Membership Development prior to any further steps being taken. This will evaluate the local demand for English language programmes, the level of support expected from the host, government or governmental organisations, previous success of organisations with similar aims or structures and potential areas of funding and sponsorship.

c) Contacts

The Head of Membership Development will introduce you to the Director-General of the English-Speaking Union at Dartmouth House. A discussion will take place as to the contacts and relationships that you might wish to make in your country. This usually comprises of contacts at the British Embassy or High Commission, the British Council and prominent Anglophone organisations. It is helpful if you can arrange to meet or speak with a primary contact from each of these organisations to ascertain their level of support the English-Speaking Union. An ESU will not be set up without the support of the British Embassy/High Commission and British Council in that country.

d) Formation of a Steering Committee

Please see section 'Steering Committee' below.

e) Business Plan

Prior to ratification, the ESU must submit a business plan to Dartmouth House. Please be aware that no funding is available from Dartmouth House and this should be sought

independently by each ESU. The business plan should include a robust financial strategy and a growth and sustainably strategy for the following three years. The plan should include the following:

- Methods of member recruitment, identification of potential target groups and a target number of members
- Intended sources of funding, including corporate membership, sponsorship, member fees and private donations
- A target group of schools that the ESU will approach to involve in the International Public Speaking Competition
- A target group of universities and academic organisations that the ESU will target for partnership
- A target group of like-minded cultural organisations that the ESU will target for collaboration
- Programmes which the ESU intends to run or participate in

f) First Programmes

With support and advice from Dartmouth House, programmes will be organised to encourage interest in the ESU. The first programme will be the International Public Speaking Competition, as we consider participation in this programme mandatory for every international English-Speaking Union. The Speech and Debate Team will be available to share resources and best practice with you, as well as provide support.

For specific information regarding the International Public Speaking Competition, please see the competition handbook.

g) Ratification

After a successful period of 'Steering', the ESU can apply for ratification from the International Council.

Ratification will be agreed on the basis of their presentation to the International Council, the Secretary-General's assessment, and the agreement to:

- Uphold the good name and reputation of the English-Speaking Union
- Participate actively in the international programmes of the English-Speaking Union
- Accept responsibility for the resolution of internal disputes and divisions

The ESU must also have:

- Twenty fee-paying members in order to apply for ratification
- Have secured funding for at least twelve months of operation, which will cover the costs involved with running the International Public Speaking Competition, travel expenses to attend the following International Council Meeting, costs associated with meetings and holding their launch. Evidence of this funding will need to be provided to Dartmouth House prior to ratification.

Once the ESU has been ratified, the Memorandum of Understanding will be signed by the Chairman of the new ESU and the Chairman of the English-Speaking Union, Dartmouth House.

h) Official opening

After ratification, the English-Speaking Union will be officially launched at a launch event. The steering committee, the Secretary-General of the International Council, the Chairman of the English-Speaking Union and Head of Membership from Dartmouth House, British organisations based locally and other ESU chairmen will be invited. The event should be covered by local media, especially if it features a prominent speaker or VIP guest.

3 THE STEERING COMMITTEE

A committee should be put together to lead the formation of the ESU. It should have as wide a range of people as possible. A balanced committee will lead to a balanced programme and a good mix of ideas. This is a very important initial stage, and will be conducted with support and advice from Dartmouth House.

- You should discuss with Dartmouth House any existing contacts they have in the country
- You should contact English-Speaking Alumni in the local area to request their involvement
- You should approach a mix of prominent business people, educators, politicians and diplomats

The purpose of the committee is threefold:

1. To identify the role of the ESU within the community and ways of fulfilling this.
2. To organise a few pilot schemes for the ESU. ESU London are available to give help and guidance with this.
3. To encourage people to join the ESU and create a membership, in the course of achieving 1. and 2.

Once you have confirmed the members which will make up your steering committee, and a list has been submitted to Dartmouth House, the Secretary-General will hold a conference call to meet them all and discuss the following steps of arranging the first programmes.

We anticipate that this 'steering' stage should be allowed to run for approximately eighteen months to two years. At the end of this period it is hoped the ESU would be in a position to officially launch following ratification by the International Council.

4 THE COMMITTEE

Committee Members: In planning a committee it is vitally important to have a wide range of people and support from the right areas. Invite individuals who are enthusiastic and who represent educational, professional and commercial areas.

- Educational:** A representative from a university will be in a position to involve academics at all levels from many interested faculties as will a representative from schools at secondary level.
- Arts:** Those in the visual arts and musical fields will also have access to additional sections of the local community.
- Professionals:** People such as lawyers or those in banking are useful for their different perspectives and also for their business contacts. It is useful to have someone who will be a capable treasurer.
- Business:** Business people (including those in the travel industry) are important, both for their interest in taking part in professional exchange programmes and as a potential source of sponsorship.
- Support:** It is important that the new ESU has good support from the beginning. Make sure you enlist this from the local British Council and from relevant Embassies (particularly the British and American).

There are several areas of responsibility to be filled by committee members. The following list can be daunting to those interested in setting up an ESU. Please note that these are suggestions and some people may fill several roles in the early stage of an ESU. However, the position of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary must be filled.

Chairman:

A hardworking and enthusiastic individual - this person will be the key to the future success of the new English-Speaking Union. Charismatic leadership is the essence of Chairmanship. As such, it is not easy to define but there are certain guidelines that can be followed:

- 1 ***Be Positive*** - The aims of the ESU should be translated into practical objectives with achievable targets. Be optimistic about the future of the ESU and proud of the achievements.
- 2 ***Organisation*** - The organisation of your ESU is most important - you cannot and should not do all the work yourself. In meetings be brief, efficient and courteous - committee meetings should never be allowed to "drag on" - generally one hour should be sufficient, and leave time for socialising afterwards. Sort out the key issues that need to be discussed at the meeting and produce an agenda to send out to all members a few days in advance. At the end of the meeting, allow committee members to bring up "Any other business" that they feel needs to be discussed and then decide on the date of the next meeting.
- 3 ***Delegation*** - Divide the Committee functions amongst members of your committee (see above) making use of individual strengths and contacts where possible. If you can find a specific role for each member of the committee, so much the better.

- 4 **Appreciation** - This is crucial to the general well-being of the ESU as well as to the members of the committee. Using the help of general members for events stops an unhealthy isolation of the committee and encourages members to take interest in forthcoming events - they will after all be your future committee!
- 5 **Recruitment** - Encourage new members by making yourself known to them and taking an interest in them - a private word of welcome before or after the meeting. It is vitally important to stimulate further recruitment. Encourage existing members to bring friends along to certain events and be inclusive towards all participants.

Secretary:

A key person who will work closely with the Chairman, take minutes at committee meetings, write general correspondence for the ESU and ensure that people are kept informed of ESU activities (including the International Secretariat at Dartmouth House). It is likely that both the Chairman and Secretary will be listed in the ESU's *International Directory* as the main point of contact.

Treasurer.

To be responsible for overseeing financial viability and producing financial reports to be submitted annually to the International Council.

Membership Secretary:

To service the membership; keeping records up to date, send out renewals for subscriptions, etc. There is also responsibility for encouraging new members to join the ESU, and for planning membership drives.

Media Secretary:

Should take control of the ESU website for the country, posting events, news and committee changes. Responsible for setting up a Facebook account and trying to engage people this way. May wish to create a monthly or bi-annual newsletter to be circulated to all members, other ESUs and Dartmouth House. Should liaise with local press to have ESU news feature in newspapers and news websites.

Programme Co-ordinator (1-2 committee members):

Responsible for enacting committees decisions regarding forthcoming programmes and a programme of events should cover many areas, in order to generate as wide an interest as possible. It may be useful for one person to organise, for example, all the lunch speakers, another to run the debating society etc. They will need to book the venue and contact speakers etc.

Publicity Co-ordinator:

To work closely with the media secretary to market the event to all members and also to the local community to encourage more members to join. Should post events in public spaces such as libraries.

Fundraiser:

It would be beneficial to appoint a member of the Committee to this position, to be responsible for contacting sponsors for individual events and for setting up and maintaining a corporate list,

i.e. a list of companies who pay a larger amount (in the form of a donation) to belong to the ESU.

Two issues that need to be faced by the committee at an early stage are:

1 A Patron/President

The ESU should have a Patron or President, who will act as a non-executive figurehead for the organisation. Invite someone with high profile to give credibility and status to the organisation, if a suitable person is available. The appointment would not be expected to take more than an occasional call on his/her time. For example, in England and Wales the President is HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal.

2 Venue

Establish a central and, if possible, permanent meeting place, often local hotels, or official organisations will provide or subsidise this facility.

The principle of rotation of officers is strongly recommended and is adopted widely within the ESU. An officer should be appointed for a period of three years and can be re-appointed for another three years. At the end of six years, the person should not be appointed to the same office, but could be appointed to a different office. A person can stay on the Committee without time restriction in a general capacity.

It will be desirable to alter committee members' roles, say, every three years to avoid staleness, to introduce new ideas and, very importantly, to spread knowledge and experience within the committee group. Members with new responsibilities can get help and guidance from their predecessor. All members on the committee should undertake a specific role or undertake a specific task such as running a particular event or series of events. It is very important that the Chairman should ensure that there is a Vice-Chairman able to take over the Chairman's role at the appropriate time and also that there are succession planning or contingency arrangements to cover key roles within the committee.

5 MEMBERSHIP

Once the steering committee has been assembled, the members of an ESU pay a membership fee to the ESU. The level of the fee is set by the local ESU, according to local conditions. The ESU in London does not take any of this fee, however, there is a subscription to the International Council from each ESU. This becomes payable after the launch and is calculated according to the membership level. When setting membership fees, please take into account this small amount per person.

The subscription fee should not discourage you from recruiting members as the membership fees will be a stable source of income and will assist the ESU with financing programmes and events.

You must consider what membership benefits you are offering to potential members to persuade them to join. Benefits may include a discount on events, access to member-only events and opportunities to become part of the English speaking community in the local area. Each potential member should be made aware of the aims and objectives of the organisation.

6. THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

The International Council is based in London and it binds together ESUs worldwide. The Council meets annually and at least one representative (maximum two) from each ESU should

participate. The Council is the body that ratifies an ESU, giving it formal status.

Each ESU is an autonomous, national ESU. It is a member of the ESU International Council, the umbrella body for the ESU worldwide.

At present the ESU of the Commonwealth provides the Secretariat and partial funding for the International Council. The Director-General of the ESU of the Commonwealth acts as Secretary-General to the International Council. For historic reasons the ESU of the Commonwealth also shares the Chair of the Council with the ESU of the USA, on a three-yearly basis. As the ESU develops worldwide, however, it may be that in future the Chairman of the International Council could be drawn from a different ESU. A President of the International Council is elected for a term of two years only by the International Council from member countries other than the UK and USA to demonstrate and symbolise the international expansion and diversity of the English-Speaking Union today. The President is authorised by the Council to speak for the English-Speaking Union internationally on appropriate occasions. The President may wish to host an International Council meeting or World Members' Council in their country.

It is vitally important that the Secretariat is kept informed of any moves towards forming an ESU. The International Council cannot recognise an ESU that has not been formed with the full knowledge and participation of the Secretary-General.

7 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF AN ESU

Once an ESU is ratified, there are several minimum requirements of an ESU that must be adhered to for the following reasons:

- The reputational risk to the ESU brand in the international market place should it be used for activities that are not aligned with our charitable mission.
- Vital resources exhausted by Dartmouth House in trying to support and rejuvenate branches that do not promote or comply with the ESU. By closing non-operating branches, we can concentrate our resources on active and growing branches.
- The risk to the quality of the International Public Speaking Contest should an ESU not comply with the rules and regulations set out by Dartmouth House, leading to poor public perception of the event.
- The risk of branches not submitting their annual report or financial information, preventing Dartmouth House from collecting subscription fees and ensuring financial regularity across all branches.

Therefore, minimum requirements of an ESU are as follows:

- To send a participant to the annual IPSC, as chosen by a national competition, unless the ESU applies for extenuating circumstances
- To send at least one delegate to the International Council, unless the ESU applies for extenuating circumstances
- To send a detailed annual report when requested by Dartmouth House, along with a financial statement, by the deadline given
- To pay the subscription fee to the International Council when requested by Dartmouth

House

- To use the branded materials and resources provided by Dartmouth House as communication templates and abide by brand guidelines

Not completing one or a combination of the above can risk the agreement between the ESU and Dartmouth House being placed in abeyance and support from Dartmouth House being withdrawn. ESU committees that wish to continue will be given a timeline to comply with recommendations from Dartmouth House and will be monitored closely by the Head of Membership Development, or they will continue in abeyance until an alternative committee is identified. However, if this is not feasible, the ESU faces full closure.

8 STATUS OF ESUs AND ESU BRANCHES

It is important that the distinction between an ESU and a Branch of the ESU is recognised:

The term "branch" should be used only in a national context to denote ESU groups within that country. Therefore, ESU France represents the national level, but a local group (eg. Bordeaux) is a branch of ESU France. (See below) Thus the formation of branches within a country is the responsibility of the national office. If someone wants to create an ESU in Bordeaux, for example, this would be another branch of ESU France and would be wholly their responsibility. The primary contact with Dartmouth House should always be the national President or Chairman, or his or her assistant.

9 THE ESU AND THE COMMONWEALTH

The term "Commonwealth" has historic connotations and can cause confusion. The English Speaking Union of the Commonwealth refers only to the official title of the national organisation registered in England and Wales. The ESU of the Commonwealth embraces the branches of the ESU of England and Wales and represents the Commonwealth. As the International Directory shows, many Commonwealth countries have now formed their own independent ESUs (Australia, Bermuda, Canada, India, Mauritius, New Zealand and Pakistan). In no sense would a new ESU be subordinate or subject to the Commonwealth. The majority of worldwide ESUs have no connection with the Commonwealth.