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Deadlines: January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15

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Meetings In Geneva Launch Groundbreaking Initiatives

By James E. Malackowski,
President, LES International

LESI held three separate but related meetings in Geneva, Switzerland, during the final week of January: the Expanded Board Planning Meeting, the second meeting of the National Presidents' Council (NPC) and the Global Technology Impact Forum (GTIF) with the concurrent Invent For Humanity Technology Transfer Exchange Fair. It was an incredible five days and the culmination of more than 18 months and thousands of hours of work, not only by those who carried our LES flag to Switzerland, but by many other LES members around the world. By all accounts each of these meetings was an amazing success with GTIF representing a fundamental step forward in the leadership role that LESI has long earned regarding global technology transfer issues.



Attendees of the Expanded Board Planning Meeting were the LESI board, past-presidents, national presidents and committee chairs. The meeting included a detailed discussion of LESI administrative needs and the benefits which may be achieved from a part-time professional executive director. The consensus of those present was that the board should move forward to consider such a role. Considerable discussion was also had regarding use of Paid Conference Organizers (PCO's) to assist in the on-site logistics of our annual conferences. We will be considering the benefits of establishing a preferred relationship with one or more PCOs.

Following the Planning Meeting, the second meeting of the newly formed National Presidents' Council (NPC) was held for all current and past national presidents. The agenda of the NPC was almost entirely centered on the sharing of best practices regarding Society management. The next meeting of the NPC will be during the International Management and Delegates Meeting taking place at the annual conference in Auckland.

In GTIF we took on a project larger and more significant than any of us imagined. Total meeting participation was well over 150 and exceeded all forecasts. In the end, we had more than 40 non-government organizations (NGOs) and several patent offices participate as well as five national delegations (China, Arab Countries, Turkey, Hong Kong and Philippines) present their case for doing IP business in their country. LESI and its strategic meeting partners (WIPO, WTO, ICC and CAI) are all enthusiastic about repeating the event next year with an expanded LES team! Thanks to everyone who contributed, but a special thanks to the event sponsors including Bardehle Pagenberg, Transpacific IP, the Interintellectual Property

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Exchange International, Inc. (IPXI) and Ocean Tomo, LLC. The GTIF meeting committee worked incredible hours bringing new ideas to a global community making an impact with more than \$10,000 raised at Invent For Humanity. GTIF 2013 will be here before you know it and the next general planning meeting is scheduled during the LESI Annual Meeting in Auckland in April. Please let me, President-Elect Kevin Nachtrab and/or LES Switzerland President Martin Schneider know if you are interested in being a part of the GTIF 2013 meeting team.

A number of interim results and ongoing efforts were announced at GTIF including:

- WIPO and LES will continue to draft a basic primer on IP valuation, but expanding to include valuation of humanitarian technologies.
- LESI prepared and provided to the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on IP a list of basic IP business principles discussed by select attendees at the recent Davos meeting.
- A number of significant Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) new to LESI, including for example the World Health Organization and NASA Launch, indicated interest in furthering collaboration on GTIF and other LESI activities.

The 2011-2012 Society year is passing quickly and there is much to be done. I look forward to seeing you in Auckland and, as always, am eager to hear your thoughts on how to deliver even more value to our Member Societies, and through them, their individual members. ■

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1. "What's New in OMPI," presented by Matthew Bryan (Director of the PCT Legal Division, 2. "Audit of Open Sources Software Assets in M&A Processes," by Etienne Papin, Cabinet Feral-Schuhl/Sainte-Marie, 3. "America Invents Act" (James Leavy, Cabinet Weil, Gotshal & Manges) and 4. "IP and Valorization of Concepts," by Eric Schahl, Cabinet INLEX, 5. EU-KTS: "Towards a New Standardization and Recognition of the Knowledge and Technology Transfer Profession Across Europe," by Frederic Caillaud—LES France delegate for the EUKTS Consortium.

Then we had—as always very appreciated by our members—the latest law cases in Pharma by André Bourgouin, Propriété Intellectuelle, and IPSEN or in the EU by Emmanuel Gougé, Cabinet Marccus Partners. And at last, (but not least!) a success story with a presentation of a very interesting French biotech named Innate Pharma by Yannis Morel – Executive VP Innate Pharma, who explained the key role played by licensing in their amazing development.

In addition to this important full conference program, the French Sector Committees were very active in 2011. The well established French Life Sciences Committee organized two conferences, one in March with an interesting presentation on French regional competitiveness engines ("Pole de Competitivité") as well as Pharma cases laws in U.S., Europe and Japan. The second one was organized in October with the following topics: "Genetic Resources under the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol, An Industry Perspective," by Axel Braun, Head International Developments,

Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd, "Traditional Knowledge And Industrial Property Rights: Challenges And Definitions," by Leila Mamoni, International Centre on Traditional Knowledge, and finally "News and Update of French Bio-Ethical Laws," by Anne-Laure Morin Avocat.

The Youths Committee, (led by Catherine Lafarge, LES France Secretary) created in 2010, was a great success in 2011 with more than 70 participating members. This newly started committee has developed a large range of activities providing a dynamic network and exchanges with more experienced professionals on business practices. They are also holding specific conferences with subjects of particular interest for members, such as "How to Use New Tax Options to Optimize Innovation Development."

Finally a third new committee "Arbitration and Mediation" was successfully created in 2011, and has organized two much appreciated working sessions during the year.

Encouraged by the increasing and recurrent attendance of LES France members to the conferences, the Board of our Society will continue to optimize this part of LES France activities which has been recognized as a real added value for our members.

Probably boosted by the success of our active and sustainable conference program, LES France is confirming itself to be an essential actor in the LES network. The number of members is increasing significantly this year with a total of around 480 members, and LES France is confirming its essential contribution to the international influence of LES Societies. ■