



European Same-Sex Dance Association

Annual Report July 2015 – May 2016 by the Secretary

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ESSDA Proposed Marketing Plan (Apr-Dec 2016)

1. The board and (re-)elections

At the 2015 AGM two new board members were elected: Marc Schleuter and Tim Regan. Since no female candidates had stepped forward, Hadass offered at the AGM to remain a board member for one year. After the AGM two other candidates offered to become board members: Trix Macleod and Chrisi Lyons. With the new board members the various positions and roles in the board were discussed. This resulted in the proposal to have a 'proxy' for every board position, with the exception of the co-presidents. The goal is to increase the availability for ESSDA members who want to get in touch with the board, to ensure continuity within the board over time if board members resign, and to give new board members the opportunity to get acquainted with these positions. With the female board members the role of co-president was discussed and how to prepare for this when Hadass would resign. None of the female board members felt ready for or capable of fulfilling this role. In order to safeguard the continuity Diana offered to start gaining experience with the role of co-president. In case no other (new) female board member could or would fulfil this position after Hadass' resignation, Diana would be willing to perform this role on an interim basis.

All new board members have taken up a specific role: Chrisi has become the Membership Officer, Marc the Webmaster and Trix the PR & Marketing Officer. Michal has become responsible for Outreach. Due to major changes in his personal and professional life, Tim Regan resigned in December 2015. This means that for the larger part of the past year the board was composed of eight members in 2015 – 2016 with the following roles and positions:

Hadass Armon (IL)	Female Co-President
Davy Brocatus (BE)	Male Co-President
Diana Vinke (NL)	General Secretary & Treasurer Proxy Membership Officer
Michal Vaníček (CZ)	Outreach
Sören Stauffer-Kruse (UK)	General Board Member
Chrisi Lyons (UK)	Membership Officer Proxy Secretary
Trix Macleod (UK)	PR & Marketing
Marc Schleuter (DE)	Webmaster Proxy Treasurer

Davy, Michal, Sören and Marc are halfway their two-year term.

Since **Chrisi Lyons** and **Trix Mcleod** joined the board after the previous AGM they were not officially elected so they stand for election at the AGM in Helsinki for a two-year term.

Hadass Armon stands for re-election for one year.

Diana Vinke stands for re-election for a two-year term.

This means that there is one vacancy. The Board has informed ESSDA members about this vacancy and has provided a brief explanation of what being a board member entails but no candidates have stepped forward.

2. Competition Rules

For last year's AGM in Stockholm DVET put forward several amendments to the Competition Rules. These amendments were thoroughly discussed at the AGM. For some of them consensus could be reached and they could be put to the vote but for other amendments this proved not to be possible. For the latter it was agreed to have a taskforce take this discussion further and decide on them.

The three proposed amendments that were put to the vote and approved of by the AGM have been processed in the Competition Rules as follows:

- Awarding two separate competition titles in case two competitions are combined into one: see Appendix 1 for new sub-rule 10.3.b of new Rule 10.3 Awarding Championship titles;
- Allowing a switch from adjudicator to competitor and vice versa more than once (rule 8.3.d). The principle of multiple switches was agreed on but not the waiting time in between roles. After discussing this at a board meeting it was agreed to observe a 6-month waiting time for the switch from adjudicator to competitor and an 18-month waiting time for the switch from competitor to adjudicator. See Appendix 1 for the new rule 8.3.e (Re-) instatement as a competitor or adjudicator;
- Awarding the title of champion in case there is no A Class or fewer than three couples competing in the A Class: see Appendix 1 for new sub-rule 10.3.a of rule 10.3 Awarding Championship titles.

In order to decide on the proposed amendments for which no consensus could be reached at the AGM, the board has not set up a separate taskforce. Instead, two meetings were devoted to discussing and deciding on the required changes content-wise:

- Setting a minimum for the number of couples per class after the classification rounds (rule 4.2 Allocation of couples to classes): the board unanimously agreed on keeping the classification system the way it is, so have the adjudicators determine which couples go to which class, also if this means that a particular class will only consist of one couple. This means that the Competition Rules do not have to be adjusted for the rule involved but it needs to be clarified how it works in practice. For this purpose two new sub-rules have been added (see Appendix 1 for rules 4.2.b.1 and 4.2.b.2)
- Adding a rule for granting titles for a 10-dance competition and a combination competition: in addition to this new rule (see Appendix 1 for rule 9.7.e as part of rule 9.7 Finals) a definition of a 10-dance competition and a combination competition needed to be added to Rule 3 Competition Categories (see Appendix for rules 3.2.c and 3.2.d).

Hadass and Diana proposed text adjustments of and additions to the Competition Rules, which were discussed and approved of by the board: see Appendix 1 for all adjustments and additions. The updated version of the Competition Rules will be in effect on 1st January 2017 and will be published on the ESSDA website after the EuroGames in Helsinki (because the current, unamended Competition Rules still apply in Helsinki).

After a try-out period with two senior age categories it was decided in 2014 to go back to one senior age category because there were too few competitors for two different senior competitions. Given the demographics of the dancers' population it was also agreed to raise the minimum age from 35 years for both dance partners to a minimum age of 40 years, together with a minimum combined age of 90 years. The try-out period for this adjusted senior age category was set at two years so at the AGM in Helsinki it will be discussed how to evaluate this.

3. Show Dance Competition Rules

So far, for Show Dance competitions no official competition rules have been in use. This year the ESSDA board has been requested to provide formal Show Dance Rules. Sören, Hadass and Diana have turned the informal document that was used for Blackpool and Stockholm into a set of formal Show Dance Rules for couples and for teams. The rules for couples and teams have been combined into one document. Since these rules will apply to the Show Dance competitions in Helsinki they have been available online since 16 April 2016. For a downloadable version of these rules see <http://essda.eu/competition-rules/>

4. Communication

After his resignation as a board member in the summer of 2014, Frank Morche remained the webmaster for the ESSDA website because no one stepped forward to replace him. With the elections in August 2015 a new board member with IT skills joined the board: Marc Schleuter. Frank and Marc joined forces to make a whole new design for the ESSDA website, with the aim to make it simpler in use and to present the information more clearly. They made a draft version of the new website available online to ESSDA members only and invited them to give comments on and suggestions for improvement. Frank is still involved, amongst others as the 'proxy' webmaster (see below). This first year with the new website has been used to improve it on the fly, as usability and clarity of information can only be determined if the website is actually used.

In order to improve accessibility by email, the mail addresses for board members have been changed. Instead of using board members' first name, the board position or role is used now, for example membershipofficer@essda.eu. Reasons for using these more general email addresses are that (1) two board members can be linked to one email address so there will also be one board member available for responding to emails (a primary board member with this role or position and his or her proxy) and (2) these email addresses remain the same, regardless of the person who has a particular position or role in the board.

On the ESSDA website there is an overview of these new email addresses and the board members linked to each address: <http://essda.eu/essda-organisation/essda-board/>

5. PR & Marketing

PR & Marketing had not been actively taken up for several years. As a first step, Trix was asked to draw up a P&R and Marketing strategy for both the short and long term. The strategy planning includes a definition for P&R and Marketing, and actions that need to be done across countries as well as locally. The latter requires recruiting local marketing volunteers. The board agreed on the overall goal to get more people interested in same-sex dancing. This plan is included in the Appendix.

As a next step Trix drew up a short-term Marketing plan for the remaining months of 2016 (April December), which is included in the Appendix as well. Chrsi and Marc will also be involved in these short-term marketing actions.

6. EuroGames 2016 in Helsinki and EC 2017 in Berlin

Davy started negotiations with the organisers of the Helsinki EuroGames but Hadass agreed to take over. She paid an onsite visit to Helsinki in March 2016. ESSDA and the organisers had come to an

agreement that the European Championship will run under the auspices of ESSDA, with ESSDA guiding it all the way through. A first challenge but also concern relates to the chosen dates for the competition within the time frame the EuroGames had already decided on. EuroGames had opted for end of June because of Helsinki's Gay Pride and had scheduled the dance competition for Wednesday through Friday. End of June was felt to be inconvenient because for dancers working as teachers, for example, this is not in their summer holidays. End of June could not be changed anymore but it was negotiated with the EuroGames organisers to schedule the dance competition for Thursday through Saturday.

Another challenge and concern relates to the pressure on the budget required for running dance championships. In order to maximise the income for the organising host the timetable was adjusted in such a way that the evening program would attract many spectators. In order to decrease expenses, the adjudicator panel was reduced from nine to seven adjudicators. At the European Championships in Helsinki Hadass will be the General Chairperson, Davy will be the official ESSDA Board representative and Diana will be involved in volunteer work but will also learn how to guide the organisation process and run a competition.

As for the European Dance Championships in 2017, Berlin has won the open bid. Hadass had a first face-to-face meeting with the Berlin team at the airport in Berlin on her way back home from the onsite visit to Helsinki. The Berlin team has much experience with organising a large dance competition and is well on track with preparing for the European Championships 2017. They aim for the last week of July with a social dance event on Saturday but are still negotiating for the location, which might mean a shift in the dates for the championships. They hope to have concluded these negotiations in the coming weeks so they can announce the dates and venue at the EuroGames in Helsinki.

7. Involvement in other international (dance) association

In the second half of 2015 ESSDA received a response from NASSPDA, one of the IFFSDA partners, to the license agreement that ESSDA uses for European Dance Championships. This reply expressed their opinion that "the conditions outlined in these licensing agreements for the organizers of these events are financially not sustainable, nor would we want to support such an approach at this point in the development of our community". NASSPDA does not agree with ESSDA asking a fee for this license agreement and with asking the organising host to provide a fee for the adjudicators.

In the first half of 2016 the FGG board made an official statement: Annual Championships are allowed to be held at Gay Games only if doing so does not require any additional fees or memberships for either the participant or the host city.

The board discussed these issues at a separate board meeting. On the one hand there is being part of a larger 'movement' such as EuroGames or Gay Games and on the other hand ESSDA wants to deliver a high-quality and well-organised dance competition. The latter is achieved by the service ESSDA provides, as laid down in the license agreement. ESSDA involves an international panel for European championships, consisting of professional adjudicators. The organising host is required to pay the adjudicators a modest fee and (part of) their traveling and accommodation expenses. In return for the fee that the organising host pays for the license agreement, ESSDA gives full support to the organising host, pays for the trophies and certificates, and for the costs involved with an onsite visit by one ESSDA board member prior to the championships. The board unanimously agreed on the value of the service ESSDA is offering and that this service brings expenses. But the board is

also aware of the budget required for dance championships and the financial strain this may put on the organising host. Therefore the board also unanimously agreed to accommodate organising hosts with respect to the amount to be paid for the license fee. In view of the FGG position it might become difficult to justify having 'additional' trophies and certificates and arranging an onsite visit. Davy is the liaising partner to discuss these topics and to hopefully come to an agreement with FGG and NASSPDA.

28 May 2016

Diana Vinke

General Secretary and Treasurer to ESSDA Board

Appendix 1 Changes in the Competition Rules

3.2 Dance Styles and Competitive Events:

Rules 3.2.c and 3.2.d are new; in 3.2.e the yellow part has been added

3.2.c 10-Dance competition:

10-dance is a competition where all 5 Standard dances and all 5 Latin dances are danced.

3.2.c.i To take part in a 10-dance competition a couple has to dance all 5 Standard and all 5 Latin dances.

3.2.c.ii In a 10-dance competition there are no classes as defined in Rule 3.5 and Rule 4.1

3.2.d Combined Competition:

A Combined Competition is a combination of Standard and Latin competitions for which a couple's results are combined into a single result.

3.2.d.i To take part in a Combined Competition the same couple has to participate both in Standard and Latin competitions during the same competitive event.

3.2.e Other styles, such as: Show Dance, New Vogue, Sequence, Tango Argentino, Country & Western, Salsa and Line Dancing, etc. are not covered by these rules. For Show Dance see Show Dance Guidelines.

4.2 Allocation of couples to classes

Rules 4.2.b.1 and 4.2.b.2 are new:

4.2.a The allocation of competitors into the different classes shall be made according to the rules of classification (see Rule 9.2b and Rule 9.2c).

4.2.b.1 In the event of a single couple assigned to a particular class, that couple shall have the choice to either dance their class or join the class above or below.

4.2.b.2 The couple shall be judged according to the level assigned in the classification round.

8.3.d Actions inconsistent with the role of adjudicator

- i) Adjudicators shall not compete at same-sex competitions.
- ii) Adjudicators shall not judge in competitions where their life partner or close family relatives are participants (see Appendix 1 rule 3(a)).

A new rule for (re-) instatement as a competitor or adjudicator has been added:

8.3.e (Re-) instatement as a competitor or adjudicator

- i) Adjudicators may apply to ESSDA for re-instatement as a competitor. A 6-month break must be observed between adjudicating and participating as a competitor. No adjudicating activity is allowed during this period.

- ii) Competitors may apply to ESSDA for (re-) instatement as an adjudicator. An 18-month break must be observed between participating as a competitor and adjudicating. No dance competitor activity is allowed during this period.

9.7 Finals

A new rule has been added:

9.7.e For a combined competition there is no final. Instead, the couple with the lowest numerical ranking (1 for 1st place, 2 for 2nd place, etc.) for Standard and Latin combined, shall be announced the winner, regardless of class.

A new rule 10.3 has been added + the former rule 10.3 Rules has become 10.4

10.3 Awarding Championship title

10.3.a A championship title shall be awarded to the couples performing best in their respective competition, regardless of class.

10.3.b When a mixed gender, same-sex couples final is danced, both genders will be awarded a Championship title, thus treating the final as two competitions: male and female.

Appendix 2 Marketing (and/or PR) Strategy Planning

Marketing

"Marketing is the word we use to explain how we encourage people to buy our products." President, Lois Geller Marketing Group.

Marketing what?

The first question we need to ask when devising an ESSDA marketing plan is – what product/s are we marketing?

- Marketing revolves around products and services and increasing revenue
- +
- ESSDA's main revenue---generating products/services are competitions and membership.
- =
- Marketing would thus revolve around promoting competitions & membership, which may be measured by:
 - o membership numbers
 - o number of competition entries and spectators

These two main marketing functions, of (a) increasing membership and (b) increasing competitor numbers, are perhaps already being addressed within other ESSDA areas of work (Membership, Outreach). As such, I have introduced a second component into this strategy planning document, which will require discussion and approval by the rest of the board: namely that of PR.

Public Relations

"Public Relations is about reputation; the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you" --- Chartered Institute of Public Relations.

- PR revolves around reputation, visibility and engagement
- +
- For this, we may refer to both (a) the reputation of same-sex Ballroom & Latin dancing, and (b) the reputation of ESSDA as the figurehead for same-sex Ballroom & Latin in Europe.
- =
- Thus PR deliverables would fall into two categories:
 - o Visibility and reputation of ESSDA specifically, measured by:
 - the amount of (positive) feedback from stakeholders
 - the organisation's reach via engagement platforms e.g. social media
 - o Visibility & reputation of same---sex dancing in Europe generally, measured by:
 - the amount of (positive) media coverage gained
 - the number of same---sex dancers in Europe (harder to measure)

Objectives & Outcomes

	<i>Promoting what?</i>	<i>To whom?</i>	<i>By what methods?</i>	<i>Acted on by?</i>	<i>Progress indicated by?</i>
Marketing	ESSDA Membership	Current SS social dancers	Fliers explaining benefits of membership;		Membership numbers
		Medalists	Link to membership page in board email signatures;		
		Pro-am competitors	Making payment easier (Paypal?) / option to choose rolling membership via direct debit;		
		Teachers/ dance schools	Survey to all current & past members to gauge how to maximise retention		
	ESSDA competition entry	Current SS social dancers	Competition promo/ fliers at social dance events & via dance schools;		Number of new competitors/ total competition entries
		Medallists	Media/interviews with new competitors;		
		Pro-am competitors	'What you need to know' pack for new competitors (incl. all from how to find a partner to what to wear)		
	General participation in Same-Sex Ballroom & Latin in Europe	LGBT groups	Fliers at LGBT groups in individual European countries;		Number of same-sex dancers in Europe (may need to ask for member dance schools/ orgs to send us monitoring data each year)
		Other SS/LGBT dance groups (salsa, swing, line-dancing)	Promoting same-sex dance performances/ showcases/ events happening around Europe (eg. via website or social media)		
Mainstream dance circles		Mutual promotional partnerships with organizations of other dance styles (Queer Tango Festival Berlin; Queer Salsa Festival Stockholm)			
Public Relations	Profile of Same Sex Dance in Europe	General public	Concentrate on one or two key messages about SS dance (eg. accomplished dancers challenging gender norms; championing equal rights to expression in dance; diverse & accepting community)		Number of articles/media opportunities
		Mainstream dance world			
		Performing arts sector			
		LGBT community groups			
		LGBT sporting groups			
	Profile/reputation of ESSDA (ESSDA's reputation as thought-leading figurehead for SS dance in Europe) (ESSDA's reputation as representative of the European SS dance community) (ESSDA's reputation as organiser & regulator of successful European SS dance Ballroom & Latin competitions)	Current SS competitive dancers	Local, national and international media coverage to broaden visibility of the organisation and it's aims;		Number of Twitter/ Facebook followers and engagement levels; Feedback from stakeholders
		Current SS social dancers	Active Twitter & Facebook accounts to showcase achievements & engage with existing same-sex Ballroom & Latin dance community as well as the general public around Europe and beyond;		
		Dance schools & teachers	Collecting event feedback from competitors, spectators & other stakeholders;		
		Mainstream dance world	Engaging SS dance community members via collaborative projects, eg. guest blogs.		



ESSDA Proposed Marketing Plan: Apr-Dec 2016



By: Trix Macleod

2016 Apr	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. ESSDA Meeting – discuss possible marketing activity in run up to Helsinki (eg. create Twitter account; #eurogamesHEL hashtag; pin Eurogames timetable to top of FB page; contact member organisations to promote Eurogames registration)	2016 May	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Compile database of European dance/LGBTQI contacts & organisations. This should be accessible to all board members & new contacts added as and when.2. Be in touch with database contacts to promote Eurogames registration	2016 Jun	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trix to put together survey for non-competitors to find out obstacles to competing2. All board members to promote survey via contacts database, social media.
2016 Jul	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask Eurogames competitors (especially new competitors) to write guest blog for website2. Create Helsinki photo album on Facebook	2016 Aug	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preparation of what-you-need-to-know / Competitor Starter Pack for new competitors	2016 Sep	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trix to circulate draft of Competitor Starter Pack to ESSDA board2. Board to provide feedback on document content & design
2016 Oct	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trix to amend Competitor Starter Pack according to board feedback.2. Publish and disseminate Competitor Starter Pack (online)	2016 Nov	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trix and Chrisi to meet & discuss member on-boarding strategy2. Meeting and actions to be minuted & circulated to board	2016 Dec	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trix to put together ESSDA promotional resource / flier for online and print publications