



# Appointment of SLSEAA Officers 2014-2016

"Get involved and get connected"

## Short biographies and manifestos

Alexander Radzyner (incumbent) for Treasurer  
Amal Safi for Events Officer  
Darshana Towakel for Events Officer  
Gil Shidlo for Events Officer  
Ivan Sobol for Events Officer  
Josef Perrez for Events Officer  
Nurit Soni for Events Officer  
Raffaele Petrone for Events Officer  
Susan Brown-Shafii for Events Officer

### Alexander Radzyner (incumbent) for Treasurer

I am a Senior Partner of Zurich Management Group AG, an information systems consultancy firm. I've worked in the international financial and banking sector for over 25 years. Now shuttling frequently between London and Zurich, I'm an independent consultant and commentator on economic issues. I received my early education in Salzburg, Austria, and undertook my studies at the School, where I later worked as a visiting lecturer. I served as Information Systems Manager for the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) in Basel for eleven years and liaised with the central banks of major industrialized countries on payments and settlements systems, information systems governance and information security. Before that, I held management positions in operations, systems, private banking and wealth management with Bank of America in London, San Francisco and Geneva and have led workshops and participated in conferences and seminars throughout the world. I have also written on economic and social issues for National Geographic. Outside work, I have a keen interest in theatre and the cinema, regularly blogging on film and theatre reviews.

If elected as the Treasurer of the SLSEAA, I will aim to contribute to the effective use of the Association's financial resources through member benefits and relevant and fun networking events.

### Amal Safi for Events Officer

I was born and raised in Geneva from Algerian parents. I have always been passionate about politics, which is the reason why I undertook a Bachelor's degree in Political Science at the University of Lausanne. I decided to move to Lausanne, because I couldn't wait to live the real student's life that Lausanne was so known for and I hadn't been disappointed.

Through my early years of studying, I could develop my sharp interest in the gender implications of political and economic phenomena. I then did an exchange year with Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, to benefit from the teaching of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, specialized in gender studies. After my Bachelor's degree, I took a year off to identify where real political power was and see how it could be seized and used for the promotion of justice: I worked within the Swiss Delegation at the United Nations in New York, in an NGO and in a law firm in Geneva. I am currently working in trading at Credit Suisse in Geneva, after having graduated from LSE in 2011 with an MSc in Comparative Politics (Politics and Markets stream). I have recently spent 6 months in 2013 in Singapore at the research department of Credit Suisse. I encountered twisted statistics, cultural shocks, a super tasty cuisine and beautiful spiritual people.

I hope that my career will help contribute to promote gender equality in the global economy in order to foster emancipation and individual freedom. I am still trying to figure out the best strategies to achieve that goal so if you have any idea, I'll be happy to hear! (I am serious.)

I have been involved with peace and feminist associations in Geneva, Lausanne and Montreal, and I am now a volunteer teacher of French since 2 years in an association helping Spanish-speaking people from Latin America having recently settled in Switzerland. I enjoy discussing with people having a collective mind, mature political opinions and not afraid to make jokes. I also like to go out, to do funny dance moves and to laugh.

I enjoyed the previous SLSEAA events that I attended, and I'd be happy to get more involved and contribute with my ideas to the organization of enriching and fun events.

### **Darshana Towakel for Events Officer**

I was born in Mauritius, moved to London in 2002 for tertiary education and graduated from LSE in 2005 with a BSc (Hons.) Management. Since then, I joined the Graduate Programme at Ernst & Young LLP in London, and obtained the Chartered Accountant CA professional qualification by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS). Looking for more adventure, I moved to Hong Kong in 2008 and lived there for almost a year, travelling in South East Asia, before returning back to London. I joined my current employer, Catlin Group Limited, in 2009 and occupied various roles namely in Risk Management, Primary Insurance and Reinsurance. I got transferred to the Catlin office in Zurich at the end of 2010 and I am currently working in Engineering & Specialty Reinsurance Underwriting.

I am involved in philanthropic activities in Zurich for a small charitable organization by the name of Sweet-Hearts.org and for a human rights foundation by the name of Freedom Flowers Foundation. I also support the LSE Annual Fund.

I have been a member of the SLSEAA for 3 years now, and was a member of the "Friends of the LSE in Hong Kong" in 2008-2009. I enjoy meeting people and living in different countries gave me the opportunity to expand my friendship network and organize various events. I am also a member of the expat community, Internations Zurich. My hobbies include painting, baking, events organizing and travelling.

### **Gil Shidlo for Events Officer**

I have a long standing connection with the LSE as a student and later as a research officer and alumnus.

In the early 1980s, with Professor Ralf Dahrendorf as Director, the LSE was very stimulating with many exciting events for a MSc student in the Government Department. I specialized in Public Policy and Administration in Emerging Economies and later, when studying for my LSE PhD, I had the opportunity to carryout field research in Brazil. After my PhD I taught in various Political Science departments including the US, England and for a short period Israel.

In all my travels I was heavily involved with local LSE alumni groups. In Washington DC, where I both taught at university and worked as a consultant for the World Bank, I was Editor of the DC Newsletter for the Alumni and Friends of LSE in the USA (AFLSE) and assisted in organizing events.

For the past ten years, we relocated to Monte Carlo, where unfortunately there was no national LSE alumni association (too small this country), so in order to remain in touch with LSE (in addition to

professional contacts with staff), we traveled many times to Switzerland, Belgium and Germany to attend local LSE events.

The involvement in events in Geneva, Brussels and Frankfurt enabled me not only to network but to make many friends with whom we remain in touch and visit. In Brussels and Washington DC, I saw how important it is for members to network especially for alumni working for international agencies like the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank and the EU Institutions and Parliament.

Last October, I decided to move to Zurich with my wife (also an LSE alum) and would like to continue my connections with the LSE and help create networking events which would be most useful for the new generation of LSE alumnae and alumni.

In recent years, I have left the academic world for the investment community but manage still to publish and contributed recently to the LSE British Politics and Policy Blog, the LSE Review of Books Blog, EUROPP - the European Politics and Policy LSE Blog, the Journal of Management and Public Money as well as City AM and Newsmax Magazine.

### **Ivan Sobol for Events Officer**

A quarter a century old Russian, I was born in East Siberia just before the UdSSR collapse. After finishing high school as one of the best graduates of the region, I've moved to St. Petersburg to study financial management in the Graduate School of Management, St. Petersburg State University. After two years of being a Bachelor student, I was nominated as an exchange student to the University of St. Gallen, where I spend nearly 7 months. My next destination was Zurich, where I am currently pursuing my Master's degree in Banking and Finance at the University of Zurich. Last summer, I was fortunate enough to attend Summer School at the LSE, where I had an amazing opportunity to meet people from all around the world and plunge into the unique atmosphere of the School. I am looking forward in the next year to apply for my second Master's from LSE. I speak fluently Russian, English, Ukrainian, a bit of Spanish and I'm learning German.

Over the summer 2011, I served as a Summer Analyst in the St. Petersburg branch of Citibank's Global Commercial Bank unit. On the second week of my internship, I was assigned as a supervisor of a team developing a new credit project for Citi in St. Petersburg from the scratch. The result of a joint effort of my colleagues in St. Petersburg, Moscow and London was tripling the growth of the credit portfolio which sharply expanded during a two-month period, and successes included building long-term customer relationships. During this appointment, I had a chance to communicate closely with clients at the level of business owners, CEOs and members of the board, assisting Client Relationship Managers. One year before, I served as a Summer Intern in the Corporate Clients Group of VTB, one of the major Russian banks, where I acquired substantial product knowledge of key financial vehicles. Demanding time constraints and challenging tasks aimed at the improvement of customer service gave me a good opportunity to learn how to work in a team.

My extra-curriculum activities include work for the Business Club of the University of Zurich as a Member of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, initially being responsible for marketing, public relations, social and special projects and then appointed as an Executive Head, Human Capital and Compliance. The Business Club is an accredited, non-commercial, non-partisan student initiative focused on strengthening the feeling of unity among students of the Economics Faculty of the University and the corporate world. I am also a Co-Founder and a President of the Commodity Club of the University of Zurich, a project which is now being set up.

I appreciate the work being done by the SLSEAA and would like to offer my contribution.

### **Josef Perrez for Events Officer**

I was at the LSE twice, as a MSc student in Regional and Urban Planning Studies in the academic year 1987/88 and as a PhD student in the European Doctoral Program in Quantitative Economics on exchange from Louvain in the academic year 1992/93. Both years were important experiences of my life, academically but also culturally and socially. On the academic side, I felt privileged to study at the LSE. This has to do with the fact that economics is dominated by research from Anglo-Saxon universities and that the LSE is one of the few institutions, which is able to influence research in the very hierarchical structure of Anglo-Saxon research universities. On the social and cultural side I met very interesting people at the LSE. Many of them still are friends of mine. I visited them in their European and Asian home countries.

The LSE not only connects to people far away but also to people living in the same country and the same city. The aim of the SLSEAA is to make these connections real. This can best be achieved through organizing attractive events. My aim as an Events Officer of the SLSEAA would be to help organizing such events.

An important step in this direction has already been done with the After-Work Drinks. These meetings can be attended spontaneously, are informal and take place on a regular basis. Another type of events I would like to promote are talks given by prominent speakers on topical political and/or economic issues. Such talks would make the SLSEAA more visible and this would benefit the organization twofold: it would attract potential members and it would augment networking opportunities. In my opinion, networking is one of the key objectives of an alumni organization.

As an Events Officer I intend to bring in new ideas, to discuss them with the other Officers and to help organizing events practically. I also would look out for cooperation partners – e.g. the MIT Club of Switzerland – to augment the impact of certain events.

### **Nurit Soni for Events Officer**

As an Event Officer for SLSEEA, I will provide a fresh touch to the events portfolio as I believe the key success of a networking event lies in its people and their interests. I aim to bring people together and deliver a new networking experience, which will create a vibrant platform for LSE alumni across regions and age groups.

My personal agenda of life draws synergies with the intent of the Officers, which emphasizes and promotes the idea of glocalisation, networking and socializing. Having graduated from LSE with a Master's Degree in Management of Information Systems, I have worked for reputable institutions across the globe such as United Nations and Deutsche Bank. Currently, I am working in Business Intelligence for Credit Suisse in Zurich, and I am heading the social events portfolio of the Next Generation Network, a platform of knowledge exchange and social activities for young talents of the bank across Switzerland. Due to my cosmopolitan upbringing and being well versed with multiple languages, coupled with my exceptional networking skills, I will be an efficient anticipator of the needs of the LSE community and an effective communicator to facilitate a seamless flow of exchange of ideas.

As I am 29, highly motivated with the passion to win and dedication to perform, I believe I am the exact driver, which the SLSEAA is looking in its Events Officers. I will treat this position with high dignity and commitment as I follow the principle of Napoleon Hill: "Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve."

### **Raffaele Petrone for Events Officer**

Nulla dies sine linea ("No day without a line"), a Latin proverb in ancient Rome, has been the motto inspiring my life from my early youth.

I am originally from Italy and during the last 20 years, I have had the privilege to live in 6 different European cities. At the age of 16, I joined Nunziatella, one of the oldest military schools in the world, where as a cadet I was educated to preserve a very strong sense of civil and social commitment together with very strong values, esprit de corps and traditions. Later on, I graduated with a M.S. degree in Engineering from the Polytechnic of Turin (Italy) and with a "diplôme d'ingénieur" from Ecole Centrale de Lyon (France).

I feel very fortunate that I had the opportunity to be a research student at LSE between summer 2003 and spring 2004, where apart from enjoying high level education, I also established many long-term friendships. I believe in life long education, and currently I pursue executive education programs at the Harvard Business School.

In terms of professional background, I have been working for more than 10 years in finance, and today I am an Investment Director in Private Equity in an institutional group sponsored by the investment bank Lazard. I cover investments in pan-Europe, which means that travelling has become a real lifestyle for me. I am also often in London, where I frequently run into LSE alumni or students.

In the past, I have actively taken part in activities of a number of associations through organising mentoring activities, gala dinners, balls, regattas, conferences and networking events.

I have been a member of the SLSEAA since I moved to Switzerland, and I have done my best to attend all the events organised in Geneva. I've established solid friendships and also extended my professional network through these events. I have also noticed that Geneva offers such a diversified basis of alumnae and alumni that is very unique: there is a balanced proportion of members working in non-profit organisations, in the financial services industry and in international corporations.

I would like to be more active with event organisation in order to create new activities, new initiatives and to bring new members on board. My interest in pursuing the position of Events Officer for our Association is to give back in appreciation to the multiple opportunities and experiences I've gained through attending LSE, and to keep strongly alive our community through series of events.

### **Susan Brown-Shafii for Events Officer**

"Genevoise" by adoption, I'm a Swiss-American, who has recently returned to the "Protestant Mecca" after a lengthy stint in Berne, where I was participating in the scientific management of one of the Swiss National Science Foundation's National Centres of Competence in Research, the World Trade Institute's NCCR Trade. A major task of ours was to integrate the Institute – initially organized as a Foundation under Swiss law and effectively a "think tank" – into the University of Berne's academic structures. It was a "clash of cultures", especially in the early days!

In retrospect, nothing could have prepared me better for this assignment than my previous work in Geneva with the international organizations. In the interest of brevity, my story is a common one. I came here in the early days of my LSE PhD studies for an internship at the then-GATT that was supposed to have lasted for 3 months; last year marked my 20th anniversary in Switzerland! I haven't had a linear career, but, if my luck holds, that will ultimately be my strength: [www.nccr-trade.org/people/brown-shafii/](http://www.nccr-trade.org/people/brown-shafii/) Basically, I see myself as an accomplished trade and investment policy practitioner, who has an academics' appreciation of the inter-linked, systemic challenges with which the global community is currently faced.

On the personal front, I'm living the "multikulti" existence for which Geneva is so well known (my husband is of Iranian origin), thoroughly enjoying the diversity of my adopted community. Before I went to Berne, I thought I knew Switzerland. What a surprise I got; it is as we are privileged to be living in a real world "laboratory" for multi-level government! To conclude, as I think my bio might suggest, I love learning and not necessarily in structured settings. This was one of the things I enjoyed most about my recent job with the University of Berne, and it was certainly the characteristic I found most inspiring about the LSE. It would be my sincere pleasure to serve as your Events Officer!