Driving LESI Forward Through Change

By James E. Malackowski,
President, LES International

‘World IP Day’ on April 26th celebrated as
Around the World with LES (ATW) marks
the unofficial midway point of our Society calen-
dar year. Again it was quite the celebration com-
prising a series of coordinated events aimed at
connecting IP, licensing and business profession-
als across the globe in an effort to move innova-
tion forward. More than 1,000 of your fellow LES
members participated.

Mid-year also presents a great opportunity to share with you the activi-
ties of my Presidency and the work of the LESI Board and its Committees.
Since taking office last fall, I have had the privilege of visiting with a num-
ber of LES Societies including—Arab Countries, Hong Kong, and the Phil-
ippines to name a few—as well as attend the LESI Annual Conference
hosted by LES Australia and New Zealand.

As I have reported previously, the work of the LESI Board centered
in the first quarter of the Society year on the inaugural LESI Global
Technology Impact Forum (GTIF) and concurrent Invent For Humani-
ty™ Technology Transfer Exchange Fair held this past January in Ge-
neva. Plans are underway for GTIF 2013 led by Hector Chagoya, Pres-
ident of LES Mexico, as well as continued on-going collaboration with
our event strategic partners—WIPO, WTO, ICC and the Center for
Applied Innovation.

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Following GTIF, the Board focused on
preparations and discussions held at the
International Management and Dele-
gates Meeting (IMDM) in Auckland. Working with the Delegates and Com-
mittee leadership, attention was paid to:

• The changing (younger) demo-
graphics of our individual members
and their needs and expectations.

• Focusing and communicating
the benefits of LESI, separate
but in addition to the benefits
of the local Societies, to
individual members.
President’s Message, continued from Page 2

• Means by which LESI can best support the efforts of local Societies.
• The import and role that humanitarian tech transfer issues should hold in our organization, and
• The next generation of LESI administrative services.

Changing Demographics

As part of on-going long range planning, the IMDM included discussion of the expected future changes in member needs. Generation X and Y are the future of LES and their participation will be driven by different objectives. We are not resting on our laurels and are working to plan for this change which we believe will include a revised concept of networking providing benefits beyond social media. We will also place greater emphasis on making a difference in our ecosystem. We need to continue to demonstrate that the value provided by LES membership greatly exceeds its cost. We want to provide more transparency and an open book view of LESI organizational operations and priorities.

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LESI Benefits to Individual Members

Being the world’s largest technology transfer organization brings significant benefits to our individual members. Our collective voice on issues important to our profession is raised by LESI through non-governmental organizations around the globe. LES is known for our unique business acumen and others are reaching out to us at an ever increasing rate. Most recently, we have begun discussions within the World Economic Forum to prepare a listing of guiding IP business principles. As we develop consensus on these topics, I look forward to sharing progress in my next report. For now, the Board of Delegates has formed a working group to better communicate the benefits of LESI to individual members.

LESI Support of Local Societies

As an umbrella organization, LESI exists to serve the needs of its 32 local Societies. In many respects, the best thing LESI can do is to facilitate communication between the leadership of the local Societies and then get out of the way! The National Presidents’ Council (NPC) is quickly becoming the ideal vehicle for these efforts. Peter Hess of LES Germany led a discussion of the NPC in Auckland focused on best practice sharing for LES local Society governance, administration and communication to individual members.

Humanitarian Tech Transfer

GTIF 2012 and Invent For Humanity™ represented our first dedicated outward effort to facilitate dialogue and networking regarding humanitarian technology transfer. This discussion continued at the LESI Annual Conference which was themed “Commercialising Innovation to Save the World.” We are not alone in this shift as the USPTO recently announced the Patents for Humanity pilot program that rewards patent owners for using their patented technology to address humanitarian needs. We are looking for input from you regarding this important topic and the specific training and networking activities that further your company’s own initiatives in this regard.

LESI Administration

The size, needs and complexities of LESI have grown significantly. We have historically relied on the administrative office of LES (USA & Canada) to staff such requirements, however their needs also continue to grow. Following discussion first at the NPC meeting in Geneva and then within the Board and the IMDM, a decision has been made to retain our first Executive Director for LESI. This is expected to begin as a two year, part time contract position, but will likely expand to a full time permanent position in the coming years. I will keep the Delegates apprised of our progress.

The second half of my term promises to be as engaging as the first. I am looking forward to attending the Pan-European Conference in Rome and the Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Tokyo as well as a number of individual Societies in between. As always, I look forward to hearing directly from you on ways to further improve the work of our organization. ■