



# Call Notes for the ELISA Portal Committee

Web meeting held:

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

10:00 AM Eastern / 7:00 AM Pacific / 5:00 PM South Africa

## **The following Committee members were in attendance:**

- Ruva Chindara, ICPD
- Scott May, ICPD
- Blessed Okole, PhD, CSIR
- Dustielyn Savage, ICPD
- Elisabeth Valerio, ICPD

## **Welcoming remarks & introductions: BOLD ITEMS WILL BE COVERED DURING THE CALL.**

For a more in-depth briefing or if you are unable to attend a meeting but would like a debrief, contact Elisabeth Valerio at [evalerio@icpdprograms.org](mailto:evalerio@icpdprograms.org)

Scott May welcomed the committee members to the ELISA Portal committee meeting. Elisabeth mentioned that the agenda was sent via email. Scott oriented (through screen-sharing) the committee members to the web-based resources that had been added since the Advisory council's last meeting. Scott asked the committee members to go the website [www.icpdprograms.org](http://www.icpdprograms.org), select "Committees" from the "Select an ICPD site" drop-down menu at the top right side of the page. Scott told the committee members that they could locate the meeting agendas, past meeting notes and supporting documents for the meeting on the ELISA Portal Committee Tab. Scott reviewed the suggested [agenda outline](#) for the Committee meetings. Elisabeth reviewed the suggested [committee objectives](#) outline with the committee. Scott then invited all of the committee members to introduce themselves.

## **ELISA Portal**

### **Overview of roles and responsibilities:**

An overview of the Portal Committee roles and responsibilities was sent to the members prior to the meeting.

### **Updates and recent developments:**

Elisabeth introduced Ruva Chindhara, an intern serving as the new Engagement Coordinator for ELISA. She is working on broadening the program's reach. She is also shaping monthly meetings called CONFABS, putting content together for the ELISA portal and reaching out to entrepreneurs for ELISA Luminaries.

Scott asked about COVID-19 on the continent and wondered if there is a role that ELISA portal should be playing in terms of helping better highlight and coordinate activities be it with respect to therapeutics, diagnostics, vaccinations, healthcare delivery or hospital capacity and people who are working on innovative new solutions to the Covid crisis. Dr. Blessed Okole stated that as the ELISA community, we need to stay relevant and current, as COVID-19 is such a pressing issue right now we should be somehow sharing content about it on the portal.

**Focus topic:**

The Committee members were guided through a review of the committee objectives by Elisabeth.

**Committee Objectives:**

Focusing on enhancing portal content and growing a robust and active online community.

**Content development including CONFABS and Entrepreneur Spotlights**

Elisabeth explained CONFABS as monthly, one-hour events hosted virtually. Each CONFAB will kick off with a presentation by a stellar entrepreneur who sets the tone for the event and inspires the participating entrepreneurs. The entrepreneur will speak for about 20 minutes at the beginning of the virtual monthly meeting held on ZOOM. The idea is to invite everyone on the portal to join these events and listen to speaker remarks before breaking out into small group discussions. These CONFABS are a way for the entire ELISA portal community to get together. The ZOOM platform allows us to break everyone into smaller random networking groups. The first CONFAB will be scheduled for early April. Ruva is doing some outreach, looking for speaker ideas.

Entrepreneurial Spotlights, known as Luminaires, are a showcase of Entrepreneurs doing real work on the continent or for the continent. These will be individuals that will be showcased on the Portal, with a page dedicated on each entrepreneur. A questionnaire response from our first entrepreneur has been received and we are looking for more. The questionnaire asks the entrepreneur a series of questions which ELISA member will find informative as they learn about the series of entrepreneurial journeys. Luminaries will help draw attention to the portal with the online content driving traffic to the site.

**Promoting development of project pages**

Elisabeth eluded that this was a new feature that has been showcased and promoted through our weekly newsletter. A project page gives anyone an opportunity to create a page that showcases a project they are involved in, working on or leading. This is about trying to educate and engaging people to collaborate and think about ways to they can get involved in Africa focused projects. What you share on the project page can be anything to help get publicity or seek interest from investors or trying to create collaborations. You can post a project page and it becomes part of the portal, spotlighting what you are doing. It includes features like blogging and other social media activity tools.

The committee should try to figure out a way of increasing the number of project pages, support and showcase them.

**User experience and portal community engagement**

When an individual joins the ELISA portal, they can join as a Gateway member at no cost at all. Elisabeth asked "How do we make sure that they want to come back and use that platform to benefit their business or their organization". Currently, we have weekly emails that go out that have fresh content every single week and new content on our Bootstrap Briefs. Elisabeth asked the committee to help figure out how to make the user experience better. Elisabeth reminded the committee that the goal is to make it a hub for Africa Based entrepreneurs.

Blessed emphasized making the portal as interesting as possible to make sure people are engaged with it, especially if it has new, fresh content every time. He also mentioned setting up project pages of his own. The project page profile has been made quite user friendly but if anyone gets stuck, Ruva can help when setting up project pages if anyone needs assistance.



Elisabeth mentioned having attended a meeting with Albino Gaw Dar who is a founder of a program like ELISA but focused on reaching out and working with entrepreneurs in South Sudan and asked, "How we can use the Portal to showcase people like this?".

Scott May clarified that project pages are not meant to substitute websites for companies that already have websites but are like billboards showcasing what the people and companies are doing. Elisabeth mentioned that as we promote the portal, project pages are automatically promoted hence increased views on them. Scott suggested that the portal contain a feature that recaps project pages daily or the most visited ones so that when the portal is visited there is a message that says "have you seen" a certain project page. Elisabeth said there is a feed that is being. Scott asked if the Feed will also be working in real time on the website and Elisabeth responded saying it is being worked on to function like that.

### **Other & Action Items**

Elisabeth appealed to the committee to help think of a few individuals that are willing to take part as speakers in our CONFABS and help reach out to them. Scott reminded everyone that the next ELISA Portal Committee meeting will be Monday, March 9, 2021. Please plan on 45-minutes for this call. Visit <https://elisanetwork.com/> for more information about ELISA.

### **Upcoming Calls**

Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 10:00 AM Eastern | 7:00 AM Pacific

Tuesday, May 11, 2021, 10:00 AM Eastern | 7:00 AM Pacific

Tuesday, July 13, 2021, 10:00 AM Eastern | 7:00 AM Pacific

Tuesday, August 31, 2021, 10:00 AM Eastern | 7:00 AM Pacific

Tuesday, November 2, 2021, 10:00 AM Eastern | 7:00 AM Pacific