



Final

Leading the Way in Europe's Civil Society



EU Consult
Strategic Plan
Final

Leading the Way in Europe’s Civil Society

EU Consult’s 2012 to 2014 Strategy

20 Years of Supporting Members

Over the past 20 years, we have achieved much. But the world is changing and we need to change to adapt. Internally, there are drivers for change too. Our renewed approach offers a new, bolder offer to members.

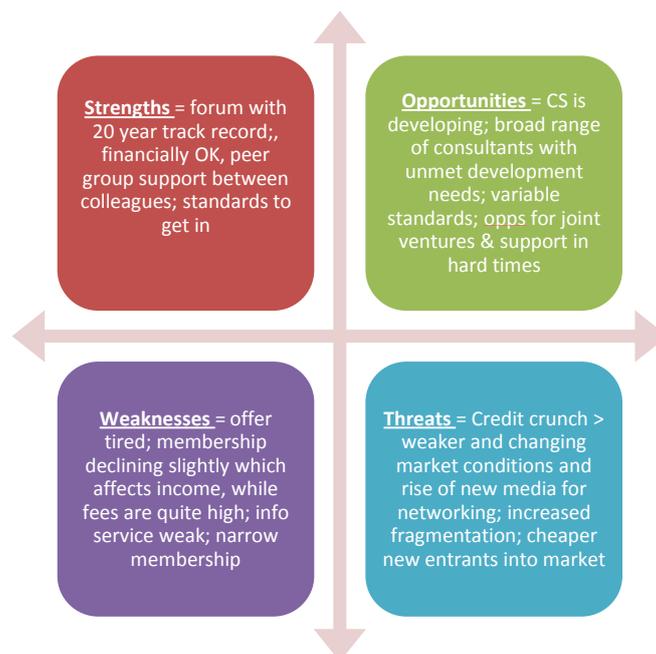
New Model Needed

EUConsult needs a new strategic plan from 2012 that renews its offer and broadens its appeal as it enters its third decade

- The foundations of a renewed organisation already in place:
 - A strong core of active members with status in their areas of work
 - A commitment to professional development, not least via the conferences
 - The ethical code of professional conduct
 - The unique pan-European appeal
 - The value that owners of consultancies place on being able to talk to their peers
 - The ability all members feel from being able to mitigate the sense of professional isolation within a small industry

This picture needs to be assessed against some negative factors as well as opportunities (Figure 1; more detail in the Appendix)

Figure 1: SWOT Analysis

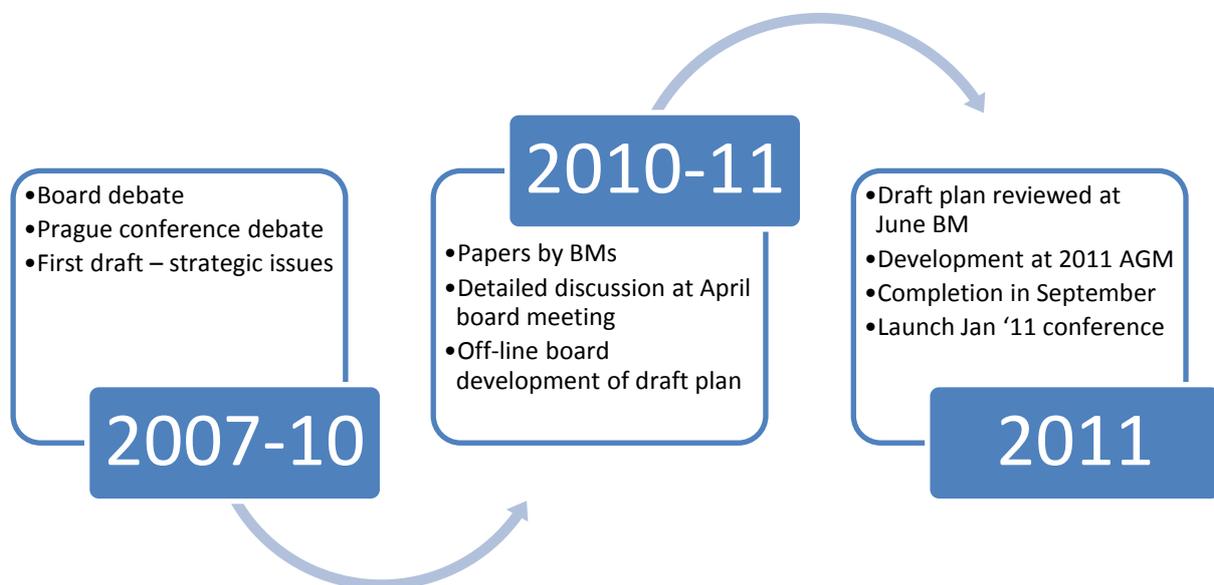


- So, we need to build our appeal from a strong base by:
 - Refreshing some aspects of our existing offer to members
 - Appealing to new segments of consulting to organisations committed to social change
 - Appealing to potential members at different stages in their careers and in a wider range of related professional disciplines
 - Facilitating more country- or language-specific forums for consultants
 - Offering a wider range of additional services attractive to new and existing members
 - By reviewing our business model to enable lower membership and conference fees

Strategic Planning Process

The process we have deployed to get us to the final draft plan is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 2: Strategic Planning Process



Our Ambition for the Future

In light of our analysis, we have reviewed our long-term vision, our mission, our target audience and our offer, as well as what in practice we do. This review has resulted in a bigger sense of ambition for the future.

Who we are

Our Vision

- We believe in a strong, independent and vibrant civil society sector across Europe and beyond, served by top quality consultants and advisors

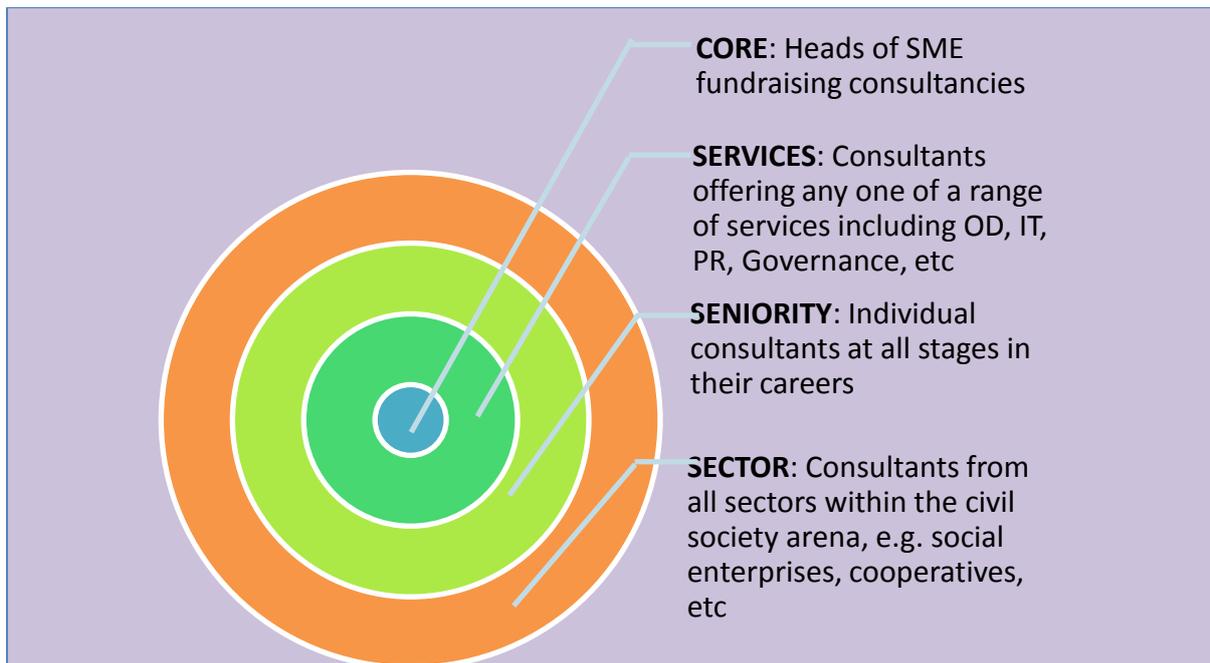
Our Mission

- The mission of EU Consult is to be a voice for consultants to civil society across Europe, providing a forum for collaboration, and an environment to foster the highest ethical standards of professional and business practice

Who we are for

- We aim to attract individual consultants in small and large firms whose role, irrespective of professional discipline, is primarily to enhance the performance of civil society (organisations)
- We therefore aim for a larger and broader membership than present, but recognise that we will grow incrementally and will preserve the informal ‘village feel’ as at present
- While creating forums for a range of different member interests, we will continue to ensure EU Consult provides a forum for senior consultants and business owners

Figure 3: Retaining the Core, while Broadening the Target Group of Members



Our Offer

Our offer to members and potential members alike comprises four key elements:

- **Professional development** by providing training and skills development opportunities, individual mentoring, etc
- **Business Development** by support to help members' businesses win work and grow, by providing specific conference sessions, etc
- Raising **professional standards** in consultancy by a code of professional conduct and a process of approving consultants
- Providing **opportunities for networking and collaboration** by means of access to other, like-minded consultants and leaders in the sector across Europe

Figure 4: The Five Key Elements of Our Value Proposition to Members



Thus, while we will preserve the key elements of our current service offering to members including two conferences a year, networking opportunities, etc, we will seek to both improve them and broaden the offer over the years ahead.

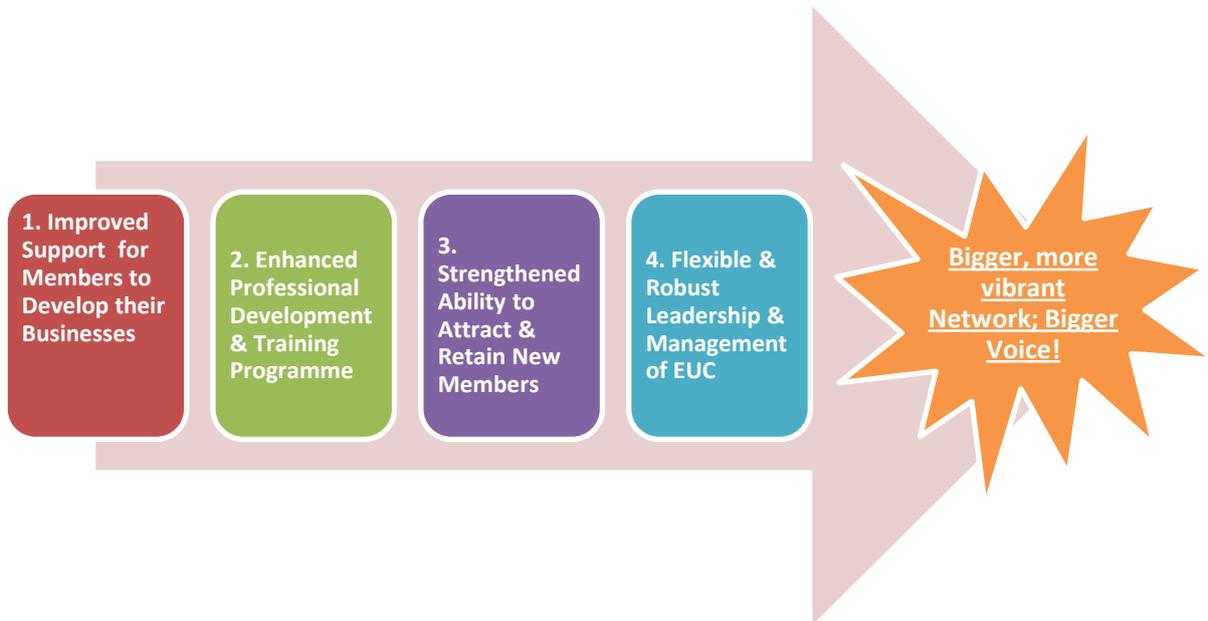
Our Strategy

Our **strategic aim** for the next three years is to create a bigger and more vibrant network of consultants with a focussed high quality offer comprising the key elements outlined above.

Strategic Objectives

To get there, we will deliver four strategic objectives:

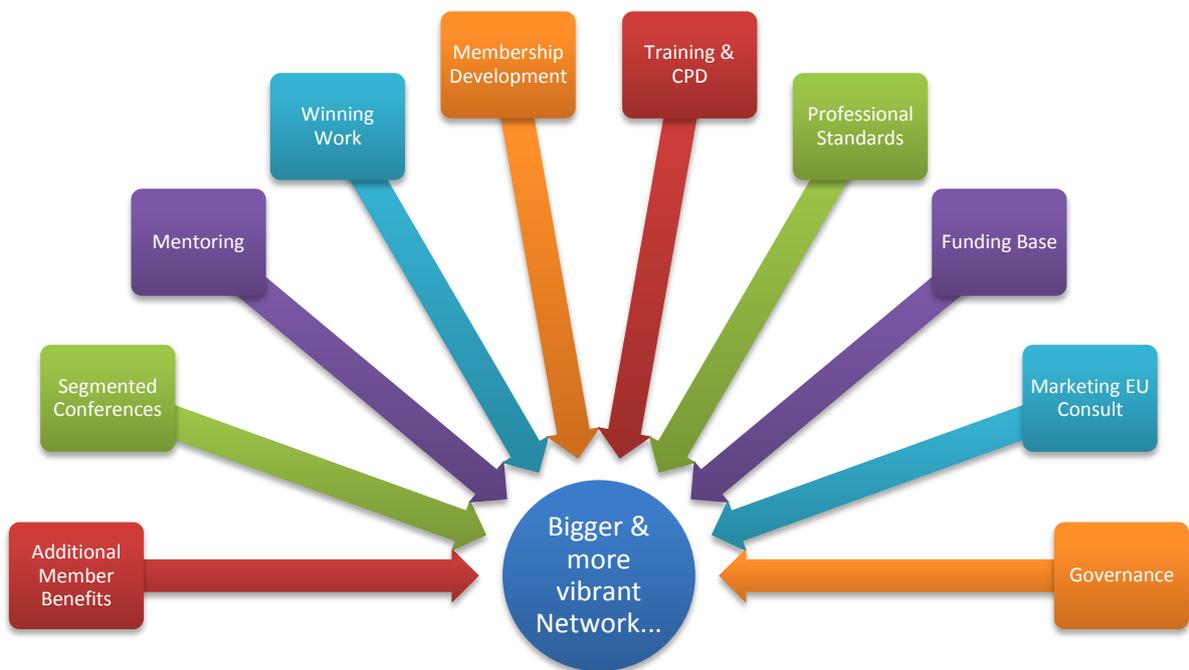
Figure 5: Four Strategic Objectives to Deliver our Strategic Goal



10 change projects will deliver the change we want and take us to 2014

In order to work towards the EU Consult we outline in this plan, the board will work with members on the following ten key change projects.

Figure 6: 10 Change Projects to take us to 2014



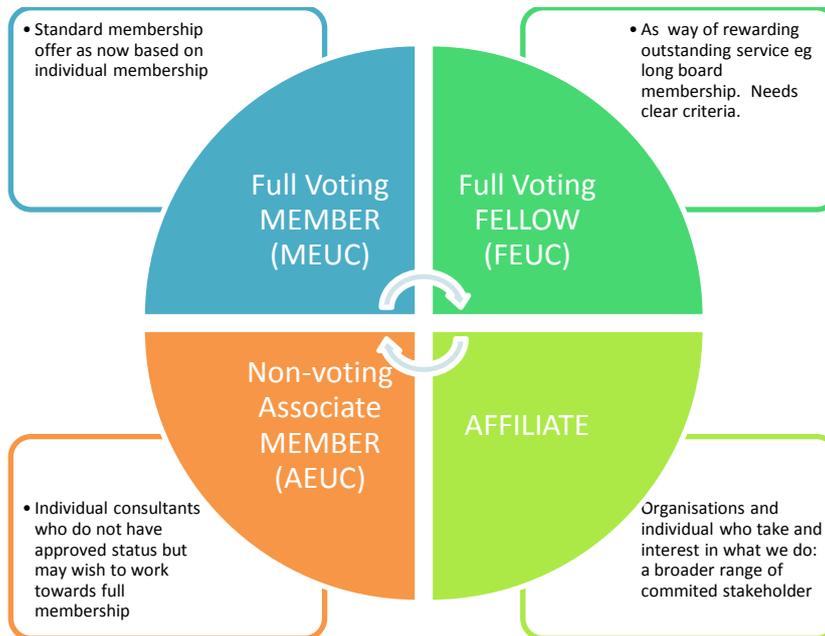
Each of these projects will be developed, consulted on and delivered with members during the course of the plan. They will form the backbone of the board’s work over the next three years – and are the key means by which the members can hold the board accountable.

Figure 7: Ten Change Projects to Deliver the Strategic Objectives

CHANGE PROJECT	DESIRED OUTCOMES
1. SEGMENTED CONFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences re-positioned so that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winter conference focuses on business development, mentoring, professional development and the AGM, while still providing a forum for member networking ○ Summer conference focuses on the big themes in the sector, drawing potential members and clients as well as existing members to provide a forum for the interface between the sector and its advisors
2. WINNING WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of a number of ideas to help members win work in a more competitive environment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using our website to give value to clients ○ A member-only portal for all sources of published tenders, possibly in association with another service ○ Facilitating collaboration between members to develop new services for the sector ○ Consideration of how EU Consult can facilitate other forms of work sharing especially cross-border
3. TRAINING AND CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A CPD framework for members to support their skills assessment, help devise development plans and record development • A range of specific training interventions – signposted or delivered directly - to support skills development in association with others as discounted member benefits
4. MENTORING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing mentoring framework is developed to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stronger support for members by members ○ Include regular sessions at the (Winter) conference ○ Facilitate exchange visits between members • This framework brought to life as a valued service

CHANGE PROJECT	DESIRED OUTCOMES
5. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of clearly defined categories of membership according to levels of experience or seniority (see Figure 8 below) • Development of a system of fees that reflect member grades, levels of member benefit and decrease geographic barriers to entry for prospective members • Move to an approach where firms or individuals can join, but that EUC has direct contact with <i>all</i> individuals in a membership relationship with EUC, not just the named head • Development of a 'pipeline of interest' from people whom we keep informed, through people who actively follow us to full and committed members • Consideration of a 'member-get-member' policy • Encouraging national/language group leads to facilitate greater coordination at those levels
6. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System of approving consultants, indicating certain levels of experience and competence, possibly in association with another body • Code of Ethics reviewed to provide an up-to-date Code of Professional Standards or Conduct, supported by a system to review cases should they occur
7. ADDITIONAL MEMBER BENEFITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of additional benefits that can be negotiated with other suppliers that meet member needs (e.g. discounted professional indemnity insurance cover, club membership, relevant journals, etc)
8. FUNDING BASE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking opportunities to broaden the funding base to achieve our mission and provide greater value for members, including EU grants & paid for services that help deliver better our mission
9. MARKETING EU CONSULT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an extensive and up-to-date list of consultants (and other) contacts across Europe whom we can keep informed by email of our activities – and promote our services • Upgrade of our marketing materials, including the website, better to reflect the range of our offer to members and to clients, current and potential • Engaging with the press more readily by releasing press releases, etc on relevant topics
10. GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance reviewed to ensure a small representative board with the right skills, offering active leadership of the association, with each board member taking a lead on one or more project or topic • Involvement of a wider range of members in the direct running of the association via project groups and committees

Figure 8: Potential New Membership Categories



Delivery

For our plan to work, we need members to focus on one or more of the projects, each having a board lead. Successful delivery also needs the right level of resources and the board needs to track progress closely, supported by the right metrics, enabling stronger accountability to the membership.

Project Leads and Timescales

One member of the board is assigned to lead on each of the change projects. Their job will be to work with a small group of members to develop a project scope and plan to:

- Specify each project in detail
- Determine an action plan, with timescales
- Consider resources required to deliver
- Report to the board on progress at each meeting
- Deliver the project within an agreed timeframe

We anticipate that each project will have one or two board members, each working with a small number of other members. Timescales will be for the project groups to determine, but each project will have one or more targets (Figure 9).

The Chair will be the overall champion for the strategic plan, holding board members accountable for progress in each area.

Figure 9: Change Project Leads and Targets

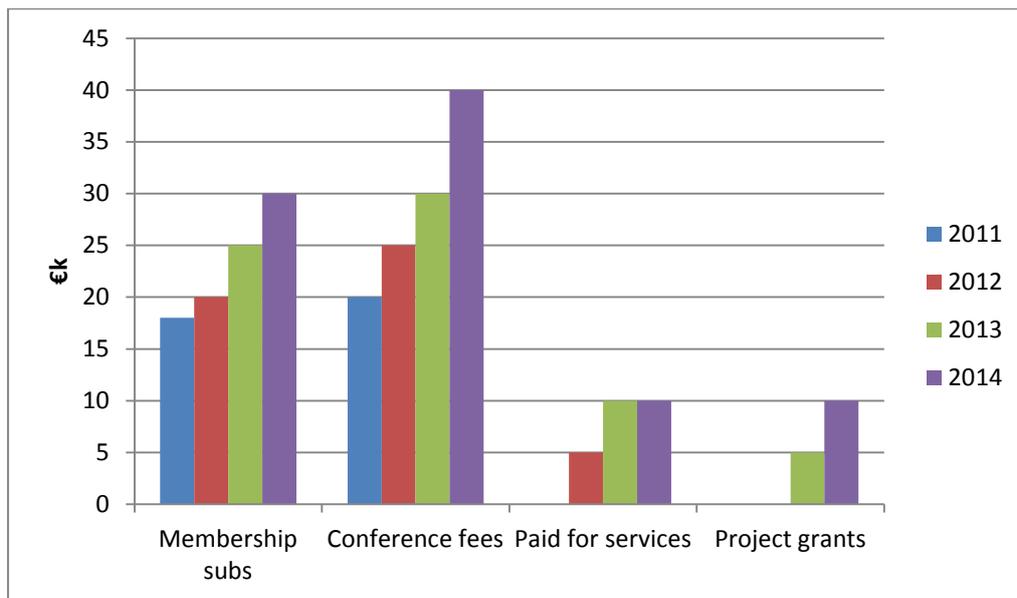
CHANGE PROJECT	BOARD LEADS	PROJECT TARGETS BY END YEAR 2014
0. OVERALL	Pasquale Pesce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain member overall satisfaction levels at 75% or above 2. Change projects specified, agreed and delivered to agreed timescales and within agreed budgets
3. SEGMENTED CONFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jakob Rolin (W) John Pepin (S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Number of conference participants 4. Maintain conference satisfaction levels at 75% or above (quality) 5. Maintain conference satisfaction levels at 65% or above (value for money)
4. WINNING WORK	Jakob Rolin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Two specific activities/services provided to members in this area 7. Member satisfaction with Winning Work role at 50% or above
5. TRAINING AND (CPD)	Linda Laurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. CPD framework in place 9. Directory of training resources in place
6. MENTORING	Mary O’Kennedy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Member satisfaction with Mentoring role at 50% or above
7. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	Arnaud Marcilhacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. EUC has in membership consultancies representing 100 individual consultants by 2014
8. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	John Tierney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. New Code of Professional Conduct in place 13. Member satisfaction with Professional Standards role at 50% or above
9. ADDITIONAL MEMBER BENEFITS	Henk Smit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Two additional member benefits in place
10. FUNDING BASE	Martin Beck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Increase Income to €70k pa by the end of the three year period 16. Maintain the level of reserves at a minimum of three months of expenditure
11. MARKETING EU Consult	Mary O’Kennedy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Four email newsletters each year to 2000 stakeholders
12. GOVERNANCE	Pasquale Pesce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Governance review completed and implemented 19. Member satisfaction with Governance at 75% or above

The Board will develop a scorecard to monitor progress on these indicators at each board meeting.

Financial Resources

It is vital that the organisation can increase its income to offer more and better services. We anticipate that in this plan it will increase income from €38k to €90k over the plan period. It will do this by increasing member numbers, conference profitability and seeking income from paid-for services or grant income for specific projects (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Projected Income from Four Main Sources 2011-14



A Membership Organisation is its Members!

We believe that a renewed network as described in this plan will create a more exciting organisation that retains its current ‘club’ feel.

The board will assess progress each year and report to members at the AGM.

Appendix: Analysis of EU Consult's Strategic Position

Successes

Since its beginning in 1991, EUConsult has enjoyed 20 years of solid achievement

- It has provided a forum for consultancies working wholly or mainly in the not-for-profit (nfp) sector across Europe
- Its particular appeal has been the owners of small fundraising and related businesses
- Its central offer has been biannual conferences which enable members to network, make contacts, learn about the sector in the host country of the conference and, occasionally, to find new business
- Of particular value to many members is the Code of Ethics which offers guarantees about minimum professional standards to client organisations
- The website has provided a window for potential clients and other consultants and has included an information service and a members' area
- It has retained a small, but close core of members, growing steadily until it reached a peak of x in y year
- It has remained a financially stable association (registered in the Netherlands as a Vereeniging), with acceptable reserves and a steady cash income from fees from members' and conferences

Changing World

But the world in which EUConsult operates is changing...

- In the recent post-banking crisis recession, the sector has contracted and, as a consequence, the potential market for members, already quite small, is likely to be static if not declining
- Even if the market for consultancy picks up in the coming years, its development is likely to be conditioned by the need to adapt to very tight public finances, reduced social service provision and heightened pressure on social cohesion
- The NFP sector is typically most associated with registered NGOs or charities, yet social change is in practice delivered by a wider range of actors within the broader civil society sector and, indeed, by public and private sector organisations. The NFO sector, as narrowly defined in EU Consult's mission, effectively excludes many forms of consulting that facilitate the development of organisations working to achieve social

...while internally the organisation has begun to face certain challenges

- Income is falling due to the declining number of members, static membership fee levels and static or falling conference attendance. Meanwhile, the pressure on income continues to be downward due to perception that membership and conference fee levels are high
- There is also a perception that our current offer to members may be becoming a little tired: a passive, 'chalk and talk' conference style, non-participation in the now defunct information service and the absence of new up and coming services attractive to a broader range of potential members just aren't pulling in the crowds
- The struggle we face to ensure that each conference covers its full costs and the consequent need sometimes to draw on income from membership fees, reduces our capacity to invest in service development

- We have failed to target and attract into membership significant numbers of younger consultants, working their way up a relatively unusual (and as a consequence somewhat isolated) professional career path and we have also struggled to attract in large numbers consultants from disciplines other than fund finding and from countries beyond the richer North and West
- We have also failed to deliver most of our strategic plan objectives for the period of the last plan, 2006-2009, not least the underlying scores of member satisfaction which have dropped from 75% in 2006 to 50% in 2009. Meanwhile there are limits to how much time the voluntary board of activist members, whose expenses are not remunerated, can afford to put into creating change

Analysis Presented at 2011 AGM in Lisbon

**Last Year in Prague, you said:
'Review the Model'**

- Discussion on strategy raised four key points:
 - Membership
 - Conferences
 - Value of fees
 - Professional standards
- Agree to review the 'value proposition' of the offer to members

Membership Expectations

Year	% of 100 + 25
2003	70%
2004	80%
2005	65%
2006	90%
2007	75%
2008	0%
2009	60%
2010	65%

While Membership has Peaked, most Member want to see 100+

Average # Members

Year	Average # Members
2003	25
2004	35
2005	38
2006	38
2007	40
2008	42
2009	45
2010	45
2011	40

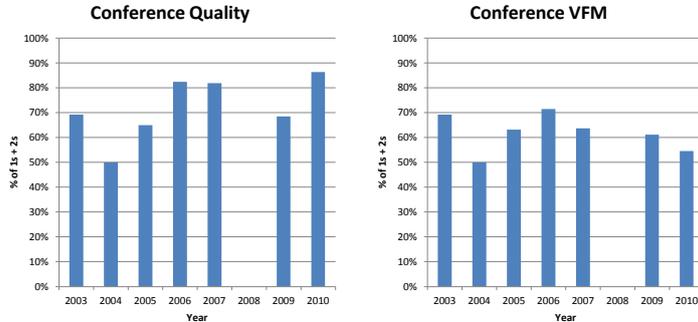
Desired Size of Membership

Year	% wanting 100 members or more
2003	65%
2004	70%
2005	75%
2006	85%
2007	70%
2008	0%
2009	80%
2010	70%

Larger Membership and:

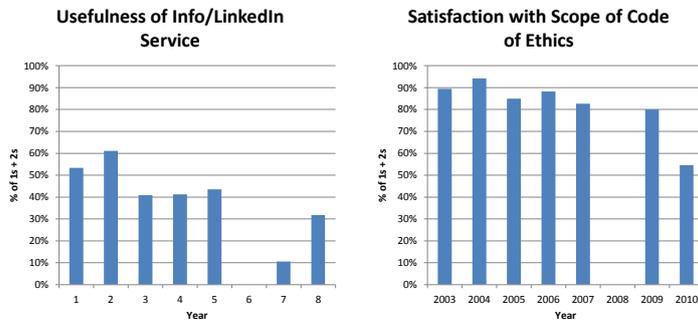
- Retain opportunity for senior consultants to meet...
- ...but include other consultants too (level, sector, discipline, etc)
- Consider fee levels and categories of membership

Good Conferences - need to improve Return on Investment for Participants



- Maintain & improve conferences, but:
- Improve ROI,
 - More support for running businesses needed
 - Consider other media e.g. webinars too

Value from Other Services Needs Updating



- Information:
- LinkedIn replaced old service; still low participation: needs further work
 - Professional standards: Code valuable for many; needs updating