

# INTA Bulletin

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## Presidential Task Force 2018 to Focus on SMEs

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2018 Presidential Task Force—SMEs and Entrepreneurs

At the start of this year, INTA 2018 President Tish Berard (Hearts On Fire Company LLC, USA) formed a Presidential Task Force with a special focus on identifying the interests, needs, and characteristics of global small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs from an intellectual property (IP) perspective. In alignment with the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan, the Task Force will examine potential opportunities and challenges in achieving IP protection that may be unique to SMEs and entrepreneurs, and further ascertain what gaps can be filled with additional resources and education.

Over the next several months, the following key initiatives will be assessed and developed by Task Force participants:

1. Defining what it means to be an SME from different geographic regions;
2. Assessing the interest of SMEs and entrepreneurs in IP and defining the best ways to communicate the importance of IP to these groups; and
3. Creating or repackaging INTA offerings that would benefit SMEs and entrepreneurs.

The results of addressing these key initiatives are expected to:

- Facilitate a refined understanding of the global identities and requirements of SMEs and entrepreneurs analyzed through the lens of IP;
- Identify the current extent of global IP knowledge bases and resources available to SMEs and entrepreneurs, as well as perceived gaps to determine opportunities to add more value in this area through optimized IP offerings;
- Mirror the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan, as previously noted, and help grow, innovate, and protect businesses in these groups; and
- Present recommended actions that INTA can initiate in the short- and long-term that are tailored to best meet the IP requirements of SMEs and entrepreneurs, and further ensure the success of their related business initiatives.

The above priorities will be addressed by participants' collective insights, perspectives, and research between January and November 2018. During this time, participants will develop a set of recommendations that will be reviewed by INTA's Board of Directors in November. Once approved, INTA will choose how to implement the recommendations.

To accomplish these priorities, the Presidential Task Force is backed by a strong team of INTA members who have experience and expertise in the interests of SMEs and entrepreneurs, and who represent each region of the world:

- Larisa Colton (Colton Consulting, USA) (Task Force Co-Chair)
- Shwetasree Majumder (Fidus Law Chambers, India) (Task Force Co-Chair)
- George Chan (Simmons & Simmons (Beijing) Intellectual Property Agency Company Limited, China)
- Elio De Tullio (De Tullio & Partners, Italy)
- Lara Kayode (O. Kayode & Co., Nigeria)
- Steven Liew (Cosmic Café/Steven Liew & Associates, Singapore)
- Kelly McCarthy (Sideman & Bancroft LLP, USA)
- Paulo Parente Marques Mendes (Di Blasi, Parente & Associates, Brazil)
- Angela Mwirigi (KCB Bank Group, Kenya)

The timely topic of the Presidential Task Force mirrors the world's present economic and professional landscape in which innovation and entrepreneurship are thriving.

- Matias Noetinger (Noetinger & Armando, Argentina)
- Ashley Parasram (Trinidad & Tobago Fine Cocoa Company, Trinidad and Tobago)
- Adina Schneider (Schneider Strick GmbH, Germany and Justin's Design GmbH, Germany/Romania).
- Charles Shaban (Abu-Ghazaleh Intellectual Property (AGIP), Jordan)
- Laura Collada (Dumont Bergman Bider & Co., S.C., Mexico)
- Karen Hayne (Addisons, Australia)
- Kay Rickelman (Spoor & Fisher, South Africa)
- Amelia Choi (Choi Tech And Law Professional Corporation, Canada)

Notably, Ms. Berard, General Counsel of Hearts On Fire Company LLC, an SME itself, is uniquely positioned to bring SMEs and entrepreneurs further into focus during her term as President and as the creator of this unique Task Force.

The timely topic of the Presidential Task Force mirrors the world's present economic and professional landscape in which innovation and entrepreneurship are thriving. In parallel, INTA recognizes that IP may not be a primary concern in the beginning phases of small companies, or for entrepreneurs, as this is typically a time when other business objectives take priority in order to build the idea or product itself.

By way of the Presidential Task Force, Ms. Berard is confident that INTA will be able to provide offerings to support these innovators in ensuring that they have the necessary resources to protect their concepts, products, and future consumers. Though it's too soon to tell, the work of the Task Force may lead to building bridges with global organizations that are already well established in these sectors of the global business community; however, with the work having only just begun, this and other promising anticipations are yet to be concluded.

Although every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of items in the *INTA Bulletin*, readers are urged to check independently on matters of specific concern or interest.

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