



Humanists
INTERNATIONAL

STRATEGY

2018 - 2020

UPDATED 2020

humanists.international



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Current situation, challenges, opportunities and vision

Humanists International is the voice of the global humanist movement and an influential, highly reputable player in the broader human rights movement. We are a very small International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) in terms of staffing and turnover, but punch well above our weight in influence and impact.

This is down to our dedicated and highly strategic Board, motivated and hard-working staff, an engaged and supportive membership, and a network of active volunteers. We have decades of experience campaigning on human rights issues and humanist ethical concerns and a bright future.

This strategy is framed within the context of rapidly changing political settlement around the world. The re-emergence of reactionary populism, nationalism and politicised religious authoritarianism poses a threat to the core values of the humanist movement. The rise of a well-funded and influential anti-humanist and anti-secularist movement of international religious organisations, supported in many cases by academics and states themselves, is having a regressive effect on the development



of many governments' foreign policies and a destructive effect on international institutions.

The principles of universal human rights and liberal secularism seem under more pressure now than at any time in the last 50 years. There is a significant risk that the fracturing of the principle of universal human rights (that they apply to everyone equally and that the individual's autonomy and dignity comes before any 'group' rights) could undermine many of the world-leading achievements of the post-war humanist movement.

In an increasingly crowded international market for both publicity and funding, Humanists International will have to work creatively to ensure that our important work attracts the support it deserves. But Humanists



International is a unique voice in the world: the reputable, professional, and respected umbrella organisation advocating on behalf of the humanist movement globally and which is democratically governed by its membership.

Demographic secularization in all societies will benefit our movement as more and more people discover that humanism is the word for their ethical and responsible non-religious worldview. Increasing economic development and sense of social responsibility around the world should mean whole new audiences are both willing and able to support our work, if we can reach them and engage them.

As an advocate for progressive values and a driver of change, Humanists International has a reputation, at all the institutions where we work, as a source of clear, principled, and evidence-driven policy leadership. We provide unique and high-quality research, information, and leadership on key humanist issues. Looking towards 2020 we must improve the service we deliver to our Members and Associates, so that they value membership with Humanists International as a cost-effective way of influencing the global agenda. Communicating the value of Humanists International membership and devising new and creative ways of supporting our Members and Associates will be crucial to achieving our mission.

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There are many exciting opportunities. We will continue to work flexibly and adapt to them as they arise, at the same time working to achieve planned and structured growth for our network.

Thank you for your support in this endeavour,

Andrew Copson
President



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This strategic plan will see Humanists International continue to lead the international movement as an advocate for change. With increased resources from a more diverse range of sources we will have expanded our professional staff team and recruit more volunteers.

In 2020 Humanists International will be a larger and more professional organisation, with a noticeably more international feel whose content will be available in more languages. Our advocacy work will be strengthened by an expanded and

“This planned and structured growth is borne of innovative renewed engagement with our Member Organizations and supporters around the world.”

reinvigorated team of delegations led by the Director of Advocacy. We will be including more of our members and supporters in our campaign work, in a more planned and thoughtful way. We will have more members in priority regions in the global south. These members will be engaged and active.

The Board of Humanists International will continue to give high-level strategic direction, ensure compliance and scrutinise the work of the staff team. The Board of Humanists International will continue to be a high-level group of dedicated people from a diverse background, who will oversee and scrutinise the work of the staff team.

Thank you for your support,

Gary McLelland
Chief Executive

OUR VISION, MISSION AND AIMS

On the following pages you will learn about **our objectives** and how we are working for a **better world**

OUR MISSION

“Our mission is to be the **global representative body of the humanist movement**, uniting a diversity of non-religious organisations and individuals. ”



OUR VISION

“ We want everyone to live a life of dignity **in a world where universal human rights are respected and protected**, and where states uphold secularism. We work **to build, support and represent the global humanist movement**, defending human rights, particularly those of non-religious people, and promoting humanist values worldwide. ”



AIM 1

We will have **successful and sustainable member organisations** in every part of the world

DESCRIPTION

We will provide funding, training, intellectual resources and other support to stimulate, encourage and foster new and emerging humanist and other relevant organisations. We will empower them to be more effective, resilient, and sustainable. We will concentrate our efforts in priority regions, but also operate opportunistically to support organisations as and where they arise.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

-  We will support our members to more effective, resilient, and sustainable
-  We will have a clear and transparent process for membership applications and fees



AIM 2

We will create a **coordinated global movement** by supporting and developing our network



Humanists International brings together member organizations and individual humanists to cooperate on global issues.

DESCRIPTION

We will bring together organisations of all non-theistic traditions, and the individuals engaged in the work of those organisations, to share experiences and good practice. We will support our member organisations to learn from each other, take joint action and become more involved in our work. We will support humanists at risk around the world, and encourage others to do so.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- We will run a successful global campaign to end blasphemy laws
- We will find ways to improve our communication with member organisations
- We will find new ways to facilitate our member organisations connecting with each other
- We will increase the participation of young people in all our work
- We will highlight and increase our global diversity
- We will find ways to engage with online groups, support them, and involve them in our work

AIM 3

We will influence and shape
**international and regional
government policies**



Humanists International works at the United Nations Human Rights Council, and other international institutions, to promote human rights and humanist values

DESCRIPTION

We will maintain delegations at priority international institutions to represent the global movement and advance our policies. We will work in cooperation with other NGOs and mobilise our member organisations to lobby their governments in support of initiatives that advance our policies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- We will maintain delegations at all relevant institutions (including the UN in Geneva, New York, and Paris; the Council of Europe; the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights; the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe; the European Union; and the Organization of American States.)
- We will be the recognized voice of the global humanist movement at international institutions and in the public eye.
- We will promote an awareness and understanding of the global situation of law and policy regarding the non-religious by improving and promoting the Freedom of Thought Report.

AIM 4

We will have sufficient **reputation, resources, and effectiveness** to achieve our objectives








A panel event in parallel with our General Assembly, 2017. Our Member Organizations come together every year to form the democratic core of Humanists International and to elect our Board.

DESCRIPTION

We will expand our staff and volunteer team. We will secure funding from multiple sources, including individual donors, member organisations, national and regional governments and grant-making bodies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

-  We will raise more money
-  We will be a recognisable brand at the heart of the global humanist movement
-  We will continue to be governed by a diverse and effective democratically-elected Board
-  We will ensure we have the staff capacity necessary to achieve our aims
-  We will ensure we have the volunteer capacity necessary to achieve our aims



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