



**Valerio Scollo**

**Candidacy letter for the position of First Vice President of AIJA**

Dear AIJA Present and Future Members, Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to present my candidacy for the position of First Vice President of AIJA.

I joined AIJA in 2019 for the Rome Congress. What started as a "see if you like it" suggestion from my dear Partner Justus Jansen (who also happens to be an Honorary Member of AIJA since 2019 and our Managing Partner since 2025), turned into a life-changing journey of personal and professional development.

As I approach the age limit for active participation in AIJA, it is now time for me to dedicate myself to passing on the professional development I have gained to the next generations of AIJA.

My candidacy is built upon one central conviction: the more you work (with AIJA) the greatest return you have in life.

**Boost Your Skills and Network**

As lawyers, our technical skills and our network are our most powerful assets. It does not begin with AIJA, we start building them at birth. We grow them through school, university, sport, and our first professional experiences. By the time we attend our first AIJA event, each of us is already a qualified lawyer and carries a rich web of personal and professional relationships. AIJA then adds an extraordinary layer: Academic and skills sessions thought for young professionals, with a global community of like-minded lawyers spanning different jurisdictions and practice areas.

These two networks — the one we bring with us and the one we build at AIJA — are not separate. They communicate. They reinforce each other. An international connection made at an AIJA Half Year Conference can unlock opportunities within your existing local network, and vice versa. The colleague you met at a seminar in Boston may become the perfect referral for a friend you have known since law school. A client attending an AIJA seminar in Tokyo or Barcelona will be impressed by your depth of knowledge and connections.

This is why I believe AIJA's role should go further than simply helping members build a network of international lawyers. AIJA should help you boost your entire network — the one you already have and the one you are building with AIJA.

### **Encourage Active Participation**

AIJA is at its finest when its members are actively engaged. I want to pass on the message I got when I first joined the association, and kept hearing ever since, in different forms: "Just raise your hand and make it happen".

The peer-to-peer, bottom-up nature of AIJA events is the best antidote to the desertification threatened by standardized LLM and AGI.

When I attended my first commission meeting in Rome, the then AIJA President asked who wanted to help for the academic program of the Half Year Conference happening nine months later. I raised my hand and suddenly I found myself coordinating six sessions together with another AIJA first timer. That event was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID, but it built the basis of my engagement with AIJA.

Not everybody can be active the same way, but I believe every AIJA member should have their chance to be involved, if they want, being in the administrative life of the association, in the development of academic programs, in the local promotion of AIJA.

Active participation breeds enthusiasm, and enthusiasm breeds growth. The more members who feel ownership of this association, the more vibrant and sustainable it will become.

### **Promote Local Initiatives and Strengthen Local Networks**

Not every professional connection needs to be made at a flagship event. Some of the most valuable relationships are those built locally — with fellow AIJA members in your own city or region who share your commitment to international practice.

I am committed to promoting local initiatives that bring members together between major events. Local gatherings are typically less expensive, or even fully paid by local sponsors, which could help to make our association known to under 30 lawyers and future lawyers. This means supporting national and local representatives in organising informal gatherings, local academic initiatives, and networking opportunities that keep the AIJA spirit alive year-round. By strengthening local networks, we create a stronger foundation for our global community.

### **Focus on Commission Officers and National Representatives**

Commission officers and national representatives are the backbone of AIJA's structure. They are the individuals who translate the association's vision into action on the ground.

If elected, I will prioritise indirect (through the Extended Bureau) and direct engagement with commission officers to understand their challenges, provide them with the resources they need, and ensure they feel supported in expanding their commissions' reach and activity. Similarly, I will work closely with national representatives to clarify expectations, provide practical tools for local engagement, and ensure that every representative is actively building AIJA's presence in their jurisdiction.

## **Create Stronger Connections with Kindred Associations**

Across the world, there are associations that share our purpose of connecting lawyers, fostering professional development, and promoting the rule of law.

If elected, I will propose a structured programme of engagement, beginning with ALSA and ELSA — the law student associations whose members are the young lawyers of tomorrow and AIJA's natural pipeline. By having formal relationships with these organisations, we can introduce law students to AIJA early, offer them a glimpse of what our association provides, and create a seamless pathway from student membership to full engagement with AIJA.

Being close to the final destination of 45, I will also focus on engaging with kindred professional associations, starting from ABA, CCBE, IBA, IPBA and UIA, to facilitate that the years of active participation with AIJA can be recognised within the association of choice.

In addition, AIJA members are often also members of industry associations. The AIJA Insolvency Commission has already developed an interesting collaboration with INSOL. I will encourage sharing of best practices across the commissions for similar events to be organised also by other commissions.

## **A Final Word**

I do not expect to reinvent AIJA, but rather to build on the fantastic job I witnessed since I joined AIJA. I will work towards unlocking the full potential of what already makes this association extraordinary: its people, and the connections between them. By boosting your network, encouraging your participation, strengthening your local community, empowering your commission officers and representatives, and connecting AIJA to the wider world of legal associations, I believe we can ensure that AIJA remains the most dynamic, inclusive, and valuable network of (young) lawyers in the world.

I would be deeply honoured to receive your support and your vote for the position of First Vice-President.