

Candidate Application in response to: **Call for candidates for EAAE Council elections 2023**

Candidate name: Samir Pandya

Candidate institution: University of Westminster, London, UK

Candidate roles: Assistant Head, and International Director of School of Architecture + Cities

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1. *Application Rationale*
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Application Rationale (482 words)

Two interrelated points underpin this rationale: one personal, one professional. Firstly, as a young person residing in London, my first major travel experience was an extended, low budget, 11-country trip through Europe. This trip was revelatory, providing a deep and vivid impression of a diverse cultural landscape which – regardless of its multiplicity – felt profoundly unified. Despite the contingent and unexamined nature of this experience, it was formative. It led to significant investment within my academic career in pursuing an active engagement with Europe, and a belief in Europe as an optimistic cultural and political project. Secondly, and perhaps predictably, my application is a response to the ongoing trauma of Brexit, and is symbolic of my – and my school’s – desire to sustain and forge even stronger strong links with our European friends. This is despite Brexit weakening the potential for collaboration, impacting negatively on UK funding and thus reducing resources and capacity (for mobility and research), and leading to the near complete absence of credible alternative strategies. In my view, the EAAE, through its clearly articulated mission and objectives, provides a space of both exchange and generosity. In this sense and in the context of Brexit, it would for me represent a vital transgressive space. Regarding my intentions should I be successful, and beyond generally contributing to fulfilling Council duties, I would be interested in discussing with EAAE colleagues the potential of pushing forward on two fronts. Firstly, to explore the prospect of extending the stated intention of the Education Academy to ‘*Map the kaleidoscopic field of architectural education in Europe and globally*’. This would be in order to maximise the value, legibility, and accessibility of the EAAE’s projects, including outputs / recommendations from past workshops, its best practice repository, and wider projects. In this sense, a major mapping project could also represent a rigorous examination of the state of the art and constitute a form of research with instructive potential for subsequent activity. Secondly, I would be keen to explore the feasibility (and desirability) of expanding and increasing engagement with the EAAE’s Associated Members beyond Europe. In the spirit of the ‘external dimension’ of Bologna, this could encompass carefully defined projects and events which examine contemporary intersections between national, European, international, and global dimensions of architectural education and research. Enhanced understanding of the dynamism of these intersections may further inform EAAE member schools’ collective and individual reflection on the international promotion of European architectural education, strengthen international cooperation, and serve as a potential source of intelligence on Europe’s positioning within the shifting landscape of inter- and transnational architectural education. By extension, this may support the capacity of the EAAE to be an ever more active global agent. Finally, the opportunity to contribute to the EAAE’s activity via Council membership would be a privilege, and would allow me to serve an interest to which I already feel utterly invested.

Personal statement regarding the Council duties (293 words)

My ability to fulfil the Council duties as set out in Article 17 can hopefully be discerned by my track record of projects and collaborative ventures. In addition to the creative, intellectual, and research skills I have developed through my training and career, my practice has been supported by quality management processes which have ensured consistency and quality. In my previous architectural practice (and alongside internal practice management quality systems), this has included working within rigorous parameters set by public body clients during the administration of building projects, including those for the UK Government's Ministry of Defence, various Local Authorities in London, and UK universities. This required procedural alignment to ensure projects were delivered to the desired quality, on time, and within budget. Within academia, as a Module Leader, Course Leader, International Director, School EDI Lead, and Assistant Head of School, the need to conduct one's administrative work within multiple quality frameworks has further refined my ability to meet and exceed the University's Key Performance Indicators. Over the years, I have organised numerous internal and outward-facing fora, symposia, and exhibitions, working with and accounting for related funding. Outward-facing events and projects have included collaborations with other schools of architecture, national student bodies, research centres, the RIBA, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, the Serpentine Gallery's Centre for Impossible Studies, and the Centre for Education in the Built Environment. Collectively, these collaborations represent a diverse range of projects, yet involved one common aspect: namely, the practice of 'border crossing'. Whether national, institutional, disciplinary, or cultural; the dimension of border crossing within collaborative working is one I find most enriching. For me, such collaboration (of which the EAAE is emblematic) allows disciplinary self-reflection, innovation, and dialogue underpinned by a human-centred politics of respect.