

The Director's vision for the EES in the 21st Century

The Egypt Exploration Society is at a turning point in its 135 year history. We now face challenges that cannot be overcome unless new strategies and important transformations are implemented. The timing has thus never been so perfect to apply the necessary changes for the EES to regain its international scholarly reputation in order to be recognized as a vibrant research institution at the forefront of UK Egyptology.

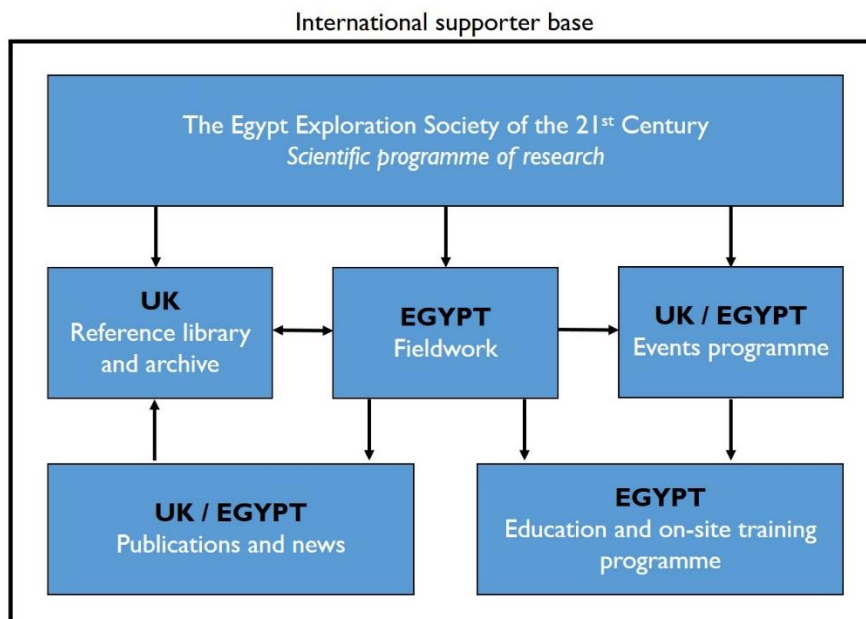
This document briefly outlines the proposed direction of the Society as outlined by its director, Dr Cédric Gobeil.

Scientific programme

It first requires the implementation of a scientific programme allowing for the development over several years of four or five main avenues of research (axes); these would constitute the backbones of the Society's activities. Indeed, not only will they help building a coherent fieldwork strategy but they will also guide our multi-year funding strategy (see below). Defining such a programme will allow us to financially assess the costs in advance, to a greater or a lesser extent at least, to allocate specific duties to the staff, and to precisely ascertain the means and tools to successfully achieve it.

Research facilities

Keeping a library as well as our archives in our future premises is critical. Both are not only necessary tools for scholars and students, but they also benefit a larger audience not necessarily affiliated to other institutions. The core purpose of our current and future activities (fieldwork and research) cannot be pursued without direct access to both these tools.



A visual representation of the Society's main activities and their support by an international community of donors.

Events programme

It is proposed to “decentralize” some events by working with non-London societies and institutions in order to reach larger and more varied audiences. The [Current British Archaeology in Egypt](#) conference, reflecting the Society’s fieldwork activities, as well as the regular study day and AGM will continue to be held in London.

Operations in Egypt

The EES must reposition itself as the leader of British archaeology in Egypt by expanding its activities and presence in Egypt. In order to achieve such a goal, the EES would have to consider writing a memorandum of understanding to be signed by both the UK embassy and the Egyptian government, settling the official framework of the EES’s new status in Egypt, that of a research institution operating from a research facility. This resolve brings the Society right back to the founding purpose that Amelia Edwards designed it for: to explore, protect and preserve Egyptian monuments. It is no more than what Amelia Edwards had called for, or at least what she had hoped for. Most of all, it would create a genuine British Egyptological community in Egypt working together with our Egyptian colleagues in order to enhance our education provision.

With regard to fieldwork, it is proposed to acquire for the Society a ‘flagship’ site, one that engenders interest in our membership, delivers on our promise of educational activities in the form of fieldschools and allows for ongoing cultural heritage management programme with local communities. The successful and popular [Centenary Awards](#) programme would be continued, as well as a limited number of grants dedicated to proposals that fit within the Society’s scientific programme as outlined above.

Scholars of the future

Training is now, more than ever, a crucial factor of all missions working in Egypt and the Society should rise up to this immediately by providing opportunities for training in the field and broad research grants to support their university research. Steps have already been taken in this direction, and the recent [Egyptian Archaeology Skills School](#) is an indicator for the necessity of providing these opportunities.

Fundraising strategy

The sale of the Doughty Mews property will help to create an endowment fund that would partially secure the EES’ future and the continuation of some of its activities. However, the interest received from this endowment would not secure the Society’s future in the long run and in order to realise the future outlined above, the Society must explore other sustainable business models and particularly consider focusing on developing a fundraising strategy which you will hear more about very soon.

Cédric Gobeil
17 February 2017