

Meeting: IESBA

Meeting Location: Madrid

Meeting Date: September 14-18, 2026

Agenda Item

10

IESBA Strategic Priorities

Objective of Agenda Item

1. To consider:
 - (a) A proposed prioritization approach for IESBA workstreams; and
 - (b) A staff assessment of priorities for current workstreams and pre-commitments in the Strategy and Work Plan 2024-2027.

IESBA Discussions in June 2026

2. At the June 2026 Board meeting, among other matters:
 - The Board supported a more systematic and disciplined approach to workstream prioritization, recognizing that there are more demands than it can meet with its limited resources.
 - The Board agreed that firm culture and governance (FCG), private equity and other external investments in accounting firms (PE&OEI), technology as well as adoption and implementation (A&I) of the Code are high-priority workstreams.
 - IESBA members suggested various approaches for assessing or specifying workstream priorities such as scoring methodologies, heat maps, traffic-light indicators, and the concept of minimum viable product. IESBA members also highlighted the level of public interest, risks and resources needed as possible criteria for weighing priorities.
 - IESBA members agreed that identified priorities should be advanced based on a realistic assessment of the available staff capacity, taking into account that staff resources are also deployed to support a variety of other IESBA activities such as stakeholder outreach, coordination with the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB), quarterly engagements with the PIOB, Planning Committee meetings, production of the IESBA handbook and annual report, etc. In addition, staff time needs to be set aside for annual leave and learning and development activities.
 - It was noted that buffers should be provided for when determining staff capacity to enable the Board to respond timely to any unplanned developments.

Workstream Prioritization and Staff Capacity

Workstream Prioritization Approach

- Staff has developed a proposed prioritization approach that sets out criteria for assessing the prioritization of current workstreams and identified strategic commitments not yet started (see **Agenda Item 10A**).
- The prioritization approach is intended to support the Board's determination of workstream priorities by providing a clear and consistent basis for assessing which workstreams or strategic precommitments should start, continue, be deferred, or be removed from the IESBA's work program.

Estimated Staff Capacity

- Staff has conducted an initial analysis of the potential staff capacity available across the next five quarters, from Q4 2026 to Q4 2027.
- This analysis takes into account the timing of workstreams and key deliverables anticipated for each quarter based on the IESBA Project Timetable as of June 2026 (see **Appendix**, which covers the period up to Q2 2027) as well as staff's projections for Q3-Q4 2027. It assumes that a staff member is at capacity when undertaking two high-intensity workstreams or one high-intensity workstream plus two or more lower-intensity workstreams.¹ This assumption also takes into account staff time allocated to support or carry out a range of other IESBA activities not shown in the Project Timetable, as well as time for annual leave and learning and development activities.²
- The results of the analysis are presented in the table below, highlighting:
 - An estimate of staff capacity available by staff level and by quarter; and
 - The number of additional workstreams that could potentially commence in Q1 2027.
- The staff capacity availability below takes into account a staff member's existing assignments, with estimated remaining capacity for an additional workstream in a particular quarter.

Estimated Staff Capacity Availability					
	Q4 2026	Q1 2027	Q2 2027	Q3 2027	Q4 2027
Directors	0	2	2	2	2
Principals	1	3	2	2	2
Senior Managers	0	3	2	3	3
Potential new workstreams	0	3	Reassess in Q2 2027	Reassess in Q3 2027	Reassess in Q4 2027

¹ Depending on their nature and scope, lower-intensity workstreams vary in terms of the extent to which they draw on staff resources. Examples of lower intensity workstreams include development of NAM, SMART initiatives, support to the Trends and Risks Committee, narrow-scope amendments projects, etc.

² Other IESBA activities include, for example, outreach to stakeholders (e.g., the Stakeholder Advisory Council, IAASB-IESBA User Advisory Group, and Jurisdictional Standard Setters), support to the Planning Committee, quarterly PIOB engagement, ad hoc assignments, etc.

Note: The indicative staff capacity availability for each quarter is determined based on the staff deployment to current workstreams and the anticipated progress of these workstreams as the project timetable currently stands. It does not take into account the cumulative effect of new workstreams commencing in earlier quarters and continuing into subsequent periods. For example, a capacity indication of three new workstreams in Q1 2027 would mean that staff resources deployed to these new workstreams would no longer be available in subsequent quarters so long as these staff resources remain assigned to those workstreams. If these three new workstreams were to start in Q1 2027, the staff capacity availability across the different levels would be reduced in subsequent quarters accordingly.

9. This analysis is a “best estimate” at a point in time. It is intended to help the Board identify quarters where staffing resources are likely to be more constrained and quarters in which capacity may become available to allow for the commencement of new workstreams.
10. As with any forward-looking assessment, the analysis may change from quarter to quarter as current workstreams advance and key tasks, timelines, priorities, or resourcing assumptions evolve over time. As such, the assessment of available staff capacity cannot be over-engineered. Indeed, given that the level of intensity of a project or other workstream can vary over time, the allocation of staff resources and how individual staff members use their time across their assignments and responsibilities inherently require flexibility.

Initial Staff Assessment of Workstream Priorities

High-Priority Workstreams

11. Based on the June 2026 Board discussions, staff has noted the following ongoing workstreams as high priority:

Interconnected Areas of Greatest Transformation and Ethical Risks	1. FCG
	2. PE&OEI
	3. Technology
Global Adoption and Implementation	4. A&I and related activities

12. At the September 2026 meeting, the Board will discuss each of these high-priority workstreams and consider:
 - (a) Key deliverables for next five quarters; and
 - (b) Whether there are any new activities or tasks that should be undertaken and, if so, whether they would require additional staff resources.
13. With regards to Global A&I, this encompasses a broader set of activities covered by the A&I workstream, and includes:
 - The development of non-authoritative material (NAM) and other implementation support materials, including to address the topic of proportionality of the Code
 - The development of jurisdictional profiles in relation to the IESBA's sustainability-related standards, and monitoring of the adoption of those standards

- The rollout of the Partnership Framework
 - The activities of the IESSA Implementation Monitoring Advisory Group (IIMAG)
 - Post-implementation reviews (PIRs)
14. When allocating resources, the Board may consider any additional work or activities that need to be supported for the high-priority workstreams, typically resulting from Board discussions, before commencing new workstreams.

Other Ongoing Workstreams

15. At the June 2026 Board meeting, the Board discussed the following two workstreams and the way forward:

(a) **Part 4B Sustainability**

Following consideration of the Project Team's final report and recommendations, the Board agreed not to initiate a standard-setting project at this time in light of the current limitations in available information and stakeholder feedback indicating no perceived gaps in the Code. The Board also supported the recommendation to continue monitoring developments in sustainability assurance practice through existing mechanisms, including the IIMAG.

(b) **Role of Chief Financial Officers (CFOs)**

The Board considered the Project Team's preliminary findings from the information-gathering work but did not make any decisions yet. The Board will consider the Project Team's final report and recommendations at its September 2026 Meeting, including any potential future actions and how they should be prioritized.

Workstreams Not Yet Commenced

16. As highlighted at the June 2026 IESBA meeting, there a number of workstreams in the Strategy and Work Plan (SWP) 2024-2027 yet to commence. All of these were assessed as medium priority in the current SWP, with the exception of the workstream on exploring extending the impact of the Code to all preparers of sustainability information, which was assessed as high priority. The anticipated demand on resources assessed in the current SWP is also set out below:

Workstreams	SWP Assessment of Anticipated Demand on Resources
Business Relationships	High
Audit Firm – Audit Client Relationship	Medium
Exploring Extending the Impact of the Code to All Preparers of Sustainability Information	High
PIR – Long Association Phase 2	Medium
PIR – Non-Assurance Services and Fees	High
PIR – Definition of Public Interest Entity	Medium

PIR – Engagement Team – Group Audits	Medium
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17. Staff has conducted a reassessment of the priority of these workstreams as well as the Collective Investment Vehicles (CIVs) workstream based on the criteria set out in the proposed prioritization approach (see **Agenda Item 10B**).

Matters for IESBA Consideration

18. IESBA members are asked to share views on:
- (a) Whether the proposed prioritization approach in **Agenda Item 10A** provides an appropriate basis for assessing the relative priorities of workstreams and strategic precommitments, and the related actions;
 - (b) Staff's assessment of priorities for strategic precommitments not yet commenced and workstreams postponed (**Agenda Item 10B**); and
 - (c) Considering also the outcomes of the Board's deliberations on workstreams on the September 2026 Board agenda, which workstreams should continue or which strategic precommitments should commence for the remainder of the current strategy period when capacity becomes available.

Next Steps

19. Subject to the Board's input, staff will finalize the prioritization approach and the assessment of workstream priorities, and present the work plan for 2027 at the December 2027 Board meeting.

Materials Presented

Agenda Item 10A	Proposed Prioritization Approach
Agenda Item 10B	Staff Assessment of Workstream Priorities 2026-2027

Appendix

IESBA Project Timetable

The [project timetable](#) below sets out anticipated milestones and deliverables for current workstreams over the next 12 months as of Q3 2026. The project timetable is updated on a quarterly basis.

Projects/Initiatives	2026		2027	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Firm Culture and Governance	1 st Read of ED Discussion of NAM Action Plan	2 nd Read and Approval of ED Discussion of NAM	Discussion of NAM	Preliminary Review of ED Comments Agree NAM
Strategy & Work Plan 2028-2031	Full Review of Survey Responses Discussion of Possible Strategic Objectives	Approve Consultation Paper		
Private Equity and Other Investments in firms (PE&OEI)	Discussion	Discussion	Final Phase 1 Report and Recommendations	TBD
Technology Working Group (TWG)	Discussion of NAM	Agree NAM Review – Further Action Plan	TBD	
Role of Chief Finance Officers CFOs	Final Report and Recommendations	TBD		
Restructured Code Post-implementation Review (PIR)	Review of Survey Feedback	Final Report and Recommendations	TBD	
Non-compliance with laws and regulations (NOCLAR®) PIR		Review of Survey Feedback	Final Report and Recommendations	TBD
Adoption and Implementation Working Group (A&I WG)	A&I Activities	A&I Activities	A&I Activities	A&I Activities
Sustainability – IESSA⁴ Implementation Monitoring Advisory Group (IIMAG)		Stock-take and Action Determination	TBD	
Trends and Risks Committee (TRC)		Update	Update	Update

IESBA Strategic Priorities (Cover Note)
IESBA Meeting (September 2026)

Projects/Initiatives	2026		2027	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
IESBA-IAASB Coordination		Update		
IESBA SMART	Update	Update	Update	Update