



## General Assembly Document

### Towards a new GeSI

*This document is intended for approval by the GeSI General Assembly (6<sup>th</sup> December '22).*

*The document translates Accenture's strategy review (May-July '22) as well as the subsequent Board feedback into a GeSI board document. It therefore identifies selected deliverables for the Board and the General Assembly. The full strategy review is presented as an annex – and a justification – for this document.*

#### 1. Status quo – strengths, gaps and opportunities

The strategy review found that GeSI currently has the following **strengths**:

- Solid vision, building a strong case for ICT as driver of sustainability
- Strong reputation among its members
- Produces widely cited and referenced content
- A nimble and efficient team
- A collaborative place for advancing the sustainability debate among members
- Relevant organic growth, with strong and reputable telecom members

Areas in which **gaps and opportunities** have been identified are:

- Member offering
  - Increase thought-leadership pieces over time (e.g., studies, papers, reports...)
  - Ensure solid and well-structured Working Group operations
  - Expand tools and frameworks to socio-economic area, update existing tools, and explore tooling partnerships
- Campaigns and events
  - strengthen the mutually reinforcing loop between regular initiatives and DWP, while avoid duplications across existing initiatives
  - Produce own GeSI events/flagship event

The organizational set up of GeSI, in short, currently consists of: 70 members, ~€1m yearly budget c.a., 3 FTEs, independent/external consultants. The strategy review concluded that – if GeSI is to address its gaps and to seize opportunities to the benefit of members – it must be able to evolve across all key aspects: staff, membership base, and budget.



If current members agree to pursue such new strategic direction, several fresh opportunities of growth are available for the organization. This would go to the benefit of its current and future members.

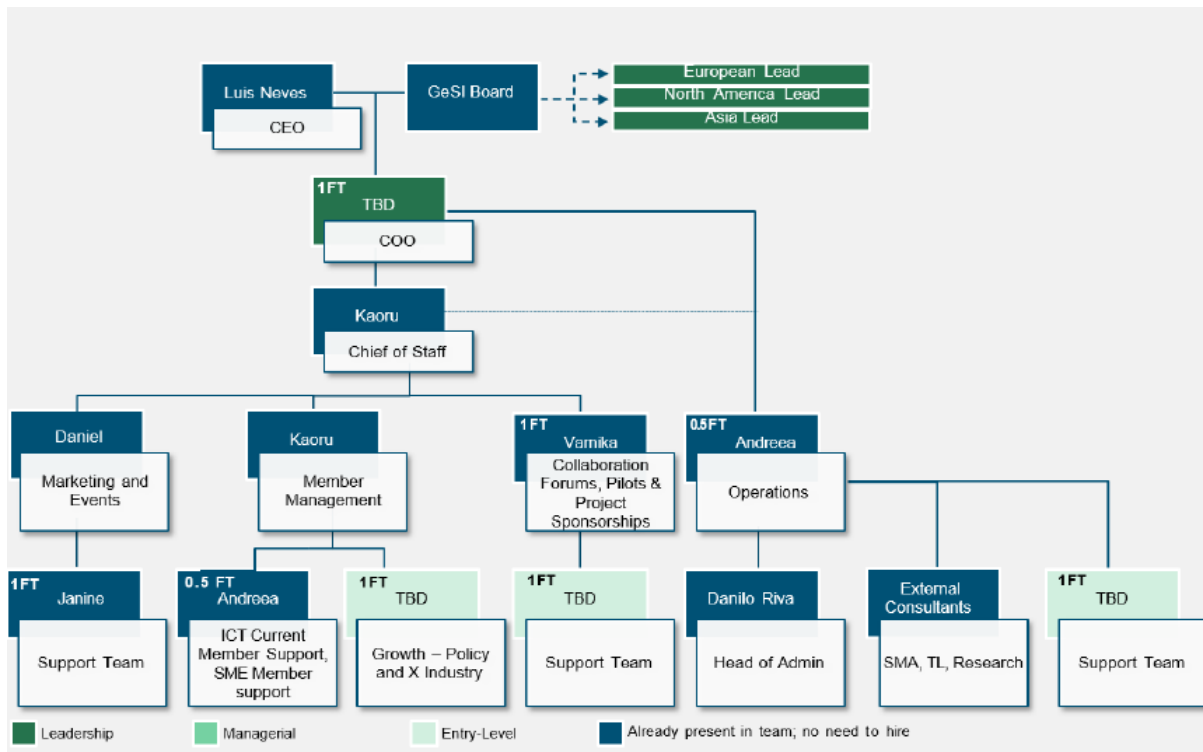
### Opportunities to strengthen and grow the organization

The strategy review has concluded that the following roadmap should be implemented in order to address the shortcomings and seize the opportunities identified in paragraph 1 of this document.

The roadmap is presented as a “menu” of **possible actions** that can be undertaken, as follows:

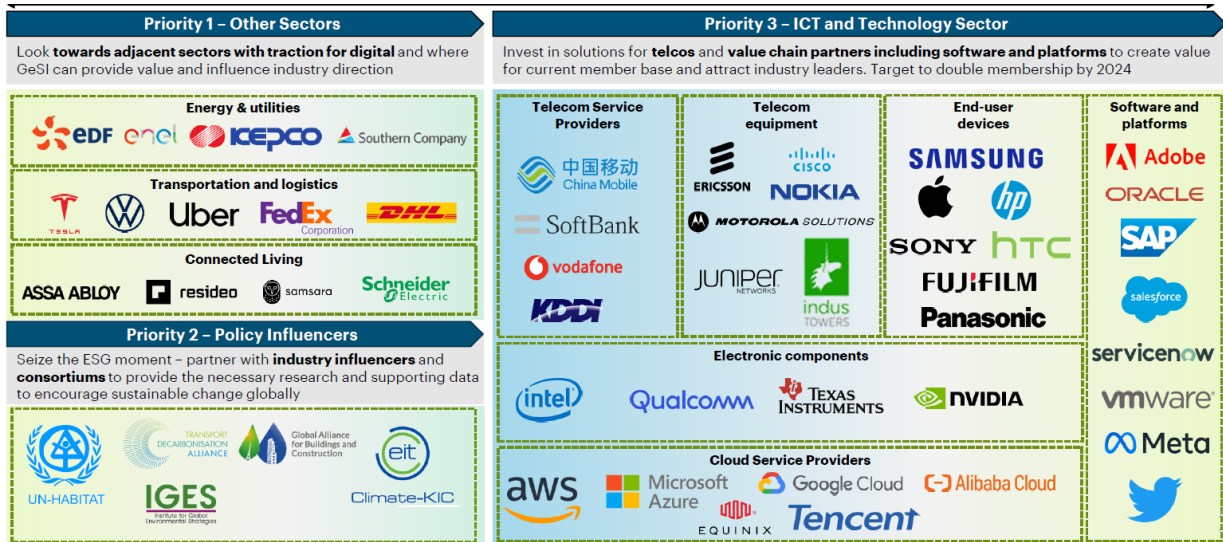
	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term
MEMBER RETENTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengthen current offerings</b> (rework tools, invest in working sessions)</li> <li>• Increase member <b>engagement</b> (via member POCs)</li> <li>• Evolve <b>working groups</b> to be more <b>action oriented</b> by partnering with members to deploy pilot solutions</li> <li>• Host small <b>annual flagship event (DWP/GeSI)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand <b>member participation</b> to include leaders from marketing, product, research, innovation, and engineering</li> <li>• Host <b>large-scale annual flagship event(s)</b></li> </ul>	
MEMBER EXPANSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand members to sectors <b>outside ICT and Tech</b> i.e., transportation, energy-management/utilities</li> <li>• Ramp up engagement with non-profits and consortiums working in <b>policy</b></li> <li>• Increase <b>brand</b> recognition</li> <li>• Start offering project-based memberships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Expand</b> members from <b>ICT and Tech</b> sector (webinars, free trial or project-based memberships)</li> <li>• Increase <b>transparency</b></li> <li>• Start onboarding <b>medium size organizations</b> on trial basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand into <b>broad or adjacent cross industries</b> like agriculture</li> </ul>
OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch <b>Advisory Services</b> for consulting projects in association with consulting member orgs</li> <li>• Conduct <b>training and awareness sessions</b> for member orgs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer <b>Learning Certificate Programs</b> for members in association with academic partners</li> </ul>	

Moving towards the implementation of some or all of the above-listed actions, also requires a new organizational structure, with a stronger **staffing** (FTEs), as follows:



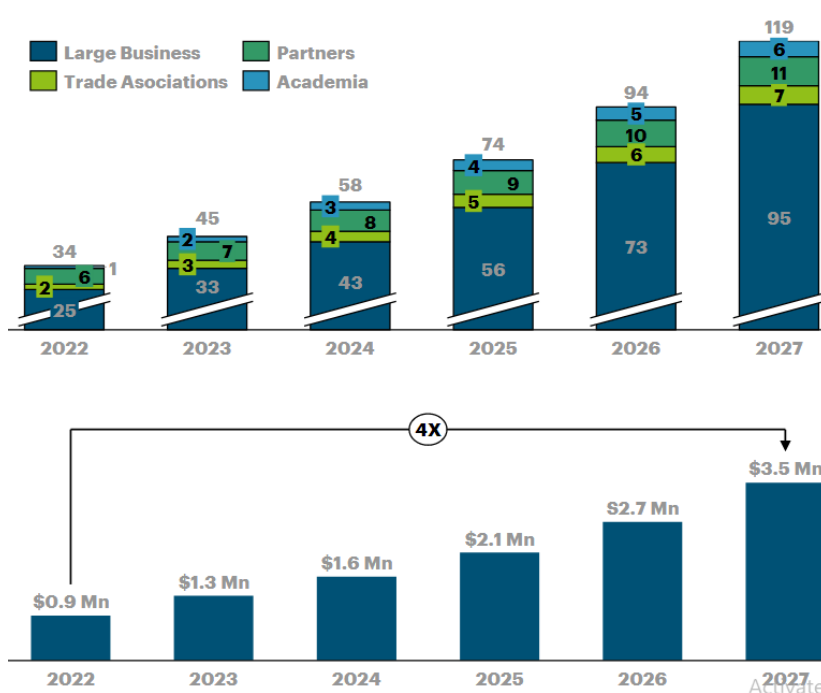
The more ambitious action plan and the new staff would aim to better serve existing members, while pursuing a structured membership-growth strategy, overseen by the Board. This would be aimed at enlarging the membership base, strengthening the positive network effects stemming from a GeSI member and providing additional budgetary resources to produce more membership services. Also, DWP staff would be brought into the picture, and stabilised, with a view to increasing integration, coherence of action and coordination.

The **membership-growth strategy** will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the current Board and the ultimate goal is to expand to a group of like-minded companies, where commitment to the values of GeSI remains a lighthouse. The membership expansion plan is to be guided by the following mapping:



The membership strategy foresees to maintain focus on companies and organizations with high reputation and a global vision, but does not imply prejudicial limits on the size of the companies. More in specific, the current Board will be consulted on how to better reflect the crucial role of SMEs.

The membership strategy, over time, can be expected to have positive effects on the **budget**:



This would activate virtuous cycle in which a stronger staff allows to better serve current members, while expanding the membership base. Such expansion would lead to extending GeSI’s network effects, while growing the budget.

Ultimately, GeSI will produce more and better member services, increase its influence and offer an higher value overall to both new and existing members.

The membership-fee-driven expansion of the budget is without prejudice to GeSI pursuing an opportunity-oriented plan for boosting its alternative revenue streams (i.e., sponsorships, tools, public funding, etc...). This is especially important in an inflationary context, where membership fee increases – while at times deemed necessary by the Board – cannot be the main way to ensure the financial sustainability of the association.



## 2. In-depth – working groups & projects

**Working groups** are key to delivering member value in trade associations. Currently, GeSI has a strong WG tradition, but the organizational and budgetary limitations, as well as limits in members' engagement, have led to some issues.

Therefore, the strategy review has identified the following possible fixes that can help relaunching WG activity:

PROPOSED MODEL	
<b>Working group themes*</b>	<span style="color: green;">●</span> Risk-driven <span style="color: green;">●</span> Innovation <span style="color: green;">●</span> Both
Net Zero	Resource Management
Regulatory and business risks	Responsible Innovation
Social Impact	Industry specific groups
<b>Recommended operational changes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Host a <b>mix of risk-driven and innovation focused</b> working group topics</li><li>• Group need to be <b>action-oriented</b> by engaging in <b>development of solutions and piloting implementations</b></li><li>• Given the limited bandwidth of board members, we suggest that <b>GeSI have a facilitator for each working group</b> to<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Plan and communicate the agenda</b> and prepare material for each session</li><li>• <b>Moderate discussions</b></li><li>• Coordinate with <b>other working group facilitators to transfer best practices</b></li><li>• <b>Share findings and learnings</b> of working group to influence research topic roadmap</li><li>• Ensure that <b>cadence, sessions notes are uploaded</b> to the online portal</li></ul></li><li>• Working groups must meet <b>at least on a monthly basis</b></li></ul>	

The objective is to achieve an action-oriented plan of activities for Working Groups.

The actions proposed in paragraph 2 of this document would be key in enabling the proposed model for relaunching WG activity within GeSI, and therefore reactive one of the major drivers of membership value.

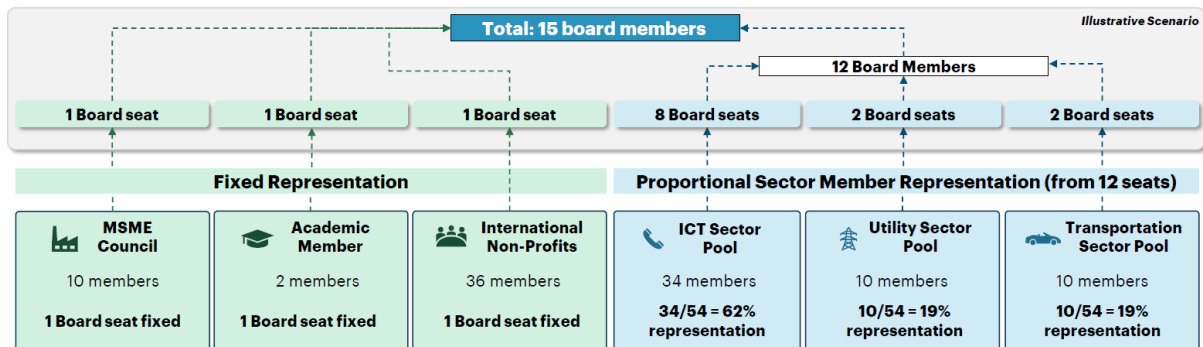
In addition, projects also play a key role in advancing GeSI's agenda. Among others, we expect 2 of them to be pillars of our activity:

- **Digital With Purpose** – with a global scope and a focus on the development of the DWP tool, aiming to set a result-oriented mechanisms to advance digitalization in the ICT ecosystem. This must be constantly and tightly coordinated with GeSI's activities, to ensure it serves the overall longer-term growth of the association.
- **European Green Digital Coalition** – with a European scope, and a focus on developing a leadership in methodologies for calculating the net enabling potential of ICT. Such methodology has the potential of setting the standard beyond EU borders and, pending future decisions by the funding authorities, it might offer a longer-term opportunity for GeSI to lead in this area (i.e., authorities might decide to establish this on a quasi-permanent basis).



### 3. Board governance

The actions and directions described in paragraph 2 of this document would require an evolution of GeSI's board to make it more relevant to existing and new members, as follows:



This would safeguard the large majority of the existing board seats, while allowing a better representation of stakeholders and companies, including those other than global corporations. This would strengthen relevance and representativeness – both internally and externally, while allowing a continue close strategic control by the Board.

### 4. Proposed GeSI Board and GeSI General Assembly resolutions on the strategy review

Based on the strategy review carried out in 2022, as well as input from Board members during Board meetings, GeSI's Board proposes the General Assembly:

- To approve the overall new strategic direction of GeSI, seeking a more structured permanent staff, growth of the membership base, and improved budgetary resources aimed at increased influence of the organization and stronger delivery of value-to-members.
- To mandate the GeSI team to develop a new WG structure, delivering increased value to members;
- To approve the hiring of at least the following additional staff, in 2023: 1 Chief Operating Officer; 1 FTE for operations/programmes. Such positions add to existing staff (1 CEO, 1 Director, 1 Junior).
- To acknowledge that the COO is hired with a view to ensure an adequate succession planning for 2023 and the transition to a new CEO. Once the succession has taken place, the role of COO and the budget attributed to it are no longer deemed necessary.
- To work on a proposal for adaptation of the GeSI Statutes, to be delivered to the current Board by the end of Q2 2023, in view of implementing the strategy and adapting the old statutes to current evolution of the relevant Belgian legislation for international associations.
- To swiftly implement a member recruitment strategy by engaging the verticals and SMEs to ensure their representation in the future governance.