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Letter from the IEC President



As 2025 draws to a close, we are completing a milestone year: the 10th anniversary of IEC activities. The impact our organization has had in a decade is a monument to the physicians and researchers who comprise our Council and the industry partners who support our work.

The start of 2026 will also see us enter the final year of our <u>3-year strategic plan</u> to keep us on track to achieve our mission and continue to grow. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has helped us make such meaningful progress.

Over the past decade, our collaboration, innovation, and steadfast commitment have built a strong community that has meaningfully improved the lives of people living with atopic dermatitis around the world.

This has been a busy and productive year. Together, we convened on three continents, advanced special projects that strengthen education and collaboration, and moved three manuscripts closer to publication. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of our Council members, the leadership and partnership of our corporate partners, and the engagement of supporters worldwide.

Importantly, the momentum behind these efforts positions us to accelerate impact in the coming year as we complete our strategic plan.

With a year remaining in my 3-year term as IEC president, I'm proud of what we've accomplished together and energized by the work ahead. Our strategic plan, also on a 3-year cycle, both showcases the progress to date and provides a clear, shared roadmap for the final stretch. You'll see details about our goals and progress in this newsletter. I look forward to continuing to grow and diversify the Council's membership and our trusted corporate partnerships, launching new educational programming, advancing special projects, and bringing to publication the results of research projects that will fill gaps in the literature. Together with our industry partners, we'll deliver on this agenda and position the IEC for its next chapter under President Elect Lawrence F. Eichenfield, MD.

As we look ahead to 2026, I ask our Council members, corporate partners, and supporters to remain actively engaged: participate in our programs, contribute expertise to our projects and publications, and share IEC resources within your networks. Your involvement is essential to sustaining progress in care, education, and research for atopic dermatitis globally.

I thank you for the energy, insight, and unwavering support you have provided to bring us to where we are today. I'm looking forward to a strong finish to my term as I set the stage for the next chapter of the IEC's work.

Alan Irvine, MD DSc IEC President

# LDA Research to Be Shared at AAD Annual Meeting and Published

The results of the IEC project seeking to create consensus on definitions of low disease activity and remission will soon be shared with an even wider audience.

First, the abstract "International Eczema Council Atopic Dermatitis Low Disease Activity and Remission Consensus Definitions: Results of a Global Modified Delphi Initiative" has been accepted as an online ePoster with oral presentation at the 2026 American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Annual Meeting March 27–31 at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver, CO, USA. Poster 73585 will be presented from 10:20 to 10:25 am March 28 in Lobby C, Poster Center 1. The poster also will be available through the AAD website and meeting

platform. Following the event, the abstract will also appear in a *The Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD*) supplement a ensuring by about the supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by about the supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD) supplement a ensuring by a supplement of the American Academy of the American Ac



publication in a major peer-reviewed dermatology journal. When the manuscript is published, we will announce it and include a link on our list of <a href="IEC journal">IEC journal</a> <a href="publications">publications</a>.

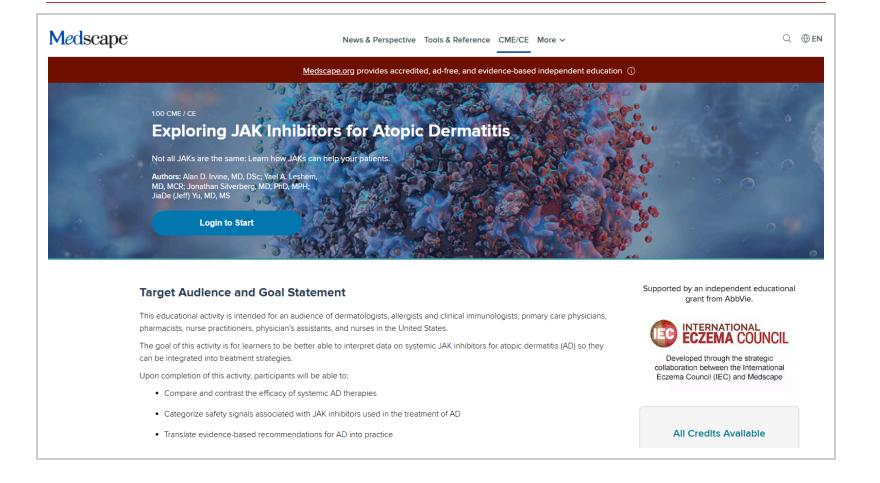
IEC Councilor Joseph F. Merola, MD MMSc FAAD FACR, is the lead author of a manuscript on the results of the project. He has played a pivotal role in advancing the IEC's Low Disease Activity (LDA) and Remission Consensus initiative for atopic dermatitis.

Leading the modified Delphi survey process, Dr. Merola guided our membership of global experts in defining clear, clinically meaningful endpoints—including LDA, very low disease activity, complete control, and remission—to support regulatory standards and clinical trial design. Providing globally accepted, clinically meaningful definitions for treatment targets in atopic dermatitis can create consistency across clinical trials, regulatory submissions, and real-world practice.

The manuscript was written by Dr. Merola and 9 coauthors:

- IEC Councilors and Current or Past Presidents Robert Bissonnette, MD MSc; Emma Guttman-Yassky, MD PhD; Alan Irvine, MD DSc; and Amy Paller, MD MS
- IEC Councilors Thomas Bieber, MD PhD MDRA; Eric Simpson, MD MCR; and April Armstrong, MD MPH
- Beth A. Childs, MSc, and Brooke Bartley, MD.

Dr. Merola previously presented the findings during the IEC's Councilor, Associate, and Industry Partner meeting held at the 2025 EADV Congress. The oral presentation at AAD and publication will help further communicate these consensus definitions to clinicians and researchers, a significant step toward harmonizing treatment goals and improving patient outcomes worldwide.



## **New Training Module: JAK Inhibitors in Atopic Dermatitis**

In partnership with Medscape and with support from AbbVie, IEC is pleased to announce a new educational module: **Atopic Dermatitis Balancing Act: Exploring Safety and Efficacy of JAK Inhibitors in Practice**. This concise, video-based training is now available to clinicians in the United States.

Developed to address important gaps in the management of moderate to severe atopic dermatitis, this resource empowers clinicians to make informed, shared decisions with patients and caregivers. Learners can earn 0.25 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ and gain an improved ability to integrate JAK inhibitors into practice for appropriate patients with AD.

We gratefully acknowledge the expertise and dedication of our IEC contributor volunteers: Alan Irvine, MD DSc; Yael Leshem, MD MCR; Jonathan Silverberg, MD PhD MPH; and JiaDe Yu, MD.

This educational activity is intended for dermatologists, allergists, clinical immunologists, primary care physicians, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, and nurses in the United States. We encourage our members in the U.S. to use the module for professional development and to share it with colleagues, trainees, or anyone who could benefit from practical, up-to-date guidance.

This module is designed to help clinicians:

- Compare and contrast the efficacy of systemic AD therapies
- · Categorize safety signals associated with JAK inhibitors used in the treatment of AD
- Translate evidence-based recommendations for AD into practice

This project was made possible through grant support from AbbVie.

**Access the Module** 

# Funding Awarded for Joint IEC/IPC Innovation Forum Event

We are pleased to share that the <u>LEO Foundation</u> has awarded a Research Networking Grant of 392,000 DKK (~\$61,000 USD) to fund the Eczema and Psoriasis Research Incubator: Cross-Disciplinary Innovation Forum, a collaborative project between the IEC and International Psoriasis Council (IPC).



IPC will organize the event in partnership with IEC. The half-day gathering aims to bring together international researchers at the ESDR Congress in autumn 2026 in Heidelberg, Germany to accelerate progress in the understanding and treatment of psoriasis and eczema by fostering cross-disease and cross-disciplinary collaboration with patients, physicians, and researchers. The program will include opportunities for participants at all career stages to engage through a mix of formats, from presentations to interactive small-group sessions.

The grant application was submitted by IPC CMO Peter van de Kerkhof with project group members IPC President Bruce Strober (IPC president) and IEC Councilors Sara Brown, BSc MBChB MD PhD FRCPE FRSE; and Fernando Valenzuela, MD.

The IEC is excited about this new event, which will act as a launchpad for collaborative science, generating new ideas, networks, and frameworks to advance patient-centered skin research.

# IEC in Final Year of Strategic Plan Advancing Global Eczema Care

The IEC is in the final year of the <u>3-year strategic plan</u> launched in late 2023. This roadmap is designed to strengthen IEC's role as a global leader in advancing care for atopic dermatitis (AD) and related conditions. When IEC developed its strategic plan in 2023, the goal was clear: to align our initiatives with the evolving needs of clinicians, researchers, and patients. The plan focuses on four key domains, each of which has a

### **Engagement & Growth Achievements in 2025**

### **Domain 1: Engagement & Growth**

Grow and strengthen relationships that support and engage the global IEC community.

- Expanded membership eligibility to researchers who hold PhDs and welcomed our first two PhD holders as Councilors.
- Increased global representation to 37 countries across six continents.
- Welcomed 13 new councilors and 17 new associates, including our first council members from Philippines, Belgium, Saudia Arabia, and United Arab Emirates.
- Promoted 3 Associate members to full Councilor status.
- Welcomed 2 past IEC Fellows as Associate members of a Council. Caroline Marie Thérèse Mann and Arbie Sofia P. Merilleno are our first fellows-turned-members.

### **Awareness Achievements in 2025**

### **Domain 2: Awareness**

Elevate the expert voice of IEC globally to improve outcomes for patients.

- Partnered with National Eczema Association and National Alopecia Areata Foundation to present at the 2025 AAD Global Education Day, enabling us to reach the NEA and NAAF's contacts as well.
- Connected with pediatric specialists by presenting at the World Congress of Pediatric Dermatology (WCPD).

### Research Achievements in 2025

#### **Domain 3: Research**

Expand IEC's impact on global, evidence-based knowledge in atopic dermatitis.

- Advanced consensus definitions for Low Disease Activity (LDA) and On-Treatment Remission, including Delphi exercises and surveys. Results are being presented at meetings, and a manuscript has been submitted for publication.
- Launched patient survey project funded by Eli Lilly to align perspectives on disease activity and remission.
- Collaborated with Medscape to launch the module "Exploring JAK Inhibitors for Atopic Dermatitis," a forcredit course for U.S. clinicians.
- Completed a manuscript about atopic dermatitis treatment in China, the world's second-most populous country.
- Continued fellowship program expansion, including international placements outside North America.
- Increased Council submission of research projects and manuscript ideas.
- Engaged medical writers to expedite publication of IEC research projects.

### **Education Achievements in 2025**

#### **Domain 4: Education**

Magnify IEC's thought leadership in physician education by expanding content and delivery channels.

- Presented six live global symposia at major dermatology and allergy meetings.
- Promoted free, on-demand education to professionals worldwide with robust YouTube Learning Center video library.
- Continued to recruit speakers for our events from within our membership. Please indicate your interests and availability in our <a href="IEC Speaker Survey">IEC Speaker Survey</a> if you would consider presenting at an IEC symposium.
- Welcomed 2 new <u>IEC Fellows</u>, Carlos Eduardo Forero Ángel, MD, from Colombia, and Christabel A.
  Ovesuor, MBBS FMCP FWACP, from Nigeria. Both fellowships are funded by a grant from the IEC
  Foundation. They are the eighth and ninth IEC fellows.

These achievements reflect the collective efforts of our Council members, corporate partners, and collaborators worldwide who are advancing IEC's mission to improve care for patients with atopic dermatitis.

As we enter this final year of the plan, IEC is committed to accelerating progress on these goals. Expect continued emphasis on our mission: "Improve patient care by promoting research, education, and best practices in treatment for atopic dermatitis in people worldwide." Global education is one of the key ways we advance our mission. You, our global community of leaders in atopic dermatitis and our industry supporters, make it possible for the IEC to achieve our vision of transforming the lives of people with atopic dermatitis.

## **Grant-Funded Survey of Patients & Caregivers to Launch Soon**

The IEC will soon deploy a survey to capture real-world insights on atopic dermatitis (AD) care from patients and patients' caregivers. Nonprofits **Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance** (PeDRA) and **Global Parents for Eczema Research** (GPER) are assisting the IEC in reaching U.S. adult and pediatric patients and their caregivers.

This project is funded by a grant from Eli Lilly, and reflects the IEC's commitment to evidence-based research to improve resources and, ultimately, care for people living with atopic dermatitis.

The project targets patients and caregivers of individuals living with AD. The survey, expected to deploy in early 2026, will collect insights regarding disease states which will be aligned with physician views.

Outcomes aim to compare disease activity level and remission definitions from both patients and physicians experienced in navigating and managing atopic dermatitis.

### IEC Welcomes 30 New Members to the Council in 2025

The International Eczema Council (IEC) closed 2025 with <a href="mailto:181">181</a> <a href="mailto:members">members</a>, marking another year of growth and global collaboration. Notably, 30 new members joined this year, strengthening our commitment to advancing eczema care worldwide.

Our membership now includes <a href="mailto:133">133</a> Councilors</a> and <a href="mailto:48">48</a>
<a href="mailto:Associates">Associates</a>, representing a diverse and engaged community of experts. With the addition of new members from Belgium, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, IEC proudly spans 37 countries—a testament to our expanding international reach.



Our current membership better reflects multidisciplinary science and the need for clinicians—dermatologists and allergists—and scientists to create the best outcomes for patients. When the IEC began more than a decade ago, membership was focused on dermatologists who held MDs. Recently, the Council also began actively recruiting allergists who also routinely treat patients with atopic dermatitis. Two additional allergists joined the IEC this year from the U.S.: Mark Boguniewicz, MD, and Marcella Aquino, MD.

The IEC further welcomed researchers holding PhDs to join the physicians on the Council in 2025. Seven PhD holders with a passion for eczema research were accepted for IEC membership: Nathan K. Archer, PhD, of the US; John E. Common, PhD, of the UK; Danuta Gutowska-Owsiak, MD PhD DSc, of Poland; Lavinia Paternoster, PhD, of the UK; Santosh K. Mishra, PhD, of the US; Luis F. Santamaria-Babi, PhD, of Spain; and Reiko J. Tanaka, PhD, of the UK.

We request your help in continuing this growth and diversification. Please share information about <u>IEC</u> <u>membership</u> with your clinician and research colleagues who have a special interest in atopic dermatitis.

## Save the Dates: IEC Will Present 5 Symposia in Four Countries in 2026



American Academy of Dermatology Global Education Day

# Psoriasis or Dermatitis? When Boundaries Blur and Treatments Flip the Script

A joint program of the IEC and International Psoriasis Council

Thursday, March 26, 2-6 pm MDT **Denver, CO, USA** 

Learn More



Society for Investigative Dermatology (SID)

## Decoding the Dialogue: Mechanistic Perspectives on Host– Pathogen Interactions

Wednesday, May 13, 8 am-Noon CDT Chicago, IL, USA



Reunion Annual de Dermatologos Latinoamericanos (RADLA)

# Atopic Dermatitis in Adults: Diagnosis, Misdiagnosis, & Therapeutic Approaches

Tentative symposium date is May 19; meeting is May 20-23 **Buenos Aires, Argentina** 



European Society for Dermatological Research (ESDR) 2026

# Reimagining Translation: The Future Impact of Big Data and Al

Symposium date to be determined; meeting is Sept 9-12 **Heidelberg, Germany** 



European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV)

### The Relevance of Clinical Trials and Real-World Data

Symposium date to be determined; meeting is Sept. 30-Oct. 3 **Vienna, Austria** 

### Three IEC-Led Research Initiatives Advance Toward Publication

The IEC is making significant progress on three major manuscripts currently in development. These projects each address critical gaps in atopic dermatitis (AD) research and clinical practice, reflecting our commitment to advancing global understanding of eczema and improving patient care. We look forward to sharing each completed manuscript with you and the public.

### An Evaluation of Allergists' Management of Atopic Dermatitis

Led by IEC Associate Marie Tauber, MD PhD, an allergist in France, this project is designed to actively evaluate how allergists manage AD and chronic hand eczema (CHE) patients, with a special focus on collaboration with dermatologists.

The multidisciplinary steering committee has completed a comprehensive literature review and is finalizing an international online survey that will explore a wide range of topics, including clinical practice, diagnostic and severity assessment, management strategies, interdisciplinary collaboration, regional challenges, and future perspectives.

The project's objectives are to quantify allergists' involvement in AD/CHE management, identify regional challenges, and highlight opportunities for improved interdisciplinary coordination. The survey is expected to be distributed soon, with results eventually providing actionable insights for clinicians and policymakers worldwide.

### **Atopic Dermatitis Management and Therapeutic Patient Education in China**

This manuscript, which presents the results of a nationwide IEC-commissioned survey of healthcare providers in China, has been finalized and is in the process of journal submission.

The study assesses real-world practices in AD management and patient education, highlighting the rising prevalence of AD, diagnostic challenges, and barriers to guideline implementation. Patient education emerges as a core management strategy, and the findings offer valuable context for improving care delivery and policy.

### The Use of Systemic Therapy for Atopic Dermatitis

The team of international collaborators led by IEC President Alan Irvine MD DSc, of Ireland, is developing a manuscript that will provide a modern update to the questions examined in the influential 2017 IEC paper When Does Atopic Dermatitis Warrant Systemic Therapy? Recommendations from an Expert Panel of the International Eczema Council.

This new manuscript aims to integrate patient perspectives, addressing a key gap in the original work. The group is finalizing a research protocol that combines surveys and focus groups to capture both clinician and patient views on transitioning from topical to systemic therapies.

**Visit the IEC Publications Page** 

Submit a Manuscript Idea

Meet the Councilor: Luis Santamaria-Babí, PhD



IEC Councilor Luis F. Santamaria-Babí, PhD, is full professor of clinical and translational immunology at the University of Barcelona, where he directs a research group at the Barcelona Science Park focused on human translational immunology in chronic inflammatory skin diseases. He also serves as external consultant to the Dermatology Service at Hospital del Mar.

For more than 3 decades, Dr. Santamaria-Babí has focused his research on the human cutaneous immune system, with particular emphasis on the functional relevance of circulating CLA<sup>+</sup> memory T cells in atopic dermatitis and other chronic inflammatory skin diseases.

He has served on the board of the European Society for Dermatological Research (ESDR), is a member of the Collegium Internationale Allergologicum and of the the European Dermatology Forum, and serves on the editorial board of *Allergy*.

In parallel, he is actively involved in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching at the University of Barcelona in clinical immunology, immunopharmacology, knowledge transfer, and biomedical research in pharma industry.

The IEC Councilor obtained his PhD at the Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma Research (SIAF) in Davos and subsequently worked for 13 years in the pharmaceutical industry as a pharmacologist and project leader, contributing to the identification and development of novel therapeutic targets in chronic inflammation.

How does your personal or professional vision and mission align with the <u>IEC mission and vision</u>? As a clinical scientist working in translational research, I focus on severe patients to unravel clinically relevant mechanisms, mode of action of innovative therapies, and patient heterogeneity in terms of molecular presentation of the disease.

### What is your proudest accomplishment in the atopic dermatitis (AD) space?

During the last 3 decades I have been investigating AD from the cutaneous immune system perspective focusing on circulating CLA+ memory T cells. This is a translational approach that bridges pathological mechanism with patient's clinical feature. Human circulating CLA+ memory T cells play a key role in AD.

### What do you value most about being involved with the IEC?

What I value most about being involved with the IEC is the opportunity to learn from and connect with an inspiring community of global experts and clinicians in atopic dermatitis. The collaborative environment, high-quality educational activities, and exchange of diverse perspectives continually motivate me. Having seen the IEC grow since its early days, I am proud to be part of an organization that meaningfully advances knowledge, fosters collaboration, and helps translate innovation into better care for patients worldwide.

### What do you think will garner the most attention over the coming year in the AD field?

Better understanding of patient's endotypes and identification of functional biomarkers that can be of use to stratify patients to select the most useful advanced therapy in moderate-severe cases.

### What do you see as the biggest need among AD patients?

Identifying treatments that not only control diseases symptoms, but that interfere with the natural history of AD, modify disease, and induce remission.

# Describe a professional experience that you won't forget because of how it impacted your specialty or the way you practice.

When I was proposed to study human circulating CLA+ memory T cell subset in atopic dermatitis patients. I was a PhD student just arrived to the Magic Mountains in Davos. Professors Conrad Hauser, Kurt Blaser, and

Louis K. Picker made a gift that has marked my whole professional career. Seeing how the knowledge of these cells has evolved in AD and in other T-cell mediated cutaneous chronic inflammation is amazing, and it is very helpful for translational research in clinic and therapies.

### What's the most recent good thing you watched, listened to, or visited?

I love spending time in the forest and mountains. This makes me feel I am part of the nature where everything started. Taking photos there to capture that essence is great—a bit of art to balance science.

Get to know other Councilors and Associates by reading past Meet the Councilor features.



# **IEC Contributes to 2025 ILDS Member Initiatives Directory**

As a member of the <u>International League of Dermatologic Societies</u> (ILDS), the IEC is proud to feature our educational initiatives in the <u>2025 ILDS Member Initiatives Directory</u> which further expands our reach to ensure physicians and researchers globally are aware of the free educational resources the IEC creates and makes available on demand.

The annual directory, now in its fourth year, includes articles from 46 ILDS member organizations around the world. ILDS said the pieces showcase "the dedication and passion that our members demonstrate in their efforts to improve skin health for people worldwide."

Read the IEC Article in the ILDS Directory











# 2025 IEC Global Education: 6 Symposia, 21.25 Hours of Live Learning

This year, the International Eczema Council delivered six live symposia across three continents, offering 21.25 hours of cutting-edge education in conjunction with major dermatology and allergy conferences worldwide. Each event featured internationally recognized experts sharing diverse perspectives on atopic dermatitis and related conditions.

- <u>Impact of Environmental, Food, and Contact Allergies on Atopic Dermatitis</u> at AAAAI/WAO Joint Congress in San Diego, CA, USA
- <u>Converging Pathways: Atopic Dermatitis and Alopecia Areata</u> at AAD Global Education Day in Orlando, FL, USA
- <u>Practical Strategies for Pediatric AD Management</u> at World Congress of Pediatric Dermatology Buenos Aires, Argentina
- <u>Practical Applications of Multiomics in Atopic Dermatitis</u> at SID Annual Meeting San Diego, CA, USA
- <u>Atopic Dermatitis vs. Cutaneous T-cell Lymphoma: Challenges & Novel Insights</u> at EADV in Paris, France
- <u>Nuances of Clinical Trial Design and Recruitment in AD and Alopecia Areata</u> at ISDS in New York, NY, USA

Healthcare professionals worldwide can learn from the experts presenting at these symposia because the IEC posts event recordings on the <u>IEC YouTube Learning Center for free, on-demand viewing</u> by anyone with an Internet connection.

In fact, our 2025 symposia videos have had more than 1,000 views already, and that number will grow over time, especially for recordings that were only recently shared.

These symposia advance global dialogue and clinical best practices, reinforcing IEC's mission to improve patient care through education and collaboration. We are grateful to our presenters and attendees for making global education like this possible.

**View the Events You Missed in the IEC's YouTube Learning Center** 





## Thank You, Corporate Supporters, and Welcome, New Partners!

The IEC extends sincere thanks to our corporate partners—industry-leading companies that provide support to help us advance research, education, and best practices in the management of atopic dermatitis worldwide. We're pleased to welcome Johnson & Johnson and Nektar as new sponsors this year!

# The IEC Thanks Our Corporate Sponsors for their Support

**President's Council** 







**Director's Council** 























The International Eczema Council (IEC) is a global nonprofit organization led by experts on atopic dermatitis (A)Du'Tera la figischer directed en einere priesse de neoderste yoling influstrated interesting direction and promine de second in the contraction of the contraction WE COMPLETION WHO DESCRIPTION THANKS THE STREET CONTINUES TO STREET OUT PROGRAMMENT SHOUTH AND RESPONSITION. The Council's hais in the support of our valued corporate partners.

## Connect with the IEC on social media









