



## Application for Vice President of Global Affairs

**Name:** Péter Árvai

**Professional Title:** International Deputy Director

**Institution/Organization:** University of Pécs

**Institution/Organization Location:** Hungary

**Membership Type:** Post-Secondary (College & University)

[Candidate Video](#)

### **International ACAC Volunteer Experience:**

*Explain your motivation for pursuing a leadership role with International ACAC as well as why this position in particular. Highlight how your leadership experience and involvement with the organization make you a strong fit for the role.*

My journey with International ACAC began in 2021, and I was immediately struck by the organization's unique ethos. In an industry often driven by metrics and ROI, I found a community where mentorship, advocacy, and "destiny-binding" took center stage. My time as a mentee in the Mentor Year Program was transformative, instilling in me a deep desire to contribute to the ecosystem that fueled my professional growth.

Over the past four years, I have intentionally sought diverse touchpoints within the organization—from serving on the Advocacy and Outreach and First-Timers Committees to co chairing the 2025 First-Timers Committee. My recent appointment as VP for Global Affairs occurred during a pivotal transition. I have spent the last six months performing the heavy lifting of foundational work: navigating a revised job description, expanding the Global Affairs Committee, and establishing the Regional Council.

I am pursuing this role because the work has just begun. Having been "in the room" for the restructuring of our advocacy framework, I possess the institutional memory and the strategic vision to move these initiatives from the foundational phase to full operational success. My perspective as a professional from a Hungarian university allows me to bridge gaps between established markets and emerging regions, ensuring International ACAC remains a truly global advocate.

**Previous Experience in Leadership:**

*Please describe your leadership experience, including your leadership philosophy, strategies for managing and supporting a committee, and the approaches you use to foster communication, collaboration, accountability, and recognition. Highlight any accomplishments that demonstrate your leadership effectiveness.*

For over seven years, I have served as the International Deputy Director at the University of Pécs, leading a diverse team of 28. My scope extends beyond recruitment to the holistic internationalization of the university, including the authorship and implementation of our International Strategy.

My leadership philosophy has evolved significantly. While I once equated leadership with "knowing more" than my team, I now recognize that true leadership is about empowerment through clarity. I utilize three core strategies:

**Strategic Delegation:** Moving away from micromanagement, I empower my team with clear KPIs and the autonomy to execute them, fostering a culture of ownership.

**Transparent Communication:** I believe in "radical candor"—addressing tough conversations directly but with empathy, ensuring that professional accountability never compromises personal respect.

**Recognition as Fuel:** I prioritize celebrating both small wins and major milestones to maintain morale in high-pressure environments.

My effectiveness is best demonstrated by my ability to represent my university at high-level national meetings and my success in building a resilient, self-sufficient team at the International Centre that operates with high levels of trust and accountability.

**Previous Experience in Volunteering:**

*Please outline your previous volunteer involvement and the skills, insights, or perspectives you have gained through service. Explain how these experiences have prepared you to contribute meaningfully to the work of this organization.*

My volunteer history with International ACAC is defined by a progression from participant to architect. Beyond my formal committee roles—including my current tenure as VP for Global Affairs and my work with the Regional Council—I have focused on bridging the knowledge gap in Central Europe.

Recognizing that many universities in my region were underrepresented and underinformed, I launched the "International Recruitment Masterclass at Pécs" in 2024. This four-day intensive workshop serves two purposes: it elevates the professional standards of regional universities and acts as a pipeline for International ACAC membership. By leveraging my network of IACAC colleagues as presenters, I have successfully demonstrated the value of our global community to a new audience.

These experiences have equipped me with a "builder's mindset." I have learned how to mobilize volunteers, manage cross-cultural expectations, and translate the organization's high-level goals into localized action. I am prepared to continue this work by ensuring our outreach efforts are not just global in name, but deeply impactful at the regional level.

**Understanding of the Role & Sharing Innovations & Vision:**

*Please outline your understanding of this role by identifying your top three priorities, why they matter, and how you would address them. Include any innovative ideas, how you would measure success, and current practices you feel are effective.*

**1. Operationalizing the Regional Council**

We have successfully built the foundation, including a comprehensive strategic document and a robust annual workplan. My primary focus now is to transition the Council from a new initiative into a sustainable, high-functioning engine of the organization.

The Goal: To establish a rhythm of operation where Regional Council members feel empowered to act as the "eyes and ears" of their regions, ensuring information flows seamlessly between local memberships and the Executive Board.

Measurement of Success: The establishment of a standardized "Operational Playbook" for the Council and a 100% completion rate of the goals outlined in the current annual workplan.

**2. Evolving Regional Institutes into a Sustainable Series**

Regional Institutes (RIs) are now among our most vital offerings. With the leadership's decision to increase frequency to three per year, we have ensured a biennial presence in every region. As the Annual Conference becomes a greater financial and logistical challenge for some, the RIs must become our premier, accessible in-person touchpoints.

The Innovation: I plan to collaborate with the Professional Development (PD) Committee to shift the RI model from "standalone attractions" to a cohesive "Event Series." This includes integrating more rigorous PD elements that carry over from one institute to the next, creating a sense of continuity and increasing the long-term ROI for attendees.

Measurement of Success: A year-on-year increase in RI attendance and high "relevance scores" in post-event evaluations regarding the new PD curriculum.

**3. Strengthening Our Advocacy Framework**

In an increasingly volatile global landscape, International ACAC must leverage the collective power of our 4,000+ members. While we are not a lobbying body, we are a massive repository of expertise.

The Vision: I will work with the Global Affairs Committee to move beyond reactive support and toward a proactive Advocacy Toolkit. We will focus on building, maintaining, and sharing "Best Practice" resources so that when a student is in crisis—due to geopolitical shifts, financial instability, or visa hurdles—our members are never starting from zero. We must ensure no stone is left unturned in our commitment to student access.

Measurement of Success: The continuous update of our centralised, member-accessible Advocacy Resource Hub and a measurable increase in member engagement with advocacy related content.

**Advocacy Priorities in College Admissions or International Education:**

*Identify and articulate a critical issue in college admissions for international students that you would like to or have championed, emphasizing its importance and potential impact on the community.*

My commitment to this is personal. I will never forget receiving a voice message from Joan Liu after I successfully secured a full-ride scholarship for a "Second Chance" student from Nepal at my university. The path to that achievement was a grueling, months-long marathon of internal debates with faculty leadership to prove the value of this investment. However, the true challenge began after the scholarship was granted: the visa process.

I found myself navigating a complex web of bureaucracy, communicating with Secretaries of State, coordinating with Nepalese officials, and personally advocating to our Consulate to guarantee that every financial and legal detail was in order. Meeting that student in person in Pécs for the first time remains one of the most profound moments of my professional life.

**Why This Matters to the Community**

This experience highlighted a systemic issue in our industry: the gap between "admissibility" and "accessibility." It is not enough for a university to say "yes" to a student in crisis; we must also have the advocacy infrastructure to ensure that student can actually arrive on campus.

As VP for Global Affairs, I want to champion this by:

**Building Advocacy Literacy:** Many practitioners want to help but don't know how to navigate the diplomatic or legal hurdles I faced. I want to create a framework where we share these "roadmaps" for high-stakes advocacy.

**Ensuring No Student is Left Behind:** Whether it is a student from Nepal, a refugee from a conflict zone, or a student caught in a sudden geopolitical shift, our community must be equipped to turn "Second Chances" into realities.

The impact of this work goes beyond the individual student. It reinforces the very soul of International ACAC: that we are not just a network of recruiters, but a global frontline for student equity and access.

## **Supporting International ACAC's Strategic Plan:**

As VP for Global Affairs, I view my role as a primary engine for driving International ACAC's Strategic Plan. My goals are not parallel to these pillars; they are designed to fulfill them.

### **1. Enhancing Member Experience Globally**

The member experience is defined by relevance and proximity. If a member cannot attend the Annual Conference, their "experience" depends on what we provide locally.

Action: By evolving the Regional Institutes into a cohesive series, I will ensure that the IACAC value proposition is accessible year-round, regardless of a member's travel budget.

Impact: This transforms the organization from a "once-a-year event" into a continuous professional home, specifically for those in underrepresented regions who currently feel the distance most acutely.

### **2. Clarifying the International Brand**

Our brand is our promise. To "clarify" it, we must be seen not just as a US-centric association, but as the global authority on international transitions.

Action: I will leverage the Regional Council to act as brand ambassadors who translate our mission into local contexts. Furthermore, by continuing and further developing the Advocacy Resource Hub (as mentioned in my advocacy goals), we solidify the International ACAC brand as a courageous, resource-rich leader that stands up for students in crisis.

Impact: This moves our brand identity from "networking association" to "indispensable global advocate," making membership a "must-have" for institutions worldwide.

### **3. Optimizing Internal Operations**

A global organization cannot run on ad-hoc efforts; it requires sustainable systems.

Action: My priority is to operationalize the Regional Council with clear workflows and a standardized "Annual Workplan" template. This reduces the "person-dependency" of the role and ensures that when leadership rotates, the momentum does not stall. I will also focus on fostering a culture of transparent communication and accountability between the Global Affairs Committee and the Executive Board.

Impact: These optimizations ensure that the Global Affairs portfolio is a "turn-key" operation— efficient, scalable, and resilient enough to handle the complexities of a 4,000+ member global network.

I do not see these pillars as separate tasks, but as a cycle: Optimized Operations allow us to build a

Clearer Brand, which ultimately leads to a vastly Enhanced Member Experience.