



Application for Vice President of Support, Access, & Success

Name: Eric Laug

Professional Title: Co Head of University and Careers Counselling

Institution/Organization: Dulwich College (Singapore)

Institution/Organization Location: Singapore

Membership Type: Secondary (High School)

[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 motivation for pursuing a leadership role is because of my personal experience and current involvement with the organization. My first interaction with IACAC was during COVID, when I attended the Summer Conference virtually at the start of my career as a college counsellor. I was working in a solo office with limited opportunities to meet counsellors and reps. The conference provided an amazing opportunity to learn about the profession, learn practical skills and begin to create a network of counsellors and university representatives. The conference provided me with a sense of belonging and made me excited to attend the next conference in person.

As I learned more about the opportunities IACAC offers, I became more involved, first as a mentee through MYP, and then as a volunteer on the Support, Access, and Success (SAS) Committee, where I am in my 3rd year volunteering. The work of the committee strongly aligns with my belief that education has the power to transform individuals and communities. Through programs like the Scholars Program, we support counsellors working with high-achieving students in under-resourced contexts by expanding access to professional development, networks, and institutional knowledge. I am excited by the committee's potential to broaden its impact further, including work to support counselors serving neurodivergent students, which is an idea the committee had this year, and other underrepresented or overlooked populations.

IACAC's opportunities for learning, conferences, and access-oriented initiatives align closely with my educational background in social work and my passion for supporting others. Having lived and worked in Singapore for 19 years, I bring a global mindset and now in my 6th year in the profession, I bring both institutional understanding and a fresh perspective. I have developed a strong understanding of how the SAS Committee operates and where clearer systems, improved workflows, and stronger cross-committee collaboration could enhance its impact.

The VP role is exciting because it allows for leadership at a structural level. In this position, I hope to bring clarity, collaboration, and a long-term focus, strengthening existing initiatives and positioning the committee to deliver sustained, meaningful impact across the IACAC community.

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.

My leadership approach is grounded in servant leadership. I do not view leadership as a top down function, but as a responsibility to model the values, behaviors, and commitment I hope to see in others. I lead alongside my team by sharing in the work, demonstrating expectations through action, and creating an environment where individuals feel supported, heard, and encouraged to grow into leaders themselves. Listening is central to my philosophy, as I believe strong teams are built when people feel respected and empowered to contribute meaningfully. My aim is to lead myself out of a job. I know that when the people I am leading can do the work without me, I have succeeded as a leader.

In managing teams I prioritize clarity from the beginning. I establish a shared purpose by defining objectives, timelines, roles, and responsibilities, ensuring alignment and minimizing confusion. This foundation allows team members to take ownership and move projects forward with confidence. This was demonstrated when I created a formal program for counsellors that have little access to professional development and a network of counsellors in Singapore. This program is called the Community Builders Programme and is part of Global University Counsellor Connect, the conference put on for counsellors by counsellors in Singapore. I led a team of 5 members to launch the programme and we have seen 2 cohorts through.

In order for this to happen there needed to be trust, mutual respect, and follow through on every member's part. When supporting members, I like to be relational and flexible. For highly motivated but overstretched members, I focus on understanding their capacity and identifying meaningful, manageable contributions. For those that may be quieter, I work to understand their motivations and strengths, providing opportunities that balance comfort with growth. Across all situations, I emphasize open communication, consistent check-ins, and recognition of effort.

My desire as a leader for the SAS Committee is to ensure we are aligned with a shared vision and goal in

order to motivate everyone to achieve the objectives and dreams we have for the committee and the members of IACAC.

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 involvement has been important in shaping both my professional experience and my understanding of equity, access, and sustainability in international education. Through IACAC, I have served the SAS Committee for 3 years, been a mentor with the Mentor Year Program, volunteered at the summer conference in various capacities and presented sessions as well. These experiences have allowed me to engage with counselors and university representatives from a wide range of geographic, cultural, and institutional settings.

Through this service, I have gained a greater awareness of the inequalities that exist across international education. I have seen firsthand that access to information, professional development, and opportunity varies significantly depending on geography, institutional resources, and even passport. These disparities affect not only students, but also the counselors who support them. Volunteering has reinforced my belief that improving access for counselors is one of the most effective ways to expand opportunity for students globally. While it is not possible to eliminate all inequalities, these experiences have strengthened my commitment to continually work toward more equitable access to resources, networks, and institutional knowledge.

Volunteering has also taught me the importance of sustainability in this work. Because volunteer led initiatives depend on shared commitment, I have learned that long term impact requires alignment of values, clear communication, and distributed leadership. Identifying and empowering others who are deeply committed to the mission and goals ensures that initiatives can continue to grow and be sustained over time. This perspective has shaped how I think about program design, leadership development, and succession planning within the organization. In addition, my volunteer roles have strengthened practical skills directly relevant to this organization's work, including cross-cultural communication, collaboration across time zones, and motivating volunteers with varying levels of capacity. Working alongside counselors and leaders from diverse contexts has enhanced my ability to listen carefully and design programs that meet the needs of those we are serving.

These experiences have prepared me to contribute meaningfully to IACAC's mission by bringing both a commitment to access and a strategic, sustainable approach to volunteer leadership and program development.

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.

The main purpose of the VP role of the SAS committee is to identify counselors, reps, and students who may not have access to resources and support in order to allow them to thrive in their role and provide the means to support students to gain access to educational opportunities and reach their full potential. This means not only providing connections to universities and counselors but also making sure that we are listening to our members and professionals to be informed about the needs that need to be addressed.

My top priorities are to strengthen our internal structure and ensure that all committee members have a voice and understand our vision and goals for the committee. Second, to brainstorm and implement new initiatives that expand our support beyond the Scholar Program, which is our main program. And third, to leverage Regional Institutes to create local networks and mentorship opportunities that are easier to access.

These priorities matter to me because an organized committee ensuring that each member is supported and motivated makes for clear communication, expectations and workflow. The Scholar Program provides amazing opportunities and access for counsellors and students, however, there are other groups of students and counsellors that need support as well. There are counselors in solo offices, who may be isolated and lack the resources and networks to thrive or there are cities that may not have a developed community and network of local counselors to share resources and opportunities. And my third initiative is to use the Regional Institutes to leverage the access these may have to support counselors in the contexts that I shared and to create opportunities for learning, growth and networking.

I see a key opportunity in improving how we share our work to the members and broader community. By increasing visibility and collaborating across committees, we can access a wider range of communication channels to promote the work and success the committee is having. Finally, I would like to continue to build and grow the great work the organization is already doing, especially in providing mentorship and regional support structures.

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.

The most pressing issue I see facing international students today is the combination of mobility barriers and rising costs. In my daily work, I see how visa difficulties and high fees limit opportunities for talented students, especially those from under-resourced or emerging regions. If we don't address these barriers, we risk perpetuating a cycle where capable students are unable to access the education they deserve, and their home communities miss out on the benefits these students could bring back.

To support these students and counselors, I have worked with a team of counselors to launch the Community Builder Programme. The programme's aim is to identify counselors working in places where they have limited access to professional development and a network of counselors and provide a year long mentorship/training programme with the goals to create a network of counselors in their area and to learn and grow in order to provide in house PD opportunities. We have worked with counsellors from the Yala Region in Thailand and in Mongolia and have seen amazing work done by them.

Another way that I have provided support for counselors is starting a Solo Counselor Whatsapp Group for solo office counselors ranging from the Middle East to New Zealand. I believe that solo counselor's needs are often overlooked and oftentimes these counselors are working with high need students, not only financially but also social, emotional and academic needs too. Being in a solo office is isolating and if the counselor is not well connected, they may not have the resources to fully support their students.

IACAC and the SAS Committee can be a powerful platform by leveraging our network and building partnerships to support students and counselors in various contexts, financial, visa and mobility, social emotions, learning needs and more. Over the next three to five years, I hope to see a centralized database of resources, stronger partnerships, and more counsellors and students from diverse backgrounds able to access and thrive in higher education.

Supporting International ACAC's Strategic Plan:

Explain how you would leverage the position to contribute to International ACAC's strategic plan, aligning your goals with the organization's three pillars: enhancing member experience globally, clarifying the international brand, and optimizing internal operations.

In addressing International ACAC's strategic plan, my focus for the SAS Committee would be on support and opportunities to improve the experience for current International ACAC members. I'd work on increasing awareness of what we do as a committee as well as building relationships and make cross disciplinary committee connections to leverage and elevate resources across the organization.

This would be done by highlighting the work of the committee, stories from scholars and providing regular updates on the current work, future plans and how other members not officially part of the committee can get involved. For members who are new to the organization, I hope to create a way to introduce them to the work of the committee so they are aware of the opportunities and needs within the profession. That way, if they have a skill, experience or knowledge that will provide support and access to groups of counselors and students, they know who to speak to and where to get involved.

To clarify our brand, I would highlight the stories of our scholars and how the IACAC community has worked together to support them. This would bring to light how community efforts and how our members work together to support students and counselors even if the members are not directly involved. I believe we all play a role in supporting one another and by sharing stories, making new connections and ensuring everyone is aware of the needs and the work, our brand will strengthen cross borders.

Finally, I would prioritize clear documentation and consistent handovers within the committee to ensure smooth transitions, and set transparent expectations for the committee. By involving the outgoing leadership, members and maintaining clear structure, organisation and records, we can ensure continuity and sustainability of our work. I would aim to work cross committees to leverage their strengths such as the Communications Committee. The SAS Committee may be stronger and more effective if we create a clear process and relationship with the Communication Committee in order to share the work we do and stories of how we are impacting counselors, students and the profession.