



## 2025 Regional Council Election Candidate

### Region 1

**Name:** Dingli Stanley Chia  
**Professional Title:** Cofounder and Director  
**Institution/Organization:** Cialfo PTE LTD  
**Country of Residence:** Singapore  
**Member Group:** Organizational: For-Profit

### Applicant Questions

**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..**

I'm passionate about connecting counselors and educators globally, and I believe International ACAC's greatest growth opportunity lies in regions that are often underrepresented. Many counselors in Southeast Asia and beyond rarely attend the US-based conference, and as a result, miss out on the incredible value our network can bring.

For the past 6 years, I've been building exactly these bridges—hosting community events in Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, and more, while earning the trust of key counselor leaders across these regions. My approach is simple: rather than reinvent the wheel, partner with existing regional networks to expand International ACAC's reach quickly and meaningfully.

As Co-founder of Cialfo, I've grown a startup into a 200-member global team by executing bold ideas, building partnerships, and delivering impact at scale. I'm ready to bring the same energy and strategic focus to the Regional Council—helping International ACAC strengthen its presence, brand, and connections in the communities that need it most.

I would be honored to represent the region and champion initiatives that ensure every

counselor feels connected, supported, and empowered—no matter where they are.

**Drawing from your previous experience in volunteering and leadership, how have these roles equipped you with the skills and insights necessary for the Founding Regional Representative position? Please highlight your leadership philosophy and strategies for effectively managing and leading a volunteer committee, with a focus on communication, collaboration, and recognition. Additionally, share specific accomplishments that demonstrate your ability to build professional communities, mentor emerging leaders, and promote inclusive and culturally responsive practices—key responsibilities of this role.**

I believe that community building is integral to supporting, building, and empowering people to reach their full potential. Over the past decade, I have consistently invested my time in volunteering and leadership roles, each shaping my approach to building inclusive, collaborative communities.

From November 2020 to November 2024, I served as EdTech Exco Co-Chair at SGTech, Singapore's first trade association committee focused on educational technology. Our mission was to unite diverse EdTech companies, foster collaboration, and advocate for members' growth and internationalization. As Co-Chair, I set the committee's vision, facilitated regular networking forums, and represented the sector in national-level dialogues with government agencies. My leadership philosophy—rooted in shared ownership, open communication, and celebrating contributions—helped create a committee where members felt valued and motivated.

Since October 2021 till present, I have also served in the NTU NBS Alumni Association Executive Committee, building a vibrant alumni network. I have organized multiple alumni-student networking events and personally mentored over 10 current students and young professionals, supporting both their career development and personal growth. This role deepened my understanding of culturally responsive mentorship, as I worked with individuals from diverse nationalities and backgrounds.

These experiences have honed my ability to:

- Communicate clearly—aligning diverse stakeholders around common goals.
- Collaborate effectively—creating environments where ideas are welcomed, and different perspectives are integrated.
- Recognize and empower others—ensuring volunteers feel appreciated and see the impact of their contributions.

As Founding Regional Representative, I will apply these skills to build a connected, inclusive International ACAC community. My proven track record of forming professional networks, mentoring emerging leaders, and promoting diversity positions me to create a regional committee that is collaborative, impactful, and representative of the communities we serve.

**As a Founding Regional Representative for International ACAC, how would you outline your understanding of the role, including the priority areas you would focus on, your overall vision for the region, and the challenges you anticipate addressing?**

**Additionally, what innovative solutions would you propose to strengthen all regional networks, enhance member engagement, and improve communication between members, the Council, and the Board, while acknowledging current practices or programs you find effective?**

As a Founding Regional Representative, my role is to set the tone for how International ACAC engages, grows, and sustains its presence in the region. I see this as both an opportunity and a responsibility—to establish strong foundations that future representatives can build upon.

Priority Areas & Vision:

1. Deepening regional counselor engagement by formalizing relationships with existing networks and community leaders through collaboration and, where appropriate, MOUs.
2. Expanding access to professional development by creating locally relevant programs that address regional needs and connect counselors, universities, and students.
3. Strengthening International ACAC's regional identity by ensuring counselors see themselves as vital contributors to the global community, even if they cannot attend the annual US-based conference.

Over my six years of building relationships across Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, and beyond, I've seen that sustainable engagement comes from partnership, not replication—leveraging trusted networks rather than creating parallel structures.

Challenges & Approach:

This region is diverse in culture, language, and counselor needs. Each country—and even each city—serves students with different profiles and priorities. Addressing this requires cultural agility, consistent in-person engagement, and adapting the value proposition of International ACAC so it resonates locally. Limited ability for school-based counselors to travel to the US conference also makes regional events and gatherings essential.

Innovative Solutions:

I propose a “Regional Anchor Cities” strategy, focusing the first phase on 3–4 key cities to establish best practices, before expanding reach. Leveraging my professional travel for Cialfo, I can support regular in-person engagement without adding cost to International ACAC. In addition, I would explore:

- Localized communication channels (regional newsletters, forums, or WhatsApp/WeChat groups) to improve information flow between members, the Council, and the Board.
- Mentorship pipelines that connect experienced regional counselors with emerging leaders, ensuring succession and sustained engagement.
- Partnership-based events that align with regional conferences to amplify presence and accessibility.

My vision is for the region to see International ACAC not just as a membership, but as a trusted partner—providing resources, relationships, and recognition that are relevant, accessible, and impactful

**As a Founding Regional Representative, advocacy for international students is central to International ACAC's mission. Identify a critical issue in college admissions or international education that you would prioritize addressing in your region. Explain its significance, the potential impact on students and institutions, and how you would collaborate with regional and global stakeholders to drive meaningful change.**

One of the most pressing advocacy priorities in our region is addressing the uncertainty created by rapidly changing government policies and visa regulations in major study destinations. Shifts in UK White Papers, changes in US immigration laws, and fluctuating visa approval rates create confusion for students and families. Often, these changes are amplified by misinformation, leaving counselors struggling to provide timely, accurate guidance.

This uncertainty has a direct impact: students make decisions based on incomplete or incorrect information, families experience unnecessary stress, and universities risk losing qualified applicants who are discouraged or misinformed.

As Founding Regional Representative, I would prioritize creating clear, reliable, and accessible communication channels to address these challenges. This includes:

- Strengthening connections with university representatives in key destination countries to gather timely updates.
- Establishing rapid-response communication channels—such as dedicated email lists, messaging groups, or regional updates—so counselors can quickly access verified information to share with students.
- Partnering with regional counselor associations to distribute updates broadly and consistently, ensuring no counselor or student is left without clarity.

I also recognize that changing university travel budgets limit in-person outreach. I would work with International ACAC and regional networks to create virtual engagement platforms and hybrid regional events, allowing universities to maintain meaningful connections with schools and students even when travel is restricted.

Through these actions, my goal is to ensure that International ACAC becomes a trusted conduit for clear, timely, and actionable information—helping counselors, students, and universities navigate uncertainty with confidence.

**Explain how you would use this position to advance International ACAC's strategic plan by aligning your top three priorities with the organization's three pillars: enhancing member experience globally, clarifying the international brand, and optimizing internal operations.**

As Founding Regional Representative, I see my role as turning International ACAC's strategic pillars into practical, measurable outcomes in our region. My priorities align closely with the three pillars:

#### 1. Enhancing Member Experience Globally

I will focus on deeper engagement and accessibility for counselors who cannot attend the annual US-based conference. Through the Regional Anchor Cities strategy, I plan to build

strong, sustainable hubs in 3–4 key cities as a first phase, hosting localized events, training, and networking opportunities. Leveraging my travel in the region, I can facilitate consistent in-person touchpoints without adding cost to International ACAC, ensuring members feel connected and supported year-round.

## 2. Clarifying the International Brand

International ACAC's value must resonate across diverse cultural and professional contexts. I will work with existing counselor networks and associations to form partnerships and co-branded initiatives that extend International ACAC's reach without duplicating efforts. By aligning with respected regional leaders and organizations, we can reinforce the brand as an inclusive, trusted global community—relevant to members whether or not they attend the flagship conference.

## 3. Optimizing Internal Operations

Strong regional communication is key to delivering timely updates and feedback between members, the Council, and the Board. I will implement localized communication channels—regional newsletters, messaging groups, and structured feedback loops—to ensure two-way transparency. This will allow us to share critical information, such as policy and visa changes, quickly and clearly, while also capturing member insights that inform Council decisions.

My vision is that by the end of my term, the region will have a connected, recognized, and self-sustaining network of counselors who see International ACAC not only as a membership, but as a trusted partner that understands their context, amplifies their voice, and helps them serve students better.