



Application for Vice President of Support, Access, & Success

Name: Joyce Agyare

Professional Title: Independent Educational Consultant

Institution/Organization: Independent Educational Consultant

Institution/Organization Location: Ghana

Membership Type: Individual: Independent Educational Consultant (IEC)

[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.

I currently serve as Vice President of the Support, Access, and Success Committee, and my motivation to continue in this role stems from a deep sense of purpose and a desire to give back. I am deeply committed to advancing several initiatives I have launched, with the invaluable support of my dedicated committee and through collaboration with other committees. These efforts aim to drive meaningful change and make a lasting impact.

International ACAC has profoundly shaped my personal and professional journey, and this position aligns with my background and passion for supporting under-resourced counsellors. With the invaluable experience on the board, I am eager to continue contributing to our association's goals and to inspire others who are passionate about volunteering. As VP, my goal has been to lead conversations and processes to expand the committee's efforts to empower professionals who help students access postsecondary education, particularly in resource-constrained areas. Coming from an underserved region, I bring unique perspectives to our committee's work to make our programming more meaningful.

For the past twelve years, our main program has been the Scholar Program, which has supported over 120 counsellors from around the world and impacted thousands of students. Under my leadership, we have continued to strengthen the program by adjusting the timeline to proactively accommodate counsellors from regions with challenging visa wait times, ensuring geographical equity. I'm

spearheading the launch of the Virtual Scholar Program (VSP), which has required collaborating with the Professional Development Committee to help those we cannot fund to attend our conference and access PD resources. This record demonstrates an ability to translate the committee's mission into tangible initiatives, a skill critical for this board role. As a board member, I have served on the Board Restructuring and Regional Affiliates committees to help strategize to meet our members' current needs and maintain global reach. Whether as a Scholar Mentor, Session Reviewer, Conference Presenter, Membership Committee member, or Project Manager, each role has equipped me with specific skills, insights, and opportunities to work with others with diverse perspectives, and I bring these advantages to the role of VP.

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 philosophy centres on collaboration, shared ownership of clearly defined goals, understanding of other perspectives, and empowering others by recognizing their strengths and capabilities, enabling them to make impactful contributions. To this, I add cultural intelligence and the expectation that others will contribute once I demonstrate trust. I believe in setting a clear, compelling direction and ensuring others feel valued and safe as they contribute to the task we have set. My philosophy also embraces structured evaluation mechanisms to give clarity on whether we have accomplished our set goals. Effective leadership is about creating an environment where everyone can innovate and contribute their best.

I apply these principles in other leadership roles as an Education Consultant working across the globe for Scholastic Inc., where I have the opportunity to advance my other passion, literacy advocacy. I also apply them in my daily work as an Independent Counsellor, supporting families and students as they navigate the College Admissions process.

In managing the Support, Access & Success committee, my strategy centers on structured collaboration, clear accountability, and shared responsibility. We build collaboration and ownership of our goals through subcommittees for specific projects, whether it is the Scholar Application Review team or the Visa Orientation Team, allowing members to experience leadership and accountability as they dive deep into areas where they are most passionate.

By maintaining shared project timelines and a mutual commitment to our programs and activities, we are accountable to each other. I prioritize recognition by celebrating accomplishments within the committee and to the broader organization. I'm currently leading a successful overhaul of the Scholars Program timeline and procedures, re engineering the selection and notification process to ensure inclusivity for scholars with long visa wait times. We are also advancing our mission of support and access for Scholar Applicants we are unable to sponsor to attend our annual conference, by creating the

Virtual Scholar Program. This allows for much-needed professional development to reach counsellors from marginalized communities in a systematic and efficient manner.

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 journey with International ACAC has been diverse and enriching, allowing me to engage with the organization in various roles.

As a member of the Membership Committee, studying the geographic distribution of members to understand diversity gaps taught me the importance of intentionality in pursuing goals. As a Project Manager for a Sub-Saharan Africa Institute, working with colleagues worldwide to organise a conference at another location gave me insight into how essential synergy and team building skills are. As a Mentor and Scholar Application Reader, I have developed deep empathy and a clear understanding of the barriers many counsellors face.

My service on the Board Restructuring Committee involved extensive discussions on creating a board that genuinely represents our association and its members' needs, with clearly defined leadership roles aligned with our strategic direction. Analyzing the strategic direction document to develop the proposal was a valuable learning experience.

Last year, in recognition of my experience, skills, and leadership capabilities, I was elected Vice Chair of the General Assembly of SOS Children's Villages, the largest NGO focused on supporting children without parental care. This role has enhanced my ability to navigate diverse cultures and perspectives, an invaluable skill in leadership. I also serve on the Executive Board of Ghana's Executive Women Network, leading a committee that provides mentorship opportunities for members and also young people. As a youth empowerment advocate, I speak at youth conferences to share my insights and experiences.

These volunteer experiences have prepared me to contribute meaningfully in three key ways:

Strategic Insight: I have developed a strong understanding of how our association's different parts interconnect. This helps me propose initiatives that facilitate collaboration with other committees

Empathy in Leadership: I prioritize listening, enabling team members to leverage their strengths to achieve our shared goals. I am committed to creating an inclusive environment that respects cultural differences and encourages open dialogue to gather honest feedback. Global

Collaboration: My years of service have forged relationships across continents, establishing trust essential to launching leading new initiatives and strengthening the programs and work at the SAS Committee.

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.

As the Vice President of the Support, Access, & Success (SAS) Committee, I oversee the committee's initiatives to promote inclusion for underserved students by exposing their educators to the resources and networking opportunities they need. I also manage several subcommittees to ensure the Scholar Program and other initiatives run smoothly to facilitate access to professional development.

My top three priorities for this role, which are also currently 'work in progress' are: Broadening our Global Reach: Our Scholar Program continues to be well executed, enabling us to reach counsellors in many underserved areas. However, we need to reach counsellors in virgin territory to empower them to support students as they access higher education. My goal is to put mechanisms in place to improve our outreach as a global organisation to gain authentic regional presence. Achieving this requires actively partnering with the new VP for Global Affairs and the Regional Council to execute a coordinated outreach strategy.

Systematizing Professional Development Access: The lack of PD is the single greatest professional barrier for many counsellors outside well-resourced hubs. My strategy has been to create the Virtual Scholar Program, which has required partnering with the PD Committee to form a joint task force using our vast resource bank to provide much-needed professional development to Scholar Program applicants we are unable to select as scholars. The program is launching in a few weeks.

Strengthening our Scholar Program and the Scholar Alumni Network: With changing times and tightening visa acquisition processes and long wait times, the Scholar Program timeline under my leadership is being adjusted to ensure inclusion for all, irrespective of geographical location. Also, by supporting Scholar Alumni over time to develop regional peer networks and leverage existing relationships, we can empower them to become local champions who advance our association's mission.

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 issue of inadequate financial aid for international students, along with the lack of transparency regarding its availability, poses a significant barrier in the college admissions process. Insufficient financial aid can prevent many colleges from benefiting from a diverse student population. Many international students struggle to identify colleges that are a good financial fit, even when they only need partial assistance. When financial aid information is available, its extent is often unclear.

Each year, talented students from modest backgrounds spend countless hours researching universities that might offer support upon admission. While some colleges provide financial eligibility calculators,

these tools may not accurately account for the financial contexts of different applicants. This confusion has led to the spread of inaccurate information about how financial aid is awarded, with some individuals falsely claiming expertise in the area and making unrealistic promises to students in certain regions.

As a result, universities miss out on economic and cultural diversity and the unique perspectives these students can contribute. My advocacy seeks to promote transparency in financial aid offerings at the foundational level. Universities should clearly indicate whether they are "need aware for international students" and provide cost calculators tailored to various student demographics. Each university's financial aid policy should be explicitly articulated on its website, helping students decide whether to apply based on affordability.

At another equally important level, I advocate for financial support for low-income students, as attending college can transform their lives and those of their families. Additionally, institutions should provide official documentation to scholarship recipients to support their visa interviews and actively advocate on their behalf with consulates. The goal is to turn hidden barriers into visible support, making the admissions process more rewarding and less stressful for both students and universities.

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.

My position as VP gives me the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of International ACAC's strategic plan through my committee's work and networking at the board level and with other members. As someone who is passionate about inclusion and support for others, I'm excited to make tangible contributions.

Upon reflecting on the three pillars of the strategic plan, I will contribute as follows: Enhancing Member Experience Globally: The Scholar Program and other SAS Committee activities enrich our members' experience, and overseeing them gives me the opportunity to expose our members to a global network that invariably improves their work. By providing access to resources and support, we deliver high-value experiences for members who may have previously felt excluded. This fosters a sense of belonging for everyone. Our programs show our impact as an organisation and give opportunities for engagement through peer support and mentoring.

Clarifying the International Brand: As an international organisation, diversity is fundamental, and the SAS committee is essential to establishing our international identity. As we recruit scholar cohorts that reflect geographic and cultural diversity, we signal that our association represents many voices and is creating a pipeline of regional leaders who will support our committee's work from a vantage point that celebrates diversity. One of my new initiatives is having our committee gather stories and data that highlight our impact to share with our members.

Optimizing Internal Operations; Collaboration is key to the work we do as the SAS Committee. We are partnering with the PD Committee to organise the resources needed for our Virtual Scholar Program, which provides support to counsellors who are unable to attend our conference. To improve our Scholar Program, I have initiated conversations with the VP for Global Affairs and the Regional Council to reach counsellors who need support but have previously been out of our reach. As someone who believes in breaking silos and fostering collaboration, I'm also initiating processes that will encourage working together with our Communications Committee, whose contribution is crucial for advancing our work.

I also hope to leverage the networking opportunities at board to advance our association's mission.