



2025 Executive Board Election Candidate

President-Elect

Name: Joyce Agyare

Title: Independent Education Consultant

Institution: Independent Education Consultant

Location/Region: Ghana/Africa, Sub-Saharan

Member Group: Individual: Independent Educational Consultant (IEC)

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.

My motivation to serve as President-elect of International ACAC stems from the impact I can make as a leader as I drive change, and from the depth of passion I feel about expanding higher education access to all students regardless of their background. Coming from Sub-Saharan Africa, I have witnessed firsthand how transformative college access can be for marginalized individuals and communities, and in line with our association's mission, I'm energized to continue creating these opportunities by facilitating global interactions between professionals who support students' transition into higher education.

Over the past two years, I have gained invaluable board experience as Vice President for the Inclusion, Access, and Success (IAS) Committee. This role has been both an eye-opening and professionally enriching journey, allowing me to lead processes to bolster the Scholar Program while actively contributing to critical conversations about our association's evolving dynamics as well as the transformative changes we are undergoing. Additionally, volunteering with the Board Restructuring Committee, following the dissolution of the NACAC Delegate role, gave me the opportunity to engage in strategic discussions about how our board structure can better reflect our mission, vision, and DEI commitments.

Currently, I am honored to serve on the Ad-hoc Committee for Regional Affiliates, where I collaborate with colleagues from around the world to explore ways to strengthen our association's presence globally in order to better serve our members. This work reinforces my belief in the importance of leadership that truly represents our membership's diverse voices

and experiences.

When I first joined International ACAC, we were a smaller community where everyone could fit into one large room. Today, we are a thriving, global association—and with that growth comes the responsibility to ensure our leadership reflects the breadth of voices we represent and our core values of equity and inclusion. I believe that leadership should not only be representative but also actively create spaces where every member feels seen, heard, and valued. This position will allow me to give back to the association that has significantly shaped my professional journey. More importantly, it will enable me to continue connecting the dots between our past, present, and future—helping to strengthen our association’s core, foster global representation, and champion the voices of all our members.

Detail experiences that have equipped you with skills and insights applicable to the position you're applying for, including your leadership philosophy and strategies for effectively managing and leading a volunteer committee, emphasizing communication, collaboration, and recognition, and transferable accomplishments.

My years of dedicated service within International ACAC and other organizations have provided robust preparation for the role of President-elect. I've volunteered on various committees—from Ad-hoc and Conference, to Standing ones, including the Membership Committee and also served as the Project Manager for the Sub-saharan Africa Institute. My initial introduction to the board as a NACAC Delegate for a year granted insight into the core functions of our association, and Regional Institute. Currently, I'm VP for the Inclusion, Access, and Success (IAS) Committee and a NEXT Program participant at NACAC. Beyond our association, other experiences have further sharpened my decision-making, communication and teamwork skills. As Chair for a \$700,000 housing project to keep girls in school, I coordinated alumni fundraising and supervised the building's construction – deepening my project management and resource mobilization skills. As part of the Ghana Executive Women's Network's Leadership and Conference Planning team, I organize events that advocate for women's inclusivity in leadership spaces and supports women in leadership roles. I also volunteer at Ellevate Network for youth empowerment and speak annually at their conference in support of youth mentorship. As an IEC, I manage a team that helps students with their university application process. Finally, my educational consulting experience also includes working with Scholastic Inc. as a regional representative, building and managing accounts within West Africa.

Core to my leadership philosophy is the creation of a collaborative environment where goals are communally held, diverse perspectives are celebrated, and even the quietest voices can be confidently heard. Effective leadership, to me, is about strategizing, listening, recognizing trends that keep our association relevant, and addressing challenges through open, meaningful dialogue. I value ethical leadership, transparency, and the continuous exchange of ideas and I've learnt that recognizing and celebrating contributions is essential to building motivated, engaged teams.

In a dynamic, global organization like International ACAC, adaptability and innovativeness are key as we embrace change in order to stay relevant. As professionals from diverse backgrounds, we bring invaluable experiences that, when harnessed effectively, strengthen our association. Integrity, information sharing, and respect of contributions are central to how I lead.

Outline your comprehension of the role you are applying for, specifying priority areas, overall vision and challenges that you would like to address, and innovative solutions you would like to implement, while acknowledging current practices or programs you feel are effective.

The role of President-elect balances strategic leadership with operational coordination—working closely with the President and Past President to implement key initiatives and ensure that our mission remains at the forefront of all we do. My role will be twofold—strengthening our internal structures (the "work within") and expanding our external reach (the "work without"). Internally, this means collaborating with the board, committees, and headquarters to align efforts with our mission. Externally, it means amplifying our presence worldwide, supporting professional development, and ensuring ethical and accessible college guidance for students everywhere.

The ongoing diversification of our leadership evidences our association's commitment to inclusion – my very presence on the board affirms this. If the board restructuring is approved, my initial priority will be to build on these wins by implementing the proposed VP structure and introducing a Regional Council – initiatives that strengthen our ability to solicit global perspectives and diversify our membership, particularly among the most disadvantaged communities in the world whose professionals desperately need the support we can provide. We must reimagine engagement opportunities that extend beyond conferences, ensuring our wealth of professional development resources is more accessible, particularly for those in underserved regions.

Building on this regional affiliation, another priority would be to establish a leadership pipeline that's truly global. Leaders have historically emerged through their involvement as volunteers on International ACAC committees and subsequently transitioned to the board, but my vision is for an intentional framework that consistently and deliberately nurtures talent from across the globe, and ensures a rich depth and variety from which our highest levels of leadership can be selected.

Finally, we've made excellent strides with the structure of our conferences to offer networking opportunities and discuss maximally relevant topics. However, the loss of valuable perspectives from volunteers unable to attend has been a consistent challenge. One of my priorities will be to support the adoption of technological tools that enable non-attendees to still contribute meaningfully.

With every member—regardless of geography—feeling included, supported, and equipped with the tools they need to thrive, we can position International ACAC for a future that is both innovative and inclus

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.

Bridging the information and professional support gap particularly for students from underserved communities is a most pressing challenge in international college admissions: students' lack of access to accurate, timely, and comprehensive information or the trained professionals to advise them along the application journey often results in subpar outcomes and missed opportunities.

Education financing in particular is challenging to navigate. The absence of structured professional support networks limits students' exposure to global educational opportunities

and confuses them about financial aid, and without these trusted advisors, students often fall prey to myths about affordability, scholarships, and admissions processes, reinforcing barriers to tertiary education.

Resolving the above challenges is even more important considering the transformative impact successful students have on the communities from which they hail. Each additional dollar of financial aid awarded can massively improve the quality of life of an accepted student's remaining family, there are entire communities buoyed by remittances made possible by admitted students' increased lifetime earnings, and perhaps, most importantly of all, there's the indelible impression made on youngsters when they watch those before them stride confidently into futures infinitely more promising than previously thought possible – futures they will now themselves similarly pursue.

One way I've intervened to solve the information gap problem has been through my annual speaking engagements at the Ellevate Conference, which attracts disproportionately less privileged students. I've dispelled basic myths about admissions processes, shared financial aid tips, and dispensed other foundational college admissions advice, and have been approached several months later by countless students with thanks for having deeply influenced their successful admissions journeys, even without my having done so on an individual basis. To scale this impact further, I've commenced an initiative in Ghana to compile tertiary education options into a single online resource for students, including means to access virtual counselors. It's just one example of how intentional information-sharing and professional support can transform opportunities for international students; a cause to which International ACAC's considerable resources can be applied to benefit students all around the world in a scalable, equitable, accessible manner.

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.

Serving as President-elect would grant me the honor of spearheading the next level of our association's evolution, while providing an opportunity to advance several of my own goals that align closely with the organization's three pillars.

To begin with, I look forward to playing a hands-on role in enhancing the member experience, and introduce some of the most rewarding membership practices I've encountered through work at other organizations. Our members are the very soul of our organization, and my intent is to ensure their needs are heard, and that any blockers to their full-throated engagement are eliminated. To accomplish this, I will support the continued refinement of our onboarding experience, provide means for volunteers to contribute their voices whether virtually or at in-person events, and expand the professional development opportunities available to members — especially those in underserved regions.

As a member of our association, I've gained incredible exposure to the inner workings of admissions processes, which has supported my work as an IEC. As president-elect, my goal would be to democratise access to this knowledge for other IECs through a strong presence in each region – which ties in perfectly with the strategic pillar of clarifying our international brand – by deepening relationships with key partners, leveraging technology and media for broader engagement, and collaborating with like-minded organizations to amplify our impact and visibility to those who need us the most. Additionally, I'm keen to start conversations on emerging trends and to explore how technology, particularly AI, can help us remain relevant,

support our mission and enhance our ethical, student-centered guidance approach. Finally, recognizing that we are a volunteer organization funded by our members, one of my goals is to ensure we are stretching each dollar as far as it can go, evaluating resource management to keep our operations lean, responsive, and fit for the future. A narrow focus on the initiatives that best advance our strategic priorities will be essential—not only to grow our membership and funding base but also to accomplish clearly measurable wins concerning our impact over the next ten years. Ultimately, I see International ACAC solidifying its position as the global standard for knowledge and ethical practice in college admissions counseling, and positioning our association for long-term success, and I can't wait to be part of leading that charge.