



2025 Executive Board Election Candidate

Vice President for Communications

Name: Lukas Devlin

Title: Director of University and Careers Counseling

Institution: Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong

Location/Region: China/East Asia

Member Group: Secondary

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.

International Education improves the lives of individuals and enhances our global society. A two-week educational exchange opportunity in Bulgaria in my final semester of undergrad introduced me to the power of global-mindedness and motivated me to leap into this profession. As a first-generation student, I serve as a testament to the power of the work we are doing across the international education industry and fuels me daily to give back to this global community.

International ACAC has been my professional home since the University of Oregon OACAC Conference. Over the years, I have benefitted considerably from my participation within the organization and simply wish to continue giving back to what is a very special community. Not only have I grown as a professional and as a person as a member of International ACAC but I have benefitted from bearing witness to the many lives that this organization positively impacts on an annual basis.

In August 2024 I was appointed to serve as the VP of Communications and during this time the committee and its impact have grown. My motivation to continue in this role is linked to my love for the organization and its mission as well as my duty to the Communications Committee members. Continuity in leadership is what will best enable us to continue driving things forward.

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 undergraduate degree was in Communications and Public Relations. Serving on the Communications Committee over the past 5 years has enabled me to apply my knowledge and drive the organization forward. In this role, my leadership approach is simple: empower and elevate the voices around you. We have some incredibly talented and passionate members in the Communications Committee; my role is to provide direction, remove hurdles, and give space to the team to drive innovation in our efforts to support the organization's mission.

As with all endeavors worth pursuing, there are challenges that must be overcome. During the last year and a half, we've established subcommittees and restructured the scope of our responsibilities to provide clarity between the space that we own as a committee and that which is shared or owned by The HQ Team. We've employed various technologies and implemented new working styles to ensure that our global spread of time zones does not become a barrier to participation and contribution of our work.

As standing VP for the Communications Committee I am grateful for the trust and contribution of my committee. I am hopeful for the opportunity to continue serving them and the organization.

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.

Our role in the Communications Committee is to facilitate engagement and communication. At present, as an organization we are settling into our new virtual home with Growthzone and anticipating a major potential shift in our organization with the proposed Board Restructure pending membership vote this spring. Our role in Communications remains to support our peer committees and leadership team with their initiatives, the organization's strategic plan and overall objectives, as well as our committee's goal to continue owning and improving our space. Moving forward, I envision us continuing to creatively optimize our workflow and effectively leverage our resources and membership to enhance communication and engagement.

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.

As politically nationalist winds continue to blow globally and technology reshapes our world at a blistering pace, there are many challenges facing the international education industry. With governmental policies impacting visa and immigration, access to finance, and economic trends our various contexts continue to experience shifting sands. These pressures increase the uncertainty in both short and long-term planning for families and institutions alike. Our ability as an organization to raise awareness and present solution-focused advocacy for these issues will be vital.

We've already begun to see the impact of these issues in our school communities globally as international student populations shift, international educators move at a rapid pace, and competition for students in various regions heats up. This pressure often emerges in the form of a shift in how we measure and celebrate student success. In other words, the emphasis on successful student outcomes changes from a "best fit" lense to an assessment of destinations against a subjective ranking list.

In the years and months ahead our industry will continue to face challenges, it is our duty as an organization to mitigate impact and remain steadfast in our efforts to champion our mission "To facilitate global interaction among counselors and institutions in support of secondary students transitioning to higher education, while promoting professional standards that foster ethical and social responsibility." Regardless of our professional role within the industry, we all have a role to play to ensure that students come first, by engaging with students and elevating their voices to advocate and champion what is best for the young people in our car. We must continue to ask difficult questions, have difficult conversations, innovate, increase access, drive change and be kind.

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.

The three pillars of the strategic plan have guided the Communications Committee's work since before my tenure began in August of 2024. During this time we've worked to:

- Increase engagement and connectedness globally. This has led to the recent (re-)launch of our Regional Counselor Resources in the Member Info Hub which strengthens our goal of broader regional representation and connection.
- Maintain current communication channels through regular moderation and management and lay the groundwork to develop additional avenues for engagement.
- Increase our presence on socials to encourage members to better leverage member resources such as the jobs board, webinars, and volunteer opportunities.
- Contributed to the exploration and development of regional partnerships.
- Optimized our internal committee operations by developing an onboarding program, establishing subcommittees, and organizing our internal resources and historical documents.
- Collaborated with other members of the board to develop guidelines on Public Statements and among the Communications Committee to revise our social media policy to provide clarity for current and future organizational volunteers tasked with navigating challenging global events.

To summarize, our efforts have enhanced the member experience globally, clarified the international brand, and optimized internal operations. Should I be given the opportunity to continue as VP of Communications, I'll align our initiatives with the outcome of the proposed Board Restructure and work to drive the organization forward over the next term.