

2023-2024 IABC Board Slate Bios

Chair (two-year term)

Maliha Aqeel, PMP, SCMP, MC

Maliha Aqeel, PMP, SCMP, MC, is Founder & CEO of The Ideas Collective Inc., an independent consulting firm bringing brand purpose to life through content, customers and culture. She has worked in corporate and agency roles for almost 20 years, connecting the dots between brand, marketing and communications to drive business objectives. She is a long-time IABC volunteer and is a regular speaker at industry conferences. She has won several IABC Gold Quill awards for brand development, content marketing, publications and internal communications, including two Gold Quill “Best of the Best” awards for employee engagement and COVID-19 response management and communications.

Immediate Past Chair (one-year term)

Alain Legault, SCMP, MA

Alain Legault, MA, SCMP, is the Deputy general director of QcGoldtech inc. and has been working for over 20 years in strategic positions with major trade union, city administration and public organizations. The recipient of the IABC Chair’s Award in 2019, Legault has a strong history of leadership and engagement in IABC, most recently as the chair of the IABC 50th Anniversary Task Force. On the chapter and region level, he has served on both the Montreal chapter and Canada East Region boards. A graduate of McGill University in political science and history, Legault also holds a master’s degree in communication from UQAM.

Vice Chair (three-year term with automatic succession to Chair and Past Chair)

Kamyar Naficy

Kamyar Naficy is the founder and principal of KNECTCOMMS, a strategic communications consultancy that specializes in financial services and fintech. With over 20 years of professional experience, Kamyar advises businesses and organizations in Europe, the US and the Middle East on all aspects of corporate, financial and marketing communications. Prior to establishing his consultancy, Kamyar held senior communications positions at JP Morgan, London Stock Exchange Group and UniCredit. Earlier in his career, he worked in investment banking and management consulting. He holds a BA from the London School of Economics and a MPhil in Management from Cambridge University.

Treasurer & Secretary (one-year term)

Ann-Marie Blake

Ann-Marie Blake, Chart.PR, is co-Founder of True, a boutique employee engagement and communication consultancy. Ann-Marie has over 25 years' experience of working globally in senior corporate roles spanning a range of disciplines including public relations, marketing, corporate affairs, change and internal communications. In addition to her day to day work, she teaches the PRCA Introduction to PR and Strategic Communications Planning courses. Blake is a Chartered PR Practitioner and currently is current Chair of the EMENA Blue Ribbon Panel for the IABC Gold Quill Awards and currently serves as Secretary/Treasurer on the International Executive Board of the IABC. She has been an IABC member since 2012.

Director (three-year term)

John Harris

John Harris is a communications consultant in Austin, Texas, working since 1991 in the public and private sectors for the agency and corporate sides. An IABC member since 2004, he held leadership positions at the chapter and region levels, and was IABC Region Leader of the Year as Southern Region chair for 2022. Earlier he was president of the Houston and Austin chapters. As a volunteer, John helps lead an Austin organization that assists people experiencing homelessness or needing financial help. Before returning to Austin, he was a senior VP at Houston First, serving the city's convention and entertainment facilities. He started in newspapers and holds a bachelor of journalism degree from The University of Texas.

Director (three-year term)

Anuja Kale Agarwal

Anuja is an accomplished global communications professional, with over 30 years of experience in communications, in the insurance, banking, financial and professional services industry in Asia, US and Canada. She is currently the National Communications Director at PwC Canada. Anuja is also actively engaged in CSR and DEI initiatives, and has served on several Diversity and Inclusion Councils. She is currently serving as the Chair of the IABC Global DEI Committee, and is the Co-chair of the DEIB Special Interest Group, IABC. In her free time, Anuja coaches and mentors graduate students and young executives on building their personal brand and executive presence. She is also a guest speaker and writer on topics such as leadership communication and engagement. She holds an MBA in Marketing and has a Bachelor of Commerce, with a specialization in Advanced Accounting and Auditing.