

IABC Fellow Designation Nomination Guide 2026

September 2025

Dear Nominator:

Thank you for taking the time to consider an IABC colleague or yourself for the IABC Fellow designation.

The IABC Fellows designation recognizes communications professionals globally whose body of work has contributed significantly to the growth and reputation of the profession and IABC in sustained, creative, and innovative ways.

IABC Fellows bring unique perspectives to their work in communications, they support best practices globally, and they believe in sharing what they know. Fellows represent the best in communications ethics and integrity in practice while upholding global standards of excellence for our profession as champions, mentors and leaders. Above all, IABC Fellows facilitate and influence the future development of professional business communication.

This guide includes:

- Background on the Fellow designation
- Nomination timeline
- How to submit a nomination
- Nomination checklist
- The Readiness Assessment Questionnaire
- The rubric used by the Selection Committee as part of the evaluation process

Completing the Readiness Assessment Questionnaire before you start the nomination will help you identify your strengths and indicate areas where you may need to work before embarking on the Fellow nomination journey. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to leader_centre@iabc.com.

Sincerely,

Rajeev Kumar, ABC, IABC Fellow Chair, IABC Fellow Selection Committee

FELLOWS CLASS OF 2026

Nomination Deadline

30 November 2025 | 11:59 p.m. CST

1. Key Dates 2025-2026

TIMELINE	
Fellows Class of 2026 open call commences	24 September 2025
Open call closes at 11:59 p.m. CST	30 November 2025
Nominations shared with Ethics Committee for review	December 2025
Evaluation of Nominees	December 2025 -
	January 2026
Interviews of Select Nominees	January – February
	2026
Recommendations made to IEB to confirm 2026 Fellows slate	February – March
	2026
Outreach to all nominators and nominees	March 2026
Announcement of the Fellows Class of 2026	March 2026
Fellow designation bestowed at Toronto World Conference	June 2026

2. Background on the Fellow Designation

2.1 Description

Being named IABC Fellow is the highest honor IABC can bestow upon one of its members. The designation is given to recognize those IABC members who have made an outstanding contribution to and impact on the communication profession through exemplary achievement within their own organization and through unselfish service to IABC, its members and the profession as a whole and continue to do so. Awarding of the Fellow designation follows an open call for nominations and an evaluation against specific criteria by the Fellow Selection Committee. The Committee annually proposes a class of new Fellows, who must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the IABC International Executive Board for selection.

2.2 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

In line with IABC's <u>approach to diversity</u>, <u>equity and inclusion</u> (DE&I), the IABC Fellow Selection Committee is committed to actively seeking candidates from a broad range of backgrounds and encourages a diverse nominee pool via the open-call process.

2.3 Designation Bestowed

IABC Fellow. The designation is bestowed for life in accordance with IABC policies.

2.4 The Fellow Selection Committee

The Fellow Selection Committee is responsible each year for evaluating nominations and making as many recommendations to the IABC Executive Board (IEB) as it sees fit. The committee is also responsible for input to the IEB on policy, standards and

3. The Nomination Process

3.1 Nominations

- Only IABC members may nominate other IABC members who meet the qualifications listed in section 3.3.
- A member may self-nominate. We encourage all nominees to work with a nominator to ensure the application is as comprehensive as possible.
- Members of the Fellow Selection Committee cannot nominate an individual or act as referees [providing submit letters of support] during their term on the committee.
- Members of the International Executive Board cannot nominate an individual or act as referees [providing submit letters of support] during their IEB term.
- No individual acting as self-nominator, nominator or referee supporting a
 nomination through a letter, can support more than one nominee. In the instance
 that the same individual has nominated or issued a letter of support to more than
 one nominee, the later dated nomination or the letter of support will be treated
 as invalid, and the nomination is liable to be disqualified from the selection
 process.
- The individual acting as nominator is responsible for checking with each referee that they are supporting only one nomination.

3.2 Class Size

There is no limit on the number of recommendations for IABC Fellow each year. Also note - that as per IABC policy, the Fellow Selection Committee is not required to propose a minimum number of new Fellow designations annually.

3.3 Qualifications and Eligibility

- Only members of IABC in good standing are eligible to be IABC Fellows.
- Nominees must have at least five years of IABC membership. Years do not need to be consecutive.
- Present IEB members, members of the Fellow Selection Committee and any
 person who has served as Chair of the IEB during the past three years are not
 eligible to be nominated. For 2025-2026 nominations, a past IEB chair must have
 completed their term before 1 July 2022.

3.4 Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

The Readiness Assessment Questionnaire (Appendix B) should be a first step in preparing a nomination. It can help determine if a potential nominee meets the stringent requirements of the Fellow Selection process and can help identify the appropriate qualifications to highlight in the nomination. The assessment is also a valuable coaching tool for preparing oneself or another person for a future nomination. The Readiness Assessment Questionnaire is also accessible on the Fellow Designation page of the IABC website.

3.5 How to Submit a Nomination

Nominations are made by filling out the online nomination form. The person completing

the form will need to create a login and will have the option to save as they go before submitting the final nomination package by the deadline. Please note that the login to this system is the same as your IABC login. Should you have any problems with the nomination process, please email your concerns to leader_centre@iabc.com.

3.6 Nomination Materials

The nomination package should tell the Selection Committee the story of the nominee, and provide all pieces needed to support the story. The nominator is responsible for gathering all required items and ensuring they collectively reflect why the nominee should be considered for the Fellow designation. Incomplete nomination packages will not be considered. The Selection Committee can only base its recommendation to award the designation using the information presented in the nomination package.

Applicants, Nominators and Referees must follow the rule on integrity in applications for professional honours. They must present the candidate's professional achievements and contributions truthfully, without embellishment or exaggeration. All claims should be reasonable, fact-based and supported by credible documentation or evidence. This honour recognizes genuine excellence -- let authentic accomplishments speak for themselves.

The committee, in keeping with practice for nominations in other IABC committees, focuses exclusively on all the information included in the nomination package.

The completed online nomination package must include:

3.6.1 Detail on the nominee

- Contact information, i.e., address, email, and phone number(s)
- Nominee's IABC Chapter (or Member-At-Large region) and member number

3.6.2 Nominee's resume or curriculum vitae

Upload as a PDF file. Nominees are encouraged to supply as much detail as possible in their CV or resume to offer the committee a comprehensive presentation of the nominee's skills, accomplishments, contributions, and impact on the profession.

3.6.3 Nomination cover letter

The cover letter (uploaded as a PDF file) should speak to why the nominee exemplifies the Fellow designation and how they embody IABC's values and ethics. The nomination cover letter should address this criterion explicitly as described below:

Alignment with IABC's values and ethics. Explain and explore the extent to which the nominee aligns with the values of the organization, upholds the highest ethical standards for professional communication, and acts as a beacon for the profession.

This document should also provide an overall view of the nominee and highlight the key areas of the four detailed sections below with a specific reference to their sustained impact. This is also the place to include any elements of the nominee's life and experience that do not fit neatly into one of the detail sections. The letter should indicate the motivation for why the nominator believes the nominee should receive the Fellow designation.

3.6.4 Nominee's qualifications

These four sections are entered directly into the online nomination form. It is recommended that you draft these as Word or equivalent documents, then copy and paste into the form. The Readiness Assessment Questionnaire and the evaluation rubric (see Appendices) provide additional guidance on content to include. It is not essential that a nominee has to be checking all the boxes given in the rubric as every individual is unique. The rubric is just a guideline and not exhaustive.

We strongly recommend you review the rubric carefully to be sure you provide the Selection Committee the information it needs to evaluate the nomination.

- Impact on the profession. Indicate the impact the nominee has had on the practice of communication, the communication profession including mentoring/developing communications professionals, and the organizations they have been involved in. [450-word max]
- Career achievement. List the nominee's communication-related career achievements. Emphasize demonstrable results and impact of the nominee's communication efforts, the scope of responsibilities, advancements, accreditation/certification, recognition (e.g., awards), education, and length of time in the profession. (450-word max)
- Contribution to the body of knowledge. List books, articles, columns,
 research papers, seminars, workshops, keynotes, courses (traditional or
 online), blogs, and podcasts (for non- IABC outlets) with as much information
 about reach and impact as possible. For academic nominees, please also
 include any professorships and other academic distinctions. (450- word max)
- Contribution to IABC. Provide detailed information about the person's leadership at chapter, region, and/or international board levels, committee activity, other IABC volunteer efforts, presentations to chapters and regions, articles written for IABC publications, and other IABC-related activities. Be sure to reference the impact of those efforts. (450-word max)

3.6.5 Letters of Support from Referees

You need to obtain four letters of support for the nomination from individuals who know the nominee well. Each letter should support a different qualification criterion listed above (i.e. one letter for 'impact', one letter for 'career achievement', one letter for 'body of knowledge, and one for 'IABC contributions'). The letters should state clearly which of the qualifications it is reinforcing and should not merely repeat the information included in the application section. In other words, they should complement and expand on what has been included in the respective sections of the nomination. The nominator's cover letter should also address the nominee's experience regarding alignment with IABC's values and ethics, as described above.

Support letters of Referees can come from IABC members but one of the letters must be from an individual who is not connected to IABC and who is familiar with the nominee professionally. A nominator or a referee can only support one candidate for consideration per year.

The letter of support from Referees should focus on the supporter's personal experience with and knowledge of the nominee in that particular area.

Support Letters from Referees can be in text format of up to two pages or a recorded video format as per convenience of the Referee. The video must be of maximum two minutes length and in the .mp4 format.

The nominator is responsible for receiving the letters of support and uploading them into the nomination form along with the contact information of the Referees.

3.6.6 Optional Additional Information

The nomination form includes an option to add relevant information that is not covered elsewhere in the form. If you feel that the nomination already fully tells the story of the nominee, it is not necessary to complete this section of the form.

4. The Evaluation Process

Step 1: Nominations are verified for completeness by IABC staff. Only complete nominations are taken forward. *Incomplete nominations will not be assessed by the Committee.*

Step 2: The IABC Ethics Committee reviews the names of nominees to ensure they are members in good standing, which includes having no current violations of IABC's Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics.

Step 3: The Fellow Selection Committee evaluates eligible nominations using the evaluation rubric (see Appendix C) as a first step. Equal weight is given to the five criteria:

- Alignment with IABC's values and ethics
- Impact on the profession
- Career achievement
- Contribution to the body of knowledge
- Contribution to IABC

Step 4: The Fellow Selection Committee identifies a shortlist of nominees and conducts recorded interviews with these individuals to assist in the committee's final recommendations. Note that moving to interview stage does not guarantee the nomination will be recommended to the IEB.

Step 5: The Selection Committee uses all information from the nomination package and interviews to finalize the proposed slate for the Class of IABC Fellows.

Step 6: The proposed slate is recommended to the International Executive Board (IEB) for its approval.

5. Notification and Feedback

The Chair will inform nominators/nominees on the outcomes from the process. For nominees not selected as Fellows, the Chair of the Selection Committee will provide

guidance and focus on identifying areas a nominee could strengthen/build on for a future nomination.

6. Announcement and Recognition

Once the selection, notification and feedback process has been completed, the selected Class of Fellows will be announced in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:

- IABC internal platforms reaching members and leaders
- Posts on IABC external and social media channels
- Media release provided for local distribution
- Listing on Fellow Designation page of IABC website

The designation will be formally bestowed during IABC's annual World Conference.

Appendix A

Nomination Checklist

Please use this list to ensure you have included everything that the Fellow Selection Committee requires to evaluate the nomination. We cannot accept incomplete nominations and can only base our evaluation on the materials included.

Nominee contact details
Nominator contact details
Nominee CV
Nomination cover letter presenting the nominee's qualifications and addressing alignment with IABC's values and ethics
Nomination content (max. 450 words on each of the following areas):
 Impact on the profession
o Career achievement
 Contribution to the body of knowledge
o Contribution to IABC
Letters of Support from Referees (one for each of the following areas). Note that one Referee MUST be a non-IABC individual, i.e. someone outside the nominee's IABC network and a Referee can only write only one letter of support for a nominee per year. A letter of support must not exceed two pages in text. Referees have option to submit in video format not exceeding two minutes.
 Impact on the profession
o Career achievement
 Contribution to the body of knowledge
o Contribution to IABC
Any additional information relevant to the nomination

Appendix B

Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

This questionnaire enables aspiring IABC Fellows or those considering nomination to determine to what extent the individual already meets the requirements to be considered for this designation and which areas they still need to attend to. This questionnaire will also assist nominators in preparing nominations that will present the nominee in the best possible way.

The questions are phrased on the assumption that it is the aspiring Fellow who is answering them.

About yourself

- Are you an IABC member in good standing?
- Have you been a member of IABC for a minimum of 5 years (not necessarily consecutive)?
- Are there four people who would be willing to write letters of support for you, each addressing one of the four criteria in 'Your career' listed below?
- Nominators including self-nominators and referees can support only one nomination per year.

Note: Current IABC International Executive Board members, current Fellow Selection Committee members, and individuals who have served as IABC International Chair within the past three years are not eligible to be nominated.

Your career

Answering the following questions will indicate to what extent you meet the criteria set for the Fellow Designation.

Your impact on the profession

- Is there evidence that you have had a positive impact on the communication profession?
- Have you served in local, regional and international leadership roles for IABC and/or other professional organizations, resulting in significant impact?
- Have you had an impact on others in the profession through mentoring or development of talent within your organization or elsewhere?
- Have you introduced new ways of thinking about the practice of communication, with demonstrable impact?
- Have you used your communication skills to make a difference through volunteer or advisory roles at a local, national, or international level?

Your career achievements

- Is your professional career path evident, with clear evidence of advancement across positions over an extended period of time?
- Are you able to demonstrate the impact of your work in these roles?
- Is there evidence of your commitment to professional development, such as CMP, SCMP, ABC, or other professional designations?
- Have you been recognized with awards of excellence on local, regional, or international levels, with measurable impact?

Your contribution to the body of knowledge

• Have you made contributions as a published author, lecturer, trainer, and/or workshop presenter at local, regional, or international levels?

Have you been recognized at an international, regional, or local level for thought leadership?

Your contribution to IABC

- Would your nomination show substantial contributions at one or more levels of IABC, with appropriate impact?
- To what extent have you made a visible positive impact on IABC?
- Do you have good examples of involvement and recognition?

Additionally, nominees for IABC Fellow must demonstrate commitment to and upholding of IABC's values and ethics:

Your alignment with IABC's values and ethics

- Do you have evidence that your professional conduct is in alignment with IABC's Code of Ethics? Have you advocated for ethical conduct in challenging situations?
- Is there good evidence that you model IABC's Code of Conduct by exercising consideration and respect in your speech and actions?
- Have you used your communication skills to make a difference through volunteer contributions (e.g. community, NGOs or advisory roles)?

APPENDIX C: The Rubric

IABC Fellow Designation Scoring Rubric

All eligible nominees will first be evaluated against the following rubric.

7 6	5	4	3	2	1
This person fully embodies IABC values, ethics and code of conduct A beacon for upholding the behaviors within IABC's brand personality This person reflects the values and the brand personality of IABC in his/her leadership roles Cited by others as a source for wisdom in difficult decisions Evidence/examples of highly visible and effective advocacy for IABC's values and ethics Career and volunteer history demonstrates outstanding commitment to Examples that show that this person is a stror proponent of IABC's values, and ethics Seen as a role model exemplifying the behaviors of IABC's code of conduct Potential indicators: Using the IABC value and ethical behavior are role modeling in difficult situation Clear evidence of positive impact in volunteering and	The examples reflect the behavior of a keen promoter of IABC's values and ethics Evidence of how this person lives the behaviors reflected in IABC's values and ethics Potential indicators: Advocates for IABC's values and ethics. Demonstrates ethical professional conduct of	Examples are shared of how the nominee has demonstrated IABC's values as a communication professional over a period of time The nomination reflects professional conduct and ethical behavior	Examples of how some of the values of IABC are exemplified Not all the values are reflected in the examples provided, or not address in the nomination	Limited or vague examples of how this person embodies IABC's values and ethics	No evidence of alignment with IABC values and ethics

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
The practice of professional communication has changed because of this nominee Impact on the profession, on a global scale, over a significant period of time and on several fronts This person has provided insights/research/professional application that has influenced how communication professionals go about their work The impact reaches a national and /or global scale Served in senior/leadership communication roles in organizations Mentored and coached leaders on communication otential indicators: Conducted large scale research that has had an impact on the profession Recognition as a leader in the profession globally Introduced communication models or ways of practicing Advocates globally for the communication profession	 The nominee served in a wide range of leadership roles and had a clear impact on the communication profession The impact and leadership are clear across multiple disciplines/clients/ geographies The nominee has served as a mentor and coach for communication professionals is an advocate for the development of talent within organizations or elsewhere Has served in leadership roles within IABC or Other professional organizations Potential indicators: Has held a number of leadership roles over many years Has influenced communication practice & thinking Is a mentor/coach and developer of others in the communication profession 	 Clear examples provided of the nominee's contribution to and/or leadership in the communication profession in a wider area of influence locally/regionally The nominee has served in communication leadership roles in organizations and/or professional bodies The Impact of the nominee reached across disciplines and governing bodies Potential indicators: Has held a number of senior and/or leadership roles over multiple years Seen to be using their communication expertise to make a positive difference across a wide geography Has multiple clients or projects in varying areas or industries 	Clear examples provided of the nominees' contribution to and/or leadership in the profession in specific localized areas The contribution to the profession and/or leadership through volunteering or advisory across a wide geography	Examples provided of the nominee's leadership roles and/ or how this person has impacted the profession, but the scale of the impact is unclear Have some examples of volunteering or advisory within a limit area	Little evidence of a contribution to and/or impact on the communication profession leadership with the profession is minimal or unclear	No evidence of a contribution to and/or impact on the communication profession

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
An accomplished professional journey, from foundation to business advisor or academic leader An outstanding contribution to all organizations in/for which they've worked Dedication to professional dev't through certification, accreditation and training Significant positive impact on colleagues & teams led Impressive recognition in professional global/regional awards of excellence Potential indicators: Senior accreditation or certification (SCMP, ABC) Confirmation of organizational impact Multiple Awards of excellence at international level (Gold Quill or other international awards) Other civil or professional recognitions at a national or international level (honorees)	 A strong career journey, with increasing responsibility and scope in positions held over a number of years Significant achievements evident across many positions with wide ranging impact Holds a professional accreditation/certification Evidence of professional recognition Potential indicators: Certification/Accreditation or both (SCMP or similar) Recognized contributions to organizations or multiple organizations Awards of excellence locally regionally or internationally 	 Professional trajectory is clear, with evidence of advancement across positions Impact of work is presented for most roles Commitment to professional development is clear, with certifications/a ccreditation Professional development seen right across nominee's career with awards or accolades Potential indicators: Commitment to ongoing professional development Awards of excellence (IABC awards or similar) Certification/Accreditation (CMP or similar) 	 Some evidence of a professional journey with increasing positions Consistent level of responsibility within professional roles Some career achievements/impact provided Professional development includes mid-level qualifications or certifications 	Positions held do not demonstrate a trajectory of increasing responsibility Limited evidence of impact on organizations some professional development indicators with courses and certificates	Some background provided on career trajectory, but overall progression not clear Limited professional development indicators	Career journey and growth unclear No evidence of dedication to professional development Career advancement no evident Lacks professional accreditation /certification

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
A prolific contribution to the profession across the spectrum of avenues A constant and reliable presence in the profession over a sustained period Recognized as an icon in the profession Ongoing willingness to share knowledge and experience as well advocating Frequent contributor to credible publications, lecturing and speaking at global conferences and institutions tential indicators: Published author A number of speaking engagements and/or lectures nationally/internation ally Recorded or live messages (podcasts, webinars) Led training and facilitation across multiple countries, avenues and communities	 Significant contributions across multiple avenues as author, lecturer and speaker Recognition as a thought leader on a regional/national level Evidence of authorship, lecturing and speaking at recognized institutions and professional bodies (i.e. those with global renown) Potential indicators: Publication contribution regular or across multiple publications Speaker assignments locally, regionally and nationally Articles /blogs or videos published on various platforms and through a number of channels Lectures, training and facilitation 	Recognized at a regional or local level for thought leadership Evidence of authorship, lecturing and speaking on a regional level Potential indicators: Leading workshops/training Conducting lectures Local speaking engagements Have published articles, blogs and thought leadership pieces Contributed and engaged audiences in discussions	Localized evidence of authorship, lecturing and speaking Only recently started on this journey Low numbers of themes and speaking assignments	Some evidence of authorship, lecturing and speaking Themes are limited Exposure limited	Minimal evidence of authorship, lecturing and speaking	No evidence of authorship, lecturing and speaking

5. Contribution to IABC					
7 6	5	4	3	2	1
 An outstanding level of commitment at all levels of the association Has gone above and beyond the call of a volunteer leader over a sustained period of time An advocate for the association; an IABC visionary and influencer A recognized presence within IABC Ongoing willingness to share knowledge and experience Significant and measurable results in leadership roles on local, regional and international board, committees and task forces. Externally viewed as a supremely effective advocate for IABC development and growth Involved over a nof years at local/regional and international leve various committee and workgroups Actively contribut to IABC content a training Presented webinars/training regional and international leve webinars/training regional and interna	and regional level in various leadership roles Demonstrated influence on the way the chapter and the region are run Was a member of a committee or work group of the IABC on international level Presented at IABC regional conferences Have led an IABC professional development course or contributed to IABC content Potential indicators: Chapter and regional involvement and impact of Member of an international work group /committee or task force	 Contribution to IABC at a local level is clear over a period of years Filled leadership and committee member roles at a chapter level Has positively contributed at local regional events Has presented at IABC workshops or supported training and development or local chapter mentorship programs 	 The contribution is clear at a chapter level Nominee has served on multiple local committees 	Limited contribution for a limited time The contribution is not clearly presented	Contributions very limited or not present at all