



**mensa world journal**

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Special Issue

# MENSA INTERNATIONAL ELECTIONS 2024

MENSA INTERNATIONAL

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*from the editor..*



*Dear Members,*

*This edition of the Mensa World Journal is a special issue solely for the purpose of enabling you, as a member, to vote in the forthcoming Mensa International Elections, 2024.*

*The four international positions that are to be elected by you are:*

**Chairman  
Director of Administration  
Director of Development  
Treasurer**

*Please note that the Candidates are presented in random order.*

*Please read all the Candidates' Material carefully, and then make considered decisions as to who you'll vote for.*

*And, please vote! Let's make this year unprecented with regard to the number of votes from members worldwide!*

*Kate Nacard  
Editor*

*Log in to [www.mensa.org](http://www.mensa.org) to read or download the MWJ in full colour*

## From the International Election Committee

**a) Instructions to Chairmen on how to distribute the election material and the deadline for distribution to all of their members.**

All the National Boards should distribute the material by the best means possible and no later than **March 20th 2024**.

All National Mensas must submit evidence to the IEC of actions taken to meet with requirement in rule 2.7:

***National Mensas are required to ensure that all their members have the opportunity to vote. The NCIE of each national Mensa must submit evidence to the IEC of actions taken to meet with this requirement, such as copies of official publications or other national election correspondence. Deadline for submitting this is March the 20th of the election year.***

**b) Information for members as to how they vote and their deadline for voting.**

Information on how to vote will be sent from the voting agency directly to all members that qualify for voting in the election 2024. The voting period is **April 15th through May 15th**.

## Candidate for Chairman

### LaRae Bakerink American Mensa



#### Campaign statement

Mensa has brought joy and become a wonderful addition to my life. I've made lifelong friendships and continue to meet kind and wonderful people through our organization. My hope is that others will find the same happiness that has enriched me and my family. Volunteering for Mensa allows me to bring that joy to others in our organization.

We need to visualize Mensa (the organization) as a business and the members as a social group; and not confuse the two. Providing a strong and relatable strategic plan will give us the guidance necessary to look forward and make good decisions for years to come.

My time spent on international and national boards and committees will help me bring the expertise and knowledge necessary for our endeavors. My varied experience in leadership will help with working with the diverse members of the International Board of Directors and bringing them together harmoniously. Each IBD member has a voice and should be heard. Our differences are what makes Mensa so unique and exciting.

While we may not agree on everything, we can disagree agreeably and still improve our Mensa. My goal is to listen, learn, and help those that desire help.

#### Biography

##### **Mensa Experience:**

Local Offices: Activities, Development, LocSec, Webmaster, Testing Coordinator, Proctor, Treasurer, Scholarship, Assistant RVC 9.

Chaired: Regional Gatherings, Leadership Development Workshops, Mind Games 2010 & 2015.

National: Chair of American Mensa (4 years), 2nd Vice Chair (4 years), National Testing Officer (8 years).

Chaired: Leadership Development, Risk Management, Annual Gathering 2016, Co-Chair Annual Gathering 2017, Testing Team.

International: NatRep (7 years), ExComm member (4 years), Testing Committee member, Chair of Strategic Management Advisory Committee.

##### **Non-Mensa Experience:**

Board of the NASDAQ Stock Market (2 years).

Board Of Governors of the National Association of Securities Dealers (7 years).

Service on Membership, Technology, Search, Regulatory, and Audit Committees of the NASD and NASDAQ board.

President and Chairman of National Association of Independent Broker Dealers (12 years).

Service on the President's National Hire Veterans Committee under the Secretary of Labor.

##### **Education:**

B.S. in Finance and M.B.A. Emphasis Management.

## Answers to IBD questions

### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

Communicating effectively with the board members, the membership, the staff, and the public when necessary. Key components of successful communication are good listening and understanding skills.

The Chair must ensure the meeting process is seamless and constructive to provide the best results for discussion and deliberation when the board meets. The Chair must prepare the board members in advance and let them know what to expect. The Chair may then guide board members in achieving compromise and unity while considering a variety of topics and needs for the organization. The Chair's actions should encourage other board members to carry out their board responsibilities.

Keeping the channels open to the membership is important to discover what they want out of their Mensa leadership and membership.

### 2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?

Mensa has provided value and a sense of awe to my life. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve in the different roles I have taken. I volunteer because it makes my Mensa experience better.

I feel that I am qualified for this role as I chaired the largest national Mensa for four years and I served on the IBD for 7 years, and the Mensa International ExComm for four years. I served in many Local and National positions and on committees. I served on the NASDAQ Stock Market Board and the NASD Board of Directors, which provided me with corporate experience.

My experience with testing, audit, finance, membership, search, development, marketing, and strategic planning committees gives me the rounded experience to see the overall picture necessary for leadership in a large organization.

### 3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?

#### **Board Member/Volunteer Training:**

Preparing Board Members prior to in-person meetings with some sort of training should be required. Having sufficient volunteers with the proper training to take on different projects within Mensa would help boost our ability to complete projects.

#### **Lack of consistent funding:**

Many of our ventures or projects have been cancelled or declined due to lack of consistent funding. We need to find other avenues of revenue outside of the component (the percentage each national Mensa must pay for each member's dues received) that will help us grow and change in a manageable fashion.

#### **Protecting our Trademark and Name:**

Trademark battles can be costly and time-consuming, which takes away from our ability to provide services to our members.

### 4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office

- Listen, learn, and help gather ideas and consensus.
- Make a smooth transition for the new ExComm and the International Board of Directors.
- Provide clear instructions to IBD members on what to expect upon attending their first meeting and as an IBD member.
- Work with the Strategic Management Committee and the IBD to develop relevant strategies for the board to use as a template for their decision making.
- Restart the cancelled project of international marketing and use our brand to bring in revenue outside

of the component as we did with the Hasbro project.

- Bring to completion the project to provide our own test and potentially market that test.
- Grow the global community and increase membership on Workplace.
- Encourage ideas, harmony, and learning.

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## Candidate for Chairman

### Jacek Cywinski Mensa New Zealand

#### Campaign statement

Mensa should provide more value to members. This is how we grow faster.

We are all responsible for the future of Mensa. It is important to create a welcoming environment for new members and keep a positive and engaging atmosphere.

Mensa must also get better at keeping volunteers and encouraging their development; it is not a secret that Mensa relies on all our contributions. Get involved – please help us to make Mensa better, every hour of your time as a volunteer is needed now more than ever.

Mensa must remain a neutral organization, and not make any statements which could be perceived as political.

I offer extensive Mensa experience and current knowledge about Mensa International processes. This allows me to focus on opportunities, rather than learning the role. While I am an independent candidate, I work well in a team and my track record demonstrates this.

I would be grateful if you cast your vote for me. If you have any questions, please get in touch.  
Jacek Cywinski E: [jacekmensa@pm.me](mailto:jacekmensa@pm.me)



#### Biography

I have been with Mensa for 19 years, having been actively involved at national and international levels:

2019 – present: International Treasurer, Mensa International

2014 – 2022: Board member, Mensa New Zealand

2017 – 2019: Executive Committee Member – Asia-Pacific Mensa Gathering 2019

2015 – 2020: Mensa Foundation International Scholarship judge

2011 – 2016: Member of Leadership Exchange Ambassador Program Committee, Vice-chair, Chair

2010 – 2012: Chair of Mensa Poland, IBD Member

2006 – 2010: Board member and Testing Co-ordinator, Mensa Poland

In my professional life, I am a public servant leading a team of tax specialists. I have 21 years of experience applying commercial and tax law regulation, fraud investigation, and following compliance framework at both national and international levels, gained at multinational companies, public



service, and my own accounting practice. I have postgraduate degrees in psychology and finance & banking; and I am a Chartered Accountant.

### **Answers to IBD questions**

#### **1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?**

Coordination of the work of the executive committee and the team of international volunteers. We need constructive discussions while avoiding groupthink. The Chairman needs to be available for international volunteers, and the international office; and be there for the good and not so good. It's essential to be empathetic and understand different viewpoints and volunteer styles; however, it is important to confidently call out counterproductive volunteer behaviours when necessary.

I believe the old Latin quote applies "*Primum non nocere*" – first, do no harm. Mensa must remain a place where intelligent people from all walks of life, cultures and ideologies feel welcome to meet, have fun, and exchange ideas. Our members can be political, but the organisation must never be – the Chairman needs to be mindful of this. Overall, it is a full-on role requiring dedication and experience, and I am up for it.

#### **2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

I am a dedicated and experienced volunteer with a track record of meeting my commitments and taking my role seriously. I believe that my skills and experience will be beneficial, particularly when the majority of the current ExComm members are not eligible for re-election, and there are quite a few projects in progress.

For most of my professional life I have been a public servant, striving to be apolitical and neutral, which is essential while serving the public – this is beneficial for our organisation, as Mensa relies on not having opinions and being neutral, as the only thing which we all have in common is high IQ.

Mensa is part of my life – there has been no week without Mensa for 19 years. I have got so much from Mensa, which I feel compelled to give back. The future of Mensa is in my heart.

#### **3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

I believe the main issues facing Mensa are member and volunteer retention, increasing transparency, enhanced use of our knowledge resources, improved intelligence testing, and taking advantage of new technology.

Member retention is an important issue facing Mensa International. We need to consider the role of technology plays in this (the last several years have demonstrated that we can all work and socialise in innovative ways).

Furthermore, it is essential to look at our cost structure as the increasing membership fees in many national Mensas are the main reasons for members not renewing their membership.

Additionally, it is crucial to continue working on greater transparency and visibility of Mensa International operations, allowing a wider audience to be involved. We should create a knowledge base, where we could share all of the fantastic resources from around the world, including materials on how to resolve the most common challenges members can face.

#### **4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

- Bringing to life the "Volunteer Development Committee" to work on the Volunteer Development Programme to increase volunteer retention and provide structured support to volunteers;

- Implementing Adaptive Testing, allowing widespread reliable, modern intelligence testing which utilises item-response theory (we have been waiting for this for so long due to a variety of obstacles and we cannot wait any longer). I will make it happen;
- Progressing implementation of worldwide membership database, so you can engage better with wider membership;
- Transforming Mensa International Office, to provide enhanced experience to national Mensas, volunteers and Direct International Members, and,  
Reconsider financing options of Mensa International to minimise the burden to members, while balancing development and strategic opportunities.

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## Candidate for Chairman

### Sonia María Fernández López Mensa Spain

#### Campaign statement

I'm Sonia María Fernández López, and I'm running for president of Mensa International, it's a risky bet but I want to share with all of you that vision of a future where Mensa International is a beacon of intellectual excellence and global collaboration. A world in which diversity of thought is celebrated and where every brilliant person finds an intellectual home in Mensa. Together, we will build a brighter world through the power of collective intelligence.

#### Biography

I'm currently studying; I'm working on two doctoral theses. One at Carlos III University of Madrid in law on stolen works of art during the Nazi period, and another in European law at UNED on artificial intelligence and robotics for future legal projections. I have a degree in criminology, law and private investigation. I'm an expert in patents, trademarks, forgery of works of art, and calligraphy.

I've practiced martial arts since I was young, currently ninjutsu. Additionally, I study violin and play the piano. I also study Japanese and Catalan. I love painting, and when I finish my thesis, I'll resume doing exhibitions around the world.

I would like to contribute to making Mensa a better place for everyone and as support for all our members; that's why I have chosen to apply. <https://linkedin.com/in/yinsey>

#### Answers to IBD questions

##### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

I believe that in the world in which we find ourselves with the evolution of artificial intelligence, we must evolve and advance towards new paths and perspectives within the development of intelligence, taking advantage of future advances to be able to create stronger and more capable intelligent beings.



**2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

I volunteer because I believe that at this point in my life I can change many things and we can create a strong and beneficial group of intelligent people fighting for a good common goal.

**3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

The problem is always the difficulty of diversity with the rest of the world, we must learn to be a strong group to be able to achieve everything we can set our minds to. Mensa must be a support for all those who need it to cover the shortcomings that cannot be reached through society.

**4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

Manage to expand Mensa to countries where it isn't present, ensure that support for diversity can be encouraged and people who have problematic differences can be helped to survive their own complexity. Create a strong group and not a residual group that can generate exchange between countries, create international games and competitions between Mensas from different countries.

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## Candidate for Chairman

### Therese Moodie-Bloom

#### Australian Mensa

##### Campaign statement

I joined Mensa 35 years ago and have held many offices since then. Internationally, I served on the IBD for 12 years, including six as Director of Administration; I served on the International General Council for six years; held several International Offices and memberships on MI committees; attended countless international meetings, and edited the Mensa International Journal. Nationally, I have held six of the positions on my national board, including Chairman/CEO.

I have grown more tolerant and much wiser due to these experiences. I am approachable, a good team coordinator, and have lived and worked with people of all religions, cultures, and ethnicities.

I continue to be passionate about the benefits Mensa provides for both members and the community. We have a unique and wonderful society, but it could be more. All our members have the intellectual potential to be great inventors or entrepreneurs; to create timeless works of Art, philosophies, or bestseller thrillers. In theory, there should be no limit to our members' achievements and contributions to the world and to humanity.

Let's help Mensa reach its own potential by drawing out the potential of our individual members. I would be honoured to have your vote. [tmb@ozemail.com.au](mailto:tmb@ozemail.com.au)





## Biography

Born and raised in Sydney, Australia, with strong musical and philosophical childhood influences. My father read us Shakespearean tales to the background of my mother playing her classical pianoforte compositions.

Degree in Politics and Philosophy. Travelled widely, starting as a rock musician during the Vietnam war, followed by working tours of Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, The Philippines. I was an English tutor in Iran with the IIAF, a music tutor in Germany, and lived in the UK and the USA.

My eventual return to Australia was marred by ill-health and a long period of limited mobility. It was during this time that I joined Mensa, and a whole new world opened to me – a world of cerebral challenges replaced physical adventures!

I currently write a weekly column for our national broadsheet, *The Australian*, and provide original material for the *Mensa World Journal*, various magazines, and for charity fundraisers and websites.

## Answers to IBD questions

### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

The crucial aspect of the role is to guide Mensa International through rapidly-changing social environments. We must retain political neutrality during uprisings and national conflicts; show acuity and foresight during rapid technological changes, and find safe, innovative ways to minimise the restrictions of plagues and pandemics. I congratulate our current ExComm on guiding Mensa, intact, through the widespread lockdowns and social isolation of the Pandemic.

The Chairman, or Chief Officer of Mensa International plays a pivotal role as the underlying glue – which binds the myriad parts of our organization together. This is done through the auspices of ExComm, members of the IBD, and our International Officers.

A large component of success therefore relies upon team-building, co-operation, and a thorough understanding of the infrastructure of an organization powered largely by a volunteer workforce. I believe I have those abilities and will continue to put them to good use for Mensa.

### 2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?

At the most basic level, I would like to ‘give back’ to Mensa. I have benefited enormously from membership.

Infrastructure and member nations: I have learnt from the experiences of holding six different pivotal positions on the National Board; of serving twelve years on the IBD, (six on ExComm), and six on the MI General Council. I’ve held many national and International offices and served on several International Mensa Committees. I am aware of how Mensa operates both internationally and within its component nations.

I have attended approximately 23 IBD meetings, approximately 10 USAGs, and several regional gatherings and EMAGs in Europe and the Asia-Pacific, and have been privileged to experience the unique Mensa@Cambridge.

Individual members: Attendance at dozens of local Mensa meetings around the world, combined with my experiences prior to joining Mensa, I now have deep insights into the different religions and cultures of the world.

**3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

Our ever-changing world situations which have already presented challenges and will continue to do so:

**- Wars and conflicts between countries and political uprisings within nations.**

We have members from every walk of life, religion and ethnicity and political stance. To serve all our members, we must retain our stance of neutrality as an organization.

**- Rapidly-changing technological advances.**

These are constantly changing, and we must adapt to the world as it changes. We need to be on the cutting edge with the latest knowledge, but apply discretion as to which innovations we adopt to enhance our administration and member communication.

**- Plagues and Pandemics.**

Our current IBD is to be commended for navigating a positive way through the lockdowns and isolation of Covid; for overcoming the lack of face-to-face board meetings, and the lack of social meetings in many countries. A challenge indeed for our Mensan leadership and progress!

**4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

Mensa International is a unique society which has upheld its Constitutional aims. We have been beneficial to members. But we could be more!

Constitutionally, we must accept all our members, as long as they meet the IQ eligibility requirements. This clearly includes members who are socially inept, members who are not particularly ethical, and many internet “trolls” and negative personalities who shoot down new ideas and belittle other members. How many potentially wonderful inventions, philosophies, works of art etc have died in their nascent stages because, when first floated by a member, they have been ridiculed?

We can help counteract this by encouraging the initiatives of members in various ways so that their creative potential can be nurtured. This could include providing “sounding boards” for new ideas, and of ensuring recognition of the developed innovations – recognition not only within Mensa but acknowledgment and awards from national governmental entities.

## Candidate for Director-Administration

**Monika Orski**

**Mensa Sweden**

### Campaign statement

When volunteering to serve, I offer to put in the effort required to handle the needs of our global membership. This takes collaboration, and I volunteer to be an active part of the team. When I say “someone should do it”, I tend to add “I am someone”.



### Important areas:

- To help spread an understanding of what Mensa is and what the organisation can do, among members as well as the general public.
- To facilitate support of various efforts to further education for the gifted, everywhere.
- To facilitate the support of research into the nature, characteristics, and uses of intelligence.
- To provide good working conditions for the International Office staff as well as international volunteers.
- To support a unified way to protect the Mensa name and trademark, in the globalized market of today and tomorrow.
- To encourage regional as well as global cooperation between national Mensas.

It is my intention to work on continuous improvements, while also being ready for any upcoming events that might demand attention. And last but not least, I do believe that the mark of successful leadership is to encourage the next generation of leaders.

### Biography

For most of my 30+ years of Mensa membership, I have had volunteer positions. I have met many wonderful Mensans at different events.

Among recent volunteer positions, I chaired Mensa Sweden 2015-2019 and represented it on IBD 2015-2021. Current volunteer positions include being chair of the Governance Papers Advisory Committee (GPAC), a trustee of the Nordic Mensa Fund, and part of the EMAG panel, but I also host book club meetings in my hometown of Stockholm every month.

Professionally, I run an IT consulting company, working mostly as an interim leader but also doing solutions architecture and technology audits. Other professional pursuits include keynotes on leading intelligent people, and published works of fiction as well as non-fiction.

I have an MSc in computer engineering and a BA in literature. In addition to my native Swedish, I speak English, Polish and French, and know some basics of German.

## Answers to IBD questions

### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

**Short version: Leadership and teamwork.**

As part of the ExComm, the International Director – Administration needs to be able to work not only in that team, but also with the full IBD and in various cooperation with many national Mensas. Being one of the ExComm positions directly elected by the membership, there is clear obligation to understand and consider the Mensa needs of the diverse, global membership.

Apart from the common ExComm tasks, the International Director – Administration has a significant role to ensure good working conditions for the International Office staff as well as all the international volunteers. It is especially important to be able to cooperate with Mensa International employees, and also to minimize the risks always inherent in any organisation relying on a small number of people.

### 2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?

**Short version: Getting things done.**

I bring the experience gained from many years of volunteering for Mensa, in many different roles. Among those, I have chaired Mensa Sweden for four years, been part of IBD for six years, chaired two International Volunteer Network (IVN) meetings, organised an EMAG, co-organised two Floating Mensans events, participated in establishing the Nordic Mensa Fund, and chaired the Governance Papers Advisory Committee (GPAC) since 2019.

In my GPAC role, I have also already worked with the International Office. And in addition to my Mensa experience, I bring my professional experience.

Serving in various positions within Mensa Sweden, I have seen it grow from 300 members to nearly 8000 members. This provides insights to the challenges that national Mensas face at different stages of growth.

But most important, I bring the proven ability and willingness to roll up my sleeves and get things done.

### 3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?

**Short version: Relevance and growth.**

Mensa International needs to be relevant to the members, all over the world. An important part of this mission is to facilitate access to international resources. This will take continued efforts in terms of IT tools and organisational routines, as well as communications between Mensa International and national Mensas, and directly with the members. It will also be part of this effort to further modernise communications channels, for members to participate at all levels of the organisation.

While facilitating the social interactions between members is important, and indeed part of the purpose of Mensa, we also need to further our work supporting the education of the gifted and research in various intelligence-related areas.

All this needs to be managed in sync with a continuing growth in membership within existing national Mensas as well as in number of national Mensas. It is a positive challenge.

### 4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?

**Short version: Incremental improvements.**

I want the next ExComm to pick up where the outgoing one leaves off, and to keep making the great so-

ciety that Mensa is even better. As the International Director – Administration, my tasks in particular will be to provide the best possible support and management for staff and volunteers. I also want to continue the ongoing development of rules and policies of Mensa for better readability.

I firmly believe in the continuous development and improvement of every organisation. It is my intention to ensure that at the end of the coming ExComm term, we will have seen a number of such improvements. They will make Mensa International even more accessible to members worldwide, encourage contacts and information exchange between members as well as between national Mensas, and ensure continuity in the workings of the International Office. All done step by step.

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## Candidate for Director-Administration

**Robin Crawford**

**American Mensa**

### Campaign statement

Mensans everywhere share a desire to make connections, find purpose, and use our gifts for the betterment of humanity. To accomplish that, I envision:

- Connecting more members on a global scale.
- Energizing and supporting all volunteers.
- Supporting gifted people and programs.
- Expediting decision-making and implementation.



Grand visions aren't enough. We need practical steps implemented by leaders who actively listen and respond to members. With decades of experience as a hands-on Mensa leader, I can make those aspirations realities.

In the past year alone, I've served as News Team Chair, significantly increasing the content on Workplace. Additionally, I've assisted the Gifted Youth Committee and helped advance the ExComm's business plan by coordinating with NMs to translate MI's practice test into multiple languages; reviewing current Name & Logo policies, clarifying nuances, and proposing updates; gathering and formatting past motions for easy, searchable access; and working with the ICO to update the website's design and organization. I'd like to continue and expand those projects.

It's time for us to advance. To do that, Mensa needs an experienced, responsive, creative, and organized Director of Administration, dedicated to improving the value of Mensa for all members.

Together we'll make Mensa flourish.

Visit [RobinCrawford.org](http://RobinCrawford.org).



## Biography

Since joining Mensa in 1989, I've been an active volunteer. Highlights of my service include:

### **Mensa International**

- News Team Chair: 2022 – present
- Name & Logo Committee: 2008 – 2014, 2023 – present
- Internet Policy Advisory Committee: 2010 – 2011

### **American Mensa**

- National Awards Committee: 2014 – present
- Strategic Planning Committee: 2021 – present
- Communications Officer: 2004 – 2011, 2021 – 2023
- Name & Logo Committee: 2004 – 2011, 2021 – 2023
- Task Forces on Governance, Services, Funding, and Value: 2010 – 2023
- Authored the 92-page Communications Guide: 2023
- Volunteerism Task Force: 2021 – 2022
- Ten other committees: 2004 – 2023

### **Chicago Area Mensa**

- Editor
- Local Secretary
- HalloweeM Co-Chair
- Proctor

### **Mensa Foundation**

- Exec. Editor of MRJ: 2012 – 2014
- Raised \$15,000 for scholarships

I was a teacher before raising twins (Mensans) and now live in the cornfields west of Chicago. Being “retired” allows plenty of leisure time for my varied volunteer roles and hobbies. See my full Mensa resume and learn more on [RobinCrawford.org](http://RobinCrawford.org).

## Answers to IBD questions

### **1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?**

**Communication**, including responsiveness to members, is the most important aspect of the Director of Administration's main responsibilities – tending to the publications, members' inquiries, volunteers, and International Office.

While “communication” sounds rather vague, it implies:

- Replying quickly to messages and requests with concrete and useful information.
- Initiating and participating in discussions with the leaders and general membership about topics and issues facing Mensa.
- Writing clear policies and procedures and then proactively educating leaders and members about changes and details.
- Maintaining a supportive and respectful relationship with staff.
- Creating content for publications and social media outlets.
- Finding and sharing ideas and solutions between national Mensas.
- Actively assisting committee leaders and encouraging the volunteers who make the day-to-day magic of Mensa happen.

**Leadership** is the second key aspect. With more than 20 years' experience leading committees and projects, I look forward to putting my knowledge to work for the betterment of Mensa International.

## **2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

I want to help others find the same value in Mensa that I have. After decades serving at the local and national levels, it's time to offer my skills and time to the international membership.

I am innovative, experienced, open-minded, responsive, dependable, organized, and able to commit significant time to this role. I understand that facts do not always support assumptions and perceptions and that a single, ethnocentric approach will not fit the needs and constraints of all Mensas.

As News Team Chair, I've actively shared the background tasks resulting in more than 150 Workplace articles and posts. As a board member, I've crafted countless motions and sweeping policies that were solid and flexible enough to have remained in effect for decades. As a teacher, I honed skills necessary to identify and organize the steps required to transform grand visions and goals into actions and results. Expanded answer on RobinCrawford.org.

## **3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

Mensa International needs to be seen as a benefit—a value-adding component of membership—not just a vague oversight entity that spends 7% of the members' dues.

Members join to find camaraderie and ways to use our intelligence to benefit others. Most find those experiences through their national Mensas. To support and supplement those experiences, Mensa International should provide services and procedures to meet the needs and desires of all members, with consideration of the cultural, governance, and economic differences between national Mensas.

In particular:

- Technology should be better leveraged.
- Testing opportunities should be expanded.
- MI's use of social media should be energized.
- Participation opportunities should be expanded.
- Volunteers should be identified, trained, supported, and celebrated.
- Funding should be supplemented by non-dues revenue.
- Spending should be equitable; all NMs should be provided with what they need to succeed, regardless of size. Expanded answer on RobinCrawford.org.

## **4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

### **Volunteerism**

- Revise the volunteer recruitment, selection, training, and review processes.
- Recognize more volunteers by revitalizing and possibly expanding the awards program.

### **Communication**

- Educate members about strategic plans, policies, and procedures.
- Decrease the number of e-mails "lost" by the current mailman system.
- Ensure that all members know about and have easy access to the many sources of Mensa International news and content.
- Continue creating content on Workplace.
- Facilitate sharing membership data and information from all national Mensas.
- Improve processes for cross-national access to NMs' websites, publications, and social media.
- Review MI's social media presence and strategy and identify ways to energize it.

### **Leadership**

- Promote sharing leadership opportunities and materials between national Mensas.
  - Host virtual events to facilitate live interaction between officers and volunteers.
  - Provide additional member benefits by leveraging digital tools more effectively and finding ways to quicken the glacial pace of getting things approved and implemented. Expanded list on RobinCrawford.org.
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## **Candidate for Director-Administration**

### **Kymberley Wilson**

### **Australian Mensa**

#### **Campaign Statement**

I am an outgoing, friendly person who enjoys the company and friendship available to Mensa members throughout the world.

Like many organisations, Mensa is being challenged by society to keep up with the sweeping changes in the way people connect and what they expect from an organisation. The DofA must be technically capable and have a track record of being able to deliver solutions.

We also live in a world where people call lawyers too easily and as an organisation we need to make sure our governance and systems are transparent and sturdy. The DofA must have a good grip on such matters.

Finally, our organisation is multi-cultural, diverse and varied in the skill and development of each National group. The DofA must be able to work effectively with people from all areas of the world.

I have the temperament, capabilities and experience to address these three challenges. My skills in IT, experience in governance and track record of getting things done means I can meet or exceed these expectations.

If I haven't already met you at a gathering or helped you with your mensa.org problems, please ask your chairman about my suitability for the role.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kymberleyfordofa>



#### **Biography**

I am a 71 year old Australian, divorced, with 3 adult children.

I have a PhD in Applied Mathematics and worked for Shell International and others as a Petroleum Engineer and software developer. I ran my own Computer consultancy for over 25 years before retiring. However, I still have a few software projects going including working on a new Website for Australian Mensa.

I have been a Mensa member continuously since 2002 and a volunteer for multiple positions since then, including:

**Australian Mensa:** Membership Secretary, Chairman, WA State Secretary, Webmaster, SIGHT Coordinator. I have organised several Annual Mensa Conferences.

**Mensa International:** IBD member, IVN committee, ITC Advisory Committee/Web Board, User support, Director for 2024 IBD in Perth.

I have also held volunteer roles in other organisation including hockey and golf clubs. Secretary, Chairman, Ladies president. I have represented my state in Hockey and Golf and Australia in Hockey.

## **Answers to IBD questions**

### **1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?**

The Director of Administration's duties are the oversight of the International Office, Publications, Direct International Members and volunteer committees and individuals.

The key to this role is to proactively seek ways to improve the day-to-day operation and provide rapid responses and enhanced functionality. If these jobs are done well, nobody notices, but if things go wrong it can have a big impact. The current and previous DofAs have done a great job in these behind-the-scenes areas and I intend to continue their work.

As part of ExComm, the DofA must proactively contribute to policy discussions, work co-operatively with the other directors and ensure the smooth running of meetings with agendas, minutes and other documents.

### **2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

During my term as Australian Chair, I put in place effective systems that take the organisation forward and set it up for future growth. I have overseen two migrations of our website, a change to our supervised test, introduction of on-line voting and made significant improvements in our governance, including development of ASIEs, numerous policies and a strategic plan. Membership has grown over 150% since I was elected.

At IBD meetings, I have made numerous presentations and been proactive in discussions. I have also been involved with Mensa International's IT systems as a member of the Web Board/ICT Advisory Committee and the user support team for the website.

I have attended many international gatherings and appreciate the diversity of our membership.

As the Director of Administration, I will continue to contribute to Mensa, where my experience and skill set can be used to move the organisation forward.

### **3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

Mensa is challenged as a global organisation that needs to move with the times. We must keep improving our online presence and exploit the global opportunities of technology, while competing with alternative platforms and social groups.

Internally, we need to consolidate and share our experience. Mensa is full of gifted people with a vast array of experience and expertise, doing useful things in their part of the world. Yet time and again, we see individual countries developing new policies, programs and systems from scratch, rather than building on that combined wisdom.

The Director of Administration can facilitate the exchange of both ideas, and more tangible aspects of building our organisation, between the different national Mensa groups. We also need to encourage

individual members in the development of leadership and other personal skills.

**4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

- An updating and improvement of communications between Mensa and the public and between Mensa organisations in different countries. In particular, this will involve improving our on-line presence and systems.
- An active contribution to the policies and decisions of ExComm and the IBD, and the promotion of harmony and cooperation within those bodies.
- Encouragement and assistance for newer and smaller Mensas to get their own systems and processes in place and up to date.
- Improve the transparency in Mensa International and ExComm by making our policies, procedures and decisions available to all members, in a way that is easy for them to access, understand and implement for themselves.
- Support the Executive Director and Director of Development in their efforts to expand Mensa into new countries.
- Develop and set in place a system for national Mensa teams to share ideas and function as a global network rather than in isolation.



## Candidate for Director-Development

**John Recht**

**American Mensa**

### Campaign Statement

Mensa has more than 150,000 members in over 90 countries. Mensa members in countries with no national Mensa are Direct International Members (DIMs), and it is these members who are the key for expanding Mensa International worldwide.

As the Director of Development, I plan to take Mensa International to a higher level by leveraging our assets in countries with no national Mensa. The web of contacts in national Mensas and among the DIMs will help us gain access to prospective members in new countries who will drive the growth that Mensa has long envisioned. I will lead these efforts through team building and effective communication, giving new Emerging Mensas the tools for development while preserving the values and ideals of Mensa.

A major challenge that has slowed Mensa's growth is the need for testing. I will encourage the use of online practice tests to promote interest in Mensa, and I will help implement solutions to testing problems as they arise, using established methods along with new online adaptive tests that could greatly enhance membership growth.

Working with other Mensa volunteers has been a joy, and I look forward to continuing to apply my skills to assure Mensa's growth and success.

### Biography

John Recht joined Mensa in 1977 and became a Life Member in 2001. Beginning in 1999, John served in numerous local, regional, and national offices in American Mensa. In eight years on the national board of directors, John chaired both the Leadership Development and Planning committees at various times.

For Mensa International, John has served as a National Representative to the IBD, as a member of the International Election Committee, and as Chair of the Mensa China Interim Board. John currently serves as Chair of the International Standards Committee, leading a team assigned to monitor all national Mensas for compliance with international requirements and to help them overcome obstacles to success.

John holds degrees in philosophy and public administration. His work included positions in international shipping and a wide range of roles in information technology, sales, customer service, and operations management, which have all helped John in his Mensa career.

### Answers to IBD questions

#### **1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?**

The Director of Development needs to have a deep understanding of the process that inspires and enables a willing group of volunteers to work together, to take on the various roles that are necessary for a



new Mensa group to succeed, and to do the tasks that are required. Having this understanding must be accompanied by a clear view of the needs and challenges that are present in each country considered for organization into a Mensa group.

In addition to effective team building, providing guidelines, and giving hands-on advice, achieving development success will require strong leadership, patience, a positive attitude, excellent communication practices, and a great capacity for listening to others while sharing constant encouragement and gratitude for the support of all volunteers who take part in development efforts, including the new group members, the Mensa International ExComm and IBD members, Mensa International staff, and volunteers from other national Mensas.

## **2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

In my decades of service as a Mensa volunteer I have focused on building the organization at every level from the local to the international, and I see the role of Director of Development as an unparalleled opportunity to put to work my knowledge, experience, and vision for strengthening and expanding Mensa, so that I may do the greatest good for our members.

I have successfully chaired committees dedicated to leadership development and strategic planning at the national level, and my responsibilities for Mensa International have given me a deep understanding of organizational structure and the problems and challenges that must be faced so that Mensa continues to grow and prosper. In particular, in three years as Chair of the International Standards Committee I have worked with leaders of national Mensas throughout the world to help them learn about their compliance issues and to give them the tools to succeed.

## **3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

Mensa is a brand recognized around the world and greatly admired. This is a valuable asset, and vigorous protection of this asset is a most important issue. Becoming a member of Mensa also has a significant value which Mensa International should promote, in order to facilitate growth and development.

At the same time, Mensa International must continue to support the membership by providing new global services for the benefit of all Mensans, by staying aware of the ways in which the world is changing, and by continually adapting to global shifts, especially by utilizing evolving technologies and by employing new methods for more efficient and effective communications. An expansion of online practice tests and the release of the adaptive testing project are also important for finding new members.

Finally, Mensa International needs to listen to what members want and to look after and celebrate the volunteers who make everything happen.

## **4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

The international election in 2024 will bring about substantial change, with several new officers. To begin my term, I will work with the new ExComm to develop the business plan that will guide Mensa International in the current year and beyond. This will involve carrying on with projects already underway that will provide benefits to Mensa, as well as incorporating strategic actions that will recognize global shifts impacting the needs and priorities of the membership.

In turn, these actions will guide the use of evolving technologies and result in more efficient and effective communications. To spur development, I will work with Direct International Members and volunteers from the national Mensas to set in motion the creation of new Emerging Mensas in South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. There are numerous countries with definite possibilities, and I would like to see six or more of them become EMs during my term.

# Candidate for Director-Development

**Eivind Olsen**

**Mensa Norway**

## Campaign Statement

I was elected as Director of Development during the summer of 2023, after the previous had resigned. Since then, I've been connecting with people, hearing which obstacles they face, and trying to help where I can.

Some obstacles have to do with communication. We have members in very different time zones and societies, using different languages. It doesn't help that for a while we have had an unreliable e-mail service that has often prevented e-mails from being delivered!

We have agreements with some national Mensas to help with testing in nearby areas, with plans for more. This lets us have development at a reasonable cost, and doesn't require us to send someone around the globe.

I have a solution for the main e-mail problems which I'm currently working on implementing. The new adaptive test we've been hearing about is getting closer now.

Every country has a unique situation, but have things in common. First, to get new members we must have the right people; we need to get word out to pique people's interest in testing and wanting to become members. Second, we must work to keep members by providing a fulfilling and fun environment with internal and external activities.

## Biography

I'm Eivind Olsen, a 47-year-old Norwegian working in IT.

When I'm home, I live with 1 fiancée, 0-4 offspring (depends on the week), and some cats going by the names Hodor, Pucifer, and Lille. I also have some boardgames – they are a great excuse to spend time with friends. Other hobbies include listening to lots of different music, movies, reading books, brewing beer, 3D-printing, and hiking. And spending time on Mensa, of course.

Communication is important. I speak several languages – a few (not all) of which can even be understood by native speakers as well!

I've been a Mensa member for 10 years now, and active since 2015 – initially by organising activities in my local group, before becoming chair of that group, national test coordinator, deputy in the national board, vice chair, and from the end of 2018 until July 2023 I was the chair of Mensa Norway.

## Answers to IBD questions

### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

The Director of Development is vital in helping us grow into new regions. To do this it is necessary to work together with the local members so that we may together do what we can to raise awareness of Mensa in the region, and to attract members. Help can come in many forms, depending on the situation. It could be by launching suggestions and ideas, moral support, financial backing, by ensuring the right people connect, or by making sure problems get fixed.



**2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

At the time I volunteered for this role in the summer of 2023, I was chair of Mensa Norway. We've had good growth every year for a while now, even during the pandemic. While it can be difficult to pinpoint exactly why that is, some possible factors can be: attracting new members while still working to keep existing members, having some activities online, and generally doing our best to create a nice, non-hostile environment where the members can feel at home.

During the relatively short time since I took over the role as Director of Development, I have learnt a lot about what works internationally – and what doesn't, and taken steps to improve matters.

**3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

The pandemic and global economic climate has led to a decline in willing volunteers in many countries. Some countries also have the experience that whatever worked well before might not have the same effect now. We need to get more people to see the shared benefits of being volunteers, and to see how we all can make an impact in different societies.

We will have a problem if the average age of members only rises. Sure, it's a sign that we must be doing something right when people decide to keep being members for several years, but we also need new members.

We need a solid foundation we can build on top of, and this sometimes means we must fix the annoying underlying problems.

**4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

During the coming term, I'd love to see how initiatives we've recently started will bear fruits.

Some existing initiatives must be completed to put us in a better position for future growth globally – one example being the adaptive test. With that test in place, we can easier provide testing in multiple countries.

I want to help us get DIMs where there is no local Mensa, help Emerging Mensas attain (and retain) Provisional National Mensa status, and help PNMs attain Full National Mensa status. How many of each? As many as possible, of course!

For the coming term, I'm hoping I'll be given the opportunity to help bring even more countries into the fold, and to build something my successor can make even better! We are standing on the shoulders of giants, and even though we may not be giants ourselves, every bit we do to improve things will help.

# Candidate for Director-Development

**Freddy Tönnesen**

**Mensa Sweden**

## Campaign Statement

As a candidate for the position of International Director-Development for Mensa International, I, Freddy Tönnesen, envision creating a global platform for Mensans to thrive in their professional endeavors. Inspired by the dream of establishing an international network akin to a worldwide job board, my focus is on fostering connections that go beyond organizational growth. I am committed to providing Mensa members with opportunities to collaborate, innovate, and excel in their respective fields on a global scale.



## Biography

Freddy Tönnesen, a Swedish engineer with a master's in Science (Engineering), is vying for the role of International Director-Development for Mensa International. Notably, I have been honored with the Kronan Scholarship for my outstanding thesis work. With a diverse professional background encompassing military systems maintenance and leadership in the food tech industry, I am poised to bring a unique skill set and perspective to this role.

## Answers to IBD questions

### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

The paramount aspect of the International Director-Development role lies in cultivating widespread relationships with organizations and companies. Establishing a broad network is crucial for Mensa International's growth in both membership and influence. Moreover, I am dedicated to creating a global platform that connects Mensans professionally, fostering collaboration and innovation.

### 2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?

I am volunteering for the International Director-Development position driven by a passion to elevate Mensa International's global presence. My experience in engineering, entrepreneurship, and leadership uniquely positions me to forge connections and drive organizational growth. Furthermore, my vision includes the creation of an international platform for Mensans to collaborate and excel in their professional pursuits.

### 3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?

The looming challenge for Mensa International is the potential misuse of AI in IQ testing, posing a threat to the organization's integrity. Vigilance in monitoring technological advancements,



especially in smart devices, is crucial to safeguarding the credibility of Mensa's testing processes. Simultaneously, I aim to address the need for an international platform that connects Mensans professionally, fostering a global community of collaboration and innovation.

**4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

During my term, I aspire to solidify Mensa International's relationships with organizations and companies globally. I aim to not only increase membership but also enhance our influence in the face of emerging challenges, such as the ethical use of AI in intelligence testing.

Additionally, I am dedicated to realizing the vision of a global platform for Mensans, providing opportunities for professional growth, collaboration, and innovation on an international scale. By leveraging the Mensa contact network, my goal is to fortify the organization's position on the international stage and empower members in their professional journeys.

## Candidate for Treasurer

**Jovana Kostic**

**Mensa Serbia**

### Campaign Statement



As a financial professional with a track record of success in multi-national retail industry, I am excited to apply for the position of International Treasurer at MIL. My role as Head of Finance Business Planning & Performance has equipped me with the skills and expertise required to excel in this role.

In these challenging times, the importance of responsible financial management cannot be overstated. Mensa International must not only navigate financial waters but also steer towards sustainability. I am committed to acting as the MIL CFO, ensuring accurate financial records, and meticulously preparing and submitting detailed annual budgets to IBD. I acknowledge the global financial pressure, which underscores the importance of making astute decisions to uphold Mensa's stability and continuity during these challenging times, including rising costs and declining purchasing power. I firmly believe in integrating ESG principles into our financials. By promoting responsible and sustainable practices, we can secure Mensa's financial future while contributing positively to society.

My experience in a dynamic corporate environment has honed my ability to manage complex financial systems, make data-driven decisions, and collaborate effectively with diverse teams. I am ready to bring this knowledge and dedication to MIL, fostering financial stability, sustainability, and continuity.

### Biography

I am Jovana Kostic, a finance professional with a strong background in multinational retail. Currently, I hold the position of Head of Finance Business Planning & Performance at a leading 1.3 billion eur company in Serbia, where I have developed expertise in financial management, strategic planning and performance optimization.

With over 15 years of experience in the finance sector, I have consistently delivered results and demonstrated my commitment to sound financial stewardship. My educational background includes a degree in finance and extensive training in financial analysis, business partnering and risk management. My passion for ESG drives my commitment to responsible financial practices.

Outside of work, I am an advocate for continuous learning and community involvement. I'm thrilled to bring my financial acumen and passion for growth to the role of International Treasurer at MIL where I aspire to contribute to the organization's financial sustainability and success on a global scale.

### Answers to IBD questions

#### **1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?**

The most critical aspect of the International Treasurer role at Mensa International is to ensure sound financial stewardship. This entails maintaining accurate financial records, developing and executing

budgets, and responsibly managing Mensa's financial resources. Equally important is promoting financial transparency, sustainability, and compliance with evolving financial regulations. Sound financial management underpins Mensa's ability to fulfill its mission effectively and adapt to changing global dynamics. Furthermore, it means being acutely aware of the economic environment and emerging trends, continuously asking relevant questions, and when necessary, making tough decisions to safeguard Mensa's financial stability and ensure its long-term viability.

**2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

I have volunteered for the role of International Treasurer because of my deep commitment to Mensa's core mission and values, which I consider of utmost importance. Mensa's mission, centered around the pursuit of knowledge and the celebration of intellectual excellence, resonates strongly with me. It emphasizes fostering a supportive community for individuals with high IQs, promoting diversity, and encouraging lifelong learning.

My experience as Head of Finance Business Planning & Performance in a multinational retail company equips me with the financial expertise necessary for this position. I am passionate about contributing to Mensa's financial stability while embracing challenges and innovation. My dedication to ESG principles aligns with Mensa's enduring legacy, ensuring continuity while addressing contemporary challenges. By serving as International Treasurer, I aim to uphold these cherished values and contribute to the mission that lies at the heart of Mensa International's existence.

**3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

MIL faces challenges that demand adaptability, member-centricity, financial prudence and strong commitment to D&I. Addressing these issues will ensure Mensa thrives and continues to fulfill its mission in the years to come.

As we progress further into the digital age, Mensa needs to harness technology to connect with members, organize events, and provide digital resources for intellectual stimulation. This adaptation ensures that Mensa remains relevant and accessible to diverse and tech-savvy audience.

Mensa's strength lies in its vibrant community of members. It is essential to foster active member engagement, encouraging participation in various activities and promoting networking opportunities. Creating a sense of belonging and value for all members is pivotal.

Ongoing economic uncertainties in the global financial landscape require diligent financial planning and prudent resource management. This includes not only maintaining current financial stability but also ensuring the long-term sustainability of MIL. Responsible budgeting and risk management are vital components.

**4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

During my term of office, I aim to enhance Mensa International's financial transparency, implement responsible and sustainable financial strategies, and strengthen our financial resilience. I also aspire to promote the integration of ESG principles into our financial decision-making process. By achieving these goals, I intend to ensure that Mensa International remains a thriving and impactful organization that continues to serve its members and society at large for years to come.

## Candidate for Treasurer

## Vicki Herd

### Australian Mensa

#### Campaign Statement



Mensa International has taken major leaps forward in its communication channels in the past 5 years. Mensa Workplace and other social media platforms are widely spreading the news of Mensa International developments, Mensa events, and details of many of its fascinating members. Some of Mensa International's initiatives-in-progress will be gamechangers when they are complete, especially adaptive IQ testing and the International Member Database (Oomi CRM system). Such rapid change requires strong financial leadership to ensure Mensa International's finances stay viable while funding developments which will enhance our membership experience.

I am running for the International Treasurer position because I am a qualified professional accountant with solid accounting, administrative and governance experience in diverse industries and not-for-profit organizations. Professional skills are essential for the International Treasurer role but so is knowledge and familiarity with how Mensa International operates and how individual members of the International Board of Directors (IBD) want to protect the interests of their national Mensas. I spent 5 years at the IBD table as President of Mensa Canada, a smaller national Mensa. I want to work with IBD members to ensure Mensa International fairly represents our global best interests. I will listen and work well with others.

#### Biography

A dual citizen of Australia and Canada, I earned the following qualifications:

Bachelor of Business in Accounting and Finance

Canadian Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) from 1989 to 2021

Australian Certified Practising Accountant (CPA)

Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Strategy and Planning

My successful professional career saw me rise to the position of Vice President of Finance and Administration. I worked for a variety of public, private and not-for-profit organizations with annual revenues up to USD \$2 billion.

Joining Mensa Canada in 1987, I held a variety of roles for Mensa Calgary including as Treasurer for over 20 years. On the national board of Mensa Canada, I served 2 years as Treasurer, then 5 years as President. I was Treasurer of the Mensa Education and Research Foundation from 2018 to 2023. I was also International Ombudsman for Mensa International from 2020 to 2023.

I proudly raised a neurodiverse Mensan son.

#### Answers to IBD questions

##### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

To me, the most important aspect of the International Treasurer role will be the vigilance required to maintain a strong financial position in this time of rising costs and interest rates, while financing the new and ongoing initiatives of Mensa International. The rising costs of travel are a major threat to budgeting for the annual International Board of Directors (IBD) meeting hosted by different national

Mensas. It could prove worthwhile to explore a corporate travel arrangement for Mensa International to reduce travel cost uncertainty.

Strong communication skills are an equally important aspect to share financial budgets and updates with all members. However, the International Treasurer also needs to build trust, rapport and good working relationships with IBD members and fellow Executive Committee members. Empathy is important.

Many initiatives included in Mensa International's budget take more years to complete than originally estimated. This time forecasting process needs to be tightened.

## **2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

I have volunteered for the role of International Treasurer because my qualifications, work experience and my Mensa resume make me eminently qualified for the role. An accounting degree, an MBA, and a professional accounting designation (CPA), plus more than 30 years in corporate management and executive roles prove I have the technical skills for the role.

However, I also bring more than 30 years of Mensa knowledge to the table. I have acted as Treasurer for Mensa Calgary (more than 20 years), Mensa Canada (2 years) and The Mensa Education and Research Foundation (5 years). I managed the budget for 7 major Mensa events and was involved in the sale and purchase of the office buildings housing American Mensa. I was also a member of the IBD for 5 years as President of Mensa Canada followed by 3 years as International Ombudsman. I know and understand Mensa International very well.

## **3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

The most important issues facing Mensa International (MI) are:

- Launching the International Member Database (Oomi CRM system) so that international Mensans can access the MI website and Workplace seamlessly without the current manual membership verification delays. It is important that all members can participate in our international community to share ideas and learn about the amazing global opportunities they are welcome to join.
- Adaptive IQ Testing – This universal Mensa entrance test has been a long time in coming but is currently in the norming phase. It will be a gamechanger in offering an online non-verbal test remotely supervised, or even automatically supervised, using anti-cheating software. This will propel some testing procedures into the 21st century and hopefully increase membership numbers.
- Trademark Unification – If MI owned the global trademark it would solve legal problems and open up licensing deals which could generate revenue from our brand.

## **4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

If elected as Treasurer I would like to establish mutual trust and respect and an effective working relationship with all members of the Executive Committee and International Board of Directors (IBD) members. I would strive to achieve this through strong communication and listening skills. I will be open to logical discourse and respect that the interests of smaller national Mensas may differ from those of large national Mensas and require compromise or unique financial solutions.

In my term of office, I would research MI's finances and associated contracts and liabilities in great detail looking to leverage anything that could serve to generate more revenue or decrease costs without negatively impacting services offered to members. Post-COVID inflationary pressures have increased travel costs which could possibly be ameliorated by entering into a corporate travel agreement to better control IBD travel costs, which I would investigate. Ensuring effective budget management is a priority.



