

IAMCR Ambassador Strategic Plan Template

1. Identification

Name and Surname:	Mandla J. Radebe
Country/Region:	South Africa
Affiliation:	University of Johannesburg
Position:	Associate Professor Centre Director
Years that this Strategic Plan Covers*:	2023 - 2025
Have you been an IAMCR Ambassador before?	No
Type of Ambassador that this Strategic Plan Covers:	IAMCR faculty ambassador

(*) Please specify the actual years (e.g. 2022-2024)

(**) Delete what is not appropriate

2. Motivation

Please briefly explain why you wish to become (or continue to be) an IAMCR Ambassador.

I am eager to serve as the IAMCR Ambassador for South Africa, driven by my passion for communication research and the potential to contribute to the vibrant IAMCR community. As an ambassador, I envision actively undertaking the key tasks as outlined in the activity plan, chiefly being profiling IAMCR to the outside world while communicating with its members. Essentially, I am motivated to serve as the IAMCR Ambassador, leveraging my skills, positions and dedication to advance IAMCR's mission, foster community engagement, and contribute meaningfully to the global discourse on communication research.

1. Activity plan

These are the eight ambassador tasks:

1. Communicating the existence of IAMCR to the outside world, and promoting its activities
2. Communicating with IAMCR members
3. Organising at least one regional/national IAMCR event per year
4. Actively contributing to IAMCR membership increase and retention
5. Connecting IAMCR to relevant regional/national associations
6. Collaborating with other ambassadors where possible
7. Reporting relevant information to IAMCR entities (EB, IC, C/TF/C, S/WG, ...)

8. Planning and reporting ambassador activities

Please describe the regional/national IAMCR events that you plan to organise on a yearly basis (Task 3), for the duration of your appointment as IAMCR ambassador. Mention the timeframe, possible themes and how the events will be financed.

- i. Organising a seminar/webinar on media freedom during conflicts in the digital age, inviting scholars to present and discuss the implications of media freedom amid escalating global conflicts (April-September 2024).
- ii. Facilitating book launches and discussions by IAMCR regional members (April-September 2024).
- iii. Hosting a seminar/webinar on the implications of artificial intelligence (AI) on communication, with scholars from the region as speakers and panelists (April-September 2025).
- iv. Coordinating book launches and discussions by IAMCR regional members (April-September 2025).
- v. Conducting a seminar/webinar on communication and decolonisation theories in the digital age, bringing together scholars and students to explore these critical issues (April-September 2026).

Funding: Seeking support from local and international funding opportunities, such as the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), South African Education Research Association (SAERA), National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and organisations like Google SA for partnerships and potential research opportunities arising from these engagements, with online seminars (webinars) being supported from my research account.

Please describe how you seek to contribute to IAMCR membership increase and retention (Task 4), for the duration of your appointment as IAMCR ambassador.

The outlined activities serve as a strategic foundation for sustaining IAMCR members' engagement throughout the year, extending well beyond the annual conference. To maximize the impact of these initiatives, comprehensive dissemination plans are in place. The outcomes of each event, including seminar/webinar insights, book launches, and discussions, will be actively shared through various channels such as social media platforms, university publications, and media outlets. This multifaceted approach to publicity aims to amplify the

reach of IAMCR's activities, ensuring that the broader academic community, as well as the general public, is aware of the valuable contributions and discussions facilitated by IAMCR members.

The proactive engagement and extensive publicity efforts are strategically designed to enhance the perceived value of IAMCR membership for existing members. By consistently showcasing the intellectual wealth generated within the IAMCR community, members will gain a deeper appreciation for the diverse knowledge exchange opportunities offered by their association. This, in turn, fosters a sense of belonging and professional development, reinforcing the benefits of IAMCR membership.

Simultaneously, the comprehensive dissemination strategy serves as a powerful tool for member recruitment. By actively promoting IAMCR activities through social media, university publications, and media collaborations, we create a compelling narrative that resonates with potential members. The visibility and impact of IAMCR's contributions to the field of communication research become evident, presenting a compelling case for professionals and scholars to join our dynamic community.

In essence, this strategic approach to engagement and publicity forms a symbiotic relationship between current IAMCR members and potential recruits. The ongoing initiatives provide a continual source of value for existing members, solidifying their commitment to IAMCR, while simultaneously attracting new members who are drawn to the vibrant intellectual community and impactful contributions made by IAMCR scholars.

Through the Center for Data and Digital Communication at the University of Johannesburg, which I oversee, we currently manage podcasts and have plans to introduce a YouTube channel in 2024. We are keenly positioned to leverage these platforms to significantly enhance engagement for IAMCR members.

Please describe how you will realize the remaining 6 Ambassador Tasks (1-2 & 5-8).

In addition to the aforementioned strategies, a comprehensive communication infrastructure will be established to further enhance engagement and collaboration within the region. This includes the creation of an email distribution list exclusively for IAMCR members in the region, offering a direct and efficient channel for disseminating information tailored to their specific interests and concerns. Simultaneously, a dedicated WhatsApp group will be formed, providing a real-time platform for interactive discussions, updates, and the exchange of ideas among regional members.

These communication platforms will serve as vital conduits for relaying pertinent information from national associations, such as SACCOM, directly to regional members. This ensures that members stay well-informed about local developments, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration within the region. The goal is to strengthen ties between IAMCR and its regional

affiliates, creating a seamless flow of information that enhances the overall connectivity and engagement of our community.

Moreover, the communication channels will serve as a two-way street, facilitating the sharing of insights and events from other IAMCR regions that could prove beneficial to members in our region. This reciprocal information exchange will be supplemented by the strategic invitation of ambassadors from other regions to participate in our local activities when their expertise aligns with our regional interests.

To ensure transparency and accountability, a robust reporting system will be implemented. Quarterly reports will be generated, providing regular updates on regional activities, achievements, and challenges (including pictures). These reports will be shared with IAMCR entities, contributing to the larger narrative of IAMCR's global impact. Additionally, an annual consolidated report will encapsulate the year's accomplishments, serving as a comprehensive overview for IAMCR and its relevant entities.

In essence, the establishment of dedicated communication platforms and reporting mechanisms is poised to not only streamline information flow within the region but also strengthen the ties between regional members and the broader IAMCR community. Through these initiatives, we aim to create a dynamic and interconnected network that amplifies the collective strength of IAMCR across the globe.