International Association of Business Communicators

IABC Fellow Designation Nomination Guide 2027 Class of Fellows

October 2026

Dear Nominator:

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

Completing the Readiness Assessment Questionnaire **before** you start the nomination process will help you identify your strengths. You may discover areas you want to develop before embarking on the Fellow nomination journey. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to leader_centre@iabc.com or me.

Best,



Brad Whitworth, SCMP, ABC, IABC Fellow
Chair, IABC Fellow Selection Committee
brad@bradwhitworth.com

FELLOWS CLASS OF 2027

Nomination Deadline

4 January 2027 | 11:59 p.m. CST

1. Key Dates 2026-2027

TIMELINE	
Fellows Class of 2027 open call commences	9 November 2026
Open call closes at 11:59 p.m. CST	4 January 2027
Submission review and scoring	December 2026 - January 2027
Finalist interviews	January – February 2027
IEB confirms 2026 Fellows slate	February – March 2027
Outreach to all nominators and nominees	March 2027
Announcement of the Fellows Class of 2026	March 2027
Fellow designation bestowed at Calgary World Conference	June 2027

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 approach to diversity, equity and inclusion (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. In addition, DE&I factors are also part of the review and evaluation process. In addition, DE&I factors are also part of the review and evaluation 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 strategic development of the IABC Fellows program.

The Nomination Process

3.1 Nominations

- Only IABC members may nominate other IABC members who meet the qualifications listed below.
- 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 may not nominate an individual or submit letters of support during their term on the committee.
- Members of the International Executive Board may not nominate an individual or submit letters of support during their IEB term.
- No individual acting as nominator or 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.

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 2026-2027 nominations, a past IEB chair must have completed her or his term before 1 July 2023.

3.4 Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

The Readiness Assessment Questionnaire (Appendix B) should be a first step in preparing a nomination. It can help a potential nominee determine if he or she meets the requirements of the Fellow Selection Committee. The questionnaire can also 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 completing 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.

Generative AI tools may be used to assist in preparing nomination materials, including for editing, organization, translation, clarity or other drafting support. If AI has been used to generate the nomination package, please disclose the extent to which it has been used. Nominators and nominees remain fully responsible for the accuracy, authenticity and integrity of all information submitted. AI must not be used to fabricate, embellish or misrepresent achievements, impact, experiences, endorsements or other evidence presented in the nomination.

The committee, in keeping with practice for nominations in other IABC committees, will not take into account information that is not included in the nomination package (e.g., personal knowledge of the nominee, reputation, etc.).

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 (upload as a PDF file) should speak to why the nominee exemplifies the Fellow designation. This document should also provide an overall view of the nominee and highlight the key areas of the five 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 five 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 five 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 provides additional guidance on content to include.

- **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.* (450-word max)

- **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 (other than IABC) they have been involved in. Equal weight should be given to all three components.* (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 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 l*eadership 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

You need to obtain three letters of support for the nomination from individuals who know the nominee well. Support letters can come from IABC members, however at least one of the letters must be from an individual who is not connected to IABC, but who is familiar with the nominee professionally. Nominator and supporters can only support ***one*** nominee per year.

The letter should focus on the supporter's personal experience with and knowledge of the nominee. It is not essential that a nomination cover letter or support letter address every item in the five sections as every individual is unique.

The nominator is responsible for receiving the three letters of support and uploading them into the nomination form (upload each as a PDF file) along with the contact information for the individual who provided the letter.

Letters may substantiate one or more of the five different qualification criteria listed in section 3.6.4 above. The three support letters along with the nomination cover letter should *collectively* touch on all five criteria. The letters should complement and expand on – and not merely repeat -- what has been included in the respective sections of the nomination.

3.6.7 Nominee Video

While written nomination materials provide extensive evidence of a nominee's accomplishments and impact, each nominee should record a two- to four-minute video as part of their nomination package. The video provides nominees with an opportunity to add a personal, reflective dimension to their nomination and allows the Selection Committee to hear directly from the nominee. Nominees can complete the recording in any environment in which they feel comfortable. Production quality, presentation style, accent, recording environment and

technical sophistication will not be evaluated. The video will be considered only insofar as its content provides additional insight relevant to the Fellow designation and established selection criteria.

All nominees are asked to answer the same self-reflective question:

"In thinking back on my communication career, I wish I had … "

Note: Completed videos should be uploaded in MP4, WMV, PPT, or MV4 formats up to a total of 2GB. NOTE: Please attach video or audio files as separate files – do not embed within PDF or PPT files.

3.6.7 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 assesses eligible nominations against 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: Based on the nominees' preliminary scores, the Fellow Selection Committee identifies a short list 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 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 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 and new Fellows are highly encouraged to attend.

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
- ☐ **Nomination content** (max. 450 words on each of the following areas):
    - Alignment with IABC's values and ethics
    - Impact on the profession
    - Career achievement
    - Contribution to the body of knowledge
    - Contribution to IABC
- ☐ **Three letters of support** that collectively discuss the five criteria listed below. Note that at least one letter MUST come from a non-IABC individual, i.e. someone outside the nominee's IABC network. An individual may only write one letter of support or nominate one nominee per year)
    - Alignment with IABC's values and ethics
    - Impact on the profession
    - Career achievement
    - Contribution to the body of knowledge
    - Contribution to IABC
- ☐ **Nominee video** of two- to four-minutes
- ☐ 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 three people who would be willing to write letters of support for you?

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. Supporters and nominators (if not self-nominating) may only support one nomination per year.

Your career

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

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)?

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 other professional organizations, resulting in tangible 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 visible, 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

- Have you served in local, regional and international leadership roles for IABC delivering tangible results?
- Would your nomination show substantial contributions at one or more levels of IABC, with appropriate impact?
- Do you have good examples of involvement and recognition?