

**ICA Public
Relations Division
Officers
2020-2021**

**Flora Hung-
Baesecke**

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Australia

Ansgar Zerfass

Vice-Chair
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Arunima Krishna

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Gabriel Sadi

International Liaison
Representative
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Grazia Murtarelli

Student and Early-
Career Representative
(SECR)
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<http://pr.icahdq.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/icaprdiv/>

https://twitter.com/ICA_PRD

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13522808>

Message from the Chair, Flora Hung-Baesecke

Tēnā koutou,

A very warm welcome to our old and new ICA Public Relations Division members! In this newsletter, you will find some important information about the planning for the upcoming ICA annual conference and other division activities.

Let me start with **the news on the ICA election results**.

Congratulations to Timothy Coombs (elected Vice Chair) and Alvin Zhou (elected Student and Early Career Representative). They both will start their service terms at the end of the 2021 ICA conference in Denver, USA. We look forward to more members from different parts of the world engaging in the Division's activities! Due to the nature of ICA 2020 we were unable to hold the Division's business meeting. Thus, the minutes for ICA 2019 were also on the ballot and were duly approved.

The voter turnout for the PR Division was 26%, whereas the ICA-wide voter turnout was 24%. This is the highest turnout in recent years. Our hearty thanks to members who voted. We also strongly encourage all of our members to vote to help shape the future of our division in future elections. Kudos to the division secretary, Arunima Krishna and the social media team, Grazia Murtarelli (Twitter) and Cindy Ngai (LinkedIn), for their great effort promoting the election and the candidates via the division listserv and social media platforms to encourage members to vote.

At the Board level, Noshir Contractor was elected President, our Division member, Elisia Cohen was elected Treasurer, Michael Kent was elected as a new Board Member-At-Large, and Christine Cook was elected as the Board Member-Student and Early Career Representative.

The full election results can be found here:

https://www.icahdq.org/page/Election2020_Results

For the ICA 2021 Annual Conference in Denver, USA, please let me remind you of the revised submission deadline (November 6th, at 12:00 noon EST) for submitting your papers, extended abstracts and panel proposals. Due to COVID-19, the conference will adopt the hybrid format. For more information, please check the Vice Chair report and the call for papers. Please be aware that the online submission site may get congested when the deadline is approaching. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that you submit your manuscripts/proposals as early as possible.

Our Division Vice Chair and ICA 2021 PRD Program Planner, Ansgar Zerfass, has done a great job preparing the conference and the Division's call for papers. Please read the section on Message from the Vice Chair to find more information on the paper submissions and pre/postconference information. If you still have questions on manuscript/proposal submissions, please contact him (zerfass@uni-leipzig.de).

In this newsletter, you will also find the reports from our International Liaison Representative, Gabriel Sadi, and Student and Early Career Representative (SECR), Grazia Murtarelli who will report on the Division's social media engagement. We also look forward to more members engaging with our division and the ICA.

Another support we need from our members is for our division's two major awards: the Robert Heath Top Paper Award Fund, and the Grunig and Grunig Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Award Fund. Donations can be as little as \$5 and can be made when you register for the conference in the new year. The Division would be grateful to see your support to reward outstanding research work.

We hope to establish a platform for sharing and supporting other public relations research activities. Therefore, in this newsletter, you can also find calls for papers from other public relations conferences.

In the next newsletter (to be issued in April, 2021), we also hope to broadcast news from our members. Therefore, if you have any updates, achievements, and new publications that you would like highlighted in the newsletter, please send the information to our division secretary, Arunima Krishna (arunimak@bu.edu).

Looking forward to seeing you all physically or virtually at the ICA 2021 Conference!

Ngā manaakitanga

Flora Hung-Baesecke
Chair, ICA Public Relations Division

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I. Report from the Chair

PR Division Membership and Budget

As of October 2020 we have 293 members, which makes us the 7th largest division of ICA among 32 divisions and interest groups. For 2021, we have a healthy surplus budget of \$13,513.09, plus some liabilities (open invoices).

In addition to our traditional PRD Reception, we will be able to provide travel grants to several students and scholars from countries designated as B-Tier and C-Tier to travel to Denver, USA. Scholars and students interested in receiving travel grants to attend the 2021 ICA conference should apply for grants via ICA's website

and also reach out to the PRD Chair once their papers have been accepted for presentation at the 2021 ICA conference. Preference will be given to students (and scholars) from countries designated as B-Tier or C-Tier whose papers ranked highest through the blind review process

The Grunig & Grunig Outstanding Dissertation Award

As we have more and more PhD students graduating each year, we are exploring the possibility of changing the dissertation award to be held from every two years to every year. Currently, we have a task force consisting of the following members: Lan Ni from University of Houston, Yi-Ru Regina Chen from Hong Kong Baptist University, and Soojin Kim from University of Technology Sydney.

The ICA Public Relations Division Book Award

In recent years, many members of the Division have published important books, further contributing to the theory development in public relations. To recognize these contributions, the Division now has established a committee to develop guidelines for the division's book award. The committee members include: Ted Zorn (Chair), from Massey University), Ralph Tench from Leeds Beckett University, and one more PRD member (to be confirmed soon). We will present the guidelines for this award during the business meeting at the 2021 conference.

II. Message from the Vice Chair

ICA 2021 Paper Submissions and Reviews

The ICA 2021 conference will be organized as a **hybrid conference with the choice of virtual or personal attendance in Denver, Colorado, USA, from May 17-21, 2021**. The new format makes it easy to submit papers now and decide later – based on the overall situation next spring – whether to attend online or in person. Please see <https://www.icahdq.org/page/ICA21FAQ> for the most relevant questions about registration, accomodation, presenting, etc.

Submissions (full papers, extended abstracts, and panel proposals) for the ICA 2021 annual conference can be submitted **until Friday November 6, 2020** at 12:00 noon EST (Eastern Standard Time). This is one week later than usual, but we strongly encourage you to submit by the end of October to avoid problems with an overcrowded submission system.

The **PR Divison's call for papers** is available at https://www.icahdq.org/mpage/PR_CFP. Please log in to <https://ica2021.abstractcentral.com> to submit your proposals. We will accept full papers as well as extended abstracts and panel proposals.

Don't forget to **register as a reviewer for the ICA Public Relations Division** at <https://ica2021.abstractcentral.com>. All faculty members are invited to serve in this role – we need your support to build a great program for this conference. **Even if**

you don't submit a paper to the conference please do register to be a reviewer. The review site will be open on November 13 and reviews need to be completed by November 27, 2019.

We will acknowledge the top reviewers at the ICA 2021 Division business meeting. The #1 top reviewer will receive a registration fee waiver.

ICA 2020 Social Events

Social events for next year's conference will be planned and announced after the review period.

ICA 2020 Pre- and Postconferences

Watch out for pre- and postconference announcements on the ICA website from early October onwards. We had no proposals from members of our division or proposals that asked for our division's support this time, probably due to the unclear situation next May. While the main ICA conference can be staged hybrid or virtual if necessary, the overall experience is that this will be tricky for satellite events who can't use the logistics provided by ICA headquarters.

III. Report from the International Liaison Representative

Last year, all ICA's divisions and interest groups elected International Liaisons (IL) representatives under the Membership and Internationalization Committee led by Shiv Ganesh. This was part of a very welcome and needed institutional effort to get the countries and regions usually under-represented in the association more involved in each of the groups and in the organization as a whole.

In this context, I started my two-year mandate as the PR Division's IL in late May, after the 2020 Virtual Conference. My view of the issue is that of an academic who has spent 16 years working in one of the least represented regions in our division, Latin America and the Caribbean, and who only moved to the UK higher education environment at the beginning of this year. In other words, I know first-hand the enormous difficulties of all kinds that academics face in regions under-represented in ICA.

Since I am naturally the first IL of our division, a formal strategy around internationalization has only recently begun and our division is currently discussing with ICA officers on different views on the topic of internationalization. Given this reality, to start my tenure I analyzed some statistics to have a whole picture of the representation percentage of each region. In May and June, I gathered data about the 2020 Conference attendees who presented their work in the PR Division: out of 177 colleagues from 16 countries, 54.23% were from North America (all of them from the US), 17.51% from Asia, 15.25% from Europe, 12.99 from Oceania, nobody from Latin America and Africa. In July, I analyzed the affiliations of all the current members of our division. The picture was very similar: out of 278 members as of July 2020, only 4 are in Latin America and the Caribbean and 3 in Africa. Similarly, many countries in Asia and Eastern Europe are under-represented or not represented at all.



Finally, in August and September, I sent a personalized email to all the PR Division members from these underrepresented regions to explore the possibility to speaking to them individually about this situation. These colleagues live and work in countries or regions usually located in Tiers B and C of the classification used by ICA (usually known as the Global South). I talked with some colleagues from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia, asking them their opinions about how the participation of academics from underrepresented regions could be enhanced in our division, considering economic, academic, or cultural aspects, with the idea of achieving a platform that is of real impact, benefit, and interest to academics from underrepresented regions.

With this data, I have started in October a round of discussions with the PR Division's officers to outline some options to enhance the participation of colleagues from vast regions in our division and, consequently, in the general field. I would like to share with you my initial assumptions on this general subject: 1) The main, not the only of course, responsibility lies with the Global North, given the greater availability of resources; and 2) The division and the PR field on a global scale loses a lot by not integrating in a more equal way the voices of colleagues from the Global South. This is not only an ethical imperative but a strategic necessity if the intellectual domain is to continue to grow!

Although this is a work in progress, I invite all colleagues who believe they can contribute to the further internationalization of the division to contact me at g.sadi@hud.ac.uk. I look forward to working together with all of you to achieve true inclusion, dialogue, and collaborative work at a (real) global level. Thank you in advance!

IV. Report from the SECR representative

ICA provides students and early career scholars with a huge opportunity to develop strong relationships with their peers and to grow up not only at a professional level. As the Students and Early Career Scholar Representative for PR Division Grazia Murtarelli calls her peers to action: to join the ICA PR division and exploit its relational opportunities.

The Student and Early Career Advisory Committee is planning and implementing diverse activities addressed to interact with ICA Student And Early Career Scholars. The SECAC Virtual Panel Discussion Forum and the SECAC Blue Sky Workshop have been confirmed for the next May 2021 Conference. Both events are addressed to provide young members with the opportunity to know each other, to become familiar with the work of their representatives and, above all, to share experiences and knowledge that could be helpful for supporting their academic growth.

For being updated about the topics of the next two events, I would like to encourage you in following and attending the [ICA Students and Early Career scholars Community](#) on Facebook and to follow [the ICA Student and Early Career Members Twitter account](#). We are continuously providing with updates about job opportunities, research collaborations chances and call for papers.

Additionally, a survey has been launched by SECAC addressed to understand SECR needs, expectations and thoughts. Results will be published in the upcoming November ICA Newsletter. I would like to invite you to contact me if you have any suggestions and needs concerning opportunities and activities addressed to students and early career scholars. You can also directly contact me by using my [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#) social media accounts or directly at grazia.murtarelli@iulm.it.

We would like to encourage you to actively participate in our social media community by the means of our three main channels: Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn group. Our social media accounts represent a virtual space where to grow our engaged community, stimulate the sharing of opinions and facilitate the exchange of useful information. Contents related to research and job opportunities, call for papers, conferences' news and updates are welcome. You can directly mention us and we share your updates or you can send us your content by using the direct message function. Thank you for your cooperation.

V. Announcements and Calls for Papers

Call for Grunig Awards Chair position announcement

The Public Relations Division invites applications for a new Chair of the Grunig and Grunig Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Awards. These awards honor James and Larissa Grunig (University of Maryland) by recognizing the most outstanding thesis and dissertation in public relations. Master's theses and doctoral dissertations must focus upon phenomena, issues and questions relevant to the study of public relations.

The chair's main duties are:

- Prepare the call for submissions every second year,
- Ensure the submissions meet the award-submission requirements,
- Identify appropriately qualified senior scholars and appoint them as submission reviewers,
- Coordinate the submission-review process,
- Notify winners, and
- Conduct follow-on activities (ordering awards, preparing final report, presenting awards, and facilitating chair transition, when applicable).

Only ICA PRD members can apply.

Interested parties should send 1) their curriculum vita, and 2) a short letter of motivation for the position addressed to ICA PRD Grunig Award Chair Selection Committee, to the Division Chair Flora Hung-Baesecke (flora.hung@gmail.com) and Vice Chair Ansgar Zerfass (zerfass@uni-leipzig.de), no later than November 15, 2020. The announcement will be made by 20 December 2020.

BLEDCOM 2021 CALL FOR PAPERS: Public Relations and Public Risk and Crisis Communication

BledCom is an annual gathering of scholars and practitioners in public relations and related disciplines to discuss contemporary communication and management problems. Organized annually since 1994, it is the oldest conference in our field that is not affiliated with a professional or academic association.

So far, eight books and nine special issues or sections of peer-reviewed journals have been published based on previous symposia (www.bledcom.com). We attribute this success to the hundreds of colleagues who have participated over these years and of course our sponsors. We thank you all for sustaining this boutique conference for a quarter of a century.

Conference Dates and Venue:

The 28th International Public Relations Research Symposium (BledCom) will be held on **July 2-3, 2021** in Rikli Balance Hotel, Lake Bled, Slovenia.

Conference Theme: Public Relations and Public Risk and Crisis Communication

Perhaps now more than ever, risk and crisis communication have been thrust into the limelight. Individuals, organizations, and nations have all become the sources as well as recipients of information intended to alter their behavior owing to Covid-19 and its debilitating impact on everyday life globally. Some nations have been lauded for their ability to manage the spread of the virus through effective communication whereas others have been targeted for performing poorly. National performance has certainly hinged on the ability of the leaders of these nations to communicate effectively about the pandemic.

Based on the innate relationship between communication and this pandemic, BledCom 2021 seeks to analyze questions such as:

- What has been the role of public relations in communicating and managing the risks posed by this virus and the crises arising from it?
- How has the public relations industry contributed to public understanding of the pandemic and its ramifications on individuals, organizations, and society?
- What are some examples of the positive contributions that public relations as a practice has made vis-à-vis this pandemic?
- What are some examples of lacunae in the way public relations as a practice has conducted itself vis-à-vis this pandemic?
- How has the body of knowledge of public relations (especially concepts and theories of risk and crisis communication) measured up in the communication vis-à-vis this pandemic?
- What lacunae in the public relations body of knowledge can one discern based on the communication experiences during this pandemic?
- What role have public relations associations played in showcasing the practice as a useful tool in this pandemic?
- Has the public relations industry leveraged on its expertise well enough during this pandemic to advance the reputation of the field as a contributor to social good?
- How have social media been used – especially by individuals – to communicate

during the pandemic including for such things as “overcoming” the constraints posed by ‘social distancing’ requirements?

- How have individuals, organizations, and governments coped with balancing privacy and social media tools?
- How have organizations, in particular, used tools of internal communication to effectively engage their internal publics?
- Are there discernible differences between different regions and cultures in the way communication has been leveraged during this pandemic? Case studies from individual nations and comparisons between nations are particularly interesting in this regard

Call for Abstracts and Panels:

We invite abstracts that are between 500 and 800 words (including title and keywords) with up to 5 references. Please note that as has been the norm in the past, BledCom welcomes ALL papers that are relevant to public relations and communication management and not just papers that discuss the conference theme. We also welcome panel proposals.

Please use the following guidelines to present your abstract and kindly supply the word count at the end of the submission.

Format for the Abstract:

Please note that the chances of your abstract being accepted are enhanced if you observe the following format in preparing it:

Introduction and purpose of the study (and research question if there is one) – helps summarize the purpose and rationale of your study. Literature review – Helps place your work in context with the existing body of knowledge. Methodology – Define the main method used for gathering data including sample size, and state the rationale for using this method. Results and conclusions – Helps summarize the answers to the research questions while also outlining the implications of the results. Also summarize the limitations of the study and offer suggestions for future research. Practical and social implications – Offer the potential implications both for practice and society. Also provide us with 3 to 5 keywords that highlight your study. Abstracts should come as blind copies without author names and affiliations, who are to be identified on a separate cover page. Please use the suggested headings to structure the abstract. A list of literature is not necessary, but if it is provided it is included into the word count.

Panel proposals are also welcome. The proposal should describe the title and focus of the panel, name of the chair of the panel, and names of every member of the panel and title or focus of each presentation.

Deadline:

Paper abstracts and panel proposals should be submitted via email to bledcom@fdv.uni-lj.si no later than **February 1, 2021**. Decisions will be made by

March 4, 2021 after peer review. Full papers not exceeding 6,000 words will be due by September 16, 2021. The organizing committee plans an edited book on the conference theme to be published by Routledge in 2022. A separate publication of the conference proceedings will feature the remaining papers.

Program Committee:

- **Dejan Verčič**, University of Ljubljana and Herman & partners, Slovenia
- **Krishnamurthy Sriramesh**, University of Colorado Boulder, USA
- **Ana Tkalac Verčič**, University of Zagreb, Croatia

IPRRC CALL FOR PAPERS

International Public Relations Research Conference, 2021

You are cordially invited to submit competitive abstracts for paper presentations at the 24th International Public Relations Research Conference (IPRRC), to be held March 4-6, 2021 as a virtual conference. This year's theme focuses on "Contributing at the top and throughout an organization: Research and Strategies that advance our understanding of public relations."

This conference is distinctly different from other conferences in that initial paper acceptance is based on a one-page abstract submitted for competitive consideration. Abstracts can include either completed research or research in-progress. Programming preference will be given to completed research. To complete the abstract submission, please follow the instructions below:

(1) Step 1: Email your abstract to iprrc.org@gmail.com as a two-page attachment in Microsoft Word file. Use the first page as your title page and include the following: author names and affiliations, corresponding author email addresses, submission category (General or Student), and a short version of your abstract in less than 50 words. On the second page, provide a blinded copy of your paper title and the complete, full-length one-page abstract. The abstract should be single-spaced, using 12-pt Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins all around on letter size (8.5 x 11 in) paper. In the email subject line, please enter: [Submission] last names of all authors. Please see [this example template](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CjeUKXQF0OkUUqQJZhcCvBDIYHqKfU7o/view?usp=sharing) (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CjeUKXQF0OkUUqQJZhcCvBDIYHqKfU7o/view?usp=sharing>).

(2) Step 2: Please complete the [Abstract/Author\(s\) Information Form](#) to provide your author(s) and abstract information immediately after your submission email. If the hyperlink does not work, you may paste the following URL to your browser: <https://forms.gle/sejwJGnWsoQHJB999>.

(3) BOTH steps (1) and (2) need to be completed by the deadline (Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 11:59pm Eastern Time) for the submission to be considered as complete. Not following the procedure will result in disqualification of your abstract submission.

Given the increasing number of papers submitted for consideration each year, each author is restricted to no more than two abstract submissions regardless of

authorship. Use separate Abstract/Author(s) Information Form entries for each abstract submitted. The blinded abstract will then be reviewed by three members from the IPRRC board of directors and advisory committee.

Acceptance notification will be sent to the corresponding author(s) that you have indicated in the Abstract/Author(s) Information Form by Monday, December 28. Authors of accepted abstracts will then be invited to compete for awards by submitting full papers by Friday, January 29, 2021. Separate instructions of award submission and presentation guidelines will be provided along with acceptance notification.

For more information regarding registration (note: information on registration rates will be announced soon) and previous years' proceedings, please visit: <http://iprrc.org/>. For the latest updates, please also visit and "Like" us on Facebook via: <https://www.facebook.com/IPRRC>. You can also follow us on Twitter and Instagram @IPRRC. For further questions, please contact Conference Directors Dr. Bora Yook, Fairfield University, and Dr. Zifei Fay Chen, University of San Francisco, at: iprrc.org@gmail.com.

IMPORTANT DATES (all based on Eastern Time):

- December 1, 2020: Abstract Submission Due
- December 28, 2020: Acceptance Notification (sent to corresponding authors via email)
- January 29, 2021: Paper Competition Submission Due (accepted, full/completed papers only)