1. Welcome and Introduction of Officers

Meeting called to order by ICA PRD Chair Ansgar Zerfass at 4:30pm.

Minutes from the 2022 business meeting (published online): no questions or objections, thus approved.

The PRD officers were introduced:
- Chair: Ansgar Zerfass (Leipzig University, Germany)
- Vice Chair: W. Timothy Coombs (Centre for Crisis and Risk Communication, USA)
- Secretary: Lisa Tam (Queensland University of Technology, Australia, absent)
- Student and Early Career Representative (SECR): Alvin Zhou (University of Minnesota, USA)
- Internationalization Liaison: Claudia Labarca (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile)

New officers were introduced; they will start their term after this conference:
- Vice Chair: Erich Sommerfeldt (University of Minnesota, USA)
- Student and Early Career Representative (SECR): Julia Stranzl (University of Vienna, Austria)

2. Announcements from the ICA Board Meeting

2.1. Elisia Cohen, ICA Executive Committee Board Member

The next conference will be held in Gold Coast (74th ICA Conference, Australia, June 20-24, 2024, one month later than the usual conference time but with the same paper submission deadline) with the theme of “Communication and Global Human Rights.”

2.2. Ansgar Zerfass, ICA PRD Chair

ICA membership is stable with 5125 members as of April 2023. The finance is healthy with an annual budget of US$2.6 million and overall assets of US$9.9 million. A new task force will examine Country/Tier categorization for membership and conference fees, considering how world politics and economic situations (e.g., inflation) have changed in the past few years. This initiative was proposed by our divisions’ international liaison.

Research escalator session, a session format that is granted as an additional slot this year, has not been used by ICA PRD this year. The session format will be a normal slot next year. Interdivisional sessions (jointly organized by 3 divisions) will get extra slots and need to be considered by the division.

We congratulate a new ICA fellow from our division: W. Timothy Coombs.

Next few conferences: Denver (USA, 2025), and Chicago (USA, 2027). The 2026 conference location is still under negotiation in either Latin America or Europe. For 2028, nothing is determined. ICA also has three upcoming regional conferences: Cape Town, South Africa, 11/2023; Warsaw, Poland, 3/2024; Dijon, France, 5/2024.

3. Division Reports
3.1. Report from the Chair, Ansgar Zerfass

PRD has 342 members as of May 28, 2023, and is among the top 7 of the 32 divisions and interest groups at ICA. The membership number is up from 277 in Spring 2021, but still down by 20% since spring 2022.

The initiatives and achievements of the ICA PRD in the past two years include:

- Communication policy of the division streamlined.
- All award guidelines approved, committees installed, and new processes started.
- Strong slate of candidate nominations for officer roles.
- Solid financial budget with sponsorships acquired by Chair.
- Successful initiatives to enhance inclusiveness.
- New virtual format for PhD seminar established.
- Number of ICA Fellows from the PR Division doubled.
- Supporting the Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE) with two ICA PRD representatives: LaShonda Eaddy, Penn State University, & Gabriel Sadi → Gabriel joined the new International Committee.

Division budget is healthy with US$ 22,533 as of December 31, 2022, which ranks among the four highest among all ICA divisions and interest groups. It is up from US$17,035 in 2022 and US$12,963 in 2021.

The US$10,000 fund for Heath Award Endowment has been installed by ICA after a strong final push by Michael Palenchar, Katerina Tsetsura, Flora Hung-Baesecke, and others in summer 2021. The division is grateful for their help. However, the value is volatile due to market conditions. It has dropped to US$8,840 in May 2023. The available cash based on the interest right now is only US$45. The situation needs to be evaluated in the next months (prize money will be covered by the normal budget until then).

We thank our sponsors: Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations (Director: Karla K. Gower) for sponsoring the Top Student Paper Awards; International Journal of Strategic Communication (Routledge / Taylor & Francis; Editors: Ansgar Zerfass & Kelly P. Werder) for sponsoring the ICA PRD Reception & Activities.

3.2. Report from the SECR, Alvin Zhou

The 2023 ICA PRD PhD Student Workshop concluded on May 12, 2023, with five PhD students from Ghana, Netherlands, Thailand, United Kingdom, and the United States matched with these senior scholars: Urša Golob, Øyvind Ihlen, Dean Kruckeberg, Brooke Liu, and Matthew Seeger. Jens Seiffert-Brockmann and Kelly P. Werder presented keynotes on academia, job search, and publication strategies. The ICA PRD is grateful for their help in nurturing the next generation of public relations and strategic communication scholars.

The virtual format has proven to be successful and inclusive. The format will carry on, with the next call available in late 2023.

3.3. Report from the Internationalization Liaison, Claudia Labarca

There is a proposal to ICA to review the tier classification for membership and conference fees. The international liaison also had several meetings with ILs from other divisions.

A successful trilingual (English, Spanish, and Portuguese) ICA preconference was organized on
May 25, 2023, at Toronto Metropolitan University: “Organizational Communication and Public Relation’s Dis/encounters: A Dialogue from Latin America.” It is the first time a Latin American group was able to coordinate a public relations pre-conference. The pre-conference featured approximately 30 participants and 22 presentations from all around Latin America, e.g., Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Perú, etc.

3.4. Report from the Vice Chair: W. Timothy Coombs

For the 2023 ICA conference, there were 15 paper sessions + 1 discussion panel + poster presentations allocated. The conference papers feature a variety of topics with a strong focus on crisis, CSR, activism, ethics, and internal communication.

- 158 papers and extended abstracts and 4 panels were submitted, compared to 195 in 2022.
- 56 out of 95 full papers accepted.
- 10 out of 59 extended abstracts accepted.
- 1 out of 4 panel proposals accepted.
- 42.4% acceptance rate overall (44.8 % in 2022).
- 160 reviewers involved. The ICA PRD thanks reviewers for their services.

4. Award Recognitions

4.1. Top Faculty Paper Awards 2023

- Jens Seiffert-Brockmann, WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria; Sabine A. Einwiller, University of Vienna, Austria; Lina Stürmer, University of Vienna, Austria; Uta Russmann, University of Innsbruck, Austria; & Gisela Reiter, FH Wien – Vienna University of Applied Sciences, Austria

Role-Conflicts in Communication Practice in Times of Blurring Boundaries Between Public Relations, Advertising and Journalism

Leah Li, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia; Kim A. Johnston, Queensland University of Technology Brisbane, Australia; & Juan Feng, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

The Authenticity of Place: The Contribution of Engaged Virtual Brand Communities to National Branding

Grace Ji, Chris Chao Su, Arunima Krishna, Jiacheng Huang, James Cummings, Rosalynn A. Vasquez & Michelle A. Amazeen, Boston University, Boston, MA, USA

Building Cross-Sector Alliances During COVID-19: A Network Approach

4.2. Top Student Paper Awards 2023

- Rongting Niu, Xiamen University, Xiamen, Fujian, China

Warranted Inferences of Mediation and Evidence of a Threshold Effect: Applying an Experimental-Causal-Chain Design to Examine the Mediating Effects of Anger in SCCT

Truls Strand Offerdal, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

A Limit to How Much You Can Plan: Planned and Improvised Strategic Communication During COVID-19
**Xin Ma & Shilin Xia**, University of Maryland at College Park, USA

*Building Community Resilience and Calling for Collective Actions: How Organizations and Publics Communicate Disaster Aid on Weibo*

### 4.3. Top Reviewer Award 2023

**Jens Seiffert-Brockmann**, WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria

### 4.4. James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Awards 2023

Report by Yi-Ru Regina Chen (Hong Kong Baptist University), Committee Chair:

- Two annual awards, including a thesis award and a dissertation award.
- 14 submissions overall (12 dissertations + 2 theses), comparable to the last edition (23 + 4 entries for a two-year cycle)
- Regional split: 9 entries from the United States, 3 from Australia, 1 from Europe, and 1 from Hong Kong SAR
- Two rounds of blind judging
- Decided to roll over the two theses to next year’s competition
- Gratitude to all committee members:
  - Yi-Ru Regina Chen (Chair), Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong SAR
  - Bruce Berger, University of Alabama, USA
  - Sabine Einwiller, University of Vienna, Austria
  - Michael Etter, King’s College, London, UK
  - Christian P. Hoffmann, Leipzig University, Germany
  - Michael L. Kent, University of New South Wales, Australia
  - Brooke Fisher Liu, University of Maryland, USA

Winner of the Dissertation Award: **Solyee Kim**, University of Georgia, USA

Advisor: María E. Len-Ríos, University of Minnesota, USA

Dissertation: *DEI Sensemaking and Social Identity Signaling in Public Relations: Recruitment of Practitioners With Marginalized Racial and Ethnic Identities and Queer Identities Through DEI Cues*

### 4.5. Robert Heath Award for Impactful and Innovative Public Relations Research 2023

Report by Chun-Ju Flora Hung-Baesecke (University of Technology Sydney), Committee Chair:

- Awarded every second year.
- First assessment (impact):
  - 15 articles nominated by major public relations journal editors (JPRR, PRR, IJSC, JCOM, CCIJ – no nominations received from PRI) plus 3 articles in other journals nominated by ICA PRD members via an online form. In total, a shortlist of 18 articles published during the last 5 years.
- Second assessment (innovativeness):
  - Two rounds of reviews by all committee members
  - With one unanimous winner
- Gratitude to all committee members:
  - Chun-Ju Flora Hung-Baesecke (Chair), University of Technology Sydney, Australia
  - Lee Edwards, London School of Economics, United Kingdom
  - Yi-Hui Christine Huang, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, SAR
Winner: Peter Winkler, University of Salzburg, Austria; Jannik Kretschmer, University of Salzburg, Austria; & Michael Etter, King’s College, London, UK

Article: Between tragedy, romance, comedy and satire: Narratives of axiological progress in public relations

Published in: Journal of Communication Management, 25(4), 353–367

5. New Business

5.1. Call for nominations: ICA PRD Secretary & ICA PRD International Liaison (2024–2026)

The ICA Public Relations Division is seeking 2–3 candidates for the following roles:

Secretary (2024–2026)

● Term: May 2024 - May 2026
● Will become part of the Division’s leadership team after the 2024 Gold Coast conference.
● Will be responsible for the Division’s communication activities (editor in chief for the website, monthly email newsletters, Facebook page, etc.). Acts as recording secretary at annual business meetings, prepares and distributes minutes of business meetings to members, keeps record of decisions etc.
● Profile: Candidates should be active members of the division with capacities and resources to fulfill the roles and attend the conferences 2024, 2025, and 2026. Might be attractive for assistant or associate professors.

International Liaison (2024–2026)

● Term: May 2024 - May 2026
● Will become part of the Division’s leadership team after the 2024 Gold Coast conference.
● Will gather opinions and feedback from members of the division, especially new members from less represented cultures and convey them to the division leadership team or other relevant bodies ICA; assist in the planning of ICA annual conferences, helping the chair and vice-chair to pay attention to participants from ethnic-minority communities and the developing world who may need extra help; participate in and facilitate other ICA internationalization activities; take initiatives to suggest new ideas for improving ICA’s overall internationalization endeavors, etc.
● Profile: Candidates should be active ICA members and (if possible) be able to attend the ICA conferences 2024, 2025, and 2026. Preference will be given to candidates from Tier-B and Tier-C countries or to candidates with a personal background in such a country.

Nomination and Election Processes for Both Roles

● Self-nominations from active members or nominations by members for a third person should be sent to Tim Coombs and Erich Sommerfeldt until July 9, 2023.
● When submitting nominations, please make sure to copy the nominated candidate and confirm that nomination consent was sought prior to the nomination.
● According to the ICA guidelines, “an ideal ballot will have 2–3 candidates per role.” The
officers need to make a pre-selection if more than three nominations are received for one role.

- According to the ICA’s guidance to divisions, the candidates and the leadership team should reflect the diversity of the membership, e.g., regarding nationality, regional identification, gender, and ethnicity. See our division’s Spring 2023 PDF newsletter for details on eligibility. The continuing members of the current leadership team after 2024 are W. Timothy Coombs (USA, North America), Erich Sommerfeldt (USA, North America) and Julia Stranzl (Austria, Europe).
- Elections will be conducted virtually in September/October 2023.

5.2. Amendment of the Heath Award Guidelines

Background

- The award was repositioned after a longer debate among former jurors in 2021; the current guidelines developed by a committee of senior members of the division have been approved by the membership in the autumn 2021 voting.
- Based on experiences made during the first competition in 2022/23, some modifications are proposed by the committee chair.
- The proposals listed below shall be discussed today; a formal proposal has to be submitted thereafter until mid-July 2023 to ICA for potential approval in the next online voting.

Proposal #1 (Discussed after Proposal #2, by Flora Hung-Baesecke)

The “Assessment” section shall be amended by adding the sentence marked in yellow (p. 2):

“First, the Chair of the Heath Award Committee will initiate the process in the summer preceding the award presentation by inviting the editors of the key journals in the field (Annex 1) to nominate the three most impactful and innovative articles published in their journal within the five previous years using an online form. Every editor shall provide the number of citations to date listed by Google Scholar and a PDF version of those three articles. Each of the editors also has the discretion to nominate, among the three articles, one article they considered qualified to enter this award, regardless of the citation number of the article.”

Rationale: The guideline mentions “the winning article will be selected in a two-stage process based on a) impact, as shown by the citations reached, and b) innovativeness, as judged upon by an internationally diverse Heath Award Committee” (p. 1). However, two editors have expressed that the number of citations, though a quick identification of nominated articles, sometimes does not really reflect the quality and the impact of an article.

On the floor, Erich Sommerfeldt raised the point to remove “the impact” part from the prize guidelines altogether; Claudia Labarca raised the case that papers from regions other than the United States usually received less citations; Katerina Tsetsura supported Erich Sommerfeldt and Claudia Labarca’s point.

The proposal will be further discussed with the division officers and the editors after the business meeting by the officers and the committee chair.

Proposal #2 (Discussed before Proposal #1, by Flora Hung-Baesecke)

The “Assessment” section of the guideline currently reads (p. 3):

“… Third, the shortlisted articles will be distributed to all committee members along with the appraisals, but without the scores. All committee members will vote on all shortlisted articles once
This sentence shall be changed to:

“Third, the shortlisted articles will be distributed to all committee members without the appraisals and the scores. All committee members will vote on all shortlisted articles once again.”

Rationale: This procedure refers to the second round of the reviews when the committee members review the shortlisted articles and vote for the winner. During this review process, a couple of committee members mentioned that they preferred not to read the comments from the first round and wanted to have their own independent evaluations on the shortlisted articles.

No comments from the floor regarding this proposal.

6. **Announcements**


Aimei Yang: Announcing a Call for Paper for a Special Issue in *Public Relations Review* on Passionate Publics.

Yang Alice Cheng: Announcing a Call for Paper for a Special Issue in *Public Relations Review* on Artificial Intelligence in Public Relations.

Juan-Carlos Molleda: University of Oregon is hiring multiple (~5) positions this upcoming year and welcomes job applicants.

Juan Meng: University of Georgia is hiring 2 positions this upcoming year and welcomes job applicants.

Yi-Ru Regina Chen: Hong Kong Baptist University is hiring 1 position this upcoming year and welcomes job applicants.

Alvin Zhou: Announcing a Call for Paper for a Special Issue in *Journal of Advertising* on Computational Advertising.

Arunima Krishna: The Department of Advertising and Public Relations at Boston University is looking for the head of the department.

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Adjournment: Meeting adjourned 5:55pm with ICA OrgComm & PR reception at 6PM