



International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorders (IALP)

PRESIDENT'S LETTER December 2023

Dear IALP Individual Members, Colleagues of the Affiliated Societies and Friends of IALP—

I hope this communication finds you well and are preparing for the upcoming holiday season and New Year.

The IALP Executive Committee (EC), Board, and many IALP members have been busy since my last communication. Below please find some of the major activities and initiatives undertaken or forthcoming for 2024.

NEW IALP WEBSITE

I am pleased to announce that the new IALP website (<https://ialp-org.com>) will be launched on January 1, 2024!

This endeavour has been undertaken by many over many months and under the leadership of Wiebke Scharff Rethfeldt (DE), Vice President for Communication. Please know that the website remains a 'work in progress' and continues to evolve with more content and features being uploaded over the coming months.

We look forward to your feedback and ask that you direct all feedback on the new website to Vanessa Ebejer, Chief Executive Officer at: ceo@ialp-org.com

2023 IALP WORLD CONGRESS, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

IALP and the New Zealand Organizing committee were delighted to welcome 1,024 delegates from 54 countries around the world to Auckland, New Zealand for the 32nd World Congress of IALP and the start of the celebration of IALP's 100th anniversary period/Centennial. Congress delegates were warmly welcomed to Aotearoa, New Zealand by the local iwi (indigenous tribe) of the land, Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei and the honorable Marama Davidson (Member of Parliament) in the Opening Ceremony. The invited keynote speakers, [Prof Gail Gillon \(NZ\)](#), [Prof Georgia Malandraki \(US\)](#), [Prof De Wet Swanepoel \(ZA\)](#) and the WHO representative, [Antony Duttine](#) presented very engaging and thought-provoking presentations. The scientific program was complemented with an equally exciting social program with various half-day excursions and a memorable Gala Dinner.

IALP STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2028)

At the outset of my term as President, it was important that IALP develops a strategic plan which could pave the way for our future over the next number years. As a result, the EC and Board engaged in a number of months of work in collaboration with a strategic planning consultant to address the current status of IALP and its future. I am pleased to report that an IALP Strategic Plan was recently approved by the Board in September 2023. At a macro-level, the Plan contains the following Four Core Strategies:

STRATEGY 1: RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION

Facilitate implementation and evidence-based practice by fostering and disseminating research and data that advances the science and practice in the field of communication sciences and disorders.

STRATEGY 2: NETWORKING AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Support knowledge sharing and skill development by providing networking and educational programming among multidisciplinary professionals working in the field of communication sciences and disorders.

STRATEGY 3: ADVOCATE AND PARTNER

Increase access to and quality of services in the field of communication sciences and disorders through awareness raising, influencing, and partnerships.

STRATEGY 4: GROW AND SUSTAIN

Grow and sustain a vibrant and effective professional association that upholds the highest standards of governance and integrity in all that we do.

In turn, each of these strategies contains a set of four (4) Priority Action Items to be implemented to track the progress of the objectives over a 5-year period by committee chairs and their respective members along with our large-, medium-, and small-sized affiliated society representatives on the Board. Meetings are currently underway with each of these stakeholder groups to discuss implementation of the Action Agenda. I am confident that the

implementation of this strategic plan will result in extremely positive outcomes for IALP over the next number of years.

The entire Strategic Plan will be posted on the new website in early-2024.

IALP VALUES STATEMENT WORKING GROUP

As part of the deliberative strategic planning process referenced above, a detailed set of terms were developed by the Board which reflected on the core values of IALP. The Working Group will meet in January to develop a final IALP Values Statement which will be embedded in the new Strategic Plan and subsequently shared with you. The development of the Values Statement will represent the final step in the strategic planning process which has been an enriching activity for all. The members of the Working Group are Tamer About Elsaad (EG), Fernanda Dreux (BR), Mershen Pillay (ZA), Thomas Law (HK) and Debbie Phyland (AU). My personal thanks to each of them for their willingness to serve.

MENTORING PROGRAMS

Transforming Faces (TF). The third year (2023-2024) of the TF Mentoring Program began in October 2023. The program, which is being coordinated by the Cleft Palate Committee under the leadership of Valerie J. Pereira (HK), has 22 mentors and 22 mentees from India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Fiji, Bolivia and Mexico. IALP offered the mentees one full year of Individual Membership.

Tavistock Trust for Aphasia (TTA). TTA has agreed to continue funding another cycle of the IALP Aphasia mentoring program. TTA is facilitated and coordinated by the IALP Aphasia Committee through its committee members Abena Asiedua Owusu Antwi (GH) and Roxele Ribeiro Lima (BR) under the leadership of the Committee Chair, Marian Brady (UK). The second cohort of the TTA program will consist of 10 mentors and 10 mentees and is expected to begin in February 2024. It is currently recruiting mentors. If you are interested in serving as a mentor on the IALP Aphasia mentoring program, please send your CV by email to Vanessa Ebejer – ceo@ialp-org.com by not later than 15 January 2024.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

IALP continues to be active as a Non-State Actor in Official Relations with the WHO.

1. IALP is represented on the WHO on the Management of Post Covid (Long Covid) working group. This international forum developed and continually updates guidance related to this condition. The *WHO COVID-19 Clinical Management: Living Guidance documents* published in August 2023 contains the most up-to-date recommendations for the clinical management of people with COVID-19. The latest version of this living guideline is available in pdf format (via the 'Download' button) and via an online platform, and is updated regularly as new

evidence emerges. This updated (5th) version contains 16 new recommendations for the rehabilitation of adults with post COVID-19 condition:

<https://www.who.int/teams/health-care-readiness/post-covid-19-condition>

This group meets regularly to hear Post Covid (Long Covid) research presentations and discuss issues related to new knowledge which may inform changes to guidance.

2. IALP has contributed to the development and dissemination of WHO's *Rehabilitation 2030* initiative: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/rehabilitation-2030> and rehabilitation competency framework.
3. Since August 2023, IALP was represented at the:
 - ✓ 74th session of the World Health Organization Regional Committee for the Western Pacific October 2023 – Sharynne Mcleod (AU) and Ferdeliza Garcia (PH) presented 2 statements on behalf of IALP.
 - ✓ Strategic planning meeting of World Health Organization collaborating centres and organizations in official relations for the Ear and Hearing Care program 17-18 October 2023. Christie-Yoshinga Itano (US) (Audiology Committee) represented IALP in Los Angeles, USA.
 - ✓ World Hearing Forum stakeholders' and members' meeting which was held on 27-29 November 2023 by Katrin Neumann (DE) (Audiology Committee).

World Rehabilitation Alliance (WRA)

IALP continues to be a member of the World Rehabilitation Alliance (WRA). The World Rehabilitation Alliance (WRA) is a WHO global network of stakeholders whose mission is to support the implementation of the [Rehabilitation 2030 Initiative](#) through advocacy activities. It focuses on promoting rehabilitation as an essential health service that is integral to Universal Health Coverage and to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 3 *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*. Additional information about the WRA may be found at <https://www.who.int/initiatives/world-rehabilitation-alliance>.

As a member of the WRA, 8 IALP members are actively participating on 4 WRA workstreams:

- *Workforce* - Abena Asiedua Owusu Antwi (GH); Sally Hewat (AU)
- *Primary Care* – Maria Christopoulou (CY); Rangasayee Ranguntharao (IN)
- *Research* – Marian Brady (UK); Angela Morgan (AU);
- *Emergencies* – Mershen Pillay (ZA); Brooke Hallowell (US)

I have been recently appointed to the *External Relations Workstream* as part of the WRA.

The objectives of the External Relations Workstream are to:

- Raise the profile of the WRA through various targeted activities both as a whole but also by aligning the different advocacy activities of each of the other work streams.
- Increase membership of the WRA community through ensuring diversity and a focus on considering whose voices may be missing.
- Extend the influence of the WRA with a diverse stakeholder map - ensuring the WRA engages with the right partners.

As you can see, IALP continues to be very actively involved with the WHO. At a recent meeting with many of the representatives of our affiliated societies who were able to attend, I also stressed the importance of connecting and collaborating with WHO's Regional Offices. More to follow on this in the forthcoming months and in my subsequent communication.

IALP COMMITTEES

Our 14 committees continue to be very active. I want to note that our Phoniatics Committee has been reactivated under the leadership of Matthias Leonhard (AT).

Below are highlights from just some of our committees.

Aphasia Committee – Chair, Marian Brady (UK)

- (i) Aphasia Rehabilitation Field Manual
Prof Laura Murray [CA] has led the development of a research project application to a Canadian funder which includes Abena Asiedua Owusu Antwi (GH) and Marian Brady (UK) and external collaborators in support of this project. A second application to a Danish funder has also been submitted.
- (ii) Continued to contribute to the update of the IALP website and to populate the Aphasia Committee webpages. The Aphasia Committee looks forward to being able to restore access to the multilingual lay summaries of information on aphasia. The committee is very grateful to Prof V.P. Vandana (IN), Aphasia Committee member for her work to develop the aphasia summaries in the following languages Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu and Tamil bringing the total number of languages that will be represented on our website in excess of 50.
- (iii) An Aphasia Committee video was recorded and produced by committee members Maya Henry (US), Roxele Ribeiro Lima (BR) and Annette Rotherham (NZ). The video aims to serve as a resource on the Aphasia page on the IALP website.
- (iv) The Aphasia Committee also hosted a successful session at the 32nd World Congress of IALP, in Auckland, New Zealand in August 2023 with many abstracts reflecting input from the following Aphasia Committee members: Karen Brewer

(NZ), Miranda Rose (AU), Bronwyn Davidson (AU), Laura Murray (CA), Angelika Rother (DE), Annette Rotherham (NZ]) Abena Asiedua Owusu Antwi (GH).

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Committee – Chair, Janice Murray (UK):

3 key activities which resonate with IALP's strategic plan and objectives:

- (i) Developing the AAC conference preparations work into an article for submission. This sub-group is being led by Sally Clendon (NZ).
- (ii) Sub-group exploring the best and most fruitful way to signpost AAC on the IALP new website. This sub-group is being led by Nika Jilenc (CR).
- (iii) Supporting WHO – AT by reviewing their suggested module content for AAC + AAC product list. Janice Murray is momentarily leading this sub-group.

Child Language Committee (CLC) – Chair, Marleen Westerveld (AU)

- (i) Global TALES Consortium: The focus of the CLC in 2023 has been on the Global TALES (Talking About Lived Experiences in Stories) project. The committee have established a Global TALES consortium with members from more than 20 countries (including South Africa, Canada, Belgium, Sweden, Taiwan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Denmark, India, Turkey, Spain, USA, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Canada). The consortium meets on a bimonthly basis for a dedicated project meeting (separate from our CLC meetings).
The Global TALES protocol has been made public on Open Science Framework – <https://osf.io/ztqg6/> - currently, there are available translated versions of the protocol in Arabic (Israel); Croatian; Dutch (Belgium); Greek (Cyprus); Hebrew; Icelandic; Mandarin (Taiwan); Portuguese (Brazil); Spanish; Turkish (Türkiye)
- (ii) Special Issue *Folia Phoniatica et Logopaedica*. Nicki Nelson (US) and Marleen Westerveld (AU) guest-edited a special issue of FPL, which will be published in December 2023. The editorial has been made free access: Westerveld, M. F., & Nelson, N. W. (2023). Evaluating children's personal narrative skills using the Global TALES protocol: Implications for Practice. *Folia Phoniatica et Logopaedica*: <https://karger.com/fpl/article/doi/10.1159/000534510/4043746/000534510.pdf>
The special issue contains 10 research papers. These are studies involving children from 15 different countries, speaking 12 different languages, ranging in age from 7 to 16 years.
- (iii) Digital Literacy Project: Barbara Ehren (US) is leading the new project on Digital Literacy. The CLC expect to send out a survey to investigate speech therapists' level of knowledge and confidence with digital literacy; how speech therapists employ digital formats in their therapy for children and adolescents; what digital literacy goals speech therapists target in their therapy.
- (iv) Jelena Kuvač Kraljević (CR) is leading a CLC project listing child language assessment tool suitable for different countries (i.e. with local norms). This list has been posted and currently includes: Arabic, Croatian, Icelandic, Portuguese (Brazil), Greek, English, Irish, Maltese.

- (v) RADLD (Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder). A meeting was held between Shaun Ziegenfusz (RADLD ambassador), Brian Shulman, Marleen Westerveld, and Vanessa Ebejer. An MoU between the two organisations is in the process of being developed.

All of our committees are very active and continue to be so. Updates on the activities of the other committees will be shared in my next President's Letter.

Cleft Palate and Craniofacial Committee – Chair, Valerie J. Pereira (HK)

Standing committee session at the IALP Congress NZ Aug 2023 on “Evidence-based Speech Intervention in Cleft Palate/Velopharyngeal Dysfunction”. 3 committee members attended in person (Yoshiko Takei, Mikaela Bow and Valerie Pereira), and represented the committee. The session was well attended (over 50 participants). A pre-session poll was undertaken: 75% of participants had previous experience working with children with CLP (30% < 1 year, 40% 1-5 years, 30% > 5 years). 40% of participants worked in a hospital setting and about 5% in a cleft service/centre). A post-session poll revealed that 75% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that the seminar was pitched at the right level; > 90% strongly agreed/agreed that they had learnt something different or new from the seminar; >80% strongly agreed/agreed that the seminar gave practical information which can be applied to their clinical practice and >95% strongly agreed/agreed that the presenters were knowledgeable on the topic and presented the information clearly and concisely. In addition to the Standing Committee session, members presented other papers at the congress.

An oral paper on the Transforming Faces Mentorship program was presented at the IALP NZ 2023, garnering a lot of positive feedback and interest.

Dysphagia Committee – Chair, Mershen Pillay (ZA)

The Dysphagia Committee reformed itself with new members and a new Chair in August '23 and is excited to announce that they have a wonderful webinar series planned for 2024. Details of the IALP Dysphagia Committee webinar series will be announced shortly. The webinars are scheduled to start in February 2024.

Motor Speech Committee – Chair, Dora Knezevic (CR)

The Motor Speech Committee is working to expand the committee with new motivated people and increase global diversity. The committee is also working on strengthening communication between committee members through monthly/bi-monthly meetings and motivating members to collaborate on a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic research project in the field of motor speech disorders, which is planned to be presented at the next IALP World Congress.

CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION WITH AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

IALP currently has 60 Affiliated Societies representing over 300,000 members. Our small-, medium-, and large-size affiliated societies are an integral component of IALP. To that end, there are three Board members, each of whom represents a sub-group of our affiliated society membership.

These Board members are:

Small-Size Affiliated Societies: Cristina Politi (GR)

Medium-Size Affiliated Societies: Mami Kaneko (JP)

Large-Size Affiliated Societies: Sean Pert (UK)

The role of the Vice President for Membership and Partnerships is a new role. Since taking up this position at the end of August 2023, Kamini Gadhok (UK) has had several meetings with the representatives of the Affiliated Societies to develop a joint action plan linking to the IALP Strategic Plan. Further meetings are to be held to share these proposals with all Affiliated Societies. Kamini has also worked with Vanessa Ebejer, the CEO of IALP to develop materials on member benefits for the different IALP membership categories along with a draft recruitment and retention plan.

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING (MOUs)

The purpose of MOUs is to increase the number of partnerships IALP has with entities whose mission and vision parallels IALP's. At the 2023 Congress, IALP renewed its MOU with the European Speech and Language Therapy Association (ESLA). This MOU memorializes not only current projects and activities currently underway but also those in which our two associations may wish to engage in the future. Inquiries have already been made with two additional professional entities about a potential MOU which hopefully will materialize in 2024. More information to follow of this.

IALP'S CENTENNIAL EVENT

Our Association will celebrate its 100th birthday in June 2024. We have already started celebrating this important milestone for IALP at the August 2023 New Zealand Congress. The highlight of the Centennial period is a compositium which is being held between 27-29 June 2024, in Vienna, Austria, the birthplace of IALP. Preparations have reached an advanced stage, and we are very close to finalizing the program details. This event, entitled "Contemporary Perspectives in Communication Sciences and Disorders" will consist of a full scientific program on speech-language therapy, audiology and phoniatics spread over two and a half days. Early Bird Registration will open in January 2024. Registration will be limited to under 200 participants. Stay tuned for more exciting news!

2025 IALP WORLD CONGRESS

With the current challenges faced regarding the tensions in the Middle East, please know that the EC and Board have been discussing the implications of such challenges on a regular basis and in consultation with our colleagues in Israel. Updates on the 2025 Congress will be further communicated when they become available. We continue to wish our members and affiliated societies in the area continued safety.

On behalf of the IALP Executive Committee and the Board, I wish you a safe, healthy, and relaxing holiday season and a very Happy New Year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian B. Shulman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian B. Shulman, PhD, CCC-SLP, ASHA Fellow, FASAHP, FNAP
President
President@ialp-org.com