

IoIC Membership Discovery Session - Transcript

Richard Bowes

But good morning, everyone or sorry. Good afternoon. In fact, thank you for taking the time to join us today. And hopefully, you all know who the IoIC are, but we wanted to use today to kind of explain a little bit more in depth detail about what benefits membership with us offers and how we can really help you in your career. So at the IoIC we exist to help people and organisations and IC professionals to promote internal comms to the highest standard. At whatever stage in your career, you might be at as the only membership body. Specifically for IC professionals.

We offer the resources, expertise and networks. You need to elevate your communication strategies and make an impact in your role and within your organisation. So, whether you're looking to advance your skills or connect with other like-minded professionals or indeed access the latest insights and best practices. The IoIC is here to support you every step of the way, and so, by joining us, you're not just becoming a member of professional body. You're joining community of a community of forward-thinking IC professionals who are dedicated to driving the agenda on internal communication.

And so today, as I want to explore how we at the IoIC can help you unlock your full potential with membership through membership with us. So, I'll just now share my screen so you can have a look and see some of the we can go through in a bit more detail before I do that. Actually, I want to do introduce the rest of my team.

So, I should have said at the start, my name is Richard Bowes. I'm a membership manager here. So, I deal with all areas of membership. And this is the rest of my team. All the rest of our team here who deal with the various different areas. So, first of all, I'll pass you over to Jen.

Jennifer Sproul

Hello, everybody! I'm going to come back in a minute and talk to you a little bit more, but I'm Jen Sprout, and so my job is chief executive of the Institute, so I'm there to do many things that I'll talk to you about, and but also lead under the Institute alongside our board of elected directors.

Richard Bowes

And then I'll next introduce you to our events, networks and awards manager, Rebecca.

Rebecca Nicholls

You just did so. I am Rebecca Nicholls. So, I'm events, networks and awards manager. So, I do what that says on the tin. I look after all of our events, from small to big look after our networks, which are managed by our volunteers. And then I also manage our awards program.

Richard Bowes

And last, but by no means least, our personal development. Manager, Emily Darling.

Emily Darling

Emily Darling, thank you, Richard. Professional development manager. I look after our learning and development activities. And so I'll talk to you a little bit about what those are and the benefits for members in a little bit.

Richard Bowes

And then just to say, as well, once we've kind of all gone through our areas, there'll be a chance for questions and answers at the end. But if you do have any questions, yeah, please keep them at the end. And I should just start by just sharing my screen so we can get started. And this is where my technical knowledge falls apart.

Richard Bowes

So can we see my screen yet?

Jennifer Sproul

Yeah, if you just put it into full, excellent screen mode event mode, you know. I mean.

Richard Bowes

Yes.

Emily Darling

All the technical terms today.

Richard Bowes

So first of all, yeah, obviously, that's membership with us. And I'll just pass you over to Jen if you're okay to start.

Jennifer Sproul

Thank you, Richard. So, as I said, I'm Chief executive of the Institute, so I'm very much responsible for everything we do operationally, strategically, and delivering that with the elected Board of Directors, and those that the members have selected, they want to represent them at board level. Richard's already said much of this in his introduction, but I think that what I would embellish upon, I guess, is the fact that we are an organisation that's rooted in a deep history. We are actually celebrating our 75th anniversary this year. And we have been a really growing institute of particularly over the last couple of years. And we support obviously, people specifically in internal communication, but those also with a vested interest in it.

Because fundamentally at the IoIC, our job is to we are owned by our members, and our job effectively is to advocate for what you do and support you in that. So everything we do is with that endeavour through a not for profit matrix as an organisation. And like, I say, we've been growing. And now we've got over about 2,600 members.

Another thing I would say as well. Largely, our members are really, really spread out. So if you're looking to connect with people from different communities, we have members in a variety of industries, from utilities, from banking, from retail charity, academic public sector that's really, really across that space. And we're seeing that membership grow every year. So, it's really, really creating that kind of community of people that are looking to raise that that credibility and use membership to help them particularly advance their skills and stay up to date with all of those things.

So, picking up on the point of standards, if I could ask you, Richard, to change the slide. Thank you in a very old fashioned, and the next slide, please. So, we mentioned it a few times. We are at the heart of it a membership body that's here to set the standards of what? What good looks like and help people achieve those standards and go through that as well as providing a forum for of course, discussion, debate, connection, and all those things. But where our standards are rooted from is the IoC profession map.

You may or may not have already come across it. But fundamentally the profession map which we first had created in 2016. And it's been through quite a few revisions since the last big one was in. We did a big one in 2020, and then a mini, one in 2022. So, it's done through consultation with our membership and through advisory boards which really sets out the occupational standards for our profession. So, it's fundamentally the knowledge skills and behaviours that you should be seeking to achieve as you progress through your career.

And it's based on those 6 areas in blue that you can see. So, strategy, planning, creating content, conducting research. And then in each level of the map, there's 4 levels that we say that. Well, so you might be looking at strategy and planning and level one. If you're entry position, these are the activities you should be doing and the skills and knowledge you should be having to deliver that. So, when we talk about being an institute of the high standards, that's fundamentally what we're there to do is to help you show your credibility through the membership. Say, I operate at level 3, and I'm this designation because I'm this competence in my profession, and then you can sort of help them standardize and grow that standards of it, the other part of it, as well as we have a code of conduct.

So what we're doing there is setting out this sort of behaviours we expect of members, which is really about, how do we go to drive professionalization, how we conduct ourselves as a profession, and with that as well, we have some ethical guidance and challenges that you might have in your role as an internal communicator and also, as well as I explained. We are a membership body. So anyone that joins owns us, we are. You are the ownership of the IoC. So when you become a member depending on your aspirations or the things you want to get involved in. There are opportunities, then, to stand for that board that I report to that then, really really helps to shape not only the strategy of the Institute, but also, then what we're doing on our wider agenda to advocate for the effectiveness of internal communications and really driving up that career standard.

So if I explain that in the membership grades on the next slide. So when that means in terms of professional credibility. If you join, there are 4 core levels of membership that are linked with that profession map that I've described, that really set you out to bring that designation, or to set out where you sit on that. So of course, there's an affiliate membership, which means you don't need to have any experience you can just join. You're new in your career. You're really interested in learning the resources and building up that body of knowledge so that affiliate is

open to all. But there is no professional designation with that role, because you haven't been assessed at a certain standard. Then you can start to. You could join there and then look at how you work through those grades. So then, for example, the next one is Associate Member grade, which is where your designation kicks in, and that means you're probably working at sort of a tactical level, and what we would say is level. One of the profession map. Then you can progress to the next stage, which is member status where you're probably primarily working at a operational level in your career, and that will be level 2 of the profession map and then on to certified member, which again, you're probably then working a little bit more strategically in your role as an internal communicator which brings into to level 3.

Now there is a level 4 of the professional map and the grade for that is fellowship which you can't join, as you can't just become a fellowship on that. It goes through a different body of assessment, and it so you could join at these grades, work towards that fellowship which says, you're level 4. You're strategically leading IC, and you would then apply for that and our fellowship panel would review that application. There may be an interview, and that could be something really that you're striving to achieve as you go through that pathway.

So the team are going to talk to you about a lot of the benefits that you get as part of membership. We know from the content, the networks, etc. So, I'll leave that to them. But what I'm trying to put at the heart of it is when you join, it's about bringing that level of standards and professionalism to the practice of internal communication. And it's rooted around this profession. Map core that, I think, helps us as a professional community. See where we are and where we need to get to in kind of a really nice flow, and if you join we can help you work through those grades and what that looks like.

So I think now I'm gonna then now we get into more of the stuff of membership. So what do you get for that stuff of membership? So I will pass to Rebecca. I think he's going to talk to you about that part of our membership benefits.

Rebecca Nicholls

Thanks, Jen. And I do look after a lot of stuff. So that comes in nicely. So I'm gonna talk to you about the benefits of being a member when it comes to events, networks and awards. So next slide, please. So, one of the main benefits is that you get free attendance for a range of events, mostly from us online. So, there are roundtable discussions. There are panels you may have seen or even been to our recent IC index panels that take some of the themes that have come out of the index and we get some industry experts to really talk about them analyse them, debate.

We have webinars. We also have webinars that come from our sponsors, that members are often invited to so real depth and breadth of subjects that are interesting to you. And we also have regional network hubs. And these vary from online to face to face. And they are across currently England. But I'm very hopeful that there's going to be an island one very soon. And these are run by our volunteers, and again they range from a networking event in the evening to a lunchtime zoom session, to talk about different things that are affecting you as internal communicators.

You also get access to the IoIC community, which is an online platform where members can go and talk about all sorts of things. So, there is a members Hub, where you can ask an offer. So, you might be saying, I'm looking for X. Can anyone help me? Or there might be something that you have an issue with, so I'd like to find out how people measure engagement in their organisations.

We've also got regional groups on there that people can talk to, because obviously, we appreciate. If you're IoIC north, that's quite a big region, and you might want to go on there to talk to each other. We also then have. I'm gonna go down and then back up along with that a members directory where, as a member, you can opt in to put your details on there, and then you can find and talk to other members.

Then I've talked about networks. So, as I say, at the moment, we have some regional networks that are led by volunteers, and as a member you can go, as I've said, to the free events, you can also get more involved. You can become a network lead. If we need it in an area, you can help out the network lead by becoming a committee member and getting much more involved with your network. We also offer some exclusive discounts to our bigger events.

So, we have an annual IoIC festival that in 2025 is going into its 5th year, and if you haven't seen it, it's a 2 day event next year. It's in just outside Welwyn Garden City, and we like to think it's a bit different to your usual conference. So it's 2 days, and it is 50 to 60 sessions. Which all take place concurrently, and you can pick and choose the content you want to see. So, we have various zones, and you can go into any zone that you like and think actually this contents for me, and there are 40 minute sessions, and then you go into another zone. So really, you're sort of choosing the agenda for the event. And what's relevant to you.

We also launched at the We launched September this year some IoIC conferences. We've been to Edinburgh, and on Thursday we're going to Manchester, and they are one day conferences that will be regional that have a regional theme. So they've got regional speakers along with some networking and discussion. And there's something that we are also going to run next year in various places around the UK and Ireland.

And then my final hat that I wear is awards. So, I look after the IoIC awards, and they are an annual program that opens in December closes in about April for entries, and then they are judged, and then we have an Awards dinner in September, October, and as a member you get discounted entry fees and discounted dinner tickets to come to the dinner.

And that's all the hats I wear, and I'm going to pass over to Emily. Now who's going to talk about? Learn and develop.

Emily Darling

More stuff, more stuff! Next slide, please. I feel like, is it? Was it Chris witty? Was it Chris witty? I feel like Chris witty? So, I talked to you about our range of learning and development activities, and particularly the benefits you gain, or you would gain as a member.

So, you may have seen, we run a training portfolio throughout the year. We have a range of training courses for different career levels, core topics. So, ranging from writing skills through to neuroscience, through to channel management at different levels. And members receive 20% discount off all our training courses.

The careers hub. So, this is quite a new benefit. And it's a dedicated platform for members, and it provides a wide range of content to support with career development management and professional skills. So includes e-learning courses, articles and videos from topics ranging from Edi decision making presentation. And it skills. There's a huge range on there. It also has career assessments and aptitude tests. It has a place. You can check your CV, your interview technique

as well, and a coaching Hub, and that's a member. Exclusive. Benefit. 24 hour, 7 days a week. Access. That's a brilliant platform.

Along with the Careers Hub we have the IC diagnostic. So Jen talked to you quite a bit earlier about the profession map. The IC diagnostic is a tool which enables members to assess their skills against the profession map. The diagnostic provides a personalised report with areas to focus on support, with development, planning and curated learning to help members meet their goals. The diagnostic is also mapped to the membership grades that Jen again talked you through earlier. So it supports with member development as well. We also provide a CPD program again. This is aligned with the profession map. Everything we do is aligned with high standards. So the CPD program is there to support members with their continuing professional development.

At the IoIC. We recommend that members undertake 40 CPD points in an annual cycle and the CPD program enables you to log track and reflect on that learning members that do achieve those 40 points or more will receive a certificate of completion to demonstrate their commitment to their development. We also back to training? We offer a bespoke training program. So, if you're looking to train a group within your organisation, we can offer tailored programs, we can come to you. We can organise elsewhere with discounted prices for members.

We also members get free registration to our mentoring scheme. So this is a really popular membership benefit. We have 3 rounds a year in February, June, and October, and this is where we match members. So you can apply as a mentee or a mentor, or both. It's always great actually to apply as both. And we will match you based on objectives and skills, on where you are, where you want to be. And it's a brilliant program that really, I think, aligns well with things. Rebecca was talking about earlier about that community?

And it's not just about supporting members with their goals. But it's about building those connections. Everything comes back to standards and connections. You may have seen, we offer qualifications. We have 3 qualifications. We have a level 4, a level 6, and a master's. These are all accredited by Solent University. So they are academic and professional qualifications, and as a member of the IoIC you have entry to those qualifications. We also offer a fast-track program. This is a 10-week coaching and learning program and members receive a £300 discount on that program.

Something else we'll be offering which we started offering this year, and we're going to be offering a lot more next year are some Free Member training sessions. These tend to be about an hour in length, and so far, I've done on accessibility communications. Next year we're planning something on accessibility communications. Again, it's been very popular, sustainability, agile and more to come. We will be announcing in January.

It's a dot dot cliffhanger. We'll be announcing more. But we're really keen to be able to offer some free training to members on these important topics. And so those will be. Those will be programmed for next year. I think that covers most things. But as members. Once you if you join and you want any support or guidance or advice, I'm always here to help and help and yeah help you if you need it, basically.

Jennifer Sproul

And I can vouch for Emily. She is definitely one of the most helpful, as are all the team people, and she's very, very passionate about supporting people on learning and development. So, she

genuinely does mean that.

So, the next part of the benefits that I'm going to come back to talk to you about is content and knowledge. And this is a big part of what members get as part of their membership. And let me talk you through what that looks like. So, the pinnacle, I guess, and what we've always had feedback is one of the more popular content resources is. We publish a Quarterly Magazine called voice. It is printed, but you have to opt in for a printed copy. We don't want to send people out things in the post and use up carbon if it isn't people's preference. But if not, you will get a digital copy. It's won quite a few awards in the membership world. I'm very proud of it. Our editor, Rob Jones, does a brilliant job in creating articles that talk from emerging trends to big challenges that has case studies. It has a real range of voices that are sharing their experiences and giving top tips, and that, as I say, comes out 4 times a year and is supported as well by a voice section on the website, whereas a member, you can access all of the articles that you can view as just stories and sometimes extended stories and online only articles that haven't potentially been able to fit into the wonderful printed edition.

Next, the big area that we offer in terms of resources is that all members have access to our fact sheets and guides. So fact sheets and guides. Those are really about taking kind of fundamental theory, whether that's theory about psychological safety or neuroscience, or planning or measurement. And what we've done is we've asked experts to create these fact sheets that really kind of give you the start point for it and then they go through a peer review process by our fellows. So, what we're doing is we're trying to set that kind of really good: this is theory into practice, kind of really good approach to it and fact sheets. We've got quite a few. We publish. It varies from about sort of 6 to 8 a year, and we often refresh fact sheets as well to make sure that they stay current.

And then we also have guides which are a much longer version of that. So we've had. For example, we have guides on how to do internal communication, strategy, change communication. And those are things we're going to sort of. We really develop on an annual basis. We also have case studies that members have access to a lot of these come from the awards that Rebecca was talking about. So again, when we produce case studies, we know that they have been judged by our awards, so that what we're doing is giving you an assessment and examples of really good work that you can use.

The next area we have is thought leadership reports. So, these are much more about the kind of the macro, the big trends. What are those things doing? So, we started talking about the future of work. For example, in 2019, we really started to cover this topic. And in that time, we've produced a number of reports that look at some really big macro trends. Whether that's technology, whether that's changing in workforce, whether that's sustainability. Of course. AI that hasn't been missed, and all those sorts of things. And we've really produced those kind of reports that really go into those sort of trends and what's going on and what we think the opportunities are in the internal communication profession.

We also produce as well which is publicly available. So, the thought leadership reports their white papers are much more member only, but we also do publish annual research report called the IC Index. I'd highly recommend that you go and download it. It's a beautiful and helpful report where we survey a representative sample of 4,000 UK employees every year to get their perspective on internal communication. And this year, for example, we've looked at the theme of trust, and we always are going to seek to produce more reports on those emerging trends that will become member only, and then really deep, dive into some of those things next for

members. So, for example. We've just been working on this month releasing some downloadable presentations and infographics that really help members see the business case for internal communication. So we've taken that and really, really built on that.

We also have on demand. So all the wonderful webinars and sessions that Rebecca was talking about, particularly online. We record all of those. And then we put those on the on-demand libraries. There's tons and tons of webinars and things to look at from specific examples to specialist topics that members all have access to.

And then the final thing we do, which again, is public is. We also have the future of internal communication. Podcast it is available on Spotify, apple, iTunes, or any of your major streaming platforms. But I think we're on series 10 or 11 now and again. This really links with our thought leadership work where we're looking at those kind of macro trends. What's going on, and we invite guests quite often from outside of internal communication or those in specialist areas to offer their perspectives. I think it's had over 30,000 downloads. Now, so it's a really growing area. But, as I say, as members, fundamentally, you get access to a wealth of knowledge and resources on the IC website. I think now, there's over something like 1,200 resources that have been built up over time and we are constantly adding new and particularly reflecting what's going on in the space of internal communication, from discussing the trends to articles, sharing experiences and case studies, to robust guidance and fact sheets on how to work through and resources on how to do certain things. So it's definitely a big area of member benefit.

Richard. I think I'm going to hand back to you, now.

Richard Bowes

Thank you. Thank you very much, Jen. And just to add to that in terms of the actual how membership actually works. So we offer 2 different strands of membership. There's individual membership, which is, as the name suggests, for any kind of any individual who may wish to join us, and the process of that is, you can register on our website. And then, once you've registered, and if you decide to join us, you undertake the self-assessment exercise which ties into the grading system that Jen mentioned at the beginning of the presentation. It's a multiple-choice questionnaire. It takes approximately 5 minutes, and upon completion. It gives you the guidance of what we think your grades should be what our recommended grade is, and what you would encourage to join up.

We it's also a membership benefit, the self-assessment tool. So, you can do that throughout your career. So 6 months later, you might have a bit more relevant experience which might take you up to the next grade, and all you need to do is complete the self-assessment. And it will then, once you've demonstrated that you're able to make that make that leap up. You'll be able to join. Sorry to change grade automatically, with no change to your membership subscription. And in addition to that, once you've signed up, you can also download a membership badge which you can use on your signature on your social media channels, and that's available for every grade from associate upwards. So not for affiliates, but thereafter, and, as I say, it shows your designation, and it's used on your signatures. And those benefits that the guys have mentioned are available to all members regardless of types because as well as individual.

We also have corporate membership. So with corporate membership which we define as anything more than 2 people or upwards, and it offers. It offers organisations a new opportunity, unique opportunity to support the entire team. As you can see. There we have about over 500 different organisations undertake corporate membership and from across the world and the

further benefits for a corporate membership include potentially further discounts depending on size on any training programs or potentially block what we call block bookings on some of our events. But the corporate membership it works out to be a slightly more cost effective. And with when we go back today with the individual membership as well. There's also the option to pay by direct debit as well as a 12-month 12 month. Sorry pay for the first 12 months as well.

But as I, just to emphasise that all benefits are available on both different strands of membership. But if you did want information about corporate membership, if you feel that any of your colleagues may benefit from the things we've discussed today, then the process is to directly contact me. There's a form on the website, or my email address will be available at the end, and I'll kind of run through what the benefits might be available again and speak to you. Explain to you about a little bit how the process work. I think that's pretty much everything in terms of the corporate in terms of the membership offering. Unless it's been anything I may not mention.

Jennifer Sproul

So that you can.

Richard Bowes

I think. Yeah, I think that's pretty much everything but just lastly, that's kind of that slide obviously explains what I've just spoken about. But yeah, further information is available directly by contacting me. But here is the process also for individual membership. So once again, you visit the website, States, select your membership grade. There's a self-assessment get started, etc. But yes, if thanks very much for your time, and I'll just stop sharing my screen and see if anyone has. Might have any questions.

Emily Darling

We realise we went through a lot there, there's a lot.

Jennifer Sproul

You know, when people don't have much time.

Erica Kirkby

Nobody can. Nobody can say that you're not enthusiastic, so thank you so much.

Jennifer Sproul

Thanks, Erica.

Erica Kirkby

I really look forward to joining, and I will be so within the next week. We must just sort out. We are all over the world. And so yeah, I need to organise who's gonna pay away. And the one I just quickly have. And I actually, I'm supposed to be in another meeting right now.

So I see that you are represented in quite a few countries, because I work for an organisation that is very much international, we are everywhere. And that's quite important to me to get some input from people from different cultural perspectives.

Jennifer Sproul

Yes, we do. We have a quite, I think, 15% of our membership, and it's quite spread out in terms of the globe and the world, and where things are and in terms of the benefits. Obviously, the thing I would say is things like live training. They are live from the UK. So sometimes that can be, we have to. We welcome members from everywhere in the world. And one of the things that we're working on, particularly with the careers, hub, the diagnostic, all of the online communities, all the papers, all the all the content, all the knowledge and all the resources are a digital offering so that they can do that.

But we're, you know, trying to build an international local regional chapters as well down the line. But we would certainly hope to think that if someone joins from wherever in the world with the routes that they have, that they could participate in conversations with other members in other locations as well as access all that that knowledge and skills and use all the diagnostic and tools. So yes, we very much welcome international teams.

Emily Darling

Definitely. I think, Rebecca, a lot of the webinars are held kind of midday to try and capture, you know, capture time zones, and I know, with learning development. We run courses, start in the morning, start in the afternoon so hopefully can accommodate. And this is a again, a cliffhanger. We are working on more on demand training for next year to really help accommodate our international colleagues. So, watch this space.

Erica Kirkby

Fantastic. Thank you so much. Please excuse me. I have to go open up my, thank you. Bye-bye.

Erica Kirkby

Have to go. Thank you.

Jennifer Sproul

Thanks, Erica.

Richard Bowes

Did anyone else have any other questions at all?

Jennifer Sproul

Good.

Carolyn Blank

I wanted to say thank you. That was a very comprehensive rundown. I'm a huge fan of the IoIC, and I'm very excited that myself and my line manager we work for Light for The World International, an NGO, and we work similar to Erica in terms of having a very diverse colleague base. And for us, I think we're most excited about your plans and events, and particularly I'm quite keen on the leadership sort of communication supporting our senior leaders and storytelling and to find out about the accessibility, making sure that we're reaching all of our all people. So thank you.

Richard Bowes

So if you've got any questions, anything else, you've got my details so.

Carolyn Blank

Yeah, I'm gonna hopefully send you all the information by the end of today. So that's great. Thank you.

Emily Darling

Our newest guide was on leadership communications hopefully.

Carolyn Blank

Okay. Super. Yeah.

Jennifer Sproul

Great. Thank you, everybody. Thanks for coming along and joining us and listening so intently, and to all the team, and I'm glad the information was useful, and we hope to see you at an IoIC event in the future.

Carolyn Blank

Thank you.

Jennifer Sproul

Bye.

Carolyn Blank

Bye-bye.