

# 2024 International Election



Candidate for

**Director – Development**

**John Recht**

American Mensa

## Campaign statement

Mensa has more than 150,000 members in over 90 countries. Mensa members in countries with no national Mensa are Direct International Members (DIMs), and it is these members who are the key for expanding Mensa International worldwide.

As the Director of Development, I plan to take Mensa International to a higher level by leveraging our assets in countries with no national Mensa. The web of contacts in national Mensas and among the DIMs will help us gain access to prospective members in new countries who will drive the growth that Mensa has long envisioned. I will lead these efforts through team building and effective communication, giving new Emerging Mensas the tools for development while preserving the values and ideals of Mensa.

A major challenge that has slowed Mensa's growth is the need for testing. I will encourage the use of online practice tests to promote interest in Mensa, and I will help implement solutions to testing problems as they arise, using established methods along with new online adaptive tests that could greatly enhance membership growth.

Working with other Mensa volunteers has been a joy, and I look forward to continuing to apply my skills to assure Mensa's growth and success.

## Biography

John Recht joined Mensa in 1977 and became a Life Member in 2001. Beginning in 1999, John served in numerous local, regional, and national offices in American Mensa. In eight years on the national board of directors, John chaired both the Leadership Development and Planning committees at various times.

For Mensa International, John has served as a National Representative to the IBD, as a member of the International Election Committee, and as Chair of the Mensa China Interim Board. John currently serves as Chair of the International Standards Committee, leading a team assigned to monitor all national Mensas for compliance with international requirements and to help them overcome obstacles to success.

John holds degrees in philosophy and public administration. His work included positions in international shipping and a wide range of roles in information technology, sales, customer service, and operations management, which have all helped John in his Mensa career.

## Answers to IBD questions

### 1. What do you see as the most important aspect of the role for which you are standing?

The Director of Development needs to have a deep understanding of the process that inspires and enables a willing group of volunteers to work together, to take on the various roles that are necessary for a new Mensa group to succeed, and to do the tasks that are required. Having this understanding must be accompanied by a clear view of the needs and challenges that are present in each country considered for organization into a Mensa group.

In addition to effective team building, providing guidelines, and giving hands-on advice, achieving development success will require strong leadership, patience, a positive attitude, excellent communication practices, and a great capacity for listening to others while sharing constant encouragement and gratitude for the support of all volunteers who take part in development efforts, including the new group members, the Mensa International ExComm and IBD members, Mensa International staff, and volunteers from other national Mensas.

## **2. Why have you volunteered for this role, and what in particular qualifies you for it?**

In my decades of service as a Mensa volunteer I have focused on building the organization at every level from the local to the international, and I see the role of Director of Development as an unparalleled opportunity to put to work my knowledge, experience, and vision for strengthening and expanding Mensa, so that I may do the greatest good for our members.

I have successfully chaired committees dedicated to leadership development and strategic planning at the national level, and my responsibilities for Mensa International have given me a deep understanding of organizational structure and the problems and challenges that must be faced so that Mensa continues to grow and prosper. In particular, in three years as Chair of the International Standards Committee I have worked with leaders of national Mensas throughout the world to help them learn about their compliance issues and to give them the tools to succeed.

## **3. What do you see as the most important issues facing international Mensa at the present time and in the next few years?**

Mensa is a brand recognized around the world and greatly admired. This is a valuable asset, and vigorous protection of this asset is a most important issue. Becoming a member of Mensa also has a significant value which Mensa International should promote, in order to facilitate growth and development.

At the same time, Mensa International must continue to support the membership by providing new global services for the benefit of all Mensans, by staying aware of the ways in which the world is changing, and by continually adapting to global shifts, especially by utilizing evolving technologies and by employing new methods for more efficient and effective communications. An expansion of online practice tests and the release of the adaptive testing project are also important for finding new members.

Finally, Mensa International needs to listen to what members want and to look after and celebrate the volunteers who make everything happen.

## **4. What do you wish to achieve during your term of office?**

The international election in 2024 will bring about substantial change, with several new officers. To begin my term, I will work with the new ExComm to develop the business plan that will guide Mensa International in the current year and beyond. This will involve carrying on with projects already underway that will provide benefits to Mensa, as well as incorporating strategic actions that will recognize global shifts impacting the needs and priorities of the membership.

In turn, these actions will guide the use of evolving technologies and result in more efficient and effective communications. To spur development, I will work with Direct International Members and volunteers from the national Mensas to set in motion the creation of new Emerging Mensas in South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. There are numerous countries with definite possibilities, and I would like to see six or more of them become EMs during my term.