

2024 International Election



Candidate for

Treasurer

Vicki Herd

Australian Mensa

Campaign statement

Mensa International has taken major leaps forward in its communication channels in the past 5 years. Mensa Workplace and other social media platforms are widely spreading the news of Mensa International developments, Mensa events, and details of many of its fascinating members. Some of Mensa International's initiatives-in-progress will be gamechangers when they are complete, especially adaptive IQ testing and the International Member Database (Oomi CRM system). Such rapid change requires strong financial leadership to ensure Mensa International's finances stay viable while funding developments which will enhance our membership experience.

I am running for the International Treasurer position because I am a qualified professional accountant with solid accounting, administrative and governance experience in diverse industries and not-for-profit organizations. Professional skills are essential for the International Treasurer role but so is knowledge and familiarity with how Mensa International operates and how individual members of the International Board of Directors (IBD) want to protect the interests of their national Mensas. I spent 5 years at the IBD table as President of Mensa Canada, a smaller national Mensa. I want to work with IBD members to ensure Mensa International fairly represents our global best interests. I will listen and work well with others.

Biography

A dual citizen of Australia and Canada, I earned the following qualifications:

- Bachelor of Business in Accounting and Finance
- Canadian Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) from 1989 to 2021
- Australian Certified Practising Accountant (CPA)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Strategy and Planning

My successful professional career saw me rise to the position of Vice President of Finance and Administration. I worked for a variety of public, private and not-for-profit organizations with annual revenues up to USD \$2 billion.

Joining Mensa Canada in 1987, I held a variety of roles for Mensa Calgary including as Treasurer for over 20 years. On the national board of Mensa Canada, I served 2 years as Treasurer, then 5 years as President. I was Treasurer of the Mensa Education and Research Foundation from 2018 to 2023. I was also International Ombudsman for Mensa International from 2020 to 2023.

I proudly raised a neurodiverse Mensan son.

Answers to IBD questions

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

To me, the most important aspect of the International Treasurer role will be the vigilance required to maintain a strong financial position in this time of rising costs and interest rates, while financing the new and ongoing initiatives of Mensa International. The rising costs of travel are a major threat to budgeting for the annual International Board of Directors (IBD) meeting hosted by different national Mensas. It could prove worthwhile to explore a corporate travel arrangement for Mensa International to reduce travel cost uncertainty.

Strong communication skills are an equally important aspect to share financial budgets and updates with all members. However, the International Treasurer also needs to build trust, rapport and good working relationships with IBD members and fellow Executive Committee members. Empathy is important.

Many initiatives included in Mensa International's budget take more years to complete than originally estimated. This time forecasting process needs to be tightened.

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

I have volunteered for the role of International Treasurer because my qualifications, work experience and my Mensa resume make me eminently qualified for the role. An accounting degree, an MBA, and a professional accounting designation (CPA), plus more than 30 years in corporate management and executive roles prove I have the technical skills for the role.

However, I also bring more than 30 years of Mensa knowledge to the table. I have acted as Treasurer for Mensa Calgary (more than 20 years), Mensa Canada (2 years) and The Mensa Education and Research Foundation (5 years). I managed the budget for 7 major Mensa events and was involved in the sale and purchase of the office buildings housing American Mensa. I was also a member of the IBD for 5 years as President of Mensa Canada followed by 3 years as International Ombudsman. I know and understand Mensa International very well.

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

The most important issues facing Mensa International (MI) are:

1. Launching the International Member Database (Oomi CRM system) so that international Mensans can access the MI website and Workplace seamlessly without the current manual membership verification delays. It is important that all members can participate in our international community to share ideas and learn about the amazing global opportunities they are welcome to join.
2. Adaptive IQ Testing – This universal Mensa entrance test has been a long time in coming but is currently in the norming phase. It will be a gamechanger in offering an online non-verbal test remotely supervised, or even automatically supervised, using anti-cheating software. This will propel some testing procedures into the 21st century and hopefully increase membership numbers.
3. Trademark Unification – If MI owned the global trademark it would solve legal problems and open up licensing deals which could generate revenue from our brand.

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

If elected as Treasurer I would like to establish mutual trust and respect and an effective working relationship with all members of the Executive Committee and International Board of Directors (IBD) members. I would strive to achieve this through strong communication and listening skills. I will be open to logical discourse and respect that the interests of smaller national Mensas may differ from those of large national Mensas and require compromise or unique financial solutions.

In my term of office, I would research MI's finances and associated contracts and liabilities in great detail looking to leverage anything that could serve to generate more revenue or decrease costs without negatively impacting services offered to members. Post-COVID inflationary pressures have increased travel costs which could possibly be ameliorated by entering into a corporate travel agreement to better control IBD travel costs, which I would investigate.

Ensuring effective budget management is a priority.