

LIA KIESSLING

Board Candidate

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PROFESSIONAL OVERVIEW

I am a long-time advocate for free and open societies, with over two decades of global experience leading technology and innovation strategies that promote human rights, good governance, and grassroots development. My work spans nonprofit leadership, Internet policy, community media, and local journalism, giving me a broad, cross-sector perspective on public-interest communications and digital equity.

At the Internet Society, I led global communications and fundraising strategies, developed donor and member engagement systems, and supported volunteer networks working to make the Internet safer and more accessible. I've advised on digital culture, volunteer governance, and inclusive engagement through roles at MSC Cruises, WWF, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Now preparing to step into the role of Station Director at CKCU-FM—one of Canada's oldest community radio stations—I remain committed to supporting community media, inclusive leadership, and grassroots infrastructure. I bring experience in strategy, mentorship, and public service, and I am passionate about building institutions that reflect and serve the people they exist to support.

GOVERNANCE AND BOARD EXPERIENCE

CKCU 93.1 FM | Ottawa, Canada. Incoming Station Director (August 2025 onward)

Leading strategy for one of Canada's oldest community radio stations, with a focus on vision-setting, governance development, and inclusive community engagement. The role also includes oversight of compliance, risk management, and long-term organizational sustainability.

MSC Cruises | Geneva, Switzerland. Head of Employee Engagement (2024 – 2025)

Drove DEI and corporate culture strategy, aligning HR engagement metrics with executive-level reporting and compliance standards.

Internet Society | Geneva, Switzerland. Senior Director, Communications and Member Experience (2011 – 2023)

Advised executive leadership and supported the board on stakeholder engagement, membership growth, and global communications strategy. Represented member interests in digital equity and governance conversations.

IFRC | Geneva, Switzerland. Leadership and Innovation Coach (2021 – 2022)

Mentored emerging leaders in organizational management and innovation within one of the world's largest humanitarian networks, with a focus on new product development and stakeholder strategy.

WORK EXPERIENCE

CKCU 93.1 FM | Ottawa, Canada. Incoming Station Director

Starting August 2025

Selected to lead Canada's oldest campus-community radio station into its next phase of strategic growth and community impact.

- Designing and executing a long-term vision to enhance CKCU's programming, audience reach, and cultural relevance.
- Building and supporting a diverse, volunteer-driven team with a strong focus on equity, inclusion, and local representation.
- Leading fundraising and partnership development to ensure financial sustainability and deepen community roots.
- Championing innovation in radio broadcasting, integrating digital tools and storytelling formats to engage new audiences.
- Strengthening organizational governance and operational systems to support a transparent, collaborative station culture.

Concluded position to transition into a leadership role with CKCU FM 93.1 and community governance work.

- Built and led a new Employee Engagement Team, increasing team productivity by 45% through strategic structure and clear KPIs.
- Mentored cross-functional leaders and high-potential staff, supporting long-term culture and leadership development.
- Spearheaded a company-wide change management program to foster a more inclusive, collaborative culture across the Cruise Division.
- Created experiences like the New Joiners Breakfast and Staff Association Committee to help new colleagues integrate into the company culture.
- Launched a new health and wellness strategy, including company-wide town halls, leading to a 40% rise in staff engagement.
- Introduced a streamlined content governance model, reducing digital clutter by 10% and improving user experience.
- Drove DEI initiatives that reinforced MSC's global commitment to inclusive workplace practices.

Internet Society | Geneva, Switzerland. Senior Director, Communications and Member Experience

2017 — 2023

- Set the strategy and structure of the communications and volunteer engagement team to improve productivity by 45%.
- Led Story strategy and achieved top-tier media coverage in [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#), [The New York Times](#), and [Deutsche Welle](#).
- Introduced donor experience and fundraising strategy, surpassing donation goals by 66%.
- Developed a comprehensive donor and member experience for new online spaces and email journeys, increasing our annual membership by 15% and improving engagement rates for our most critical campaigns.
- Effectively led a geographically dispersed team of 10 communications and membership professionals, surpassing quarterly goals by 20%.
- Identified potential stories and managed a team of journalists for production.
- Oversaw team budget of up to \$2.5 million annually, consistently achieving targets within .01% of budget.

Internet Society | Geneva, Switzerland, Senior Manager. Content and Campaigns

2011 — 2017

- Led global women in tech campaign that resulted in international media coverage and over 3 million views on social.
- Led a cross-channel storytelling campaign, which generated a 50% increase in media coverage and a 20% boost in brand awareness.
- Led the development and implementation of comprehensive legal processes and contracts, ensuring the protection of Internet Society's copyright and licensing assets.

WWF | Gland, Switzerland. Internal Communication Manager

2008 — 2011

- Created a groundbreaking internal communication strategy for WWF, resulting in a 15% increase in employee engagement and a 25% improvement in cross-functional team collaboration.
- Redesigned WWF's global intranet.
- Awarded employee of the year for coverage of the WWF annual conference.

Vancouver Coastal Health | Vancouver, Canada. Issues Management Officer and Online Editor

2005 — 2008

- Led crisis communications for the Inner-City Program and Supervised Injection Sites.
- Led communication initiatives focused on dementia and long-term care, leveraging multimedia channels, organizing community events, and collaborating with key stakeholders; reached and engaged 30,000+ individuals.
- Led crisis communications campaign during the 2007 Vancouver water turbidity crisis, winning the prestigious IABC Gold Quill award for exceptional crisis management and stakeholder engagement.
- Implemented a comprehensive Vancouver Coastal Health website redesign, incorporating user feedback and usability testing. This resulted in a 50% increase in mobile responsiveness and a 20% enhancement in overall user satisfaction.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada | Ottawa, Canada. Senior Communications Officer, Quick Response

2003 — 2005

- Achieved top score nationally for the Ottawa Public Service Exam.
- Conducted daily briefings with the Minister to provide management strategies for crisis issues.
- Personally selected by the Director General of Communications to spearhead the communications around the Northern Strategy.

Public Safety Canada | Ottawa, Canada. Speech Writer and Media Relations

2002 — 2003

- Head speechwriter and lead media relations officer for the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC).
- Wrote speeches for Members of Parliament, Senators, and the Prime Minister of Canada.
- Wrote news releases, backgrounders, and briefing notes for Canadian journalists.

CBC Radio | Ottawa, Canada. Reporter and Associate Producer1999 — 2002

- Radio journalist for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Canada's national public station.
- Regular Associate Producer for Ottawa Morning and Ontario Today.
- Regular Reporter for As It Happens and Ottawa Morning.
- Created radio-syndicated documentaries.
- Received the award for the top sound produced in a radio documentary.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies | Geneva, Switzerland. Coach.2021 — 2022

- Coached the Solferino Academy's Future Fellows on design thinking, innovation, and organization management to introduce new products into the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

EDUCATION

Carleton University | Ottawa, Ontario | Bachelor of Journalism

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Strategic Planning & Visioning	Board Governance	Community Engagement	Digital Equity
Fundraising Strategy	Membership Strategy	Nonprofit Leadership	Regulatory Affairs
Culture Building	Budget Oversight	Internet Governance	Mentorship

Technical Skills

Public Speaking	Collaboration Tools	Email Platforms	Project Oversight
Data Interpretation	CRM Software	Media Reporting	Stakeholder Outreach
Executive Writing	Grant Systems	Digital Literacy	Content Development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nonprofit Management and Leadership Harvard Kennedy School2021Design Thinking and Creativity for Business | INSEAD Executive Education2021Digital Campaign Certification | Social Movement Teach2020 — 2021