# **President’s Report to the Annual General Meeting**

**of the MBA Association of Ireland (MBAAI) Limited**

**to be held Wednesday 25th January 2023 at 6pm at the Guinness Enterprise Centre, Dublin.**

The MBA Association of Ireland (MBAAI) is a CLG (Company Limited by Guarantee) as outlined in the Companies Act 2014 and a Registered Charity with the Charities Regulator. It is the representative body for all MBA students and graduates living in Ireland, which aims to extend the value of the MBA qualification over a lifetime. The Association does this through:

* Organising events and activities and sharing thought leadership to keep members abreast of current management thought;
* Facilitating networking with fellow MBAs from Irish and international colleges on a business and social level;
* Enhancing the public profile of the MBA brand generally across the island of Ireland.

2022 has been an encouraging year for the association. We continue to see strong levels of interest from members as we transitioned back to more in person events post the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were pleased to run a long and varied list of events for our members, including;

* “Leadership Reset – How to lead in an increasingly unpredictable world” with Ade McCormack
* “How Successful People Collaborate” with HBR Author Rob Cross
* Our always popular MBAAI Golf Event at Powerscourt
* “Better, Simpler Strategy” with Harvard Business School Professor Felix Oberholzer-Gee
* Our “Best Business Reads of 2021” Event for Christmas 2021 with Frank Dillon of Decision Magazine
* Our AGM and “New Ways of Working – An Employers Guide” with Kevin Callan of HR and employment law specialists Peninsula
* The “Meet the Entrepreneurs” evening in the Guinness Enterprise Centre
* Our South East chapter hosted a lunchtime webinar with Carolynn Chambers, CEO of the Good Governance Academy on Good Governance standards
* Our annual National Strategy Prize, with a talk from Stuart Crainer of Thinker’s 50 on the New World Order post COVID
* A Global Economic Outlook review with Goodbody
* Our annual Summer BBQ, as well as several social networking evenings during the year
* Our Southern Chapter hosted an event on Digital Transformation and Connected and Autonomous Vehicles with John & Perrott Jaguar Land Rover

I would particularly like to highlight our National Strategy Competition, which returned to a face to face format this year and was won by the team from South East Technological University, in the face of some very stiff competition. This was a very successful event and we have had positive feedback from members, participants and the business schools involved, demonstrating that this key event in our calendar continues to be an excellent showcase for our talented MBA student population – the future of our organization. Events like this require many different contributors to make them happen, but I would particularly like to thank Michelle Gallagher and Bryan Murphy from the board who coordinated the planning and execution of the Strategy competition.

In addition to our own events, we continued our collaboration with the CGAI (Corporate Governance Association of Ireland) and the Professional Women’s Network (PWN). We also joined forces with Institute of Management Consultants & Advisors to offer each other’s events to our respective members.

We continued to build on the progress made with academic institutions with a view to building our future membership and, indeed, providing for the networking needs to many of our student members today with a view to securing our future with this cohort. Our Southern Chapter has been reinvigorated in 2022 with Jerry Crowley joining the board and driving events in the region which has been very welcome. We also built upon the foundations laid with our website in 2021, delivering event highlights and curated content to ensure this remains a valuable resource for our members.

In terms of looking back at performance for the past year, I am pleased to report that in the financial year from October 2021 to September 2022 we grew our membership by more than 15%, predominantly through increased numbers of student members. While this is very positive, we have seen our numbers of fully paying members stagnate somewhat and a big focus for the association in 2023 will be driving far greater levels of graduate membership from that student member population to strengthen the association into the future. To this end, we will be re-doubling our efforts this year on quality events, with additional investment in a calendar of strong speaker events and networking opportunities, as well as investing in additional resources to focus on retaining our current members and recruiting new full and graduate members.

As a board, we have managed our costs carefully in 2022 so that we achieved a surplus for the financial year. Our finance director will discuss this in more detail shortly, but I am pleased to be able to confirm that as a board we believe we can fund this additional investment in 2023 without an increasing our top line membership fees. However, to assist with funding this we will abolish the “direct debit discount” made available as a temporary measure some years ago to harmonise fees for all full members. We propose to make this change from 1st March 2023.

Our activities would not be possible without the support of our sponsors Decision Magazine, The Guinness Enterprise Centre, Davy Stockbrokers, Sia Partners and Goodbody, our supplier partners including Conor Horgan of Horgan PR & Marketing as well as Carmel Seery who maintains our accounts alongside our finance director.

The MBAAI is an association of MBAs run voluntarily by members and has no direct employees, so our volunteer’s efforts, and in particular those of our board of directors, shape our association and drive the value that we deliver to the wider membership. As such, special thanks must go to all board members who served over the last year. I would like to acknowledge the support and significant contribution of Niall O’Donovan who stood down during the reporting period, as well as Michael O’Grady, Ronan Neary and Grace O’Shaughnessy who step down from their roles in the coming weeks. As a board, we are always open to any full member who is interested in serving the association and we are grateful to all of those who have given so generously of their time and expertise to improve the association for our members.

Our appreciation also to all the volunteers who work with the regional chairs and give up their time and expertise to organise events, support networking, and raise the profile of the MBAAI in Ireland. Please consider getting involved, either at chapter or board level to enhance the association for our membership.

Finally and most importantly, everything we do as an association is due to the continued support of our membership and given the challenging period we are going through globally, I want to take a moment to thank our members, on behalf of all of the board, for their continued support and we look forward to continue to serve you in 2023.

**Michael Bulman MBA MICS**

President - MBA Association Ireland.