



**President's Report to the Annual General Meeting  
of the MBA Association of Ireland (MBAAI) Limited  
to be held Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm (Virtual)**

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.

Overall, 2021 has been an encouraging and exciting year for the association, albeit with a unique set of challenging circumstances driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. Having moved to running all of our events virtually in 2020, we continued with this approach through most of 2021 and ran a long and varied set of events for our members, including;

- AGM and Sean McKeon of Dalata on Covid
- "Meet The Entrepreneurs" event in conjunction with the Guinness Enterprise Centre in Dublin
- Economic Outlook with DAVY
- Whistleblowing Policy and Process with Grainne Madden of GMJ Associates
- HBR's Bill Sanders on Creative Conflict: A Practical Guide for Business Negotiators
- Ralph Benson and Olive Ryan of Moneycube, Webinar on pensions
- Strategy expert Kaihan Krippendorff of [outthinkers.com](http://outthinkers.com) on "Outthink the Competition"
- Donal Murphy of Intuity Technologies on Cyber Security and Internet Fraud
- Gillian Horan, CEO and founder of branding consultancy The Pudding, on "Brand – why it needs to be on the board agenda"
- Paul Dervan, Chief Marketing Officer with National Lottery, on Marketing Effectiveness
- HBR author Alex Lazarow: "Out-Innovate"
- Sia Partners on Artificial Intelligence
- Dr. Aidan Duane of Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) on Blockchain

I would particularly like to highlight our 2021 Strategy Competition, which was run virtually this year for the very first time and won by the team from TU Dublin, in the face of some very stiff competition. This was a hugely successful event with a record number of teams competing. 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 from the board who coordinated the planning and execution of the Strategy competition and who has set a very high bar for this year's 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 where we offered each other's events to our respective members.

2021 saw a major re-focus on our relationships with academic institutions and we have had a wonderful response from the colleges and universities. I am pleased to report that this has driven much more active engagement with the association, which will be critical both to growing our membership and maintaining the relevance and credibility of the association overall. A particular highlight was welcoming Munster Technological University as a new academic member in 2021.

This was our first full year since the launch of our new website and this has been a great success, offering a much improved experience for our members and better tools for us as a board to understand our membership and manage the association. One example is our bi-annual Learn Zone e-zine, bringing thought leadership to our members in partnership with Decision magazine and with all of the content being available to our members via the website all year round. This is even more important with the increased emphasis in delivering value virtually that has come with the current global pandemic. Looking forward, the Association will continue to strive to deliver relevant content to our members through the Learning Zone on our website in addition to our various events.

In terms of looking back at the past year, I am pleased to report that we have maintained and slightly grown our membership and managed our costs carefully 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 see no reason to increase our membership fees for the next twelve months. We are committed to working in 2022 to grow our membership across student members, graduate members and indeed full members of the association through engagement with students, educational institutions and our existing members.

Our activities would not be possible without the support of our sponsors Decision Magazine, The Guinness Enterprise Centre, Davy Stockbrokers, Sia Partners and Deloitte, 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 Ronan Kearns, Mona Shrestha and Niall O'Donovan who are stepping down from the board this year. I would especially like to thank, on behalf of the present and former board members, Alacoque McMenamin who is stepping down this year after many years of dedicated service.



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 difficult time 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 server our members in 2022.

**Michael Bulman MBA MICS**

President - MBA Association Ireland.