

To the Nominating Committee

Statement of purpose

I am most grateful to ICSB Board Member and ICSB Indonesia President Hermawan Kartajaya for the nomination. It is an honor in itself when a colleague and fellow member recommends you for an important task. Even more so when it is the Presidency of ICSB. I would be more than pleased to serve as President-Elect or in another senior position at ICSB.

ICSB is a wonderful organization. While it is the oldest and largest membership organization promoting entrepreneurship and SMEs, it remains agile, dynamic and forward-looking. Moreover, it is people-oriented and humane, like a big family.

It is a great honor to be part of this family and to contribute to its continued success. I have had the pleasure to be involved in many ICSB activities, for example, organizing a VIP reception in New York, speaking at the Egypt Entrepreneurship Summit, representing ICSB at the GEC in Johannesburg and at the Oxford Entrepreneurship Policy Roundtable, being an ICSB Academy Global Faculty and a Humane Entrepreneurship country representative, organizing ICSB and USASBE delegates' visits to Slush, facilitating the Slush GIA Argentina during ICSB 2017, and participating in other ICSB meetings and activities in Asia, Europe, and the USA. Currently, I have the pleasure of leading the preparations and execution of the ICSB 2019 World Congress and to serve as Vice-President and Board Member of ICSB.

My background is in both academia and business. I earned my PhD from HEC Lausanne in Switzerland, and have worked in universities and research labs in Europe and the USA. During my career, I have worked closely with multiple universities, for example, negotiating and coordinating partnerships with Berkeley, Stanford, Technion, Tongji, and Tsinghua. With regard to my business experience, I have worked in SMEs, corporates, and corporate ventures, as well as run my own startup. In total, I have more than 15 years of management and leadership experience, and many years of board work in multiple companies. Finally, I have had the privilege to bring together the two worlds of academia and business. At CERN, I brought companies, SMEs and CERN together to build the \$5bn Large Hadron Collider. All this would not have been possible without the ability to speak both science and business and translate across the two.

Today, I am leading Aalto Ventures Program, the strategic entrepreneurship education program of Aalto University. In five years, we have taken our academic program from zero to over 2 500 students, and our co-curricular activities from zero to over 20 000 participants. Our students run, for example, Slush, one of the largest startup events in the world; Junction, the biggest hackathon in Europe; and Startup Sauna, ranked the number one young accelerator in the world. All fully run and organized by students – demonstrating that young people are the future.

Young people are also the future of ICSB. I would like to see a great number of new members, especially younger people and entrepreneurs. There is growth potential within geographical areas of existing affiliates such as Europe, but there are also countries like Israel and several African nations, for example, that are famous for entrepreneurship and SMEs, yet are not covered by ICSB. I would aim to make the ICSB brand stronger and do well-focused marketing to reach out to new members. Also, strategic partnerships with organizations such as Slush could bring new members. ICSB is about its members. With our membership, we can take ICSB to next level. Therefore, I would like to better understand what our members want out of ICSB and what they need. Listening to our members would be one of my most important tasks.

My vision is that, thanks to ICSB, we will see radically improved management practices among entrepreneurs and small business owners and managers throughout the world, and, thanks to ICSB, entrepreneurs and SMEs will be fully recognized for their most valuable and unique role in achieving sustainable development goals and human wellbeing - and in solving world problems. Finally, I can see that, one day also ICSB will be recognized for having enabled all of that through research, education, policy development, and influence. Therefore, ICSB will be increasingly invited at major tables such as the World Economic Forum, which will further improve ICSB influence and recognition.

None of this, however, can be achieved alone. It is all about teamwork and good collaboration with members.

Yours sincerely,
Olli Vuola