**Statement of Purpose**

**Nominee: Vicki Stylianou**

**Background:** My activities over the last twenty plus years have been all about growing small businesses and entrepreneurship. This has included being an owner, operator, adviser and investor in numerous small businesses in different countries, through to being involved in education, training, research, policy development and advocacy on behalf of small business. This broad and varied experience and expertise could be leveraged for the benefit of ICSB and its members and the international community of small businesses.

**Strategic direction:** At the ICSB, especially in the development role, I would seek to contribute to the overall strategic direction of ICSB by focussing on the application of the excellent academic work being undertaken through the development of policy frameworks, tools and resources. This would reinforce the role of ICSB as the peak body advocating for small business and entrepreneurship in the global arena. This could be done with the assistance of the affiliates; and provide an overarching framework which can be adapted at the state level. This would strengthen the position of ICSB in accordance with its mission statement as an “umbrella organisation”.

**Increasing the influence of ICSB:** ICSB could leverage its collaborative advantage by undertaking regular surveys, stocktakes and assessment of research to keep up to date with the latest issues of concern for small business and entrepreneurs; and which could help to inform its activities and short, medium and long term strategies. It would provide a common platform for comparison, for benchmarking, for best or common practice, as well as learning from each other. All of this could be undertaken with affiliates and with partners and their respective networks. Developing broader networks using government agencies and other organisations, leveraging the name and reputation of ICSB, could be useful for increasing the influence and reach of ICSB. All of this could also be used to lobby governments, regulators and relevant authorities, on a state or international level. Some parts of the world are not covered by affiliates and may benefit from a more visible ICSB. The declaration by the UN of the World Small Business Day and work on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are examples of what can be achieved.

**Models for improving small business:** My current position at the Institute of Public Accountants (IPA) in Australia includes responsibility for the IPA Deakin University SME Research Centre. The Small Business White Paper, which it produced, and its recommendations on boosting small business productivity was the basis for my presentation at the 2016 ICSB Conference. The focus is on developing human capital, enabling better access to financial capital and building innovation through technology. The research draws from many countries and industries and accordingly could be applied to any small business in any country or region. We often find that many issues and concerns faced by small business are the same around the world. Likewise, after attending the 2017 GW October conference, I was provided with another view of the role of global entrepreneurship and humane entrepreneurship. The IPA has its own ‘maturity’ model which has been presented to government and used by the World Bank in the Asia-Pacific region to build sustainable organisations to aid overall development. Similar models were successfully applied during my decade spent in Papua New Guinea.

**Being practical and effective:** Through leveraging technology we can develop a more cohesive international community of small business people. Specifically, ICSB could further develop its advocacy efforts in international arenas such as the United Nations, focusing for example, on the SDGs or lobbying on trade agreements in specific regions; ICSB could develop its own ‘market place’ to match businesses that may wish to trade or do business with each other in different countries or regions as a means of fund raising but also spreading its influence; or researchers could more easily share their results or exchange ideas or comments. This would put into action the results of academic research while providing a practical benefit to small businesses around the world.