



**IFBLS**

International Federation of  
Biomedical Laboratory Science

# Candidate Profiles

*Nominees to IFBLS Board of Directors 2024 - 2026*

*Contact us at:*

Head Office:

33 Wellington Street North Hamilton, ON L8R 1M7 Canada

Tel: 905.667.8695

Email: [communications@ifbls.org](mailto:communications@ifbls.org)

Website: [www.ifbls.org](http://www.ifbls.org)



# GABRIELLA LILLSUNDE LARSSON

- *Currently serving as IFBLS President-Elect 2022-2024*
- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*
- *Interested in the position of IFBLS President*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**SWEDEN** - The Swedish Institute of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IBL)

## SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

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- Research, Education, and Professional Development

## SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

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I have been fortunate to be a part of the IFBLS Board of Directors when I was first elected as a Board member in 2020-2022, and President-Elect in 2022-2024. As President-Elect, I was also Chair of the Scientific Committee between 2022 and 2023. In the Scientific Committee we arranged four Britta Karlsson Educational Webinars during that time, and we also proposed a relaunch of the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program during the AltGAD meeting in Dublin 2023. The Scientific Committee also initiated a new formation of the Scientific Network of Experts which will need to be further developed.

As President-Elect, I have been member of the Management Committee where I have been introduced to the internal organizational work of IFBLS. This includes economy related tasks, strategic planning, preparing for AltGAD in Dublin 2023, planning for GAD 2024 in Vancouver, as well as writing a new IFBLS-WHO Collaboration Plan for 2025-2027.

I have also been part of restarting a social media presence with contracting a social media administrator.

During this year (April 15) I have also submitted and published in our International Journal of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IJBLS). The paper "Action Plan for the Future - the Situation for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists (BLS) in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden", presents the situation for Biomedical Laboratory Scientists (BLS) in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

My term as President-Elect has been very educational and inspirational and I am now seeking to explore a future role as President for the organization. These four years on the Board, in different roles, have been rewarding in both a professional and personal way. I believe and hope I have gained the qualifications needed to lead and develop this organization further. It would be a great honor to continue this work and below are my thoughts on challenges, opportunities, and suggested activities for the coming period.

### 2024-2026

Many recent activities of IFBLS have been aiming to support and promote education and advancement of science and technology in the professional development of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists, as stipulated as one of the objectives of IFBLS. Through the Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series and the upcoming relaunch of the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program, this will be one way to secure member-value. We all need continuous professional development and for this I think digital solutions are eminent.

I am personally very much invested in research and education. In my daily work, I am fortunate to be able to divide my time between education, clinical practice and research. As Program Director for a Master's program for Biomedical Scientists, I am passionate about continuous professional development for the profession. I strongly believe that to attract young people to this exciting profession, we need to provide opportunities for advanced studies and to career development.

This is also true in other Nordic countries, as presented in the article above. Another large part of my work is within research. It is a privilege to supervise PhD students as well as other students in projects related to my research interest in human papillomavirus (HPV)-related cancer. I also have projects in cost-effectiveness, epigenetics and cervical screening; [https://www.oru.se/english/employee/gabriella\\_lillsunde-larsson](https://www.oru.se/english/employee/gabriella_lillsunde-larsson).

To further enhance the impact of new research and professional impact in education, I teach the BLS program at Örebro University in subjects such as genetics, molecular diagnostic methods, professional roles, and leadership. I am also a faculty board member at the Faculty of Medicine and Health (MH) at Örebro University where I provide input on Biomedical Laboratory Science, professional impact and challenges in workforce etc. It is rewarding to meet the future professionals and learn from their expectations and to also be able to be part of academia to enhance the education further.

To be the global voice of Biomedical Laboratory Scientists, I believe we need to collaborate with others such as the WHO. In order to promote the profession, we can provide expert opinions relating to Biomedical Laboratory Science where one example is to provide input to the Essential List of In Vitro Diagnostics. With the help of experts within our association members, the knowledge of the workforce can be implemented in future policies. For a smaller profession such as ours, we need to be even more engaged in collaborations, such as with the WHO to secure that the professional voice is represented where needed.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to adapt to several changes. We have learned to use digital tools for meetings, seminars and conferences but at the cost of less face-to-face meetings. Travelling has become more expensive, and some may also be hesitant toward travelling, both from a personal perspective but also in a sustainability context.

As an international organization this provides challenges. Historically we have been able to meet member delegates at least once a year at our AltGAD meetings, and every other year at our GAD meetings in conjunction with that year's World Congress. Costs for travelling as well as costs for congress organizers are increasing and may be a concrete obstacle for member organizations today. As an international federation I think we need to thoroughly discuss the future forms of member meetings. Virtual meetings are easier to attend and good for information purposes but may not provide equal discussion forums. It will rely on the meeting organizer to be observant and inclusive, and the language barrier can be even stronger in a digital format. But we, as an organization, must work hard to ensure member value despite these challenges and I think this is one of the major challenges we have ahead of us. In relation to this new normal, I believe we need to also investigate the economic impact for IFBLS.

To summarize, these are my suggested future activities for the coming period:

- To investigate how we can meet in the future to secure member participation, member input and member value for each organization.
- To explore the impact on IFBLS economy in relation to fewer IFBLS conferences, member fees and member-value.
- To increase the Britta Karlsson Educational Webinar Series and to relaunch the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program.
- To increase collaboration with the WHO and seek regional attendance in WHO meetings when possible.

I look forward to continuing our work together on topics important to the profession. The pandemic showed our importance in health care, and we must continue to add value, quality, and science to health care and to the community in the future.

Our expertise is needed in many different settings and if elected as President I will strive for advocating this to groups within and outside of the laboratory.

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# HASSAN AZIZ

- *Currently serving as IFBLS Board Director 2022-2024*
- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*
- *Interested in the position of IFBLS President-Elect*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

USA - American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS)

### SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

- Laboratory administration, Higher Education leadership, Microbiology.

### SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

Dr. Hassan Aziz is the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at the Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi. Dr. Aziz is a past President of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS). He served on the International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS) Board of Directors between 2022 and 2024. He is a Fellow of the Association of Clinical Scientists (ACS) and of the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia (UGA). He is a certified Green Belt Six Sigma and TEDx speaker.

With a distinguished career spanning over 30 years, Dr. Aziz has been a leader in integrating research and education, experiential learning, and curricular innovations across multiple disciplines. He has an extensive international experience in higher education, consulting, and advisory work. He is an external examiner for several international academic programs and an adjunct faculty to a number of institutions. He is an active member of national and international professional and scientific societies and organizations. He is a VIP mentor to new program directors through the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS) as well as a site visitor for clinical laboratory programs.

In addition to numerous international conference presentations and guest speaking engagements, Dr. Aziz has over 80 peer-reviewed publications. In 2019, he was the recipient of the prestigious ASCP Lifetime Achievement Award and the Distinguished Author Award by ASCLS. He is a consulting editor for Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS) published by ASCLS.

Suggestions for future IFBLS activities are:

- Introduce Virtual Reality Laboratories training courses.
- Coordinate a summit on the future of the Laboratory Workforce, challenges, opportunities, and training needs.
- Create and maintain globally accessible and inclusive training for laboratory staff.



# BITTEN KAANBJERG KRISTENSEN

- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**DENMARK** - Danske Bioanalytikere (dbio)

## SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

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- Ethics
- Labor Rights
- Education
- A trade union that remains relevant for young BLS.

## SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

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In a globalized world, it is crucial that biomedical laboratory scientists collaborate across borders to advance scientific development and ensure the highest quality of healthcare. International collaboration opens doors for knowledge exchange, technological innovation, and standardization of practices, all of which are essential to meet the ever-growing challenges in biomedicine and the healthcare sector.

One of the most valuable aspects of international collaboration is the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences. Biomedical laboratory scientists from different countries possess a diversity of expertise and perspectives that can enrich each other's work. By collaborating, we can learn from each other's successes and mistakes, accelerate research and development, and implement best practices worldwide.

The rapid technological advancements in biomedical laboratory science require constant updating and adaptation. International collaboration ensures that we stay at the forefront of the latest technologies and methods. Through joint research projects and international conferences, biomedical laboratory scientists can explore new technological solutions that can improve the diagnosis and treatment of diseases.

I am deeply committed to advancing our profession. Biomedical Laboratory Scientists are at the heart of healthcare, providing crucial diagnostics that guide patient care. Our field is evolving rapidly with technological advancements, and it is essential to stay ahead while maintaining the highest ethical standards and fostering a sense of community and professional pride, especially among the younger generation of scientists.

It is important to me that biomedical laboratory scientists are classified correctly in the ISCO system. This work can be contributed to by IFBLS, and I hope to be allowed to contribute to it in the IFBLS board.

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# MARIA KLEMENT

- *Currently serving as IFBLS Board Director 2022-2024*
- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**CANADA** - Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS)

## SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

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- Quality and safety standards
- Student engagement
- Board of Directors

I am a Medical Laboratory Technologist in Canada. My role working in the Interior of British Columbia was as a Quality Director. This position allowed me to implement a quality management system. Besides quality, I was heavily involved with Point of Care Testing and the safety of staff.

I have always had a passion for volunteering and giving back to my community; be it for my professional societies, educational systems, athletics, or the voice of the patient.

I have held many boards of directors' positions including the presidential chair for the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS). I am currently the Co-Chair for the Kootenay Boundary Collaborative Service Committee, the chair for the Kootenay Boundary Patient Advisory Committee and as well sit on many community healthcare committees.

I have always been proud of my profession and advocate and promote the profession.

## SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

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- Chair of the Development Committee
  - Current editor of the IDBLSE (International Directory of Biomedical Laboratory Education (<http://idblse.editme.com/>))
  - IFBLS Social Media - Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram
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# GODSWILL CHIKWENDU OKARA

- *Currently serving as IFBLS Board of Director 2022-2024*
- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**NIGERIA** - Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria (AMLSN)

## SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

- Educational Advancement of BLS
- BLS practice at the consultant and specialist levels
- [Link to video](#) at a recent ECOWAS Regional Council for Health Professionals Education (ERCHPE)

## SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

- As a member of the Membership Committee of the 2022-2024 Board of Directors, I have realized that the strength of the IFBLS as a global organisation of our profession lies in the number of countries and biomedical medical laboratory scientists it represents. The need to expand and increase the stature and strength of IFBLS is a core mandate of the Board of Directors.

I played a very active role in sensitizing and mobilizing BLS Associations in over twenty African countries in the past two years, which has resulted in the following countries joining the IFBLS as full members in the past two years, Togolese Association of Medical Biologists (ABM-Togo); Medical Laboratory Scientists Association of Tanzania (MeLSAT); the National Association of Biomedical Technologists in Burundi (ANTEBBU); others in the process of joining the IFBLS are Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Egypt, Cote d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Benin Republic.

With the recent inauguration of the Federation of Associations of Laboratory Professionals in Africa, many more countries would be joining our global family of IFBLS in the very near future. I am committed to the accomplishment of this objective if re-elected.

- As a member of the IFBLS Development Committee in the 2022-2024 Board of Directors, I have contributed to the enrichment of the discourse on IFBLS engagement with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) to ensure that the BLS profession is properly and deservedly classified as a full-fledged profession by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the next ISCO classification exercise. The need to sustain and deepen the engagement with the Technical Working Group (TWG) and the ILO Statistics Department by updating these vital organs of the ILO with the current educational, practice and functional structure of the BLS profession globally is imperative. I will pursue this imperative if re-elected.

I contributed to improving the International Directory of Biomedical Laboratory Science Education (IDBLSE) database as an important source of information on the BLS profession and the need to make it reflective of the growth the profession has undergone in different parts of the world, such as the 5-year Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science (BMLS) degree, the 6-year Medical Laboratory Science Doctorate (MLSD) degree, the Doctor of Clinical Laboratory Science (DCLS) degree programs; the 4-year Specialist Postgraduate Fellowship training in several member countries of IFBLS. I contributed to fashioning out the policy guideline for the Britta Karlsson Advancement Program.

I contributed to increasing the IFBLS collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) by keying into the 76th World Health Assembly Resolution 2023: Strengthening Diagnostics Capacity.

- It is my firm conviction that the IFBLS needs to systematically leverage on the global spotlight the COVID-19 Pandemic brought to our profession and its practitioners, to reposition the profession for increased social reckoning and professional relevance. I intend to actively contribute to the achievement of this laudable objective.



# GISEON SONG

- *Nominated for the position of  
IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**KOREA** - Korean Association of  
Medical Technologists (KAMT)

### **SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:**

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- Developing scientific knowledge
- Serving members' rights in IFBLS community

### **SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:**

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The IFBLS World Congress 2022 was held in Suwon, South Korea in October 2022, and in charge of international protocol tasks for the Congress as International Director of KAMT.

I believe I could be helpful for IFBLS activities and performing well with my own experience.

Promoting recognition of global biomedical laboratory scientists as serving academic vice-president of KAMT.

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# MIRJANA STUPNISEK

- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**CROATIA - Croatian Chamber of Health Professionals - Professional Department for Medical Laboratory Activities (CCHP-PDMLA)**

**CROATIA - Croatian Laboratory Association (CLA)**

## SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

- Education, Training, and Professional Development of Biomedical Laboratory Professionals/Scientists, ISCO
- Promotion of the Biomedical Laboratory Profession/Science worldwide
- Hematology, Cytology, Pharmacology, Infectious Diseases, Biosecurity and Biosafety, Quality Control, Scientific Research

## SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

I am a registered Biomedical Laboratory Scientist, with a Master's degree in Biomedical Laboratory Diagnostics (BLS) and a Doctorate degree (PhD) in Biomedicine and Health (Medical Sciences). In addition, I completed a one-year specialist training and gained the title of Health Manager, as well as training for QMS Lead Auditor (CQI and IRCA Certified).

I have 39 years of work experience in the fields of BLS (hematology, cytology, pharmacology, infectious diseases, quality control, biosafety, and scientific research). I am currently employed full-time as the Head of the Accreditation Department (Quality Control) at the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases in Zagreb, Croatia. Also, I am a lecturer (associate professor) at the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health at the University of Osijek and at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Osijek, Croatia.

In addition, as a university professor, I am also a mentor for BLS students on their graduate theses.

I have more than 20 years of experience in organizing BLS scientific and professional courses, meetings, conferences, and congresses.

Also, as a member of various councils and working groups within the health sector, I have contributed to projects related to the BLS profession.

My experience in the professional field as a BLS and a member of associations gives me the belief that I can contribute to the work of the IFBLS Board of Directors, and I am willing to serve in its efforts to enhance and promote the BLS profession.

### **My suggestions for future IFBLS activities are:**

Development and promotion of the BLS profession through IFBLS activities:

- promote the role, contribution, and importance of the BLS profession in the society and health care system worldwide
- harmonize BLS education (training and practice) internationally
- promote continuing professional development internationally
- strengthen IFBLS through international expert groups and projects
- strengthen the role of IFBLS worldwide
- organize BLS Day and the IFBLS World Congress
- continue to work on the revision of the ISCO
- continue to work in collaboration with the WHO
- continue to work on increasing the number of IFBLS members



## ROBYN WELLS

- *Nominated for the position of IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

### ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**AUSTRALIA** - Australian Institute of Medical and Clinical Scientists (AIMS)

### ELECTION INFORMATION FOR ROBYN WELLS

- Chief delegate for Australia since 2018
- Past president of the Australian Institute of Medical and Clinical Scientists (AIMS)
- Chair Overseas Assessments Committee
- Editor of the Australian Journal of Medical Science
- Haematology convenor for the AIMS Fellowship Program
- Sessional academic at Queensland University of Technology

### SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

- Haematology and Malaria
- Continuing education and professional development for all laboratory personnel
- Recommended universal curriculum for graduates of BMLS programs
- Standardisation of achievable, measurable core competencies

### SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

Identification of those member countries where the IFBLS can assist in providing CE opportunities and expert assistance when required. This would involve reaching out to these organisations to assess their needs and work with them to provide the resources and opportunities.

Ensuring that the Core Competencies that have been developed are fit for purpose for all our members and assisting in their implementation. This may be done by the development of appropriate documentation to reduce the burden on the employers and make it simple to adopt.

Development of a core curriculum for graduates of a BMLS program to ensure consistency of content and enable scientists to work globally. This would involve input from all our members and the compilation of the key subjects required to produce a work-ready graduate. The International Directory of Biomedical Laboratory Science Education database (IDBLSE) will be a valuable tool for this exercise.

Promote the prizes and scholarships offered by the IFBLS so more of our members have opportunities to attend meetings and further their CE and CPD. This can be achieved by ensuring all of the member countries advertise these bursaries and promote the benefits to the successful applicants.



# ALAN WAINWRIGHT

- *Currently serving as  
IFBLS Past-President 2022-2024*
- *Nominated for the position of  
IFBLS Board Director 2024-2026*

## ASSOCIATION MEMBER

**UNITED KINGDOM** - Institute of  
Biomedical Science (IBMS)

## SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

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- Degree accreditation and professional qualifications
- Professional training and continuing professional development to support career progression
- Professional and regulatory standards with a focus on fitness to practice and ethics.

I am the current (2022-24) Past-President of the International Federation of Biomedical Science (IFBLS) Board of Directors and member of the Management Committee. I am an international speaker presenting on Learning Outcomes, Training and Education, Professional Competence and Continuing Professional Development conferences in Taipei (Taiwan), Kobe (Japan), Brisbane (Australia), Bloemfontein and Johannesburg (South Africa) and Florence (Italy).

## SUGGESTION(S) FOR FUTURE IFBLS ACTIVITIES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO DEVELOP EACH:

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I have actively contributed to the strategic development and work of the IFBLS during my term on the Board of Directors 2016-2024. I have held the following positions:

- Chair of IFBLS Development Committee 2016-2018
- Chair of IFBLS ISCO Task Group 2017-2018
- Member of IFBLS Membership Committee 2016-2018
- President-Elect 2018-2020, member of Management Committee and Development Committee
- President 2020-2022, Chair of Board of Directors and Management Committee
- Past-President 2022-2024, Member of Management Committee, and Chair of Membership Committee

During my time as President I successfully steered the IFBLS Board of Directors during the height of the Covid pandemic when the impact of Covid on meeting attendances, in particular the World Congress, required difficult decisions and new ways of working. This episode has highlighted the importance of face to face meetings and opportunities for social and professional networking.

I feel we still need to develop a greater understanding of biomedical laboratory services, and underpinning education and training in individual countries in order to be more strategic in identifying issues in biomedical laboratory science that IFBLS can influence the resolution in its position as a global membership organization and Non-State Actor (NSA) in Official Relations with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The status of IFBLS as an NSA with official relations with the WHO are entered into through a triennial review and governed by a framework of engagement with agreed objectives and outlined activities for the coming three-year period. I believe that for the next triennial period (2025-2027) it is crucial that IFBLS prioritises its commitment to the plan and to strengthening its relationship with the WHO Designated Technical Officer who is the focal point for joint collaboration. To do this effectively we need to improve our ability to respond to WHO initiatives by identifying how the impact of biomedical laboratory science can make a difference. This can be achieved in two ways. 1) More effective communication on a regional basis with our Members Associations to understand the impact of WHO directives on their laboratory services, and 2) rebuild our network of scientific experts and fully engage them in the process of achieving the objectives we have with WHO.

Delivering on the plan enables IFBLS to be recognised, not just as the global voice of Biomedical Laboratory Science, but as an organisation whose members can influence and guide improvements to the crucial impact Biomedical Laboratory Science can have in improving healthcare worldwide.

My motivation for seeking re-election to the Board of Directors is to contribute effectively to future strategies by maintaining organisational stability and sharing the knowledge, experience and professional insight of IFBLS member associations I have gained over the last eight years. I am confident this can contribute significantly to building international advisory groups for different BLS disciplines within IFBLS, demonstrating the inter-relationship of these disciplines in healthcare and through this strengthening closer relations with our membership on a regional level.

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