

FR: Irene Berkowitz, [iberkowi@ryerson.ca](mailto:iberkowi@ryerson.ca), 416-433-8785  
TO: Internet Society Canada Chapter (ISCC)  
DATE: May 11, 2022  
RE: Application for Board of Directors

**1. Provide a statement of up to 500 words in length indicating:**

- ***Why you should be elected as an ISCC Director;***
- ***The specific skills and experiences that make you a suitable candidate for the ISCC Board; and***
- ***Any relevant biographical information***

I would be most honoured to be elected as a Director of the ISCC, as this organization is core to my mission to be a significant contributor, and ideally catalyst, to successful adaptation of Canadian regulatory policy to the unstoppable opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. While my efforts and expertise, since 2014, have been focused on the media space, I understand (and teach) media as the leading edge of profound changes across the spectrum of human endeavour in money medicine, mobility, many more. All this renders media policy a comparably simple test case for larger challenges; Canada is far behind, when it could be a global leader. Per our current work at ISCC, Canada is struggling to understand, much less embrace, internet including content business models (C-10/11); news and information (C-18); online “harms;” and associated arenas such as copyright.

It is my deep belief that helping Canada/global society to adapt to the internet is best done as group advocacy. As a member of ISCC during the last year, I’ve had the privilege of participating as a member of the Policy and (more recently) the Strategic Communications Committees. It has been wonderful to “find my people.” Having had the opportunity to get to know the leadership and many ISCC members, I can say authentically, that my interest and comfort is not only in its mission; but at the relationship-level too, that I would be thrilled to have an opportunity to contribute at the Director level. While my expertise is not in tech or legal, I believe my role as a policy analyst, particularly in the content arena, is a valuable complement to the wide range of expertise in ISCC.

My public advocacy in media policy began in 2014, when I testified at Canada’s first inquiry into the internet era, *Let’s Talk TV*. My presentation made waves and I was included in a key decision (CRTC 2015-86). Activities in this arena can be described as follows (from my CV):

... media policy analyst, journalist, podcast host, research team leader, book author public speaker, and teacher (of MBA and MA courses that prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers). Berkowitz is Senior Policy Fellow in Audience Lab at The Creative School; Executive Producer/Host of two podcasts, *The Sessions* (collaboration between *Playback* and The Creative School); and *Mediaucracy*, inspired by her 2021 book on legacy media in the global, online era, *MEDIAUCRACY: Why Canada hasn’t made global TV hits and how it can*. Berkowitz was also lead author the 2019 report on new media, *WATCHTIME CANADA: How YouTube connects creators and consumers*. Her policy expertise is requested by top media publishers including *The Globe and Mail*, *Playback*, BNN-TV, CBC, CTV, and Global TV; and organizations such as Canadian Radio

Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), Canada Media Fund (CMF), McDonald Laurier Institute (MLI). Berkowitz is a graduate of Cornell University (BA), University of Chicago (MA), Toronto Metropolitan University (PhD), and Singularity University Executive Program in Mountain View, California.

A list of publications, white papers, and conference presentations can be found [here](#).

In addition to public advocacy, I practice “quiet diplomacy,” anchored in relationships across the industry. For example, I worked with a key organization to build a groundbreaking meeting (at May’s National Culture Summit) between old and new media orgs to accelerate understanding on C-11. I’ve come to understand the problem is rooted in dynamics that we/ISCC understand inherently; as Konrad Von Finckenstein called it (on a recent podcast interview with me), the open internet is the “engine of innovation.” Backward-facing responses are rooted in what Harvard icons Michael E. Porter and Clayton Christensen (and Jean-Pierre Blais at *Let’s Talk TV!*) identified as the entitlement mentality of entrenched stakeholders, even as creative destruction sweeps away any possibility that luddites will ever be on the right side of history.

**2. Are you seeking a one-year or two-year term as Director? (Please bear in mind that you may not necessarily be appointed to your preferred term.)**

Two-year

**3. What do you consider to be the top three challenges and opportunities facing the Canadian Internet Community in the next three to five years? What specific actions do you propose to address one or more of these challenges and opportunities?**

**Problem: Canada’s lack of a culture of innovation** (per WEF study showing this is Canada’s #1 business challenge) – overall lack of understanding of the 4IR. Lack of understanding and accompanying fear of internet/4IR and its changes are a huge problem. I heard this, literally, at last week’s meeting – and many, many times before.  
**Action:** I would like to lead a small team to develop Exec education that we bring to organizations and gov’t. Hardly anyone (besides us) can draw a neat line from media innovation to mRNA vaccines; being able to do so is core to understanding what is happening in the world and making effective, and even innovative, laws and policy.

**Problem: Current legislation.** defeating or substantially amending C-11, C-18, online harms. We must do our best to prevent Canada from going down backward-facing paths in media.

**Action:** As I continue my public activities (writing, speaking), I’ve also started to explore efficacy of quiet diplomacy. But all this has led me to the 3<sup>rd</sup> problem...

**Problem: Politicization of message.** Ironically a problem is that we often do so much work, yet “speak to the converted” or get categorized in the “look we welcome both viewpoints in our wonderful democracy” category but messages get filed as political. Analyses of internet impact, some of society’s biggest changes in more than 600 years, may not be best received as taking a political side.

**Action:** Perhaps we can address this question at ISCC, perhaps specifically in the Strategic Communications Committee, overall issue of messaging and efficacy; as an organization, how to effect more change? What will make a real difference? (For example, this might even relate back to the first action, such as getting into the highest levels of gov't for a 2 session executive seminar...)

**4. If elected as a Director, will you make the required time commitment to contribute significantly to ISCC in accordance with what is generally expected of Directors?**

Yes.

**5. Do you agree to abide by the ISCC process for candidate nominations for the election of Directors that has been described to you?**

Yes.