

Regional Chairs Specification

About IAPB

The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) is the overarching alliance for the global eye health sector dedicated to eliminating the global vision crisis. A global network of more than 250 organisations spread across 100+ countries, of the most brilliant and committed non-profits, philanthropists, public and private organisations.

There are 1.1 billion people living with sight loss because they don't have access to eye care services. On behalf its network, IAPB is making the case loudly and repeatedly that eye health is not an optional extra. It is vital to everything, for everyone.

Our income and impact have both increased in recent years. IAPB is a growing and successful international organisation registered in the UK with a dedicated staff team located around the world. In 2026, we are aiming to hold the first ever Global Summit for Eye Health bringing together world leaders, governments, international organisations, civil society, and the private sector to amplify the urgency of addressing avoidable sight loss, galvanise national and global action.

Roles and Responsibilities

Background:

Regional Chairs serve a critical function to enable IAPB to achieve the ambitious targets as set out in 2030 Insight. The role and related activities reflect the global strategy at a regional level and aims to leverage the global reach and authority of IAPB within regions. It promotes the regions to drive towards integration of eye health in a broader health and development agenda. It provides for a structured approach that is directly aligned with the IAPB Secretariat plan and creates a framework to enable consistent planning and accountability.

Each of the WHO regions have one Regional Chair. These are elected from the IAPB membership for four-year terms. The Regional Chair may only serve a maximum of 2 x four-year terms. Nominations and elections for Regional Chairs will be held in Q1 of 2025 with the successful candidates being ratified at the AGM in April. This paper sets out the role, responsibilities, accountability mechanisms and requisite skills and experience for Regional Chairs.

Responsibilities:

The Regional Chair is responsible for:

1. Ensuring effective political engagement at national levels in the lead up and execution of the Global Summit on Eye Health
2. Assessing the strategic requirements in the region working with the IAPB secretariat and members to develop and implement activities to meet regional requirements
3. Ensuring members are engaged in national, regional and global activities
4. Ensuring the IAPB secretariat and IAPB Board are aware of key opportunities and risks that may impact IAPB and its members in the region

Role:

The role of the Regional Chair is one of strategy, advocacy, facilitation and representation. Working with the Head of Region and other IAPB staff from the IAPB secretariat, the focus of the role for 2025 – 2029 is:

1. Driving the development and execution of the Global Summit on Eye Health through:
 - a. Leading on regional discussions, meetings and actions as part of an IAPB Secretariat structured approach to national level government leaders to engage them in supporting and contributing to the Global Summit
 - b. Providing progress reports, feedback and strategic advice on regional political engagement to the IAPB Secretariat and IAPB Board
 - c. Leading communication forums with members to activate their engagement in the Global Summit development process

2. Facilitate strategic discussions and forums with members and other stakeholders at national and regional levels on developing evidence and prioritised program and policy areas and encourage engagement through regional planning to achieve a joined-up sector approach
3. Engagement with governments through members or directly, to drive implementation of global policy and frameworks
4. Engagement with WHO regional and, where appropriate, country offices in areas of mutually prioritised policy areas
5. Act as a conduit for knowledge between national, regional and global levels ensuring global evidence and frameworks are being considered and implemented where appropriate. Ensuring that grass roots, national and regional information and evidence is informing global level advocacy.
6. Representation of IAPB at a regional and, where appropriate, country level.
7. Supporting in the identification of new members and stakeholders to help achieve the goals of 2030 Insight that may include brokering strategic partnerships for IAPB that meet agreed regional and Secretariat planning priorities
8. To support the IAPB secretariat in securing funding for regional and global activities

Key Stakeholders:

1. IAPB Members
2. IAPB Head of Region and other regional staff
3. IAPB Secretariat
4. IAPB Board
5. National governments
6. Regional bodies including WHO
7. IAPB Supporters & Donors

Accountability Mechanisms:

1. The Regional Chairs will be required to provide an annual high level workplan. They will report twice a year to the IAPB Board

2. Specific reporting mechanisms to the IAPB secretariat through the Political and Engagement workgroup will be required in the lead up and subsequent to the Global Summit on Eye Health
3. Formally communicating with regional members a minimum twice a year
4. A representative from the Regional Chairs will sit on the Executive Committee of the IAPB Board
5. Bi-annual meeting of the Regional Chairs and staff to discuss opportunities, barriers and to share information

Required Experience and Attributes:

1. Solid knowledge of eye health issues, evidence, global policy and frameworks
2. Demonstrated experience in advocacy with national level government
3. Ability to facilitate and develop strategies for national and regional approaches to policy and system change
4. Strong written and oral communication skills
5. Engaging and skilled presenter of information at varying forums
6. Experience in developing partnerships

Other requirements:

As this is an unpaid role, the Regional Chair must have written confirmation from their sponsor organisation that they will be able to allocate the necessary time to fulfil the duties of the Regional Chair. This includes travel within the region and to the Board meeting twice yearly.