



UNIVERSITÉ DE BALAMAND
ACADÉMIE LIBANAISE DES BEAUX-ARTS

Beirut, 3 January 2019

Dear Cumulus Secretary General,

I write to submit my candidacy for the executive board of Cumulus International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media. I am an experienced design educator and a faculty member at Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA), University of Balamand, where I coordinate the MA program in Global Design and teach a wide-range of undergraduate and graduate courses in the Department of Design.

I am motivated to serve on the executive board because my home institution, ALBA, is one of the few Cumulus member institutions in the Middle East. This is a region with an incredible history of art and craftsmanship, and I would love to see it better represented in the Cumulus leadership. Art, design, and media are academic fields that have been largely dominated by American and European perspectives, especially on an international level. If elected to the executive board, I will ensure that other global perspectives are also represented. Moreover, the visibility of this position will allow me to better advocate for art and design education within Lebanon and more generally in the Arab world. ALBA is the only art and design school in Lebanon, and it was the first national institution of higher education in the country. I am the co-founder of Beirut Design Week and a board member of the MENA Design Research Center, a non-profit organization that advocates for design in the region. I am, therefore, well-positioned to do this kind of advocacy work, especially with deepened ties to the Cumulus organization.

One of the most exciting things about Cumulus is the fact that it is a truly *international* organization, with member institution from around the world. As an executive board member, I would strive to interrogate what it means for art and design education to be international. I have already begun this kind of work as a board member of Ateliers de la Recherche en Design (ARD), an organization of Francophone design researchers. As a Cumulus executive board member, I would be enthusiastic about understanding art and design education as global phenomena. What would it mean, for example, to think about the role of language in art and design education? As a Lebanese-Armenian, I grew up speaking Armenian and Arabic, and I have taught and studied in English and French. Moving between these languages has always been important to my work. While English is necessarily the language of the Cumulus organization, designated workshops, panels, and publications would be exciting forums for thinking within and between other languages as they relate to art and design education.

I believe that my experiences and energy would contribute a great deal to the Cumulus executive board. Attending meetings regularly over the last several years and getting to know the Cumulus family have been highlights of my career. I am enthusiastic about the possibility of joining the leadership ranks and helping to steer the direction of this organization. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Vrouyr Joubanian', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Vrouyr Joubanian