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# IoIC Annual Review 2020

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*#WeMatterAtWork*

Internal communication  
has the power to transform  
organisations and working lives.

# Introduction

**Suzanne Peck**  
*IoIC president and FEIEA vice-president*

*Emerging stronger in an  
unforgettable year.*



2020 was a tough year for membership associations, no matter their age, size or shape. And IoIC was no exception. You'll read in this report about how our overall turnover decreased by 24% as our big events were cancelled, and that we made a loss of £818.

Although it was tough to see some of our strategic plans and targets derailed, I think that the IoIC achieved nothing short of amazing.

We saw a 1.5% growth in our membership at a challenging time when it would have been so easy to cut spending on professional membership.

We quickly adapted and continued to deliver, not just services and activities, but value for our members. This included free six-month membership for those impacted by redundancy or significant loss of income, and we made practical, useful coronavirus advice, resources and content accessible for all, putting our purpose over potential profit.

We also created a Taskforce of senior internal communication practitioners, who gave valuable insight into the impact of the pandemic across a range of sectors, helping to inform the UK Government, as well as shaping our own services for members.

How we engaged with our membership was flipped

on its head. Yes, we all missed face-to-face events and networking, but we also learned a lot about the useful accessibility and reach of technology. We held 56 virtual events, shared more than 75 blogs, and pivoted all our professional development training to be delivered online.

On a personal note, I have been blown away by how our Board, our Governance Group and our volunteers around the UK made the transition to a "different way of being IoIC".

And the standouts for me have been our chief executive and HQ team.

They have made heroic efforts to keep the IoIC relevant, useful and valuable during chaos and uncertainty. Their commitment has shone through with a continuing flow of practical, proactive ideas and work-arounds to challenges in their way.

Jennifer in particular has been our lynchpin, bringing IoIC's internal family and external community together, and keeping IoIC focused and delivering.

Despite the pandemic, we have come out of 2020 and into 2021 in a far stronger position.

With perceived value of internal communication at an all-time high, it's an amazing time to be an internal communicator, and to be part of the IoIC community as we work together to help organisations succeed.

# Introduction



## **Jennifer Sproul** *Chief executive, IoIC*

*2020 was a year like no other. It was filled with challenges, an overwhelming volume of professional and personal change and the fast acceleration of trends – and we all had to adapt and keep pace with the implications brought about Covid-19.*

The internal communication profession stepped up to the plate in 2020, playing a critical role in supporting our people and organisations in the fast transition to home working, keeping our employees safe, supporting their health and wellbeing, and ensuring everyone felt informed, connected and valued in this turbulent year.

The IoIC's central aim in 2020 was to support our members through this challenging time with expert advice and resources, while enabling our community to come together and share experiences. We swiftly adapted how we operate, created our dedicated Coronavirus Advice Centre on our website, hosted over 55 webinars and online events with expert advice to help members, and published research on how the IC profession responded.

On top of this, we transitioned our professional development activities to an online format, delivered IoIC Live and our Awards events in new virtual formats, and we continued to print and circulate Voice magazine. We also joined the Government Communication Service's Covid-19 Advisory Panel, created a dedicated Taskforce, and partnered with other organisations to provide internal communication support.

# Introduction

In this annual review, you can read about the work we did in 2020 across our four strategic pillars, as we continued to focus on helping organisations and people succeed through promoting internal communication of the highest standard.

In addition to this, we continued to drive forward on our plans to promote internal communication as a career of choice, enhance the teaching provided through our Diplomas, created more practical resources and thought leadership reports and launched our refreshed Profession Map, looking at the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for internal communicators.

Although the impact of the pandemic saw our overall turnover decrease by 24% due to the cancellation of our large-scale events, we still saw a 1.5% growth in our membership and a minimal loss of (£818). This was helped by the fact that we secured over £12,000 of government funding through grant and furlough schemes. We weathered the storm, maintained our head office team, and continued to deliver all our activities and resources – all while protecting our balance sheet.

↓ **24%**

Decrease in  
annual turnover

↑ **1.5%**

Increase in  
membership

Through all these challenges and changes, I have learned an incredible amount and valued the time I have spent talking with our members and hearing how this amazing profession has supported the working lives of millions. These learnings are helping us to assess how we can better support our profession, try new ideas and work with our members to understand their long-term needs. As we work through another year of turmoil, I am confident we will come out a stronger Institute and profession.

I am incredibly grateful to the team at head office, who worked tirelessly to transition our activities and support our members while managing the uncertainty. They are passionate and dedicated and, without their commitment and support, we would not have achieved all that we did.

Sadly, in March 2021, a member of our head office team, Tim Beynon, passed away after a short battle with cancer.

Tim played a central role in helping us through last year and worked for the IoIC for over 14 years, seeing us through many changes. He was a kind and

caring man and I just want to say thank you, Tim, we are all going to miss you very much.

I would also like to thank my Board colleagues who have been an amazing support and, in particular, the members of the Governance Group who have been there on every Zoom call to not only support me with tough decisions, but also provide me with a kind and listening ear.

Finally, thank you to all our amazing volunteers who have adapted with us to ensure we continue to come together as a community and, of course, all our members, who have made it possible for us to get through this tough year.

It has been a journey and one that is not over yet, but I hope we all feel a great sense of pride in the work we have done. As we look to 2021 and beyond, we will continue to work with you to create the Institute this profession needs and deserves.

# 2020 in numbers

## Membership

**1,673**

members

**729**

new members

**110**

signed up for Covid-19 support

**1.5%**

increase in membership

## Professional Development

**55**

training courses delivered to 453 delegates

**25**

students awarded the IoIC Foundation Diploma and 11 students awarded the IoIC Advanced Diploma

**17**

students awarded the Masters in Internal Communication Management

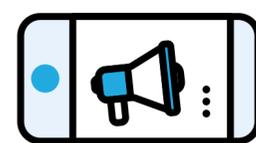
**30**

people took part in the Accelerate programme

**88**

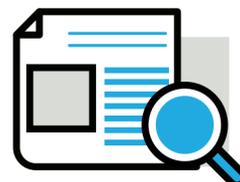
matched mentees and mentors

## Content and Resources



**56**

online events held with 2,100 registrants



**3**

peer-reviewed factsheets published

**48**

Voice Online articles and 14 new case studies posted

**75+**

blog posts written

**VOICE**

**4**

4 Voice magazine issues published



**6**

6 thought leadership reports circulated



**4**

4 podcast episodes recorded

## Regions and Networks

**12**

regional events took place, in total drawing in 450+ attendees

**6**

dedicated FutureNet events were hosted, attended by over 100 IC newcomers

## Awards

**57**

awards given out

**300+**

guests attended our virtual Award ceremonies

## Conferences

**111**

delegates attended the IoIC Live virtual event series

# Delivering a high standard of membership experience

*Our members are at the heart of the IoIC, and it is essential we create and deliver new and engaging ways for them to connect with content, engage in conversations and fully utilise their benefits.*



## **Coronavirus Advice Centre**

In the weeks leading up to our first national lockdown, we created our Coronavirus Advice Centre to support members with the provision of IoIC resources and curated content. Over time, this advice centre grew to host over 115 pieces of content on topics such as crisis communication; wellbeing; leadership; furlough communications; platforms; and remote working.

We also created our own Taskforce made up of senior internal communication practitioners, who provided valuable insight into the impact of the pandemic across a range of sectors, helping to inform our content and offer advice for members.



## **Webinars and resources**

To support our members with advice while also providing opportunities to connect and share experiences, we delivered 55 free webinars and online events for members, covering topics such as communication and culture in Covid times, employee experience, the future of work, communication planning, equipping leaders, tackling racism in the workplace, creating video content, crisis communication, user generated content, O365 for home workers, and virtual facilitation. All webinars were recorded and made available for members to access on demand.



## **Your weekly membership briefing and member lead emails**

To ensure members were regularly informed of the latest content, upcoming events and resources, we created our weekly membership briefing to ensure members were able to make use of their benefits.

In addition, every month, our Group Member Leads received an email providing a further update with emphasis on new activities.



## **Networks**

We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers who transitioned our events and activities to new virtual formats to ensure members could continue to connect and engage in insightful discussions. We launched a new Huddle format exclusively for members to come together to talk about specific challenges and collectively share experiences and advice.

Our regional networks and FutureNet (our network for newcomers) delivered a series of events and activities, including Lessons Learnt in 2020, Planning a Communication Recovery Plan, Securing your Next Role, and many more.

# Activities and highlights



## IoIC Live

We delivered our annual conference through a new four-part virtual conference series, as we looked at Facing the Future. In this series, we heard from a fantastic line-up of speakers as we explored the importance of community in a fragmented workplace, changing leadership, and building ethics and trust. We ended this series by celebrating the stories of success and award winners of 2020.



## Awards

After such a tough year, it was important to us to ensure we could come together to recognise and celebrate the amazing work of our fellow internal communicators through our award schemes.

We hosted two virtual ceremonies, free for entrants to attend, and we were delighted to see the winners join us on screen to celebrate their award wins.



## Support for members affected By Covid-19

It was important for us to support our members adversely affected by the pandemic, resulting in redundancy or a significant loss of income. We created a free six-month membership for those affected to access key resources, hosted events with tips on securing a new role and how to thrive after redundancy, and created resources to help individuals with preparing their CVs.



## Voice magazine

As the most valued benefit of our membership offer, we continued to print and circulate our quarterly membership magazine, Voice. As many members transitioned to working from home, we reached out to make sure we updated mailing details and delivered a year packed with content to help members through Covid times and more.

Features covered a wide range of topics, including how to welcome a new CEO, how Covid changed the IC landscape, the impact of fake news, workplace bullying, diversity & inclusion, rebuilding the future, using data, and the changing role of leaders.

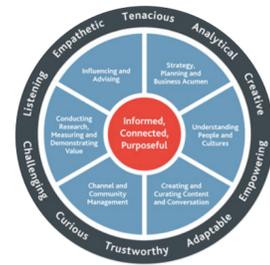


## Bringing Fellows together

To enhance the experience and bring together our valued Fellows in 2020 we launched our new Fellows roundtable events. In our first roundtable event, the group discussed 'Re-booting face to face communication in the "new" workplace environment'. We also awarded 12 new Fellowships in 2020.

# Driving the professionalisation and ethical practice of internal communication

*We continued to drive the standards of internal communication as a distinct discipline with requisite knowledge, skills and ethical standards that can be gained via education and lifelong learning.*



## 2020 Highlights

### IoIC Profession Map

The relaunch of the IoIC Profession Map was a key highlight of 2020, and we're thrilled to see its continued use and application by members and organisations.

With the support of our professional development advisory board, we refreshed the map's central purpose and professional areas, as well as the knowledge, skills and behaviours to be acquired across the levels, making the 2020 iteration an even more useful framework for all existing and aspiring internal communicators.

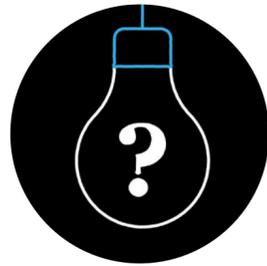
Additionally, we launched a Self-Assessment Handbook, underpinned by the Profession Map and exclusively available for members, to enable individuals to assess their current skills and knowledge and identify their professional development needs.



### Transition to virtual learning

Due to the pandemic, we swiftly moved our training portfolio to a virtual environment. But more than simply transitioning online, we assessed how to improve the experience by breaking down sessions, introducing more supportive learning exercises and making better use of our online learning environment for delegates to interact with each other, as well as their trainers, between sessions.

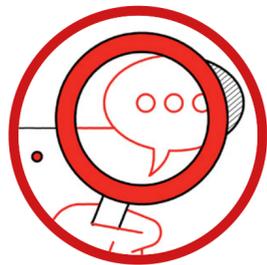
Additionally, we moved all of the teaching included in our qualification programmes to virtual formats. We also took the opportunity to increase the investment in the teaching delivered through our diploma programmes in order to improve the student experience.



### New courses

We took the opportunity to assess our training course offering against the newly refreshed Profession Map, adding new courses such as Microsoft 365, and updating others such as Introduction to Internal Communication and Communication Planning.

New courses have also been introduced to our 2021 portfolio, to include Introduction to Quantitative Research, Business Partnering for Internal Communicators, and Introduction to Behavioural Economics.



### #IChoseIC

In order to increase awareness of internal communication as a career of choice, we began our outreach programme, the #IChoseIC campaign, in 2020, proactively contacting careers education partners and supporting various initiatives that provide careers insights, as well as skills and knowledge, to people who are making decisions about their future.

In 2020, we supported events delivered by multiple educational institutions such as the University of Lincoln and Cardiff University. As part of the campaign, we also launched our series of #IChoseIC blogs, and we were thrilled to post over 22 blogs from practitioners who hoped to inspire others to choose a career in internal communication.

We hosted our first #IChoseIC webinar, creating on-demand content to showcase a career in IC. The campaign continues in 2021 with the launch of our #IChoseIC Ambassador programme.



### Taylor Bennett Foundation

It was our second year working with the Taylor Bennett Foundation, delivering our Introduction to Internal Communication session for the Taylor Bennett trainees and providing them with insights into the profession. We were also thrilled to see the Taylor Bennett Foundation supporting our #IChoseIC campaign and sharing our careers guide through its events and activities.



### Mentoring

Now in its fourth year, we continued to match more mentors and mentees through our mentoring programme. We made changes to proactively encourage more ethnic minority practitioners who were outside of membership to join the programme, while also offering a reverse mentoring option to enable IC professionals to increase their understanding and conversations to help build a more diverse and inclusive profession.

# Develop and deliver thought leadership and practical resources of the highest standards

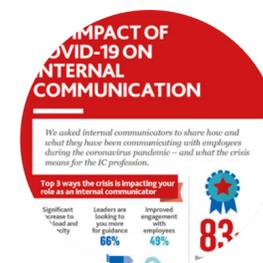
*Providing our members with the very best content, advice, and resources to tackle current challenges and future trends is fundamental to our work at the IoIC.*



## 2020 highlights

### Thought leadership reports

In 2020, we launched our first thought leadership report to look at the Future of Work Trends and their implications for the internal communication profession. The pandemic saw these trends accelerate at a rapid rate, so in 2020 we launched our report, *Why every organisation needs world class internal communication*. Through the lens of the pandemic and events of 2020, we delved deeper into these trends, looking at how they are shifting and the role of internal communication in a 21st century organisation.



### Understanding the impact Of Covid-19 on internal communication

In April 2020, we undertook a survey to understand the impact of Covid-19 on the internal communication profession. It was completed by nearly 500 respondents.

The report highlighted the challenges for practitioners and, in particular, the increased workload, the focus on wellbeing, the switch to video and digital channels and the importance of keeping employees informed regularly. Notably, the survey highlighted that 90% of respondents stated Covid-19 was having a positive impact on their role, increasing employee engagement, improving the relationship and role of leadership and increasing trust overall.

We followed up with a series of thought leadership reports looking at trust, taking care of ourselves and the importance of listening. At the end of 2020, we reached out again to see how things had changed and the priorities for 2021, and 90% of respondents reported that they continued to feel the positive impacts on their internal communication roles.



### New IoIC podcast

To further enhance our content offering, we launched our new podcast series, Internal Communication in the Raw. The format is a series of bitesize interviews with internal communication practitioners to share their insights, experiences and advice in what has been a challenging and changing year.

In our first year, we were delighted to interview Tim Rutter from Tata Steel, Bola Gibson from Osborne Clarke, Marcos Eleftheriou from Ennismore and Jody Lewis from Lloyds Banking Group. We chatted about the impact of Covid-19, how internal communication can create more inclusive organisations, and change communication.



### Peer-reviewed factsheets

We continued to produce more peer-reviewed factsheets exclusively for members, providing expert tips and advice robustly reviewed by IoIC Fellows. New topics included communicating financial results, leadership communication and communicating redundancies.



### Case studies

Accessing case studies is highly valued by our members, so we added more in 2020. New case studies covered categories from our National Awards, such as Best Feature Magazine; Best Crisis/Emergency Communication; Communicating Strategy; Culture Communication; Game Changer; Best Engagement Programme; Best Use of Social Channel; and Best Ongoing Communication. Other case study topics included supporting business transformation; helping leaders lead through lockdown; and keeping connected during Covid-19.

# Advocate for the impact of effective internal communication on organisations and working lives

*IoIC proactively and articulately advocates for the impact of internal communication on organisations and working lives.*



## 2020 highlights

### GCS Advisory Panel and report

Alongside CIPR, PRCA, CIM and LGA, the IoIC was invited to join the Government Communication Service's Covid-19 Advisory Panel to provide insight and advice from the internal communication profession. As an outcome of this group, the panel produced a far-reaching report looking at the impact of the crisis and the opportunities it presents for our collective professions. We joined a call for evidence and submitted our essays for the final report written by Stephen Waddington.



### Speaking engagements

We joined many events and conferences to speak about the internal communication profession and the impact of Covid-19. We joined panels and delivered speaker sessions with conference providers, including the Internal Communication Conference, the Austrian Embassy and DRPG Big Talk. We also joined our GCS colleagues at the Public Sector Academy event.



### Partnering and sharing resources

It was a year to come together and share advice and resources. As part of this, we were delighted to partner with CIPR to share our webinars and resources through our respective memberships, and we also worked with the CIPD to provide input into its *Covid-19: Tips for communicating with employees* resource.

# Financials

The following summary of key financial information is extracted from the audited accounts for the year 2020. A copy of the Statutory Report and Accounts have been submitted to Companies House and is available to IoIC members on request.

## Summary income and expenditure account

Income	2020	2019
Subscriptions	£230,489	£227,098
National awards	£29,755	£127,930
Conference	£19,748	£66,162
Professional development	£424,080	£476,167
Special events	£0	£7,501
Sponsorship	£39,367	£35,383
Regional events	£4,961	£51,305
Sundry income	£3,464	£3,413
<b>Total</b>	<b>£751,864</b>	<b>£994,959</b>

Other operating income	2020	2019
Government grants	£12,484	£0

Expenditure	2020	2019
Cost of sales	£384,853	£604,498
Operating costs	£380,321	£340,112
<b>Total</b>	<b>£765,174</b>	<b>£944,610</b>

Operating surplus/(deficit)	2020	2019
<b>Surplus/(deficit) before tax</b>	<b>(£818)</b>	<b>£50,349</b>

## Summary balance sheet

Income	2019	2018
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	£8,235	£8,207
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	£221,560	£230,813
Cash at bank and in hand	£164,825	£171,854
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(£275,733)	(£291,169)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>£110,652</b>	<b>£111,498</b>

<b>Net assets / Capital &amp; reserves</b>	<b>£118,887</b>	<b>£119,705</b>
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# Company details

## Our purpose

In a world of constant change, internal communication has the power to transform organisational performance and working lives by helping people feel informed, connected and purposeful.

As the only professional body dedicated to internal communication in the UK, we have been helping organisations and people succeed through promoting internal communication of the highest standard for over 70 years. An organisation that communicates well with its people can achieve greater productivity, innovation, reputation, talent and retention. Because how we communicate at work matters.



## IoIC main board

Suzanne Peck, IoIC President  
Jennifer Sproul, Chief Executive  
Liz Cochrane, Board Director  
Andrew Harvey, Board Director  
Andy Holt, Board Director  
Oli Howard, Board Director  
Justine Stevenson, Board Director  
Caroline Waddams, Board Director  
Andy Williamson, Board Director  
Colin Archer, Board Director  
Chris Coburn, Board Director  
Helen Connolly, Board Director  
Paul Diggins, Board Director  
Nicola McLaughlin, Board Director  
Claudi Schneider, Board Director  
Leona Smith, Board Director  
Krishan Lathigra, Board Director

## **Tim Beynon**

Tim Beynon, Membership & Operations manager, was with IoIC for 14 years and was a much valued and respected member of the HQ team. He was a lynchpin within the team, and his passing has had a profound impact on all who knew him.

Tim loved the IoIC, and he was always willing to go above and beyond to help members and his colleagues, offering support in whatever way he could.

Our thoughts and sympathy are with his wife and family.

You can read more about Tim in our tribute [here](#).



## Region directors

**Alastair Scott**, Scotland Region Director  
**Andy Holt**, North Region Director  
**Claire Widd**, Central Region Director  
**Nina Ghataura & Daniel Lambie**, London Region Directors  
**Catherine Finn**, Ireland Region Director  
**Graham Barton**, South Region Director

## Head office

**Jennifer Sproul**, Chief Executive  
**Sarah Magee**, Professional Development Manager  
**Rebecca Nicholls**, Events & Awards Manager  
**Richard Bowes**, Membership Development Manager  
**Daniela Girardi**, Senior Marketing Executive  
**Kirstie Godber**, Professional Development Co-ordinator

**Institute of Internal Communication**

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