



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026

INTERNATIONAL PAEDIATRIC ACADEMIC LEADERS ASSOCIATION

President's Note

This is my first Newsletter as IPALA President! I am honoured and excited to take over as President and want to record my thanks to my predecessor, Professor Kevin Forsyth, for his tireless work in leading IPALA over the last years. Kevin will continue to be a member of the IPALA Executive Committee and so we will still benefit from his wisdom and leadership. He, along with others, including Dr Bob Armstrong who has stepped down from the role of Secretary, have moved IPALA into a much more secure place and their ideas and enthusiasm over the last 3 years in particular, mean we are now able to be much more ambitious in our vision for the future. Huge thanks to Kevin and Bob.

We held a successful Annual General Meeting on 20 August 2026 and the nominations for the formal office bearer roles were approved, namely:

Secretary – Tanya Ruder

Treasurer – Matthew O'Meara

Member-at-large – Angela Migowa

Member-at-large – Omowunmie (Mo) Akindolie

We are supported by our amazing Executive Committee, and we have already had our first meeting. I am really impressed by the range of ideas and the impressive ambition for how we see IPALA playing a role in developing the capabilities of child health leaders internationally and ensuring the highest standards of academic and clinical excellence underpin our work. Many of our members are alumnae of our Leadership Academy and I am pleased to say that as the 2026 Academy is nearing completion, we have had brilliant engagement from nearly 100 scholars from around the world, most particularly South Africa. Not only have we had great speakers, I pay tribute to our facilitators who have worked hard to provide country-based sessions for reflection and learning. If the Academy reflective group that I have been co-leading is anything to go by, the future is bright for child health leadership!

Most of our activities are online and this allows us to reach as wide an audience as possible. We are working hard to improve our website and make the various online processes as straightforward as possible. We'll be updating you about new activities soon.

While online interaction is great, I personally love getting together every now and again. In person interaction seems to enable us to be so much more creative and ambitious in our thinking. At IPALA, it is our ambition to host one in person activity annually. Our last Newsletter described our 2026 meeting in Johannesburg which was one of the highlights of my year! In 2027 we will meet in Kigali, Rwanda, at the International Pediatric Association 2027 conference ([IPA Congress website](#)) and I hope some of you may be able to join us there. We will share more information about that as our plans evolve – but rest assured we have some exciting plans!

Please contact us if you have any ideas or questions by emailing contact@ipala.org

With my best wishes

Camilla Kingdon

Leadership Insights and Resources

- Effective healthcare leaders create psychologically safe environments where team members feel able to speak up, question decisions, and share concerns without fear of blame. This supports learning, patient safety and innovation.
- Leadership is not only about individual influence; it is about creating the conditions for teams to work, learn and improve together.

Suggested Read:

Dharmarajah K, Laurent S, Jacob H, Kingdon C. Being kind and strong: compassionate leadership within child health. Paediatrics and Child Health. 2023 Sep 1;33(9):272-6.

Leadership Academy Highlights

The **2026 IPALA Leadership Academy** brought together emerging paediatric leaders from across the international community for a programme focused on leadership development, collaboration and professional growth. As the Academy drew to a close, we invited participants and facilitators to reflect on their experiences, the insights they gained, and the impact of being part of this year's programme. In this section, we share some of their reflections and perspectives on the 2026 Leadership Academy.

I am eternally grateful to have been asked to participate in this IPALA initiative. Having been in Paediatrics as a leader in the academic space, these sessions were an opportunity to understand what the perspectives of young Paediatric specialists regarding Leadership, Quality Clinical Service provision, Research and Self-development are, which helped me to understand, and enhance my own approaches to my style of Leadership and Mentorship. I enjoyed the discussions. I have learnt with and from the group.

Thank you to IPALA for allowing me to serve in this meaningful way.

– **Prof Dini Mawela, South Africa**

Facilitating local discussion groups at this year's IPALA Leadership Academy was an inspiring reminder of why investing in our future and ongoing collaboration is so vital to providing high-quality care and fulfilling careers as physicians. Engaging with and learning from global leaders who offered pragmatic advice on key themes motivated our scholars to launch new initiatives in leadership, patient safety, research, and teaching.

Watching the participants lean into complex challenges with such curiosity and shared purpose was remarkable. Programs like this don't just build individual skills – they cultivate a global network of passionate paediatric academics dedicated to shaping the future of child health. For me, facilitating these discussions also provided a valuable opportunity to apply theoretical insights directly to our local workplaces and establish meaningful connections with other emerging leaders. – **Dr Lindsey Ross, Australia**



Annual General Meeting 2026

Highlights

On 20 August 2026, IPALA held its Annual General Meeting virtually, bringing members together to reflect on the organisation's progress and shape its next chapter. Members reaffirmed IPALA's commitment to developing paediatric leaders through education, research, leadership development, and health-system strengthening.

A growing global community: The Leadership Academy continues to expand, with regional facilitation groups supporting its growing international cohort. Looking ahead, IPALA is exploring an Advanced Leadership Academy and a new Leadership Lab, providing alumni with ongoing opportunities for peer learning, mentorship, problem-solving and collaboration.

Strengthening research capacity: Members discussed IPALA's emerging role in promoting research equity, particularly by supporting paediatricians in low- and middle-income countries. Future work may include connecting existing child-health research networks and strengthening mentorship for clinicians developing new research programmes and collaborations.

From leadership to health systems: A new Workforce & Health Systems initiative is being developed to build expertise in child-health workforce planning, policy and health-system performance. Proposed activities include webinars, advocacy initiatives and a potential certificate programme.

Connecting leaders across the globe: IPALA remains committed to being a truly global organisation, with members highlighting the importance of balanced geographic and gender representation as the association grows. The next major opportunity for global engagement will be the IPA Congress in Kigali, Rwanda, in September 2027, where IPALA hopes to host a leadership workshop.

Looking ahead: In closing, Dr Camilla Kingdon highlighted the growing global need for paediatric leadership development and the strong foundation built by IPALA. She emphasised that future growth should be measured and sustainable, with the ultimate aim of equipping paediatricians with the skills, confidence and influence to advocate effectively for children and child health.

IPALA Leadership Toolbox

Are you considering a child health research project but unsure where to begin? The new **IPALA Research Starter Toolkit** offers a practical introduction to developing a focused research question, reviewing the available evidence, addressing ethical requirements, identifying collaborators and funding opportunities, and building research skills along the way. Designed for clinicians and emerging researchers across a range of settings, the toolkit includes useful checklists, direct links to trusted resources and a clear pathway from an initial idea to a feasible research project.

[Download the IPALA Research Starter Toolkit here.](#)