

John Cawley
Candidate Statement for the Election of IHEA President

Current positions:

- Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Cornell University (USA)
- Honorary Professor, University of Galway (Ireland)
- Research Associate, NBER

Previous involvement with IHEA:

- IHEA Board of Directors, 2022 - present
- IHEA Finance Committee, 2022 - present
- IHEA Nominating Committee, 2017 – 2020
- IHEA Selection Committee for the Kenneth J. Arrow Award, 2011 – 2016
- Closing plenary speaker (joint), 2015 IHEA Congress
- IHEA Scientific Committee: 2014, 2011, 2009, and 2007 Congresses
- Co-convenor and co-founder, IHEA Special Interest Group (SIG) on the Economics of Risky Health Behaviors, 2023 - present

Candidate statement:

I am standing for election as President because IHEA has been important to my research and career, and I would be happy and honored to work to ensure that it continues to evolve with the times to best serve the needs of its members.

IHEA brings together health economists from around the world with complementary research interests, and facilitates the exchange of information about data, methods, best practices, and new findings. To further IHEA's goals and impact, several issues need to be addressed. The fees for IHEA Congresses are high, which is an obstacle for some researchers and works against our goals of diversity and inclusion. It will be important to seek out additional sponsors, both to limit conference fees for everyone, and to have targeted scholarships, e.g. for early-career scholars and those from low- and middle-income countries. Efforts to further grow the membership of IHEA will help by providing a broader base of membership dues and economies of scale in the conference.

A major challenge that the next President will face is the retirement of our long-serving (but hopefully not long-suffering) Executive Director, Di McIntyre. Di has given loyal service to IHEA, and her dedication and commitment will be very difficult to replace. A comprehensive search will have to be undertaken, with an openness to redefine the position of Executive Director to give more responsibilities to the management company, based on the qualifications and interests of the new hire.

To expand and improve IHEA, we have to center Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We need to work with the regional and national organizations to identify promising researchers to whom we can reach out with information about IHEA in order to solicit their membership. We should also provide detailed information about how to put together successful abstract and panel submissions for the IHEA Congresses, in order to share the "hidden curriculum" and facilitate broad and diverse participation. We must recruit diverse slates of candidates to stand for election, so that IHEA has a membership and leadership that represents the world.

It is critically important that the scholarship presented at the Congress is first-rate and cutting-edge. I would use the plenaries and a limited number of organized sessions to bring members up to speed on methodological developments and new lines of inquiry within health economics. There are many competing health economics conferences available, and we must ensure that IHEA's program is sufficiently high-quality that even the most accomplished scholars make participation in it a top priority.

A long-standing project of mine is helping to prepare Ph.D. candidates for success on the job market. I would expand IHEA's mentorship programs, online resources, and conference events for job candidates in the field of health economics. Sharing the "hidden curriculum" of professional development will lower barriers, promote meritocracy, and help grow our organization.

IHEA has a vitally important role in promoting excellence in health economics research worldwide, and I look forward to working with all of you to further strengthen and improve this organization that's so important to our field.