



IRIS ALMEIDA CÔTÉ, ICD.D/IAS.A., LL.M., M.A, IIA-CGAP.

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Curriculum Vitae

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- 2016-present: President and Chief Executive Officer, INNOVACONNECT Inc.
- 2015-2016: Executive Director, The Royal Society of Canada
- 2012-2015: Executive Director, Strategic Management, International Association for Public Participation
- 2012 – Founding President, INNOVACONNECT Inc. Strategic Management & Impact Assessment Services.
- 2009-2012: President, Canada World Youth
- 2006-2009: Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Pension and Benefits Institute
- 1991-2006: Senior Director, Parliamentary Centre, Rights and Democracy
- 1988-1991: Director of Programs, Partnership Africa Canada
- 1986-1988: Assistant Secretary General, CIDSE (Brussels)
- 1982-1986: Président, Mouvement international d'étudiants universitaires (Paris).

EDUCATION AND ACCREDITATIONS :

- Cybersecurity and Enterprise Risk Management, Harvard University, 2020.
- Government of Canada Audit Group, Canadian Space Agency - Treasury Board of Canada, Member, Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), 2018.
- Director Education Program, University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management and the Institute of Corporate Directors, (ICD.D), 2016.
- Masters in International Law (LL.M.) Université du Québec à Montréal, 2001.
- Masters of Arts (Sociology), University of Bombay, 1983.
- Bachelors of Arts (Economics and Sociology), Honours, St. Francis Xavier's, University of Bombay, 1980.
- Finance and Governance (*Services Financiers et Gouvernance*), Collège des administrateurs de sociétés, Université Laval, 2014.
- Governance for SMEs (Small and medium enterprises) *Institut sur la gouvernance des organisations privée et publiques* – IGOP, 2013.
- Gouvernances des établissements de la santé, l'Association Québécoise des établissements de santé et des services sociaux et l'IGOP, 2012.
- Advanced Management, McGill International Executive Institute, Desautels Faculty of Management, 2005.
- Beyond Management to Leadership, McGill University, Desautels Faculty of Management, 2002.
- Executive Leadership Management Training for Senior Executives in the Federal Public Service, Canadian Centre for Management, Ottawa, 1996.
- Certificate of Conversation, Culture and Business writing (Spanish) - Eurocentro, Barcelona (1986); Universidad de Salamanca, 1984.
- Diploma in Conversation and Business writing (French), *Université de Censier et Sorbonne Nouvelle*, Paris, 1983.

LANGUAGES:

Fluent in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Hindi
Government of Canada (SLE tests – ECC score March 2012).

AWARDS:

- Exceptional Women of Excellence - Women of the Decade in Risk Management - Women's Economic Forum (2018).
- Prix Reconnaissance UQAM – pour l'excellence de la réussite et de l'engagement Outstanding Alumni - Faculty of Law and Political Science, (2014).
- SME Passeport Award in International Commerce and Partnerships, Caisse de Dépôt et de Placement du Québec and the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal (2012-2013).
- Diversity 50 initiative, Women and Visible Minorities on Corporate Boards, presented by the Canadian Board Diversity Council (2012)
- Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women Awards presented by the Women's Executive Network (2011) and (2008).
- Women of Merit Award for service in the community, Foundation Y des femmes (2009).
- *Prix d'Excellence*, presented by the Réseau des femmes d'affaires du Québec (2007)

MEMBERSHIPS – AFFILIATIONS :

- Institute of Corporate Directors.
- Institute of Internal Auditors - Government of Canada Audit Group
- Women in Finance Network
- Women's Economic Forum
- The Corporation of the Sainte Justine University Hospital.
- Public Relations Without Borders
- Canadian Society of Association Executives

SENIOR MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

President and Chief Executive Officer, INNOVACONNECT Inc. (April 2012 – current)

INNOVACONNECT Inc. is federally incorporated since 2012 and continues to provide executive leadership, finance and audit training, enterprise risk management; strategic planning and environment, social and governance (ESG) impact assessments and equity, diversity and inclusion policies frameworks and programs to private sector enterprises and academic institutions. Iris has set up strategic public-private partnerships in over eighty countries during the thirty-eight year career and contributes the best of this experience to INNOVACONNECT and Boards of Directors at this time.

Results Achieved in the Past Eight Years:

Iris served as Strategic Adviser in the development and facilitation of the five-year Scientific Program of Action process for the Energy, Materials and Telecommunications Research Centre in Varennes (Québec) in 2020.

Iris conducted Transformative Leadership Programs, Human Resource policies and organisational development for the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund of the Assembly of First Nations in 2019-2020.

She has offered stewardship in the five-year strategic planning process at the *Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique* (INRS) a globally renowned graduate university composed of four teaching and research Centers of Excellence in 2018-2019. Iris proposed participatory methodologies in the five-year strategic planning process and assisted in establishing a common vision, an environmental scan, strategic directions and a framework to guide the organization's operational plan. Her expertise in finance, risk, audit and cybersecurity and well as the establishment of performance indicators to measure results and brand identity helped the INRS to enhance alignment and interdisciplinary collaboration among the diverse centres of excellence, to strengthen strategic communications for greater impact. The INRS is composed of four research and teaching centers namely: the Water, Earth and Environment Research Centre focuses on improving environmental protection, conservation and development of natural resources and sustainable management of water and land resources; the Urbanisation, Culture and Society Research Centre focuses on cultural diversity, immigration, social exclusion and vulnerability, decentralization and democracy, mobility and migration; the *Institut Armand-Frappier* Research Centre focuses on infectious diseases, immunity, cancer and epidemiology, microbiology, environmental toxicology and chemical pharmacology; the Energy, Materials and Telecommunications Research Centre focuses on nanotechnology, photonics, telecommunications and sustainable energy.

Iris was nominated in 2018 to the Canadian Space Agency Departmental Audit Committee by the Comptroller General of Canada and reports to the President. Her work is focussed on finance, audit, review of internal controls and oversight, cybersecurity audit and oversight on progress in the implementation of the strategic plan.

In 2017 and 2018, Iris served as a Strategic Adviser for Research and Organisational development at the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Development Council. Her work focussed on Quality Assurance and credentialing of Indigenous post-secondary education and training Institutes. She worked with the leadership to pioneer the strategic planning and organizational work plan processes to enhance Indigenous Board Governance, Finance Management and Audit. This work focused on the reconciliation, revitalization of indigenous cultures, languages, legal traditions, and worldviews and knowledge-sharing that is rooted in the respect and promotion of the unique perspectives of Indigenous students, technical institute's trainees and their communities. The innovations in this work are demonstrable through the participatory research methods she developed together with Indigenous community leaders and knowledge givers. It also included the framing of indigenous models of governance, ethical code of conduct, restorative processes for mediation and dispute resolution, audit, performance measurement and the risk management scorecard using indigenous knowledge and experience emphasizes indigenous ways in establishing organizational success and long-term sustainability.

Iris has facilitated strategic planning, financial literacy and audit workshops for leadership for Small and Medium Enterprise in the Health Care Sector: These include: IMA Santé and Plakett Services Clinique in 2015-2018. She coached the leadership and staff of Nataka Mode and Design and REFA Canada – a network of immigrant entrepreneurs in Leadership, Branding and Business Development in 2012-2015.

PAST LEADERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR:

Executive Director – The Royal Society of Canada (August 2015 – August 2016) contract

The Royal Society of Canada (RSC) is a not-for-profit organisation was established in 1882 as a collegium of Canadian scholars and scientists. RSC comprises three bilingual academies namely, Sciences, Social Sciences and the Arts and Humanities. The Academy of includes four divisions: Applied Sciences and Engineering, Earth, Oceans and Atmospheric sciences, life sciences and Mathematics and Physical Sciences. Working closely with fifty-seven Universities members across Canada, the RSC through a peer-review process selects annually eighty distinguished scholars to join the 2,800 strong fellows and recognises and celebrates excellence. Iris was the first female Executive Director of the RSC in its 133 years history.

Results Achieved:

- Managed the contractual relationship with fifty-seven Universities for the selection of Canada's scholars and scientists to receive awards and recognition.
- Directed the Programs of the Academies of Science, Social Science and Arts and Humanities.
- Built the case for support for the new College of Scholars, Artists and Scientists.
- Provided strategic accompaniment in change management and financial audit processes
- Researched and developed the Governance policies and established the statutory committees of the Board.
- Prepared the terms of reference and supervised the independent human resources audit.
- Reduced overhead costs and obtained major saving using lean management processes and negotiated contracts with service providers for changes to the IT technology, VOIP telephone system, the emails server, the database, e-blasts and web communications.
- Managed the complete renovation and restoration of the national secretariat in Ottawa.

Executive Director – Strategic Management, IAP2 (March 2012 – July 2015) contract

Working in cooperation with a team of forty certified trainers and associates as well as over 2000 members in Canada, USA, France, UK, Italy, Portugal, South Africa, Indonesia and Australia, the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) provides national and international organisations with certified training in stakeholder engagement and capacity building expertise in organisational development, strategic planning and communications. She was responsible for conducting research-action project to empower the leadership of organisations by providing tools and methodologies to conduct effective stakeholder engagement in the fields of education, environment, mining and infrastructure projects.

Results Achieved:

- Coordinated the international learning and development activities of the International Association for Public Participation
- Trained senior executives in leadership development, governance, organisational development, strategic planning, government relations and community engagement.

- Supervised senior staff and managed the global operations, including staff in remote locations;
- Organised the first Strategic diplomacy training for the British High Commission in Canada.
- Prepared a governance handbook for the International Board as well as for national chapters.

President and CEO, Canada World Youth

(June 2009 – April 2012)

Canada World Youth is recognised leader in the field of education and training for dynamic young leaders, of diverse cultural communities, in the age range of 17 to 35 years. Focused on youth leadership development and entrepreneurship, CWY promotes experiential learning and leadership in health, water, sanitation and climate change community projects, connecting Canadian youth with partner organisations in the Ukraine, Indonesia, India, Vietnam, South-Africa, and Colombia.

Results Achieved:

- Developed the first global Aboriginal Youth Excellence program with guidance from Metis and First Nations community leaders to implement the program.
- Coached the senior management and managed the global operations of CWY.
- Developed the five-year strategic plan and budget
- Obtained contributions and corporate sponsorships of CDN. \$50 million, from private and public sources.
- Established a framework of governance and financial risk management and decreased the administrative costs of the organisation from 35% to 14.79 %.
- Put into place an intranet system to make accessible to staff and Board members information on new organisational policies and best practices.
- Coordinated the move to more effective IT system and established a new database and strengthened linkages with over 35,000 CWY alumni from across Canada.
- Conducted research and set up an educational campaign in 50 schools, Colleges and Universities on the themes of the environment, health, gender and the UN Sustainable Millennium Development Goals.
- Mobilised 450 municipalities across Canada in a national advocacy initiative focused on recognising young leaders and their competencies.

Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Pension & Benefits Institute (Montreal)

May 2006-May 2009

A leading trade association providing 3,500 senior executives from Canadian banks, insurance companies and human resource agencies active in the pensions, benefits and investments management, with membership services and accredited executive education programs and policy development.

Results Achieved:

- Established in association with the Board of Directors, the directors and provincial representatives the three-year strategic business plan.
- Lead the Canadian operations from the national office and provide high-quality bi-lingual services to members.

- Strengthened digital communications and cooperation between the nine provincial/chapter offices across Canada.
- Hired and coached an eight-member management team.
- Increased the institutional programs and activities by 50% and the number of members by 15%.
- Restructured all of the financial services and increased annual revenues by 30%.
- Established a new corporate framework for good governance and published a governance policies manual, based on research on best practices in the industry.
- Developed a new website and implemented a new strategic digital communication plan.

Senior Director, Parliamentary Centre - Rights and Democracy October 1991-April 2006

Established by an Act of Parliament of Canada in 1988, Rights and Democracy provides technical advice to Governments and supports the building of democratic institutions and practices. The programs focussed on the rule of law, education, election preparedness and the strengthening of national human rights compliance mechanisms. Enjoying consultative status at the UN (ECOSOC), its global programs promote rights and freedoms guaranteed by the United Nations Charter on Human Rights. Working with governments, United Nations agencies and civil society organisations in Rwanda, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South-Africa, China, Indonesia, Haiti, Colombia and Peru the organization contributed to the global effort to establish the International Criminal Court, the Ad-hoc tribunals on the former Yugoslavia as well as on Rwanda and the African Court.

Results Achieved:

- Set up the Rule of Law programs in partnership with Canadian legal experts and partners in fifty countries in the Americas, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.
- Analysed the policies and reports on national electoral processes, human rights and the state of advancement of democratic institutions and made recommendations to governments.
- Evaluate the impact of programs focussed on children and women's human rights and indigenous peoples' living in remote areas across Canada.
- Presented submissions at the request of Parliamentary committees of the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada.
- Hired, trained and managed twenty direct reports and a budget of CDN. \$10 million annually.
- Prepared the strategic plan and programs (2000-2005) and the (2005-2010) periods.
- Set up the Ombudsman Office in Haiti and provided technical support to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Peru.
- Assisted in the drafting of the Democratic Charter for the Organisation of American States and proposed mechanisms for mediation of disputes with indigenous communities in Canada, Mexico, Colombia and Guatemala.
- Provided technical expertise for the creation of national human rights commissions in Afghanistan, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Nepal.
- Collaborated with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) on a project protecting the rights of indigenous peoples' arts and traditional designs.
- Conducted the research to advocate for the United National Convention on Persons with Disabilities.

- Designed and managed the Indigenous Women in the Americas network to facilitate exchanges and cooperation.
- Assisted the organisation of the Nobel Peace Prize laureates' mission for the restoration of Democracy in Burma which received media coverage in over 100 media outlets.

Director of Programs, Partnership Africa Canada

October 1988-October 1991

A coalition of eighty non-governmental organisations and academic research institutes, Partnership Africa Canada received significant support from Canada's Foreign Minister, The Right Honourable Joe Clark in 1986, at the UN Special session on African recovery and development. Following recurrent humanitarian crisis and significant resources invested in relief operations, PAC was established as a vehicle to support Canada's long-term economic and social development partnerships in Africa. Iris was appointed as the first Director of Programs and she initiated large scale twinning projects between educators, doctors, nurses, mid-wives, lawyers, judges and youth to exchange research, technologies and best practices across Canada and Africa.

Results Achieved:

- Prepared policy briefs on country situations and program effectiveness of Canadian international development cooperation in support of democracy, rule of law and election monitoring initiatives in the following countries: Ethiopia, Eritria, Kenya, Rwanda, Cameroon, Senegal, Zimbabwe and South Africa.
- Managed multi-year grants and contributions of \$75 million provided in by the Government of Canada, Norway, as well as African regional organisations focussed on long-term economic recovery and sustainable development.
- Supervised and conducted performance appraisal of eight direct reports and fifteen consultants.
- Established a management and peer evaluation process – creation of a Program Committee for project selection, monitoring and impact assessment.

Assistant Secretary General, CIDSE (Brussels)

January 1986 -October 1988

International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE) is an international donor agency established as a headquarters of a global consortium of philanthropic organisations based in Europe, North-America and Australasia providing financial support to over 6,000 projects in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. A member of the World Bank-NGO committee it holds UN ECOSOC status and assists its members in policy, research, funding and evaluation of international projects.

Results Achieved:

- Coordinated the dialogue meetings with national governments and the European Union in the co-funding of major economic development projects, (matching funds mechanism), for the benefit of Lomé convention - least developed countries.
- Represented the organisation in national and international policy forums on women's rights, youth, indigenous peoples' rights, and humanitarian action.

- Negotiated contribution agreements with the European Economic Community (currently referred to as the European Union DG VIII) focussed on development aid programs on behalf of the European and North American institutional partners.
- Provided policy advice to European parliamentarians on the management of third world debt, poverty alleviation programs and mediation efforts in conflict zones – Central America, Indo-China and Southern Africa.

President, *Mouvement international d'étudiants universitaires (Paris)* February 1982-January 1986

MIEC – IYCS is an international organization of national youth organisations from over eight-seven countries. Holding consultative status with the UN (ECOSOC) and the regional bodies of the UN, it is focussed on higher education and training of youth leaders with job skills to compete in global markets. Through involvement in economic development activities and the sharing of best practices in youth engagement, Iris represented the organisation at the United Nations.

Results Achieved:

- Co-presided, with the UNESCO Secretary General, of the World Conference on Youth in Barcelona (Spain) in 1985.
- Managed the International staff team of eight elected youth leaders, based at the headquarters in Paris. Coordinated the policy research, impact evaluation and stewarded governance processes.
- Established relations with Governments, UN Agencies, European and North-American foundations and donors in support of national Youth skills training programs.

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS:

Iris enjoys the culinary arts, gardening and tennis.

She has a passion for philanthropy and is involved in pro-bono coaching and mentorship of young leaders in the community.

CV Update: 2020-2021.