

WPP Talent Director Frances Illingworth elected new President of 'edcom' – the EACA Education Institute

Lisbon, 16 May 2013: Frances Illingworth, Global Recruitment Director at WPP, has been elected President of edcom, the European Institute for Commercial Communications Education, for the period 2013-2015.

edcom was founded in 2007 by EACA, the European Association of Communications Agencies, to promote excellence in commercial communications education and research, enhance communication and co-operation between the European commercial communication sector and academic partners, to facilitate cross-border education, employment and exchange of commercial communications students and to promote knowledge and understanding of innovative advertising and communication techniques and new use of media and other public platforms.

“I am honoured to have been asked to take on the Presidency of edcom from 2013. Having been associated with EFCCE (now edcom) for some years I have watched it mature and develop into a highly effective organisation, devoted to the pursuit of higher standards and relevance for young people entering our industry. My predecessor has put great emphasis on extending learning opportunities for our students and academics, and I believe our 'product', as it were, represents the gold standard in communications' education. So now our network is truly international and continues to grow, and the quality of our graduates is amongst the best, I intend, during my Presidency to place emphasis on building edcom's relationship with our member agencies. In my role as a Director of Talent, I listen constantly to the complaint that there is not enough good talent in our industry. Only we can address this issue, and it starts with our commitment to young talent”, said Illingworth, introducing her programme.

The new edcom President's objectives will be to:

- beat the drum for increasing the number of young people entering our business, which includes the development, career opportunities and reward given to them
- continue to emphasise the need for alignment between our talent strategies and the skill set of our graduates, so our schools can prepare graduates for the workplace as it will look in five and ten years' time.

“Specifically in relation to edcom members, I intend to build the reputation of our graduates across the industry, in particular amongst senior business leaders, who are best placed to commit to greater numbers and relevant retention strategies. This is not something that will be achieved quickly and I envisage the next two years as the beginning of a step change in our overall commitment to our young people. I have enormous respect for Dominic Lyle and his team at the EACA, who work tirelessly for the greater success of our organisation and look forward to partnering with them and the other members of the edcom Board,” added Frances Illingworth.

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EACA, the European Association of Communications Agencies, brings together the advertising, media and sales promotions agencies across Europe, enabling international experience and issues to be shared and dealt with on a pan-European basis. It provides an important link between agencies, advertisers and the advertising media in Europe and around the world and participates closely in the setting of standards in many aspects of the business across Europe.