Candidate Name

Amarah Khan, Certified Organizational Ombuds

Candidate Title

Executive Director, Office of the Employee Ombud

Organization

City of Seattle, Office of the Employee Ombud

Candidate Statement

Serving on the IOA board for the past few years has been a true honor. IOA's growing community of professionals has taught me and lifted me up as I dedicate myself to being a facilitator of dialogue and respectful discourse. Organizational Ombuds serving in municipal governments are still a small group, I have had the privilege to be invited to consult with other municipalities as they establish a new ombuds service. I have been able to mentor and guide emerging and new Ombuds on adherence to standards and code of ethics. Above all, I have steered IOA towards a more sustainable financial outlook. If granted this opportunity to serve another term, I want to continue our efforts to bring new partnerships on board. Make room for international and multicultural voices, and support practitioners as they get certified.

Pathway to the Profession

IOA is uniquely positioned to standardize the Ombuds profession, through rigorous enforcement of standards of practice, greater pathways to certification and more learning content for all levels of practice. I take pride in the incredible amount of work we accomplished to create a new 'program certification' pathway, while also updating requirements for individual certification. We have re-written, modernized and updated IOA's standards of practice and supported volunteer run committees to be true incubators of innovative ideas and practice. I want to sustain these efforts and make IOA accessible to Ombuds wherever they are practicing.

IOA Values

For IOA to be a truly international network, we have to make it easier from practitioners from around the world to join, learn, participate and thrive. My own ombuds journey has been so diverse and unusual, I want to create welcoming pathways for traditional and unconventional ombuds practices to coalesce and thrive as we learn from each other. For this dream of bigger, more inclusive international association to exist, my vision is to prioritize affordability through revenue diversification so we can fund inclusive endeavors and innovative learning solutions that appeal to a multicultural audience.

Volunteer or Leadership Experience

IOA has been my second professional home and learning hub since 2019. I volunteered to serve on the Board of Certification, first as a treasurer and then as a board liaison. I have been a member of the DEIAB

committee, and the finance committee. In 2023, I was elected to the IOA board of directors. I have since served as the IOA treasurer and chair of the finance committee.

Professional Expertise

I am a researcher and scholar. I enjoy developing learning content. In 2025, I joined a group of other scholars in developing and teaching a Leadership Academy for more seasoned Ombuds professionals. I have served as IOA's treasurer with great dedication and ensured our financials are in good health. From oversight of investment strategies to cultivating new donors, I have led from the front. I am very invested in diversifying our partnerships with likeminded corporate and public sector partners who are aligned with IOA's mission, values and services.

Candidate Bio

I have been serving as the inaugural director of the Ombuds Office for the city of Seattle since 2019. I was the director of equity and inclusion at the Renton School District prior to this appointment. My career started with the UN in 2003, and I served as an international aid and development professional for a decade. My doctoral studies brought me back to higher education sector and I served as the associate director for global diversity initiatives at Oregon State University.