

Statement of Candidature for the ALICE Collaboration Board Chair

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Firstly, I would like to thank those who nominated me and encouraged me to stand for the Collaboration Board Chair. Being considered for this important post within the Collaboration is an honor and after careful consideration and with the support of my group, I have decided to accept this candidature.

Since 2021 when Silvia Masciocchi first proposed me as Secretary of the Collaboration Board (CB), and then in 2022 when Marielle Chartier asked me to stand as Deputy Chair of the CB, I have become increasingly involved and interwoven with the intricacies, the heartbeat, and the emotional state of the Collaboration. From within the Collaboration and its Board, the experiment is realized. Any decision, be it at the technical, physics, financial, or social level is taken by the CB at its regular meetings. Governed by our Constitution the power of co-decision by any member of the Collaboration and voting rights to those eligible to vote on behalf of their team or group, are defined and guaranteed. However, this system has undergone a lingering annulment over the past few years. More often a stage is reached where this decision-making is hamstrung and severely threatened. This situation and state of affairs are seemingly characterized by a lack of responsibility on the part of the voting body of the CB, which is something that needs urgent attention. Addressing this condition with the help of the CB chair's office and all available avenues would be one of the first actions that I would undertake.

Testing and maintaining the functionality of the CB is critically important, especially given that endeavors like the ongoing Run 3 and the exciting prospects of the upgrade program proceed in parallel and provide an ever-increasing scope to the experiment. In this regard, the CB will play an increasingly important role in ensuring its stakeholders remain informed and kept aware of the duties and tasks at hand. Active monitoring and participation by the CB Chair's office in the regular meetings of the Management Board, Physics Board, Technical Board, Run Coordination, Editorial Board, Conference Committee, Service Work Board, Upgrade Coordination, and meetings with the Diversity office and Juniors will be vital in staying abreast with the operations and the eventual implementations of decisions taken by the CB.

The quality of the harvest of physics results from Run 3 relies on an efficient and dedicated data-taking strategy and campaign conducted at Point 2. Here, the Technical Board and Run Coordination require continuous support from the CB. Since

the data analysis and reduction starts at Point 2, the close-knit and synchronized cooperation between Run Coordination, the Online-offline Particle Data Production group, the Data Preparation and Reconstruction group, Trigger Coordination, and the Physics Board is crucial in providing high-quality Run 3 data and guidance for the further and individual data analysis. Here, the Physics Board, as the over-arching coordinator of realizing the rich physics program, needs continued support from the CB.

While this thrust goes hand in hand with ensuring high-quality presentations at international Conferences and published papers the role of the Conference Committee and Editorial Board in this regard is paramount in adhering to the data handling and publication policies of the Collaboration.

Apart from the ongoing activities around Run 3, the upgrade programs for Run 4 and ALICE 3 are gaining momentum. Thanks to many groups' sterling efforts, both projects are on track despite the tight timelines. Here, the CB will play an increasing role, in conjunction with the Management Board, Upgrade Coordination, Service Work, and Resource Boards, to ensure efficient use of resources and welcome new teams into the Collaboration.

Most of our efforts are coming to fruition owing to the significant contributions made by the members of the Junior community of ALICE. Hence, it remains of utmost importance to the CB to maintain the special relationship with the Juniors and provide a mouthpiece and co-decision to them, at the CB.

Reaching the various goals of the experiment in the short and long term will largely depend on the spirit in which the Collaboration and its members interact with each other. In this sense, we will be further guided and assisted by the input provided by the Diversity and Inclusivity office ensuring respectful, tolerant, fair, and unbiased conduct by each member of the Collaboration.

With the CB Chair team, I will address and realize these goals and react to challenges ahead, in all conscience and the interest of the Collaboration.

My Background

I graduated from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in 1992 and worked from 1994 - 95 as a post-doctoral fellow on the GEM experiment at the COSY, FZ-Jülich, Germany. Since 1987, I have been employed at iThemba LABS outside Cape Town, South Africa. I started my career as an experimental nuclear physicist. Under the leadership of Prof Zeblon Vilakazi and the late Prof Jean Cleymans, I joined ALICE in 2008 and have been a member of the muon group and heavy-flavor leptons (HFL) since.

My positions in ALICE include Period Run Coordinator during Run 1 in September 2012, Run Coordinator during Run 2 in 2016, member of the Conference Committee from 2017 – 2021, Secretary of the CB from 2021 – 2022, and Deputy CB Chair from 2022 – 2025.

Currently, I am a Senior Researcher at iThemba LABS and Deputy Team Leader of the South African Group. As a member of the muon group I have organized the international muon week of ALICE, held in Cape Town, on two occasions, in March 2012 and April 2019. I served on the local organizing committees of the Hard Probes Conference 2013 and the Workshop on Discovery Physics at the LHC (Kruger 2014 and 2018). Over the past ten years as part of the outreach program, I participated in hosting the International Masterclasses in ALICE to local high school learners. Recently I joined the LHC Early Career Mentoring Program. Within the local activities of the muon group and HFL, I have co-supervised seventeen MSc and PhD students and mentored four post-doctoral fellows.

Looking into the future and as a member of the South African team, I have joined the ALICE 3 TOF detector project.

*“For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf,
and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.”*

Rudyard Kipling