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À Strasbourg, le 2 May. 2022

Objet : Letter of reference for M. Lorenzo IMBESI

Madame, Monsieur,

I am pleased to share my professional and personal thoughts on M.Lorenzo IMBESI in support of his candidacy for the presidency of the Cumulus Association.

I have known Lorenzo since 2007 when we first met at the Cumulus meeting hosted by l'Ecole de design, Nantes Atlantique. At the time I was a design practitioner and part-time design educator. Lorenzo welcomed me warmly into the bewildering environment of a Cumulus conference. Clearly an outstanding academic I appreciated his professional experience and inclusive approach. It was with his (and others) encouragement and support, I was able to bring ESAD Reims (where I had established the Eco-Design program) into the association.

My contact and friendship grew with Lorenzo.

The pivotal Kyoto meeting in 2008 where leaders of Art and Design schools articulated their engagement to align the fundamentals of education to meet the social and environmental challenges that the new century presented was a time of active discussion and justified optimism. The 'bridge building' that Lorenzo is so good at, was fundamental to the positive outcomes of that meeting.

I went on to run the Masters program in Responsible Innovation at EDNA Nantes while maintaining my professional practice. I wasn't always able to attend the annual meetings but those that I did, I appreciated catching up with Lorenzo and developing further the associative collaborations which underpin Cumulus.

In 2015, I was approached to take the direction of LISAA Strasbourg. L'Institut Supérieur d'Arts Appliqués (LISAA) sits alongside several other Art and Design Schools (Marangoni, Strate, Belcour, Penninghen, Macromedia University, NABA, Cours Florent, Atelier de Sevres) as a part of Galileo Global Education. I have been actively developing the international ambitions of my 300+ strong design school ever since.

Like all Cumulus members we had to change our practice overnight to meet the realities of the Covid pandemic. I was impressed by Lorenzo and his team at Sapienza University's organization of 2020 and 2021 Cumulus conference. Good results under difficult circumstances.

The challenges facing the direction of Cumulus are clear.

The important task of structuring the association for future growth while building on core values and spirit of this remarkable representative body of Art and Design educators requires the federating qualities that Lorenzo has in abundance.

Lorenzo has my personal and my institutions full support in his candidacy.

Sincerely

Benjamin Walker
Directeur
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Établissement d'enseignement
technique privé reconnu par le Ministère
de la Culture et de la Communication