

## **MINT Incorporated Board of Directors Candidate Questionnaire**

The mission of the Board of Directors is to oversee and guide the development of MINT Incorporated and establish mechanisms for long-term growth that recognize the realities of being a multinational, multilingual and multi-professional group. Board members are required to actively participate in ongoing Board listserv discussions and join biweekly, 2-hour Board conference calls. They are also expected to attend two in-person meetings annually, a 1-day meeting immediately prior to the Forum and a 3-day retreat held midyear at a place and time agreed to by all Board members. Members are expected to devote a substantial portion of time to MINT projects and working groups, and to lead efforts in important areas of MINT development. Members—committed to MINT values of quality, generosity, openness and respect—need to be able to differentiate between personal preferences and a viewpoint that considers the interests and concerns of MINT at large.

In order to ensure that MINT members have sufficient knowledge to cast their votes in an informed manner, each candidate for Board membership must complete a Candidate Questionnaire. If you wish, in addition to responding to the specified questions, you may also add any other information that you believe is relevant in supporting your candidacy. Please remember that MINT members whose first language is not English will read what you are writing. Completed questionnaires will be posted to the website for all members to review prior to the election.

Thank you!

MINT Nominating Committee 2016  
Cristiana Fortini, Chair  
Jeff Breckon  
Margo Bristow  
Joel Porter  
Karen Ingersoll, MINT Board liaison

1. Please describe your experience in MI in any or all of the following roles: practitioner, trainer, supervisor, researcher, and/or administrator.

I first became introduced to MI during my PhD research project in 1997. I was planning a treatment outcome study for Vietnam veterans with PTSD and alcohol dependence. My supervisor at the time, Professor Ross Young, guided me towards motivational interviewing and I began reading, practicing and training in the approach. I was also working at the time at an alcohol and drug treatment service where MI quickly became a fundamental part of my practice.

I learned a lot about helping people change through the "parry and thrust" of working with veterans. I was still young and they were quite rightly wary of me. But my MI skills developed quickly through my work with hundreds of veterans. I also began running some small presentations and trainings with Professor Young, and when the opportunity came along to train to be a trainer, I jumped at it. I was so grateful to be given the opportunity in 2007 to be part of the wonderful Chicago TNT led by Professor Bill Miller and Dr Terry Moyers. I remember walking into the workshop room and felt immediately like I had come home. I still have many friends and close colleagues from among that group.

In 2009, I was mentored by highly experienced and innovative MI trainer Steve Berg-Smith in San Francisco, USA. This provided me with a wonderful opportunity to deepen my approach to training, and bring much more creativity and enhanced learning to my workshops.

My clinical work continued, by now in private practice, and my training skills took a wonderful boost from the TNT and the mentorship. I have continued to run workshops around Australia since then, for the Australian Psychological Society, National Heart Foundation, Cancer Council, Queensland Health QuitLine and Relationships Australia (Queensland), to name a few. Along the way I have been a trainer for research projects run by Professor Kim Halford at UQ Psychology, Professor David Kavanagh at QUT Institute for Health and Biomedical Innovation and Dr Kevin Runions at Telethon Kids Institute, Western Australia.

I am now Adjunct Associate Professor at the UQ School of Psychology. I have been supervising students at the university for their internships for over 16 years. Part of this has involved lectures and presentations on MI, as well as providing MI supervision to those interns specifically allocated to me. I also provide supervision to health professionals, especially psychologists and social workers, on the topic of MI, amongst many other things.

2. Please describe your involvement in MINT and any activities that demonstrate your commitment or service to MINT.

I have now been a member of MINT since 2007. Since that time, I have tried to contribute to the worldwide discussion of MI and MI training through the MINT list serve. While sometimes feeling a bit restricted in my ability to be actively involved in MINT activities from Australia, I have tried to be very active in local MI and MINT related events. I have certainly been a strong advocate for high standard MI training, and I have been able to do this as a trainer on a number of research projects being run out of Australian universities, as well as Statewide rollouts of MI training, such as with Australia's National Heart Foundation.

I have participated in and presented at the International Symposium on MI (ISMI) for several years, including events held in New Zealand and Australia. I have also presented frequently at other conferences, especially for other allied health professional associations in an effort to highlight the importance of high quality training in MI.

I have been a part of a local network of MINT members who have now established MI Oceania, an organisation run through local MINT member volunteers working towards promoting MI and good MI training in Australia and New Zealand. For the last year, I have been the Secretary on the MI Oceania interim committee. We have organised a number of events, including international experts flying to Australia and New Zealand to provide training for local practitioners. MI Oceania has aspirations to become a local chapter of MINT, and we are working through the process of developing and formalising the organisation to help make this happen.

3. Please describe your vision of MINT, its essence and its mission.

To me, the vision of MINT is to always keep one eye on the "client". MI itself is very client-centred, as well as respectful, collaborative and compassionate, and so the vision of MINT must also map onto those same values.

“Helping people change” is the essence of MI, and so it should also be for MINT. Significantly, that means the person receiving the approach, those real people who are struggling with addiction or other behavioural challenges and decisions. But from MINT’s point of view, it also means the person who is attending MI training and in many ways is faced with certain behavioural changes themselves, at the very least some changes to their own therapeutic practices.

So, my deeply held belief about MINT and its mission is firmly anchored to being of service to people’s welfare and well-being, and acting in ways that promotes that. Since the inclusion of compassion into the MI Spirit, I have been particularly interested in this and learning more and more about what compassion is and how we might cultivate it in ourselves, our training participants and our clients. MINT’s mission is a compassionate one, and incorporates selfless promotion of others’ well-being, through the continuing development, improvement and access of high quality MI training that exemplifies the very qualities of MI itself.

4. What do you view as the main issues facing MINT since incorporation? What are your ideas for addressing these issues?

Since incorporation, MINT has spread rapidly, but not necessarily evenly. In other words, certain people and places in the world have a lot more trouble affording and accessing MI Training-New-Trainer experiences. I believe that one of the main issues facing MINT now is to create a truly global organisation. Many amazing and great steps have been made towards this. Even in Australia we are now much better serviced by well-trained and skilful MI trainers thanks to a recent TNT held here in Melbourne last year. However, I believe it truly is time for MINT to venture out, and be present in under-served locations, partnering with local organisations or groups, and providing access to training experiences, for example, in Africa, South America, Asia and the Middle East. Again, this has begun. And it continues to be of great importance.

On the other hand, the rapidly increasing MINT membership creates other challenges. How do we reach all of our members? How do we help them to feel involved? How can we nurture a sense of belonging in the organisation? How do members access support or develop collegial support networks? How do we assist members to maintain and update their skills? And how do we ensure that the standard of MI training around the world is kept at a high level?

I have noticed that, although we have recently had another 40 or so new MINT members in Australia, it has been a real challenge to keep them actively involved. Symposiums and conferences are one way to do this, however we are exploring a range of other approaches, such as peer support networks, communication strategies, online meeting platforms, and so on. While understanding that being more closely involved may not be everyone’s choice, it is important to understand members’ motivations and wishes regarding their involvement in MINT and helping to meet their needs through making their preferences available and creating opportunities to remain closely involved.

5. Please describe any experiences you have had in serving on other committees or boards, either in a professional or personal capacity that might support your candidacy. Specifically, include dates of involvement, positions held, experience of working as part of a team, challenges of the positions held, successes and frustrations. How have these experiences prepared you for serving on the MINT Board?

My primary experience of working in a directorship position has been in my own company since 1999. I am the director of Psychology Consultants Pty Ltd, and along with my co-director and a business manager I have managed operationally and strategically a company that has 25 clinical psychologist employees and 5 administrative employees. This position has required me to have a good understanding of business accounting, profit and loss statements, tax requirements, workplace health and safety, insurance requirements and staff management.

Always in these situations, the greatest challenge, as well as the most worthy endeavour, is the management of staff. I have tried to walk that fine balance between autonomy and attention. I've noticed that people vary a lot in terms of their needs. For some people, it is important to be left largely alone. They like the independence and are able to be largely self-directed and self-motivated in their work. For others, it is important to feel attended to and appreciated, to receive guidance and direction, and to feel part of a bigger team. The challenge, of course, is to meet the staff member where they are at, and be mentally agile enough to meet different people's needs even as those needs themselves might change over time.

My position in the business also comes along with some challenges working together with the other key members of the leadership team: collaborating, cooperating, conceding and advocating. This has also been my experience on certain boards and committees of which I have been a member.

For two years from 1994 to 1995 (Brisbane, Queensland), and then for a year in 1996 (Perth, Western Australia), I was on the committee for the Australian Association of Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy (AACBT). At first, this organisation was locally known as the Australian Behaviour Modification Association (ABMA), and I was part of the committee when the change to the new name was made. I was variously in the role of Secretary and Treasurer, and we would meet on a monthly basis. We managed to recruit members, put on regular seminars and workshops, as well as the very successful "Behaviour Update Weekend", held annually for several years in South East Queensland. This experience was quite early in my career, and taught me the importance of cooperation and teamwork, as well as how to work with different personalities with different ideas, opinions or goals.

From 1997 to 2000 I was on the committee of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) College of Clinical Psychologists (Queensland Section), serving as vice-chair. The APS is the peak professional association in Australia for psychologists, equivalent to the American Psychological Association (APA) or British Psychological Society (BPS). In Queensland at the time the College of Clinical Psychologists had become inactive, and along with my clinical supervisor, Professor Roger Dooley, we re-established the Queensland Section, inspiring others to also join the committee. Again, the committee was charged with recruiting members, communicating to members through a newsletter, and organising seminars and other training events, and we met on a monthly basis.

Of utmost importance in this APS position was the relationships among committee members. Clinical psychology is a rather diverse profession, often encompassing a variety of people with competing opinions and needs. As such, a vital skill was the ability to communicate and negotiate to ensure a balanced approach by the College. I learned to practice patience and acceptance, especially in the face of aggressively expressed points of view, and the committee was able to function very well through those otherwise tumultuous early years re-establishing the Queensland Section and identifying the direction it would take.

In 2008, I successfully applied to participate in the Australian Psychological Society's Leadership Development Program. This year long program involved travelling to Melbourne on a quarterly basis to receive instruction on a number of aspects of leadership, and then to take these skills home and work on small groups projects. I was fortunate enough to work on a project involving the establishment of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA). This involved consultation with indigenous communities and identifying interested parties, as well as establishing a vision, mission and strategic direction for AIPA. This project culminated in the launch of the association and the APS national Conference towards the end of 2008 in Hobart, Tasmania.

Since 1999 until the present I have been a supervisor for post-graduate clinical psychology students at the University of Queensland School of Psychology. This role involves providing clinical supervision to students in their clinical psychology internship as part of their course work. However, the position also requires supervisors to be part of the Management Committee, overseeing the operational and strategic direction of the University's Psychology Clinic, and meeting on a quarterly basis.

This position has allowed me to be involved in discussion around best practice for training clinical psychologists, creating a positive learning environment, planning for learning opportunities and considering options for assessing competency. I have been in this role for 17 years now, and the university has given me the title Adjunct Associate Professor as thanks for my service there. Last year, I was awarded the coveted Paul Conrad Award for Excellence in Supervision, which was an extremely humbling and satisfying experience for me.

For approximately the last year since August 2015 I have been the secretary on the MI Oceania interim committee. This committee is not an elected committee (which is why we refer to ourselves as an interim committee) however it has been a great opportunity to try to raise awareness of MI in Australia and New Zealand. The committee itself is very cooperative and hard working. We have begun organising some events, including international speakers visiting Australia and New Zealand.

Apart from participating as a general committee member, I have been largely responsible for writing up minutes, distributing minutes, and maintaining an email list of local MINT members. Our greatest challenge at the moment is to set up an organisational structure and legal entity that meets the requirements of MINT so we can become a Chapter of MINT. This has been a slow process as there are many legal and administrative aspects of different structures to consider, however, this will be an exciting development once we can become more formally a part of MINT.

Finally, in 2014 I founded the UQ Compassion Symposium and each year since then have been the convenor of the event, hosting international and local speakers and hundreds of attendees. Since its inclusion in the MI Spirit in Miller and Rollnick's most recent edition of *Motivational Interviewing*, I have become very interested in compassion, first as a part of the MI Spirit and therefore a central part of any training in MI that we may offer, and second as an imperative in our communities and societies generally around the world. I have developed somewhat of a "passion for compassion" and the UQ Compassion Symposium is an expression of this passion.

I have also established here in Australia, along with my colleague Dr James Kirby, The Compassion Initiative, which is designed to promote and disseminate compassion-related research, education and action throughout Australia. I have recently rolled out

a workshop titled *The Science and Practice of Compassion and Self-compassion* here in Australia, which was very well received. I would dearly love to contribute to awareness raising, discussing and considering compassion within the MINT community, and its part in the MI Spirit, as well as what this means for MI, the way we train MI, and the way we compassionately engage with the each other, our training participants and clients, and with the world.

6. Board work currently consists of both operational tasks (keeping the organization functioning day to day) and strategic tasks (overseeing and planning). Describe your interest in and capacities in both these areas.

As a business owner of many years now, I am very familiar with the multi-layered tasks of leadership and management. I am well-versed with operational duties, such as management of the financials, reporting, communication to staff and external stakeholders, issues around information technology, website development, social media and other marketing activities.

I do believe that my strength is in areas of strategy, formulating ideas, overseeing projects, advocating special topics or interest and engaging with the community and media to promote excellent practice in motivational interviewing. I have experience writing blogs and articles, being interviewed on radio and television, and have really focussed on this more strategic view, especially with regard recently to promoting compassion throughout the health sector and beyond into the general community.

I am inspired to use these skills to promote motivational interviewing on the global stage, and work towards the development of excellent quality training and practice of MI around the world.

7. The typical Board member spends 5-10 hours per week on MINT Board matters. Please indicate how you will integrate this commitment with your ongoing professional and personal activities.

I am currently working full-time in private practice as a clinical psychologist. My practice includes clinical work, supervision and training. I have decided to make a change for next year, and that is to reduce my work hours to four days per week, leaving Mondays free for other endeavours. My hope is to be able to do pre-assigned tasks and special projects as part of the MINT Board on Mondays.

However, I also understand that unexpected tasks come up and there may be requirements to do work outside of the hours I have allotted to MINT on a Monday. My day is scheduled so that I have breaks at 10am and 3pm every day. I am able to use this time in a prioritised way for tasks that arise in all aspects of my work, including my work on the MINT Board.

In terms of my personal life, I have two children who will both be in high school by next year. I understand there are a number of commitments parents have to make to high school children's academic pursuits and extra-curricular activities, however I have sat down with my family and discussed the requirements of being a member of the MINT Board and everyone is happy to support me in this goal.

Furthermore, my professional/vocational goals have always been to create opportunities to make an impact on a larger scale. Membership of the MINT Board aligns perfectly with these goals, and my passion for motivational interviewing means that I feel greatly inspired to contribute in any way I can.

8. Please send a current CV and also provide the contact details (email and telephone number) of two references that we may approach as part your nomination process. These people should be able to provide information about your suitability for this position.

Please send the completed questionnaire to [Cristiana.Fortini@chuv.ch](mailto:Cristiana.Fortini@chuv.ch) by 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2016.