IETA

International Emissions Trading Association (IETA)

President & Chief Executive Officer

Position Specification

September 2026

To apply, please email your CV and covering letter to:

IETA@kornferry.com

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About IETA

Who are IETA

The International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) is the leading global business organisation dedicated to advancing high-integrity carbon markets and market-based climate solutions. Founded in 1999, IETA brings together companies, financial institutions, project developers and other stakeholders committed to using carbon markets as an effective tool to support the goals of the Paris Agreement and the transition to a net-zero economy.

Operating at the intersection of business, climate policy, finance and market design, IETA plays a central role in shaping the development of compliance and voluntary carbon markets worldwide. Its work spans emissions trading systems, carbon pricing, Article 6 implementation, voluntary carbon markets, carbon removals, aviation, natural climate solutions, digital market infrastructure and emerging climate-finance mechanisms.

Today, IETA represents more than 300 member organisations and has established itself as the foremost global business voice on carbon markets, providing leadership, expertise and practical insights on the policies and frameworks needed to deliver effective, scalable and environmentally robust market-based approaches to climate action.

Convening Power and Influence

IETA occupies a unique position within the global climate ecosystem. Through its extensive membership network and longstanding relationships with governments, regulators, multilateral organisations, investors and market participants, the organisation plays an influential role in shaping policy discussions and advancing the evolution of carbon markets around the world.

The organisation provides members with unparalleled access to market intelligence, policy insights, advocacy platforms and global networks of business leaders, policymakers and technical experts. It serves as a trusted forum through which diverse stakeholders can engage, collaborate and build consensus on some of the most complex and consequential issues facing carbon markets today.

Over the past decade, IETA has expanded significantly in both reach and influence. Under Dirk Forrister's 14-year leadership, membership nearly doubled from 155 organisations in 2012 to more than 300 today, while the Secretariat grew from approximately 20 to more than 40 professionals. The organisation now has staff based across 12 countries and supports carbon market development across Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa and Asia.

As carbon markets continue to mature and assume an increasingly important role in global decarbonisation efforts, IETA is exceptionally well positioned to influence the next generation of market frameworks and climate policy. The incoming President & CEO will have the opportunity to build on this strong foundation, ensuring IETA continues to be the leading convenor, advocate and trusted voice for high-integrity carbon markets globally.

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The Opportunity

The Opportunity

IETA seeks an exceptional President & CEO to lead the organisation through its next chapter of growth, influence and impact at a defining moment for global carbon markets.

Following more than 14 years of successful leadership from Dirk Forrister, the incoming CEO will inherit one of the most respected and influential organisations operating across the climate, carbon and policy landscape. Building on a strong foundation of global membership, industry credibility and policy influence, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to shape IETA's future role as carbon markets continue to evolve in scale, complexity and strategic importance.

As governments, businesses and investors increasingly look to market-based mechanisms to support decarbonisation and economic development, IETA is well positioned to play an even more influential role in shaping policy frameworks, supporting market integrity and convening stakeholders across the carbon ecosystem. The next CEO will be expected to strengthen the organisation's position at the centre of these discussions while ensuring IETA continues to deliver meaningful value for its members.

This is not simply a stewardship appointment. The Council is seeking a leader who can balance continuity with evolution, preserving the attributes that have made IETA successful while identifying new opportunities to enhance its impact, broaden its reach and strengthen its long-term sustainability. This may include expanding member engagement, building new strategic partnerships, developing additional sources of value creation and ensuring the organisation remains responsive to a fast-changing external environment.

The successful candidate will bring a distinctive combination of strategic leadership, stakeholder influence and organisational management capability. They will be comfortable operating at the intersection of business, government and climate policy, while possessing the judgement, diplomacy and credibility required to unite diverse constituencies around a common vision for the future of carbon markets.

Ultimately, the role provides the opportunity to lead the world's foremost business association dedicated to carbon markets and to help shape one of the most important tools available for achieving global climate objectives.

The Role

Position / Reporting Line

President & CEO / Reporting to the IETA Chair & Council

Location:

Europe or UK preferred. Eastern North America also considered. Essentially based in a major internationally connected city relevant to climate diplomacy, carbon markets and IETA's membership. Significant international travel required.

Website:

www.ieta.org

Role Overview

The President & CEO is accountable to the Chair and Council for the overall leadership, performance and long-term success of IETA. The role is responsible for translating the organisation's mission and strategic priorities into tangible outcomes while ensuring effective governance, financial sustainability and organisational effectiveness.

Leading a globally distributed Secretariat, the CEO will oversee the delivery of IETA's programmes, initiatives and member services, while fostering a high-performing and collaborative culture across an international workforce. The role requires a leader who is equally comfortable operating at Board level and engaging directly with members, policymakers and staff.

A key responsibility will be maintaining and strengthening IETA's reputation as a trusted and authoritative voice on carbon markets and market-based climate solutions. The CEO will represent the organisation with governments, regulators, multilateral institutions, corporate leaders, investors and partner organisations, helping to shape policy discussions and advance practical solutions that support effective climate action.

The role also requires sophisticated stakeholder management. With a diverse membership spanning energy companies, financial institutions, technology providers, project developers and other market participants, the CEO must be able to build consensus, reconcile differing perspectives and translate member priorities into coherent organisational positions.

The CEO will be expected to strengthen member engagement, explore new revenue opportunities and ensure that IETA's events, partnerships and policy work are clearly aligned to member value and financial sustainability.

Ultimately, the President & CEO combines external influence with internal leadership, ensuring IETA remains an effective, financially resilient and globally respected organisation that delivers meaningful value for its members and continues to advance the development of high-integrity carbon markets worldwide.

Key Responsibilities

- Strategy and leadership: Drive IETA's strategy with the Chair, Council and Secretariat, aligning priorities with mission, resources and long-term relevance.
- Team leadership: Build and empower a high-performing Secretariat and team with clear accountability, effective delegation and disciplined delivery.
- External representation and advocacy: Represent IETA as the authoritative voice on carbon markets in climate policy and carbon pricing forums.
- Market and policy leadership: Advocate for effective market-based climate policy, including international and domestic carbon pricing mechanisms (ETS/Cap and Trade, carbon tax), the use of carbon credits, Article 6, CORSIA, voluntary carbon markets and related carbon accounting and reporting issues.
- Convening and thought leadership: Strengthen IETA's role as a convener, thought leader, advocate and trusted business voice in carbon pricing and carbon market development.
- Stakeholder relationships: Build strategic relationships with international organisations, financial institutions, policy platforms, business groups and market initiatives.
- Membership value and growth: Maintain and grow a diverse, engaged membership by delivering a strong value proposition, fostering collaboration and reflecting member needs across the carbon market ecosystem.
- Strengthen IETA's membership proposition, ensuring members feel heard, valued and actively engaged in shaping the organisation's agenda.
- Financial and operational stewardship: Oversee financial management, budgeting, human resources, resource allocation and KPI-driven operational performance to ensure resilience and sustainable growth.
- Governance and accountability: Promote transparent, effective governance consistent with IETA's legal obligations, Articles and By-laws, Code of Business Practice, Council policies and good association management. Take active ownership of governance, HR and people management, and resolve complex stakeholder or organisational situations with sound judgement.
- Change leadership: Assess the organisation on arrival, determining what to retain and what to evolve, and lead any necessary organisational or structural change with sensitivity and pace.

Candidate Profile

Essential Experience and Expertise

- Proven executive leadership experience within a corporation, business association, international organisation, government body, financial institution, NGO or comparable environment, with the ability to combine strategic leadership and external gravitas with a practical, hands-on management style.
- Demonstrated success leading organisational growth, transformation and change, including setting strategic direction, aligning stakeholders and delivering measurable outcomes.
- Strong track record of leading, developing and motivating high-performing teams, including experience managing geographically dispersed and internationally diverse workforces.
- Excellent organisational, financial and operational management capability, underpinned by experience in governance, people leadership, succession planning and conflict resolution.
- Significant experience engaging with senior policymakers, regulators and government officials, with the credibility and judgement to influence policy development and broader regulatory agendas.
- Strong understanding of carbon markets and climate policy, including areas such as emissions trading systems, Article 6, CORSIA, the Paris Agreement, voluntary carbon markets and related market-based mechanisms.
- Credibility and presence with senior business leaders, policymakers, investors, NGOs, multilateral organisations and other stakeholders active across climate, energy, finance and sustainability.
- Sound appreciation of the commercial, economic and competitiveness implications of carbon-market design and climate policy for businesses operating in globally competitive sectors.
- Proven ability to engage diverse stakeholder groups, balance competing interests, build consensus and translate complex perspectives into clear and effective organisational positions.
- Experience operating within a membership-based, trade association, industry body or multi-stakeholder environment, with an understanding of member engagement and stakeholder governance.
- Direct involvement in international climate policy processes, including UNFCCC negotiations, Article 6 implementation or comparable multilateral policy forums.

Candidate Profile

Desirable Experience

- Existing relationships across IETA's membership ecosystem and adjacent sectors, including energy, industrials, financial services, aviation, commodities and carbon market service providers.
- Experience with carbon-market infrastructure and implementation, including registries, carbon accounting, assurance, removals, market integrity initiatives or related market mechanisms.
- Track record of growing membership value, expanding revenue streams or developing new commercial offerings through events, partnerships, thought leadership, research or adjacent services.
- Experience establishing strategic partnerships or collaborations across industry, government, multilateral institutions and civil society.
- Fluency in English required. Additional language capabilities, particularly French, Spanish, German or Mandarin.

Qualifications

- Significant senior leadership experience, typically gained over 20+ years, within carbon markets, climate policy, energy transition, international affairs, government, finance, industry, trade associations, multilateral organisations or related sectors.
- Demonstrated experience operating at executive and Board level, with responsibility for organisational leadership, strategy, stakeholder engagement and business performance.
- A degree or equivalent professional qualification is expected. An advanced degree in environmental policy, economics, law, public policy, business, finance, international relations or a related discipline would be advantageous.
- However, academic credentials will be considered secondary to relevant leadership experience. The Council is principally interested in candidates who have established a strong track record of leadership and impact in areas such as carbon markets, climate policy, international advocacy, government relations, industry representation, association management or closely related fields.
- Evidence of ongoing engagement with emerging developments in climate policy, carbon markets, sustainability, international affairs or related disciplines will be viewed favourably.

The Candidate

Candidate Profile

Personal Attributes

- Strategic, commercially aware and intellectually rigorous.
- Politically astute, with the judgement to balance member interests, public-interest climate goals and reputational considerations.
- Collaborative and coalition-building, with the ability to bring competing voices to common ground.
- Combines a highly relational, consensus-building leadership style with the confidence to make difficult decisions and lead change.
- Listens well, builds trust and brings stakeholders with them, while remaining decisive, action-oriented and willing to challenge the status quo when required.
- Diplomatic, credible and effective in high-level advocacy and public communication settings.
- Pragmatic, disciplined and comfortable operating amid ambiguity and regulatory change.
- Globally mobile and committed to transparent governance, integrity, discretion and high-integrity carbon markets.
- Able to manage a global, mostly remote team of around 40 multi-disciplinary professionals to work effectively and synergistically together to deliver on IETA's mission.
- Based in a major jurisdiction relevant to international climate diplomacy and carbon market policy and conducive to market and member engagement, with a preference for the EU or London.
- Able to support an intensive international travel schedule (approximately 50% travel).
- Personally agile, accessible and willing to operate at both strategic and practical levels, with the professionalism of a blue-chip executive and the hands-on approach of a small-organisation leader.
- Truly global in outlook and comfortable engaging across markets including Asia and the Americas not solely Europe.

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John Mensah

Senior Client Partner, Energy Transition EMEA

Sherree Kendall

Senior Client Partner I Global Energy