

1

**Bio & Policy Statement from  
A Nominee for President  
Board of Governors 2023-2024**



**Lee WILLIAMSON**

**Affiliation: Tatler Asia**

The FCC is a unique institution in Hong Kong. As the world’s most renowned press club, our duty is to defend press freedom at home and abroad, to support journalists and to promote and facilitate journalism of the highest standard. This is fundamental and irrevocable. It’s who we are. I’m well aware that my profile is different from many past FCC presidents, but be assured that, if elected, I won’t flinch in my full-throated support of this mission.

We are also a vibrant private members’ club—a place for the city’s media, business and diplomatic communities to network, celebrate, and enjoy world-class speaking events. For 80 years and counting, the FCC has been home to the intellectually curious and a haven for robust and healthy debate.

As we all know, in recent years our responsibility as a press club and our role as a private members’ club have sometimes been in conflict. We need a new path forward.

I am currently serving on the 2022-23 Board of Governors, and before that I contributed to club committees. If my colleagues on these bodies were to describe me in one word, I hope it would be “pragmatic”. This is how I would serve as your president: leading us step by step as we walk this new-normal tightrope together; engaging in the issues and making our substantial voice count, while also securing the long-term future of the FCC. If I can’t guarantee particular outcomes, what I can guarantee is absolute transparency and proactive communication with members throughout my term as president.

If elected, the following issues would be top of my agenda:

- **Recruit more young Correspondent and Journalist members.** Our number of C&J members is declining and our average age is creeping up. I would encourage more young journalists to come through our doors and eventually join the club by building on existing initiatives such as social mixers and training for young journalists. They are the future lifeblood of the club; let’s get them involved now.
- **Develop and enhance our training programmes.** Statements are important, but they’re not the only function of a working press club. We can and should offer more training to support our

members, developing initiatives such as a skills day for early and mid-career journalists. With the pandemic behind us, we will bring back the FCC Journalism Conference.

- **Confirm a new general manager.** With our current GM Didier Saugy leaving us after the AGM, a top priority for the next board must be the recruitment of a new club manager to continue the smooth running of club operations.
- **Strengthen our alliances with other press clubs** in the region and identify areas of collaboration and mutual support.
- **Make diversity a priority at FCC speaker events,** ensuring a 50-50 gender split across the year and including marginalised voices in our talks.

It would be an honour to serve as your president. During the election, I'll be at the Main Bar several days a week solely to get acquainted with members I haven't yet had the chance to meet. Please do introduce yourself. Let's have a conversation about the future of this unique club that we all value and care about so deeply.