

Candidate Profile



Birgit Fuhrmann

is running for the position of **chairperson**.

Academic background:

2002: General higher education entrance qualification (Abitur), Theodor-Heuss-Gymnasium, Schopfheim, Germany
 2006: Vocational training as a hotel manageress, IHK Bremen, Worpswede, Germany
 2008: Two semesters of business management, University of Bremen, Bremen, Germany (no degree)
 2012: Bachelor's degree in Translation with Specialisation of Technical Communication at ZHAW, Winterthur, Switzerland
 2024: Master's degree of Applied Linguistics with Specialisation of Organization Communication

Professional career:

More than 20 years of professional experience combining industry, academia, and service leadership. Currently Lead Lecturer and Head of the Technical Communication lecturer group at ZHAW School of Applied Linguistics (since 2024), with responsibility for team leadership, resource management, research strategy, and academic program development. Previously served as Operative Manager for Research and Services in Technical Communication, with full budget responsibility, project acquisition, and institutional representation.

Prior to academia, held senior leadership positions at Endress+Hauser, including Head of Technical and Marketing Communication and Deputy Head of Documentation. Responsible for departmental leadership, team development, budget planning, process optimization, and cross-functional coordination. Early professional experience in the hospitality sector shaped a strong service mindset, resilience, and customer orientation.

Recognized for strategic prioritization, decisive leadership, negotiation skills, and the ability to combine operational implementation with structural development.

Professional experience in technical communication:

Over 12 years of hands-on industry experience and more than 6 years in applied research and higher education in Technical Communication.

Extensive expertise in technical documentation, usability and user experience, terminology management, XML-based authoring, structuring and standardization, visualization, digitization projects, and regulatory and normative aspects. Strong background in project management, interdisciplinary collaboration, and aligning technical communication with product quality, compliance, usability and business objectives.

In academia, responsible for teaching project management in technical documentation, legal and normative frameworks, AI literacy in language and communication, and supervising bachelor theses. Head of the Information Design Lab and Usability Lab, leading research acquisition and implementation.

Consistently focused on strengthening the strategic role and professional positioning of technical communication within complex organizational and European contexts.

Commitment & Memberships

Active member of tekom since 2020, contributing regularly as speaker and workshop facilitator at the tekom Spring Conference and Annual Conference. Author of professional articles in tk magazine since 2021, contributing to discourse within the technical communication community and strengthening professional exchange at European level.

Engaged in community-building initiatives through after-work talks and workshops, fostering dialogue between academia and industry and promoting usability and information design practices.

At ZHAW School of Applied Linguistics, active in outreach and public engagement: organization of information events, participation in open days, and contribution to a promotional film presenting the

specialization and the professional field of technical communication. Strong commitment to increasing visibility and attracting the next generation of technical communicators.

Goals for my role as chairperson:

tekom Europe stands at a decisive turning point. With the full renewal of the Executive Board, we have a rare opportunity to reposition the association structurally, culturally, and strategically. I am standing for Chairperson because I believe this moment requires clarity, consistency, and the courage to strengthen our foundations.

Professional strength requires organizational strength. Effective European advocacy and international representation are only possible if tekomp Europe itself is structurally sound, financially sustainable, and visibly supported by its members and national organizations. Stability is not an administrative detail – it is the prerequisite for political credibility and professional impact.

My commitment focuses on four interconnected priorities:

1. Structural and Financial Stability

We must consolidate our structures, reduce structural dependencies, and secure long-term financial viability. A resilient organization creates the space for strategic action instead of reactive management. Clear responsibilities, reliable processes, and transparent budgeting are essential for this.

2. Participatory Governance and Shared Responsibility

tekomp Europe must become more participatory and transparent in how it operates. Task forces, advisory boards, and national organizations should not merely be consulted but actively involved in shaping strategy and initiatives. The Executive Board's role is not to centralize activities, but to coordinate, enable, and provide strategic orientation. Leadership means creating frameworks in which others can act effectively.

3. A European Community with Local Strength

tekomp Europe must be a visible and supportive European umbrella that respects and strengthens its national associations. Diversity in culture, structure, and expectations is not a challenge to overcome but an asset to cultivate. Our role is to connect, align where useful, and create added value without overriding local autonomy.

4. A Clear Communication Strategy for Visibility and Impact

If we want to be relevant, we must be visible. tekomp Europe needs a coherent communication plan that strengthens its public presence at European level while equally empowering national associations in their local markets.

This includes:

- A shared communication framework that defines key messages, positioning, and strategic priorities.
- Coordinated communication around advocacy, standardization, and professional topics to ensure a consistent European voice.
- Clear channels and formats for internal communication to enhance transparency and participation.
- Support for local associations through adaptable communication toolkits and aligned campaigns that increase visibility without limiting local identity.

Communication is not an add-on; it is a strategic instrument. It shapes perception, strengthens political influence, and reinforces internal cohesion. If we communicate clearly about who we are, what we stand for, and what value technical communication creates, we strengthen both the association and the profession. Beyond internal consolidation, I see strong potential in deepening cooperation with international and interdisciplinary professional associations. Strategic alliances at European and global level can amplify our voice in regulation, standardization, and professional development. Collaboration must replace fragmentation. Where others work toward similar goals, we should align rather than duplicate.

At the same time, we must actively strengthen the professional relevance of technical communication within companies. We need to consistently demonstrate how technical communication contributes to product quality, compliance, usability, and customer experience. Technical communicators are not mere content producers; they are key contributors within complex product and organizational ecosystems. This positioning must become part of our external communication strategy.

As Chairperson, I see my role as creating structure, clarity, and continuity — and enabling a collective process. Leadership means listening, aligning, deciding where necessary, and ensuring follow-through. My goal is clear: to help transform tekomp Europe into a resilient, visible, and strategically coherent European umbrella organization — one that supports its national associations, connects professionals across borders, and strengthens the voice of technical communication in Europe.