

# The ACA welcomes Gillian Rightford, ensuring smooth transition following former CEO's departure

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The Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA) announces that Mathe Okaba, who served as chief executive officer for over five years, stepped down from her role in December 2023. The board assures stakeholders that a smooth transition is underway, and in this regard, has appointed Gillian Rightford as interim executive director on a fixed-term contract.

Rightford, leveraging her profound understanding of the South African advertising, marketing and communications industry, will ensure seamless operations alongside the ACA secretariat during this interim leadership period until, such time as the process to appoint a new CEO is concluded.

Rightford brings a wealth of expertise in marketing, strategy, advertising, and leadership to the role. Prior to entering the creative world, she consulted on marketing strategy and later became a shareholder and group managing director of two globally aligned agencies, Hercules DMB&B, and Lowe Bull. Gillian founded Adtherapy, a communication and management consultancy, catering to diverse clients globally, including marketers and advertising/communication agencies. Adtherapy is dedicated to enhancing output quality for improved ROI through refined strategic thinking, creativity, streamlined processes, organisational structure, and team alignment.

Commenting on the transition, Sharleen James, deputy chair of the ACA, expressed gratitude for Okaba's service, stating, "We thank Mathe for her dedicated service to the ACA and the industry. Her contributions have been valued, and we wish her success in her future pursuits."



Gillian Rightford

We are confident that Gillian Rightford's expertise will be an invaluable asset to the organisation, ensuring continued excellence in serving our members and partners and bringing our vision to "promote a communications profession that is trusted, inclusive and measurable" to life."

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**Association for Communication and Advertising**

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