

Season's greetings from the Executive Board: Together through the year

„Don't look at what divides you. Look at what connects you“
(Margot Friedländer)

Dear All,

Margot Friedländer's quote seems very fitting for the times we live in. Perhaps you are also experiencing this in your professional and private lives: differences are becoming more pronounced and obvious. Conflicts are often fought out with greater vehemence. Whether it's the interests of different departments in companies or differing views on political and social issues among friends, acquaintances or colleagues.

Interactions in virtual spaces are also characterised more by division than by connection: social media – which was once created to cultivate friendships, exchange opinions and views, or build communities – has degenerated into platforms where conflicts and even hatred are fuelled and undesirable social developments are promoted – not least because of algorithms that inflame polarising debates.

This gives topics that are at the forefront of our professional association a high degree of relevance. For example, digital trust as the expectation that digital technologies and services protect the interests of all stakeholders and respect social norms. Or regulations such as the EU's AI Act (and thus AI governance), which aim to ensure that not everything that is possible is also legal, legitimate and can be implemented. This immediately raises the question of whether compliance and data protection on the one hand hinder innovation and value creation on the other... Asking such questions and discussing them controversially is necessary and helps a community and society move forward – if the ultimate goal is to find common ground.

In this respect, it is gratifying that ISACA Germany focuses on exchange and technical discussions in many areas. And there are good reasons, especially at the end of the year, to look at what unites us.

First and foremost, of course, is our **GRC Congress**. For 10 years now, the ISACA community has been meeting at different locations throughout Germany. We can be proud that the congress is growing every year – and we believe it is also getting a little better every year.

Another major event is the specialist group conference days, where specialist group members, some of whom look at the same topics and aspects from different perspectives, exchange ideas and discuss issues. These events – like focus events and BarCamps or our regional get-togethers and meetups – are an excellent opportunity to experience the association 'in action' and to network – in other words, to connect.



But it's not just the large and particularly visible events. New content, formats and groups are also emerging on a smaller scale. For example, members have developed and launched new seminars, training courses and classes, while others have produced publications, podcasts and tech talks. Or someone has taken the initiative and founded a new specialist group or revived one that had fallen into decline. Sometimes in larger groups, sometimes by a handful of active members who feel particularly connected to a topic and have invested many hours of work to share their knowledge with others, organise something and get others involved. All these activities (and much more) can be seen throughout the professional association, and it is impressive to experience such a vibrant community in action.

At the same time, our chapter is growing steadily and has now significantly exceeded the 4,000-member mark. This growth would not be possible without the voluntary commitment of many people. Therefore, a very special thank you to all those who contribute to our success with their commitment, knowledge and time!

We are confident that this trend will continue in 2026 and are very excited about our members' writing, organising and discussing activities, as well as our meetings – whatever form they may take.

There have been a number of changes on the board in the year that is coming to an end. Our president, **Dr Tim Sattler**, has been a member of ISACA's Board of Directors since the summer and is therefore no longer able to serve on the board of the Germany Chapter. **Matthias Kraft** has stepped down after many years as board member for specialist groups. We would like to thank them for their years of collegial cooperation and their services to the further development of the association!

For some time, **Julia Hermann** had taken on the role of interim association president in addition to her board position in communications and marketing. Following her reorientation in November, **Markus Gaulke**, a long-standing board member for continuing education, will take her place as interim association president and will lead the association and the board in this position until the next general meeting.

Of course, these personnel changes are a challenge – but they are also a great opportunity because, fortunately – and this again speaks in favour of our association – there are members who thankfully offer their support and would possibly make wonderful successors!

This means that in 2026, changes will continue in the Executive Board and in the Chapter, and it will be important to focus on what will advance the association and what the Executive Board can do for its members.

Keeping the above quote in mind will certainly not hurt. Incidentally, it goes even further: 'Be human. Be reasonable.' And anyone who knows Margot Friedländer and her life story a little knows that her words have a particular political and social dimension and are meant both as a warning and as a call to action. This can set a direction – for 2026, a new year in the professional association, and one can also wish for it for the political climate and social cohesion.

In the Chapter, we have worked hard in this spirit and can look back with joy and pride on a great year and on what we have achieved and accomplished together!

We would like to thank you very much for your support and commitment! We wish you and your loved ones a peaceful Christmas and a healthy, happy and successful New Year 2026! May it be a year full of success and new insights!

Season's greetings!

Matthias Goeken – on behalf of the Executive Board



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