



INTERNATIONAL MICROWAVE POWER INSTITUTE

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Marie Jirsa Inducted as Fellow of IMPI; Voting Board Members and Executive Board Elected at Annual General Membership Meeting

June 25, 2026 - The International Microwave Power Institute (IMPI), the leading scientific organization dedicated to connecting the global microwave and RF energy community, is pleased to announce several major developments out of their Annual General Membership Meeting last week in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA. The meeting was held at the Westin Hotel, in conjunction with the Institute's 60th Annual Microwave Power Symposium (IMPI 60).

Marie Jirsa, a Senior Food Scientist at the Kraft Heinz Company, was inducted as the 38th Fellow of the Institute on June 17th. Jirsa has been a member of IMPI for fifteen (15) years and held various leadership positions during her tenure. She served three terms as a Voting Member of the Board of Governors (2014-2023) and currently sits on the Corresponding Board (2023-Present). Jirsa also served on the Food Science and Technology Committee for five (5) years and the IMPI Fall Seminar Planning Committee for nine (9) years. She is a regular presenter on microwave preparation best practices and has been instrumental in developing and executing IMPI's Consumer Microwave Survey.

The Fellow Nominating Committee, chaired by IMPI Fellows: Dr. Juan Aguilar of the University of Nuevo Leon, Dr. Juming Tang of the University of Washington, Dr. Ulrich Erle, formerly of Nestle, and Mr. John Gerling of Gerling Consulting, nominated Jirsa in March, following an extensive review process.

One letter of recommendation, provided by Dr. Sean McKeown, Vice President of IMPI and a R&D Manager at Graphic Packaging International, read in part, *"Marie Jirsa exemplifies the sustained contribution, leadership, and industry impact that IMPI Fellowship is intended to recognize."* A second letter of support, provided by Brenda Dismore, Director of Research and Development for Tyson Foods, credited Jirsa with *"innovation, applied microwave science, leadership, and dedication to education and advancement of the field. Her contributions have had a lasting influence on both industry practices and professional development within microwave food science."* The Board of Governors was unanimous in their decision to bestow the Institute's highest honor to Jirsa.

After receiving the Fellow Award, Jirsa shared, *"Personally, I am honored to be named the 38th Fellow of the International Microwave Power Institute (IMPI). Being part of IMPI has enriched my knowledge and understanding of microwave technology and its applications—especially in areas such as food safety and innovation—and has also brought me lifelong friendships."*

The IMPI membership also elected five Voting Board Members. Voting Board Members serve a three-year term. Ben Ballart, SAIREM; Dr. Ray Boxman, Tel Aviv University; John F. Gerling, Gerling Consulting, Inc.; Dr. Sean McKeown, Graphic Packaging International; and Roger Williams 3D RF Energy Corp. The full Board of Governors list can be [found here](#).

Following the Annual General Membership Meeting, the Board met to elect their leadership for the coming year: Brian Blackwell of Microwave Techniques will serve as President; Dr. Sean McKeown of Graphic Packaging International as Vice President; John F. Gerling of Gerling Consulting as Treasurer; Ben Ballart of SAIREM as Secretary and John Mastela of WavePia as Immediate Past President.

“It is a profound honor to be elected President of the International Microwave Power Institute, an organization with a proud legacy of connecting the global microwave and RF community and advancing the non-communication applications of this transformative technology. I am grateful for the confidence of my colleagues and excited to work with our members, partners, and volunteers to strengthen collaboration, support education, and help drive innovation from the laboratory to industrial processing and the marketplace. Together, we will build on IMPI’s strong foundation and continue demonstrating the value of microwave and RF energy in solving real-world challenges,” Blackwell stated.



Marie Jirsa (left) receives a plaque from three current Fellows (from left): Dr. Juan Aguilar, Mr. John F. Gerling and Dr. Ulrich Erle. Photo two: Marie Jirsa.



IMPI Executive Board Members (from left): Ballart, Gerling, McKeown, Blackwell and Mastela.



The IMPI Board of Governors Meeting (June 15, 2026) in New Orleans.

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