

# **ICMA Executive Board's Guidelines for ICMA Nominations and Elections in the Five U.S. Regions**

As approved September 2011 with updates as of June 2012, September 2013,  
June 2014, September 2015, and June 2016

## **Introduction**

The shift to Regional Nominating Committees was a significant change for ICMA. Until 2012-2013, a single Nominating Committee had the responsibility for nominating well-qualified members who can best represent the diversity of the profession and its future. That responsibility and accountability has shifted to the regions. The board believes that this provides a new opportunity to strengthen ties and shared ownership with state and affiliate associations.

While many of the guidelines build on the experience of prior screening panels in three regions as well as the prior Nominating Committee, it is important for all regions to give careful thought to how the process is conducted. The Regional Nominating Committees select ICMA's leadership – all vice presidents and therefore future ICMA Presidents. Over many years, members relied on the Nominating Committee to play that role as opposed to having a competitive process with active campaigning. The Regional Nominating Committees need to be fully engaged in considering the impact on ICMA as a whole as they carry out their responsibilities.

The following guidelines are a combination of ones that were part of the past Nominating Committee process and new ones that address issues that surface with the delegation to the regions. The goal is to be as comprehensive as possible to guide the process across all regions. Guidelines will evolve with experience.

## **ICMA Constitution as Amended in 2011**

Article VII of the ICMA Constitution outlines the process for nomination and election of the ICMA Executive Board. In addition to setting the nominations and elections schedule, the Constitution gives the board two new responsibilities.

### **1. The board has the responsibility for designating other affiliated organizations in the U.S. in addition to affiliated state organizations for the purposes of governance**

**New:** ICMA Constitution Article VII: "*Section 2. Nomination of Officers.* Nominations shall be made by a Nominating Committee in each of ICMA's five regions of the United States and its territories composed of (a) the President-or designee on the ICMA Executive Board and (b) Corporate Members selected by each affiliated state organization and other affiliated organizations designated by the Executive Board."

- Domestic affiliates

The board has designated the International Hispanic Network (IHN), the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) and the National Association of County Administrators (NACA) as affiliates.

There are currently assistant associations in six states. ICMA has worked with these associations, particularly around professional development opportunities and membership recruitment, and will continue to do so. For the purposes of governance, ICMA will work through the primary state associations. In the case of MMANC and MMASC, the primary association will be Cal-ICMA.

- State associations and affiliation agreements

The board has encouraged affiliation agreements with all states. When the first Regional Nominating Committees met in 2013, all but three active state associations had signed agreements. Now all have signed agreements.

## **2. The ICMA Constitution gives the board the responsibility for establishing guidelines for nominations to ensure a uniform structure and process.**

**New:** ICMA Constitution Article VII, "*Section 3. Procedures of Nominating Committees.* The ICMA Executive Board shall invite all members to submit recommendations for nominations and shall also inform all members that names may be placed in nomination by petitions signed by at least fifteen Corporate Members and presented to ICMA for verification. Recommendations and petitions must be received by ICMA by a date that the Executive Board shall establish and shall announce to the membership not less than sixty days before such deadline. The Executive Board shall establish guidelines for nominations to ensure a uniform structure and process."

### **Overarching assumptions**

Geographical rotation decisions are delegated to each region. A single set of board guidelines - that were vetted with states and affiliates in 2012 - govern other aspects of the process to achieve the goal of a standard process across the regions. Regional Nominating Committees are asked annually whether they have any suggested changes to the guidelines.

A standard process can assist Regional Nominating Committees, most of whose members change annually, with being able to focus their time on the assessment of candidates as opposed to decisions on process.

ICMA provides staffing for the Regional Nominating Committees as it did for the Nominating Committee and for the regional screening panels in three regions in 2010 and 2011.

## **REGIONAL AGREEMENTS**

The state associations in each region are responsible for:

- developing geographical rotation protocols
- defining the vote necessary for approval/reaffirmation of rotation protocols. (The goal was to reach consensus from all the states in the region. If that is not possible, agreements require a vote of two-thirds of the states.)
- defining how frequently the rotation agreement will be reviewed. (Review periods in agreements ranged from annually to ten years)

ICMA provided a template for the regional agreements in order to ensure a uniform structure and process across regions for certain aspects of the nominations process as defined in board guidelines. Each region incorporated its rotation protocol into the template and approved the initial agreements during the 2012 Regional Summits. In September 2015, following consultation with state presidents in each region, the board eliminated fixed dates for formal renewal, focusing instead on annual review and the process outlined in each agreement for amendments.

## **NOMINATIONS PROCESS**

### **Solicitation of Nominations**

There are two ways for a member's name to appear on the election ballot that Corporate Members receive: A) nomination by a Regional Nominating Committee or B) qualification by petition.

#### *A. Regional Nominating Committee Nomination*

There are essentially three avenues for consideration by the Regional Nominating Committees:

1. Suggestions from state or affiliate associations.

Annually, ICMA contacts association presidents and the presidents of relevant groups such as those representing assistants and counties as well as the International Hispanic Network and the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. All groups are asked to submit the names of several members who can represent both their region and the diversity of the profession

2. Identification by Regional Nominating Committee members.

3. Expression of interest by petition

To qualify by petition, ICMA must receive signatures from 15 Corporate (Full) Members in support of the candidate. The only way to guarantee being on the election ballot is to submit the required petition signatures by the established deadline.

The sole purpose of petitions is to allow a member the opportunity to qualify independently for nomination. Regional Nominating Committees do not review submitted petitions, but ICMA staff verify the necessary 15 Corporate (Full) signatures and provide the Committees with the names of those candidates eligible to appear on the ballot. Letters of support from individual Full members may also count towards the 15 signature requirement. To aid in verification, signatures on petitions should also include printed or typed names and titles.

### *B. Qualification by Petition*

If a member meets the requirements outlined above and, after being interviewed by the appropriate Regional Nominating Committee, does not receive the nomination, the member has the option to appear independently on the election ballot.

### **Guidelines for Evaluation of Candidates**

The Regional Nominating Committees are asked to select the best-qualified individuals who will provide a balanced board that represents the profession and those served by it. The Committees will use the following criteria to evaluate candidates:

- Experience in local government
- Service to ICMA and its affiliates
- Diversity in the nominees and the continuing board members with whom they will serve in terms of geography, ethnicity, gender, position, and size and type of local governments
- Demonstration of ethical behavior
- Support of the profession through the ICMA Fund for Professional Management or by other means
- Commitment to follow the election guidelines
- Quality or caliber for board service
- Participation in ICMA's Voluntary Credentialing Program, if eligible

### **Commitment to diversity**

ICMA has a longstanding commitment to ensuring diversity in its governance. The ICMA Executive Board's policy is "to recruit nominees who will provide a balanced board that represents the profession and those served by it." Diversity has been defined as including geography, ethnicity, gender, position, and size and type of local government. Ensuring representation in terms of ethnicity and gender has been the most challenging to achieve.

In the past, the ICMA Nominating Committee assumed primary responsibility for this goal. This responsibility now rests with the Regional Nominating Committees and the state and affiliate associations. The ICMA Executive Board is committed to working with state and affiliate organizations on developing joint strategies for achieving broad representation and will be monitoring the impact of the regional nominating committee process on that representation. The Board believes that progress on diversity can continue under the delegated process and a continuously proactive approach will support that progress.

At its June 2016 meeting, the board developed and recommended approval of a statement to the membership, *Fostering the Next Generation*, re-emphasizing the board's commitment to fostering a new generation of innovative, positive and principled leaders in local government management and the importance of greater local action to achieve a diverse and inclusive membership that reflects the make-up of our communities. It also broadens the conversation about what success looks like for the board. The statement outlines recent efforts and progress on achieving this goal, notes that more needed to be done in partnership with the membership, and encourages members to consider being candidates for the board. It is attached to these guidelines.

- How each region can contribute to having a representative pool of candidates each year:
  - Since geographical rotations for each U.S. region have been agreed to by the state associations in each region, there is an opportunity for a long-term view in identifying candidates and in grooming future candidates. State associations are encouraged to work with affiliate organizations on identifying candidates that state and affiliate associations can jointly endorse. In addition, state and affiliate organizations are asked to provide minorities and women with opportunities for participation and contribution to help them grow as leaders.
  - This process should also include a focus on recruiting talented minorities and women into local government and into membership in state associations and ICMA. For some states and regions, there are few minority managers or assistants, making the focus on the longer-term strategy of recruitment particularly necessary. It is important for ICMA and state associations to recruit a diverse membership and for affiliate organizations to encourage membership in state associations.
- Procedures to help ICMA and the Regional Nominating Committees assess overall representation on the board.
  - ICMA Regional Vice Presidents will talk with the association boards for their states about their plans for identifying candidates and to encourage attention to issues of diversity.
  - There will be one deadline for all candidate submissions in all regions three months prior to the first Regional Summit. (early December deadline; first Summits in March).
  - Every Regional Nominating Committee and the ICMA board will receive the list of all candidates and their profiles along with the profiles of continuing board members so that state and board leadership know how the candidate pool could contribute to achieving a diverse board for the coming year. This will allow for additional recruitment of candidates if any gaps in representation surface.
  - After the candidate deadline, the ICMA President will convene the chairs of the five Regional Nominating Committees to review the process for the coming year. This meeting will include an assessment of the representative nature of the candidate pool and an opportunity to discuss what action could be taken to address any perceived gaps.
  - The ICMA President or designee - who will serve on all regional committees – will provide a national perspective on issues of diversity during the interview process.
  - The ICMA Executive Board, at its June meeting, will review the diversity in the make-up of the upcoming board. This will allow the board to identify any gaps to work on for the future. The results of this review will then be shared with state and affiliate organizations as well as with the membership.

## **Opportunities and Expectations of Board Service**

The ICMA Executive Board is the governing body of the Association. The board represents all members and is uniquely positioned to connect their priorities and issues to the policies of the Association. The board also has the responsibility to encourage membership, to represent the priorities and strategies of the Association, and to solicit member feedback. It establishes the strategic direction of the Association and therefore plays a critical leadership role for the profession. Those who serve on the board find it a very rewarding experience personally and professionally.

The ICMA Executive Board is a working board that requires active participation and a commitment of significant time and effort from each member throughout the three-year term. This includes annual attendance at four board meetings as well as attendance at Regional Summits and state association meetings. ICMA pays for almost all travel obligations of board members. The only exceptions are the annual conference and the member's own state/country meeting. It is assumed that all board members would be attending those anyway. Board members are expected to champion priorities of the association. Current examples are Life, Well Run and the Voluntary Credentialing Program. Board members are also expected to make a personal commitment to recruit new members in their own states/countries.

## **Submission of Candidate Information**

All communications should be in writing and submitted to ICMA as opposed to any individual members of Regional Nominating Committees. ICMA will share submissions with all members of the appropriate Committee.

- All candidates are asked to provide a statement of no more than two pages on their qualifications for the position they are seeking and on their views of issues facing ICMA. Contributions to ICMA, state or affiliate organizations should be included. Candidates also are asked to provide a resume with their statement.
- Members are encouraged to submit thoughtful letters of support that can improve their understanding of a candidate's qualities, achievements, and potential for contribution to the board. Sitting board members are not to provide any letters of support or endorsement.
- Submission of candidates' expressions of interest, thoughtful letters of support and petitions must be submitted by the established deadline in December. State or affiliate endorsements are also requested by the deadline, but in recognition of the infrequency of state and affiliate board meetings, they may be submitted up to one month before the relevant regional summit in the US or by March 30<sup>th</sup> for international endorsements.

## **REGIONAL NOMINATING COMMITTEES**

### **Composition:**

- All must be ICMA Corporate (Full) members. In addition to the ICMA President or designee from the ICMA Executive Board:

State organizations: Each primary state association that has an affiliation agreement with ICMA may designate a representative for its Regional Nominating Committee and may determine the selection of its representative. The state president, if an ICMA Corporate member, would presumably participate. Otherwise the president needs to designate an ICMA Corporate member to serve.

Affiliate organizations: Each affiliate organization, designated as such by the board for the purpose of governance, has the opportunity to identify a representative for each of the five U.S. Regional Nominating Committees. Representatives must reside in the individual region. The board has designated the International Hispanic Network (IHN), the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) and the National Association of County Administrators (NACA) as affiliates.

#### **Role of Regional Vice Presidents in Regional Nominating Committee process:**

- The Senior Regional Vice President, in consultation with the two other vice presidents, selects the chair from one of the representatives who is from a state not in the geographical rotation for that round.
- The Senior VP has the responsibility to orient and prepare the Chair for the interview process and will serve as a resource to the chair during the interview process.
- The three Regional Vice Presidents sit in on the interviews to provide continuity, but are only observers. They do not comment or raise questions.

#### **Procedures:**

- Information provided to Regional Nominating Committees on candidates and regional history:
  - Candidate statements and resumes; communications of support or endorsement
  - Twenty year history of board members in the region to show geographical rotation
  - Spreadsheet on candidates (state, ethnicity, gender, position, size and type of local governments; Credentialed status, Fund contributions)
  - Profile of continuing board members with state, ethnicity, gender, position, and size and type of local government
  - In addition, IHN, NFBPA and NACA have the opportunity to provide information on those candidates who are also members of their organizations and their contributions.

- Quorum to conduct business

A majority of eligible representatives will constitute a quorum.

- Candidates for interviews

Each region is expected to identify at least two qualified candidates for interviews each year. This also applies to those geographic rotations that designate a single state, such as California in the West Coast and Texas in the Mountain Plains. Individual state associations are encouraged to submit more than one candidate for consideration

- Interview process

- The Regional Nominating Committee will meet in executive session.
- Every candidate in the U.S will be interviewed by the appropriate Regional Nominating Committee. These interviews will be held in conjunction with the Regional Summits.
  - Candidates are encouraged to attend in person, but if that is not possible, phone interviews will be allowed.
  - Regional Nominating Committee members must be in attendance in person in order to participate.

- Interview questions

Questions should help assess whether the candidate:

- Is knowledgeable about current ICMA issues;
- Understands the responsibilities and expectations of service on the board
- Can describe potential contributions to the furtherance of ICMA's work
- Can describe ways of maintaining a connection to the region

In addition, questions should address the following:

- VPs have a responsibility for membership recruitment. Ask how the candidate would go about fulfilling this.
- If the candidate has not made a contribution to the ICMA Fund for Professional Management or the Life, Well Run campaign, ask whether the candidate, if nominated, would be willing to provide support to the Fund.
- If the candidate is eligible but not credentialed, ask whether the candidate, if nominated, would commit to becoming credentialing within the next year.

Each February, the Regional Vice Presidents will agree on the interview questions to be used for all the regions to ensure relevancy and consistency.

- Interview process
  - The interviews will be 30 minutes long with an allowance for a two minute opening statement



- The Chair will ask all questions with the option for follow-up questions from Committee members if time allows
- Guidelines for decision-making
  - A secret ballot process will be used and decisions will require a majority vote.
  - If a Regional Nominating Committee has an even number of members and cannot break a tie vote, the President or designee will abstain from voting.
  - In assessing the impact of the state rotations outlined in regional agreements, they apply only to the states of vice presidents, not to those of presidential leadership.

## **CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES**

- It is inappropriate to use, without reimbursement, such local government resources as postage, multiple copies of stationary, copying machines, telephone, fax or email for mass communication in support of a candidate.
- Campaigning at the annual conference is restricted. It is inappropriate to circulate petitions or campaign material or to use hospitality suites for campaign purposes. It is also inappropriate for members to contact regional nominating committee members individually to discuss any candidates during the conference or the Regional Summits.
- Candidates will not use ICMA member communications, including electronic forums, for campaigning. This extends to social media and online sites maintained by ICMA such as Facebook and LinkedIn.
- ICMA will make mailing labels available for campaigns at an at-cost rate and will provide the option of email communication for the same fee. A sample of the campaign material must be provided ahead of time and no more than two communications may be sent. Staff will provide technical guidelines for the process of sending the emails.
- ICMA committees and task forces are not to endorse candidates for the board.
- Candidates in a contested election are offered the option of submitting candidate statements of no more than 200 words for the online system. Since biographical information is already provided, candidates are urged to focus their remarks on how their experience relates to their proposed service on the board, what they would bring to the board that is unique, and their plans if elected. The statement should not mention any current or former ICMA member or other nominees from the region. ICMA staff may edit for grammar, punctuation, spelling, or length.

## **SCHEDULE**

- Early September:
  - Call for nominations sent to all members through the *ICMA Leadership Matters* newsletter.
  - State and national affiliate presidents are also alerted to the upcoming process. Those with affiliation agreements are asked to designate a Regional Nominating Committee member.
- September/October: The ICMA President and staff will convene the Senior VPs to review their responsibilities.

- November: The Senior Regional Vice President in each region will take the lead in identifying the Regional Nominating Committee chair
- Early December: Deadline for all candidate names including those running by petition.
- Mid-December: List of all candidates and their profiles along with the profiles of continuing board members will be sent to Regional Nominating Committee members and the ICMA board.
- December/January:  
The ICMA President will convene the chairs of the five Regional Nominating Committees and the Senior Regional Vice Presidents by conference call to review the process for the coming year. This meeting will include an assessment of the representative nature of the candidate pool by reviewing candidate and continuing board member profiles and an opportunity to discuss what action could be taken to address any perceived gaps in representation.
- February board meeting: Senior VPs review and finalize interview questions.
- March/April/May: Interviews and nominee selection at the Summits
- May/June: Ballot
- May/June board meeting: The board will review the diversity in the make-up of the upcoming board. The results of this review will then be shared with state and affiliate organizations as well as with the membership.
- July: Incoming board orientation
- September/October annual conference: Incoming board induction

**ICMA Board Update to the Membership**  
**Fostering the Next Generation**  
**June 2016**

The ICMA Executive Board places a high value on fostering a new generation of innovative, positive and principled leaders in local government management. This future is one that will require greater local action and a diverse and inclusive membership that reflects the make-up of our communities. The Executive Board, with its partners IHN, NFBPA, and ICMA-RC, have taken significant steps to meet that goal and there are a number of positive signs that bode well for the profession as we make our way into the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, the Board acknowledges that more can be done and is committed to providing the leadership necessary to see this task through.

Over the years, the Board has worked arduously to implement policies and guidelines that would attract strong, principled individuals to the profession. In the past year alone, the Board has successfully brought on ICMA-RC as a partner to underwrite the membership dues of ICMA collegiate student chapters around the country. The results are already tangible with a 21% increase in chapters in the span of only a few months. The Board expects this number to rise significantly over the next several years. The Board signed new partnership agreements with IHN and NFBPA that include membership advantages such as a joint dues structure and co-sponsorship of conference educational sessions. The Board also instituted a new flat fee dues structure for department directors. Since implementing the new rate in July 2015, we have increased membership in this category by 55%.

The Board continues to support the ICMA Local Government Management Fellow program and encourages local governments to fund and hire fellows to provide an in-road for students seeking access into a public management career. To date, 30 local governments host 46 fellowships. Similarly, ICMA's student scholarship program for ICMA conference attendance offers yet another opportunity for a young person to make the necessary connections that could prove to be the difference in effectively building one's career. Additionally, the Board entered into an agreement to offer the CAL-ICMA Coaching program nationwide to provide professional development and career coaching at no cost to participants.

In 2015, the Board adopted many of the recommendations from the Task Force on Women and the Task Force on Inclusiveness. Work continues to further implement those recommendations in FY 2017.

Although much has been accomplished thanks to the support of the ICMA membership, there is still more that can be done. The Board is only as effective as its individual members. To that end, the Board encourages the association's members to seriously consider being candidates for the Executive Board.

The Board is comprised of 18 members from the United States and 3 International members. Membership on the Board is determined by a nominating process that is meant to provide the states and international members with the greatest voice in the selection of who represents the

membership on the Board in any given year. This is critically important since the Board deals with those issues and needs that are the core values of the local management profession. These may be practiced differently across this country and abroad. The Executive Board does not unilaterally choose ICMA Executive Board members. Rather, this selection is done in the ICMA regions by representatives of the various State Associations, NACA, IHN, NFBPA, and the Board President. However, the Board does provide guidance and encouragement to the regions on the selection process and the importance of selecting nominees who fully represent all of our organization's members. ICMA's affiliate organizations, IHN, NFBPA and NACA, are also encouraged to recruit and encourage potential candidates to submit their application for consideration.

The most inclusive Board membership would include males and females, young professionals, seasoned professionals, people of color and varied ethnic backgrounds, Caucasians and managers/assistants representing communities of small and large populations and everything in between. Though laudable in its intent, it is not necessarily possible to address each of these priorities each year when only 6 new Board members are selected for each three year term. In addition to providing a diverse pool of Board members each year, there is also a need to provide for a selection process that includes opportunities for every state and every international member nation to participate fully in selecting an individual they believe will best represent their regional issues and needs. Furthermore, there is a rotational process that by its very nature may not provide annually a very diverse candidate pool if the states whose turn it is, do not have a large pool of diverse candidates serving in manager or assistant roles. The decision is made at the time to nominate the best candidates from each region and sometimes the region itself is not very diverse.

Serving on the Board is also a very personal choice for managers and assistants. Not only are there the overarching considerations that the states and the Board have each year for promoting diversity, but every potential nominee has to make the decision to become a candidate based on very personal circumstances. Depending on the geographic rotational process in place in any particular region, a given year may generate a demographically different set of candidates. Perhaps the best view of the Board's diversity is a long-term view. When viewed over the last ten years—for example—the Board's make-up has been significantly diverse. However, more can and should be done to foster a new wave of candidates to lead us into the future. The ICMA Executive Board is committed to that goal.

To that end, the Board will host a "What it Takes to Be an ICMA Executive Board Member" session at the 2016 annual conference. It is hoped that this session will help raise awareness of the process and elicit interest from those that may not have previously considered Board work. At the grass roots level, the Board encourages all ICMA members to promote the career of local government management to young professionals and support and encourage M.P.A. student programs to the greatest extent possible and to encourage engaged professionals to participate on ICMA committees, task forces and to attend the annual conference and regional summits. Anyone considering Board service should feel free to contact any past or present ICMA Vice President for input and advice. In addition, the Board will include a discussion on Board diversity

on agendas at least twice per year. The Board will also discuss the possibility of requiring potential candidate names one month prior to the actual deadline for submission of nominees in order to insure that the candidate meets all of the rotational requirements that relate to the qualification of potential candidates to serve.

It is expected that the cumulative impact of these actions will provide for the greatest opportunity to reach the goal of Board diversity to the fullest extent possible and that a long term view of these efforts will be the best measure of "success."