

Election Committee Guidelines for 2022 IAWRT Election

Elections are an exercise that always require a lot of attention, due to the fact that there are often controversial/contentious issues and candidates and voters need to be informed with information on any situation that may arise.

Although IAWRT has statutes incorporating electoral guidelines, there have been many social and technological changes that have in one way or another affected performance. An example is the explosion of COVID 19 which has largely led to the use of new technologies in meetings, conferences, elections and even trainings.

IAWRT in 2022 is again conducting elections for Board members and executives of the organization, online. Given the 2020 experience it is important to identify some of the controversial issues and rule on the answers for the benefit of the voting exercise and a healthy organization

This guide has been agreed by the Elections Committee which will oversee the 2022 elections.

1. The Code of Ethics

In order to run the elections in a democratic and healthy way the code of conduct must be observed. Despite late approval and partial approval of the developed codes, the election process must abide by the Code of Conduct despite it still being in draft form.

The Board was given the mandate to amend the Statutes and Guiding Documents so as to reflect the new e-voting process which was approved by members at the Biennial in the Philippines (2017) and the regional conference in Uganda (2018).

The good spirit and intention of the proposed amendments must be acknowledged for the benefit of the voting exercise and a healthy organization. So the Elections Committee will follow the current amendments as proposed by the board. Election 2022 will be done online and NOT at the biennial as stipulated in the statutes.

2. The Statutes

The statutes do not deal with the fact that the elections will NOT be at the biennial but conducted 'online' more than a month beforehand - so we have to ignore the statutes and the guiding documents that relate to the biennial event.

The election is still a secret ballot. but online, the onus is on individual members to ensure they vote in private.

It has taken too long since 2017 to approve/amend the statutes. The statutes and guiding documents will be followed as far as possible whilst enacting the good spirit and intention of the proposed amendments; we should move for change immediately and not wait on formalities. At this point in time, when technology gives us the freedom to override distance and difficulties of international travel, let us move forward.

Online voting is easy nowadays, and many other professional organizations and associations we belong to, have online voting systems. In our case a proposed site is 'Buddy' which each member can use the link to vote, so there would be no double voting or private issues. An email message and a few follow-up reminders ensure members know about the vote. This way, there should be many more members voting, and the elections would not be biased towards those with physical participation in the conference.

3. Election Committee

The election Committee has not been elected according to the statutes. It was selected four months before the 2022 election by the outgoing board. It can only ensure all legitimately nominated candidates are put before the voters. A slate recommending a particular group of candidates will not be produced.

4. The Nomination Committee

References in the statutes should be read as the Election Committee. It has the responsibility for collecting, research, checking candidates' posts, awards or degrees. It will note if certain sections are under-represented and may appeal for more nominations from that group and finally present the list of sufficiently qualified candidates to members; but should not recommend any candidate or choose to drop any candidates and manipulate the process. It is important that all candidates are treated equally and meet the same prerequisites during the nomination / selection process.

Our members choose freely amongst those nominated; we do not want to be accused of not letting democracy rule. While article 6 of the statutes says the board shall represent a diversity of geographical regions, age and media experience, we must take that chance and leave it to the members to choose.

No additional nominations may be made by members after the window is closed. The Election Committee may seek extra nominations in the following week if the nominated candidate list does not meet the diversity requirements of the statutes and guiding documents.

5. Voting and Nomination Rights

Who is eligible to Vote?

Only paid-up members for 2 consecutive years including 2022 fees. New members who joined in 2022 must have been approved by the board.

Can I nominate a member for a position?

Yes, provided you are a member and have paid your 2022 membership fees.

Who is eligible to nominate for a position?

Any member, who has been an active dues-paying member for no less than 2 consecutive years, is eligible to serve on the Board. Some previous board members are ineligible, due to the rules on previous terms served.

How can I be nominated?

Two other current members must nominate you (sign your nomination). All candidates must be nominated by 2 other paid-up members (there are NO chapter or interest group nominations).

What is a legitimate nomination?

A legitimate nomination is correctly signed by two member nominators and by the candidate for a **named position**. NB nomination form are no specific for each position. A photo **must** be supplied,

and ALL questions must be answered. Nominate early, to ensure it complies with the rules, as no negotiations will be entered into after close of nominations on August 28, 2022.

With rules on campaigning in the Code of Conduct how do I tell members about myself?

In the nomination forms, candidates are asked to produce a three-minute video or audio which is sent by election committee to all voting members. The committee will endeavor to arrange meeting the candidates' sessions online. Any other communications must be in accordance with the draft IAWRT Code of Conduct, and breaches can lead to investigation, warning, and disqualification of any candidate. Cases involving serious lapses may be treated as gross misconduct which could result in dismissal from positions of leadership and/or revocation of IAWRT membership.

Can I pay membership at the biennial and vote in the 2022 elections? NO. The vote will be held before the biennial. Chapters treasurers will supply their list to the secretariat by the August 28 deadline. individuals must be paid up before that deadline. (New approved members can vote on other issues at the Biennial, according to the statutes)

Will a slate of recommended candidates be named?

NO. The committee will define the slate as all legitimately nominated candidates and they will be put before the voters - a 'slate' recommending a particular group of candidates will not be produced, like the 2020 elections. The 2022 committee is not elected in accordance with the statutes; it has no mandate to recommend any candidate.

Links to IAWRT Statutes and documents

[IAWRT GUIDING DOCUMENTS 2017](https://iawrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/IAWRT-Guiding-documents-2017.pdf)

<https://iawrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/IAWRT-Guiding-documents-2017.pdf>

IAWRT STATUTES (NB UPDATE to RECENT VERSION ON IAWRT.ORG.)

<https://iawrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/IAWRT-Statutes.2013.pdf>

IAWRT CODE OF ETHICS

NB UPLOAD THE MOST RECENT DRAFT (2019/20?)