

INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL CANDIDATES: IAIA 2021 ELECTION

The purpose of this document is to explain to potential candidates for IAIA Board of Director positions the process by which a slate of candidates is prepared for the next election (to join the Board in 2021) and the expectations for Board service. We have tried to answer as many of the typical questions as possible, but should you have further questions, or you need clarification of particular points, please contact the current chair of the Board Nominations Committee, Miles Scott-Brown (miles@cieragroup.com).

The Board Nominations Committee has the period of time from this year's IAIA Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) to 1 January 2021 to prepare a draft slate of candidates to run for the three positions on the Board, each with three-year terms. The election will be held electronically in January 2021, the positions to be taken up after the 2021 AGM. The Board Nominations Committee is mandated to "... prepare slates of two or more candidates for each office, and ...[to]ensure that the Board of Directors maintains a balance of regional, racial, ethnic, gender, experience and professional expertise."

1. IAIA NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION PROCESS

The 2020-2021 Board Nominations Process started virtually this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic which did not allow us to hold our Annual Conference in Seville, Spain in 2020. It is the purpose of this Board Nominations Committee to identify potential candidates for the Board. In addition, any IAIA member may identify candidates to be considered by the Committee for formal nomination to any of the positions to be filled. All names of potential candidates to be considered for nomination are sent to the IAIA Executive Director to confirm that each candidate is an IAIA Member in Good Standing (current year's dues paid). This list of confirmed candidates is then returned to the Board Nominations Committee.

At least two candidates will be nominated by the Committee from the pool of confirmed candidates for each of the three Board offices to be filled by the IAIA 2021 election: Present-Elect and two IAIA Directors.

An alternate means of ensuring that a particular candidate is formally nominated for a given position is also available (*Article IV, Section 5[b] of the IAIA By-laws*). Nominations signed by at least five Nominators and by the Nominee, all of whom must be IAIA Members in Good Standing, shall be included on the ballot papers, provided that the nomination is received by the Executive Director in time to be included on the Draft Ballot, six months before the next AGM.

The IAIA Board of Directors is subject to a renewal process each year when one-third of the Board members complete their three-

year terms and are replaced by a newly elected President-Elect and two new Directors. Under the By-laws accepted at the 2020 Annual General Meeting, the Board consists of nine Officers and Directors. Individual member of IAIA may serve as a Director or as President.

Stipulations:

The Board Nominations Committee advises those who agree to have their names placed in nomination that if nominated, they are agreeing to attend all Board, AGM, and Council meetings (mid-term, and those associated with the Annual Conference); communicate electronically with fellow Board members between meetings; and be able to obtain their own finance to cover their travel and accommodation costs for these meetings.

IAIA policy recognizes that if obtaining all the necessary funds is a problem, travel reimbursements of up to US\$1,875 total per calendar year for participation at the two board meetings may be applied for if needed. The funds can be used all for one of the Board meetings or split between the two meetings each year, at the Board member's discretion. Temporary changes regarding the reimbursement, however, have been made due to the COVID-19 pandemic (see **4.** below).

Even so, it is recognized that attending two international meetings each year for three years may be financially prohibitive and require excessive time away from work, especially for those Board members who are independent consultants and/or have no organization or employer support at all.

Consequently, all Board members are expected to attend the Board meeting associated with the annual meeting; and all Board members ideally will also be present at all three midterm meetings during their tenure on the Board. Although the midterm meeting is typically a more intensive meeting and it is important for all Board members to attend, missing a midterm meeting may be excused for financial or work-related considerations.

For accounting purposes, un-requested reimbursement amounts may not be carried over to a subsequent year.

In addition to the in-person meetings, Board members may need to participate in several (3-5) 2-hour web conferences each year. The web conference bears no cost to participants but requires internet access using a computer with a microphone and headset. If the computer/internet access is not available, the Board member would bear the cost of the two-hour international phone calls.

2. BECOMING A CANDIDATE

The Board Nominations Committee follows a two-step process:

1. compile a long list of potential candidates
2. select a sub-set of candidates to stand for election, to ensure... "a balance of regional, racial, ethnic, gender, experience and professional expertise" on the new Board

Should you agree to be considered as a candidate and following verification of your membership status, your name will be placed on the long list from which the final selection of Nominees will be chosen. At this stage it is important to secure the agreement of your employer (if relevant), as you will need time away from your normal activities to travel to two Board meetings per year (see **5.** below). Your employer may also be willing to provide some financial support should you be elected to the Board.

If you are selected to stand for the Board, you will then be asked to provide two items:

i.) a short resume, no more than a half-page (A4 or Letter size) in length, containing: a brief overview of your professional qualifications and experience; where relevant, a brief statement of any current or past service to IAIA (anything in addition to

regular membership); and finally a short statement of your thoughts on IAIA: for example, you may have ideas about how you would like to see IAIA develop in the next few years; you may have suggestions for how it might serve impact assessment professionals more effectively; or you may see emerging issues to which IAIA may need to respond. There may be other ideas or comments you wish to include in the short statement. The intention is to be flexible and allow candidates to present information that the members will find useful when making their choices.

The resume is best written in the 1st person as this information is sent out with the ballots to the IAIA membership (representing over 100 countries) to assist them with their voting. It should be forwarded to the Executive Director (david@iaia.org) by 15 December 2020.

ii.) The Board Nominations Committee Chair also asks each candidate in a *Letter of Commitment* if he/she will be able to comply with the conditions of office:

- Attend all Board and Council meetings;
- Carry out electronic communications [e-mail and web-conferencing] on Board affairs between meetings;
- Be prepared to take on special assignments - see below for examples.

An electronic Confirmation of Commitment Letter is sent to each candidate: they are asked to sign it and forward it to the Executive Director (david@iaia.org) and to the Nominations Committee Chair, Miles Scott-Brown (miles@cieragroup.com).

3. A REVIEW OF THE COMMITMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BEING ON THE IAIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board meets twice a year: once associated with the IAIA Conference and Annual Meeting, and again at a mid-term meeting. At the annual Conference, Board meetings are scheduled after the Conference is over. The AGM and Council meetings are scheduled during the Conference. Depending on exactly when the Conference finishes, Board meetings could take place that day, that evening, or during the next two days following the close of the conference. Newly elected Board members officially take office "at the commencement of the first meeting of the Board of Directors after each Annual General Meeting", which is

usually the Board meeting just after the Conference is over. The retiring Board members are invited to participate in this meeting as well.

Board members are expected to attend ALL Board, AGM, and Council meetings unless a sudden personal problem intervenes.

In addition, a variety of smaller and/or more topical meetings are often scheduled throughout the Conference at which Board member presence may be required. While these meetings are scheduled to avoid conflicts with sessions in which Board members present or chair, often these meetings are scheduled during the Conference day, meaning Board members may need to miss a session of interest.

IAIA holds its annual conference event in a different continent/region each year to give all IAIA members chances to attend some IAIA conferences at convenient locations. Annual conferences tend to be scheduled in the April – August time period.

The location of the mid-term Board meeting varies. It may be the current President's home institution or city; in conjunction with and at the site of an Affiliate's meeting; or at a strategic location to increase that region's exposure to IAIA. The mid-term meeting is usually scheduled mid-way between Annual Conferences, often in November, and is typically spread over two days.

E-mail is the life-blood of Board business conducted between members between regular meetings. The intensity of communication is determined by what is on the Board's current agenda, and to what extent each individual Board member is involved in that particular issue. Typically, all Board members might receive one IAIA e-mail a week, and in an intense issue time, there could be as many as two or three messages per day for several days, some of which would require answers. Fortunately, "intense periods" don't generally last for very long and may involve only a small number of Board members at any one time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily changed how we operate in IAIA. With improved web-conferencing capabilities, Board members are now able to hold "mini" meetings on key agenda items throughout the year. This maintains the momentum of work on activities associated with the Board's

strategic plan and keeps Board members in closer contact with each other and IAIA HQ staff. Board members should anticipate 3-5 2-hour web conferences each year.

The basic expectations are that each member of the IAIA Board of Directors will

- attend the entire Board meeting attached to each annual conference for their three-year term,
- attend each of the midterm Board meetings during their three-year term *if they are able to do so*, and
- commit to participation in 3-5 electronic meetings of 1-2 hours duration each during each of the years of their three-year term.

Summary of Reimbursement Policy

A total of US\$1,875 per calendar year can be applied to a Board member's travel to the two Board meetings each year and can be divided between the two meetings as desired.

Outgoing Board members can request 50% of the total (\$938) for expense reimbursement for the Board meeting associated with the last annual conference of their term.

The annual conference registration fee can be included as one of the expenses for reimbursement, but the Board member must contact IAIA HQ for a discount code *prior* to registering for the conference.

Receipts, an expense report, and signed US tax documents (as applicable) are required for all reimbursements.

A full description of the Board Travel Reimbursement Policy is contained in IAIA's Policy Note #4.

Board members are also asked to take on special assignments. Examples include acting as the Board Liaison with a Committee; serving on a Task Force to deal with a specific Board initiative such as the By-Laws revision; writing an article for the IAIA Newsletter on a particular activity or issue that the Board member is involved in; or attending a particular function at or near one's home base as an IAIA representative. Serving as Director-Secretary or Director-Treasurer also count as "special assignments". Board members are also encouraged to initiate activities in accordance with IAIA overall policy and planning objectives. All Board

members are expected to use their talents, networks and influence to build a more secure financial and membership base for IAIA.

4. IAIA AND COVID-19

There is no doubt that for many of us, COVID-19 has greatly affected the way we live and what we do. The same applies to IAIA. We are now doing virtual board meetings, and our upcoming 2020 mid-term meeting will also be virtual.

As the Board travel reimbursement is only to be used to offset travel costs, it will not be available to directors in 2020. We will continue to monitor the situation and how travel is affected by COVID-19 in 2021 and beyond.

5. FOR ALL CANDIDATES

It is important that each candidate discuss the possibility of serving on the IAIA Board, if nominated and then elected, with his/her employer. Common questions that an employer will ask when one of his/her staff is asked to serve on the IAIA Board is "How much time will it take?" and/or, "Who covers the costs?"

- Based on previous experience, individuals should allow roughly one week for the mid-term meeting, and up to two weeks for the Conference/Annual Meeting and associated Board and Council meetings. These estimates include travel times, which are location-dependent, of course.
- Activities and e-mail or other electronic communications while at home base: these are hard to estimate; perhaps the

equivalent of two-three working weeks per year for a heavily involved person, but as communications can be done or prepared at home after hours, this should not impact one's regular employment unduly.

- If a candidate expects his/her employer to fund the required travel, that expectation should be confirmed with the employer before the candidate agrees to be on the ballot.

IAIA expects that the employer gains positive benefits by having a staff member closely associated with an organisation of professionals such as IAIA. The staff member benefits as well as the employer from the close association with his/her fellow Board members where an important goal is to advance the role and practice of Impact Assessment in broadly-based environmental assessment and management, and in sustainable development world-wide. IAIA's associations with other international organisations is also of interest and provide mutual benefits.

We all recognise that the travel cost issue can be a problem. Fortunately, creative candidates and Board members seem to have been able to overcome it, frequently with the help of their home institutions, or by obtaining grants from other sources. As noted above, IAIA finances permitting, Board members may obtain a modest travel reimbursement if that makes the difference between attendance or inability to attend. Use of personal frequent flyer programs and early sign-up for the best airline discount and seat-sale fares also help substantially.

In closing, we thank you for agreeing to your candidacy to the Board and for your interest in serving IAIA.

Miles Scott-Brown
Chair, IAIA Board Nominations Committee

David Bancroft, Executive Director

October 2020