Preface

Congratulations on your decision to accept the nomination as a candidate for the Special Libraries Association Board of Directors. For the Association to grow and prosper, we need dedicated leaders like you to assume leadership positions when asked to serve. No matter the outcome of the election, the experience will be rewarding and will enrich your personal and professional development.

This document is intended to provide a step-by-step outline of the entire SLA election process and what is expected of you as a candidate. It reflects the experiences of a number of individuals who have served on the Board of Directors, or on the Nominating Committee, who are part of the Headquarters team, or who were candidates themselves. It is crucial for each candidate to understand the commitments that are required when accepting the nomination for a Board position.

Parts I and II are timelines and guidelines for the candidates. They clearly spell out the commitments and recommended practices. Parts III and IV detail the involvement of the Board of Directors, the Nominating Committee, and SLA Staff in the election process.

Thank you for your willingness to serve and good luck.
I. Board of Directors, Nominating Committee and Staff

A. The Nominating Committee for each election of Association members to the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Board in June of the preceding year of the closing date established for the Committee’s report (no later than August 1st).

B. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of five members, none of whom shall be a member of the Board.

C. The 3rd year directors shall present four candidates to the Board to serve as members of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee elects one of its members to serve as chair of the committee the following year.

D. The proposed list of names is voted on by the Board of Directors during an Executive Board session. Once the committee members are approved then the 3rd year directors step back from the process.

E. The Past President and Executive Director work with the Nominating Committee in an advisory capacity.

F. The President-Elect contacts the candidates (once approved by the Board) and acts as a liaison throughout the year.

G. Once the Nominating Committee has submitted the slate of candidates and the Board of Directors receives the slate, Board members are responsible for the following:
   • The President-Elect will schedule time during the Annual Conference for candidate introductions at various events.
   • Additional obligations of the candidates are outlined each year by the President-Elect.
   • Once the votes have been tallied, the Executive Director contacts the President and President-Elect with the election results. With due speed, the President-Elect then contacts all the candidates with the results, then s/he contacts the rest of the Board with the results, and then sends out a communication to the entire membership. Election vote counts are undisclosed.

II. The Election Timeline

In the third quarter, the Nominating Committee:
   • Reviews the Nominating Committee guidelines and candidate handbook for necessary updates and changes.
   • Reviews and updates the information requested and process for the Call for Nominations.

In the fourth quarter each year:
   • The SLA Board of Directors shall provide the Nominating Committee a list of desired skill sets and expertise desired, as well as a census of the current Board of Directors that takes into consideration current Director and Officers makeup to ensure a diverse Board composition.
   • The “Call for Nominations,” inviting the submission of possible candidates and advertising the criteria that will be used in the selection process, is disseminated via electronic distribution (email, social media, e-newsletter, SLA Connect, SLA Unit Leadership Community, etc.). Each candidate will submit information about themselves and the desire to serve on the SLA Board of Directors. This will include, but is not limited to, demographic information such as industry sector, and geographic area, and direct responses to questions about skill sets, experiences, and areas of expertise. The staff will provide the Nominating Committee with a list of the responses to the Call for Nominations at the end of January.
   • At the November Meeting, current Board census and demographic information is presented by SLA President and Executive Director to the Nominating Committee. Gaps related to industry sector, geographic, skill sets, areas of expertise, etc. are identified.
   • At the December Meeting, the Nominating Committee meets to review and discuss the list of possible nominees and the information received from the Call for Nominations so far. The Nominating Committee notes the individuals that meet the desired criteria to fulfill the SLA commitment to diversity and inclusion. The Nominating Committee makes outreach to those individuals who have not yet turned in the required Call for Nomination information.

In the 1st quarter of each year:
At the January Meeting, the Nominating Committee will review all of the potential candidates and then rank potential candidates based on those criteria.

Between the January and March meetings, the top candidates will be invited to informal conversations to aid decisions on which candidates to put forward for each position, to inform them of the commitments involved in both their candidacy and in holding office and to give them an opportunity to ask any further questions they may have.

At the March meeting, the Nominating Committee will agree which candidates to put forward for each position on the slate. Following the Meeting, Nominating Committee members:
- Nominating Committee will call suggested candidates to confirm they will run for office.
- Ask those that have agreed to run to supply a letter of acceptance and an additional written indication of support from their employer.
- Review the make-up of the candidates along the way to ensure balance, diversity and inclusion.
- Candidates should NOT be told the names of their opponents UNTIL the Board ACCEPTS the report of the Nominating Committee.

In the 2nd quarter of each year:
- The names of the nominees and their written acceptances shall be submitted to the SLA Board of Directors no later than April. The Nominating Committee Chair prepares the report with the slate of nominees for the Board of Directors at the April meeting. An information copy should be sent to each member of the Nominating Committee. The Chair will submit with the report the written acceptances of those willing to serve.
- The Board of Directors will accept the report, discuss the recommendation and vote. If the slate of nominees is accepted by the Board, the association staff will contact the nominees regarding biographic information, headshot, Annual Conference schedule, etc. If the slate is not accepted by the Board, it will be referred back to the Nominating Committee with recommendations for review and consideration.
- Following the SLA Board of Directors meeting in April, the Nominating Committee slate of candidates will be announced to the membership at least one month prior to the Annual Business Meeting. Additional nominations may be made by a petition entered by twenty-five (25) voting members. Such petition must be filed with the Association staff officer during the 3-week period prior to the nominations deadline set by the board and must be accompanied by written acceptance of the nominee and other materials required for the process. Once the petition with 25 signatures and accompany information is received, SLA will announce the additional candidates to the SLA membership.
- The President-Elect will contact each candidate immediately after the slate of candidates is official. Expectations will be outlined and a time for the candidates to meet at the Annual Conference will be set-up. SLA Staff will send out a congratulatory email advising candidates the election timeline and process.

Candidates for the Board of Directors will:
- Be invited to observe open board meetings.
- Be encouraged to attend all relevant meetings, networking opportunities, receptions, and other functions at the annual conference. Please manage schedules accordingly.
- Receive email messages regularly reminding them of deadlines and any other important information.
- Provided the “Board of Directors’ Orientation Manual.” It is recommended that candidates review this publication so that they become familiar with Board activities.
- Ask to submit a photograph, short biography and answers to several questions, which will be posted on the website and/or other SLA communication vehicles. Due dates will be established by staff.
- Be encouraged to participate in an SLA webinar, Meet the Candidates, which is an opportunity for the membership to engage with the Candidates.

In the 3rd quarter each year:
• The election will begin in September and closes two weeks later. Once the votes have been tallied, the Executive Director contacts the President and President-Elect with the election results. With due speed, the President-Elect then contacts all the candidates with the results and then s/he contacts the rest of the Board with the results and sends a communication to the entire membership. (It is suggested that the President-Elect collects the best number for reaching each candidate in advance.)

III. Meetings to Attend

Each candidate should begin planning his/her attendance at various SLA functions during their candidacy. As mentioned in Section I, it is highly recommended that each candidate attend the SLA Annual Conference (Open Board meeting, open houses, etc. and other "association events" [General Sessions, International Reception, etc.]). **The candidate is financially responsible for attendance at the Annual Conference.** SLA and the Communities offer stipends and scholarships to the Annual Conference. Candidates are encouraged to explore these opportunities if facing a financial hardship. Please note: once elected the Board members may receive a travel stipend for travel only (Registration to SLA events is not included).

The Annual Conference offers many opportunities for candidates to network with members and meet the leadership of the association. Candidates will wear a Board Candidate ribbon for identification purposes. The candidates are invited to attend and are introduced at the open session board meeting before the annual conference begins. The candidates are encouraged to attend all Association-wide events such as the First Timers Reception, International Reception, General Sessions, Annual Business Meeting and as many community networking events as possible. Visibility during this conference is very important for the success of the candidate. These events may change from year-to-year. **Plan a multi-day commitment for the Annual Conference.**

IV. SLA Election Policy Statement of Intent

I. Purpose

The following policy governs candidates during the election process for office in SLA. It is intended to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and equitably and that they are able to participate in the election process without undue political pressure from member groups, or excessive requirements to commit their time or other resources to the election process. Candidates are encouraged to become well informed about Association issues in the event that they are asked to comment on them in one of the ways permitted by this Policy. Candidates should do all they can to ensure that Association entities, Communities, Committees, Advisory Council, Task Forces, partnership, and all other relationships are treated fairly and equitably by themselves and other candidates for the same position on the Board of Directors.

II. Policy

Candidates may not campaign for elected office by engaging in such activities as distributing flyers, buttons, other promotional items, or fund raising that are intended to persuade members to vote for them.

Candidates may express their opinions or ideas about professional issues dealing with information management, leadership, knowledge management, and librarianship at any time and in any format.

Each candidate standing for election to a position on the Board of Directors must participate in the SLA sponsored election-related events or activities, such as the published candidates’ statements that appear on SLA’s website each year. Candidates may not make promises about future actions that will be taken
Candidates may not respond or comment on another candidate's views or positions.

Candidates may participate on SLA Connect and other communication platforms sponsored by SLA Communities, as long as they conform to all aspects of this policy.

SLA Communities or individuals may notify their members that candidates are members of their entity. Entities may not endorse candidates. SLA Board of Director members may not actively support a candidate.

Accepted 03.11.2010 (OM0310CC-A02-3)
Revised October 2017
Revised October 2020

V. NOTES

- Candidates may use social networking tools in pursuing their election to the Board. The emphasis for the candidate should be on communicating their ideas and opinions rather than on the tools.
- Candidates should take full advantage of all SLA-sponsored promotional opportunities. Any additional communication tools (such as business cards) or methods they wish to use will be at their own discretion as long as it doesn't violate the prohibition noted above about active, persuasive attempts to campaign.
- If the Statement of Intent and Candidate Guidelines are disregarded, the Executive Committee will take appropriate action up to and including elimination of the candidate from the ballot.
- SLA entities such as Communities or individuals may notify their members that candidates are members of their entity. But entities may not endorse candidates. SLA Board of Directors members may not actively support or endorse a candidate.
- In order to ensure fairness and mitigate any financial burdens to running for the board, candidates are discouraged from traveling to visit other community events other than the community in their state of residence or area. Candidates may speak virtually to communities but only if the invitation to do so comes directly from the community to each candidate for a particular office and is scheduled for a date that works for each candidate invited. Candidates should not ask a community to coordinate any meetings, library visits, events or speaking engagements on their behalf.