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, on the Nominating Committee, who are part of the SLA Staff 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.

*Note: Prior to approval of the slate, individuals will be known as Nominees. Once the slate is received, individuals will be known as Candidates.*
I. Board of Directors, Nominating Committee and Staff

- The Nominating Committee for each election of Association members to the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Board in the 3rd Quarter of the year (no later than August 1st).
- The Nominating Committee shall be composed of five members, none of whom shall be a member of the Board, with a wide geographic spread, from as many different Communities as possible and at different stages of their careers.
- 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.
- The Nominating Committee is established to identify future Association leaders to ensure a representative slate of diverse, talented, qualified, and willing candidates for election to all positions on the Board of Directors.
- The proposed list of names is voted on by the Board of Directors during an Executive Board session. Once the committee members are approved, the 3rd year directors step back from the process.
- The Past President and Executive Director work with the Nominating Committee in an advisory capacity.
- The President-Elect contacts the candidates for the Nominating Committee (once approved by the Board) and acts as a liaison to them throughout the year.
- Once the Nominating Committee has submitted the slate of Nominees 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, as well as opportunities for candidates to virtually engage with SLA members outside of conference.
  - 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 they contact 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

Election Timeline At-a-Glance:
- Update Call for Nominations & Candidate Handbook (July-Sept)
- Launch Call for Nominations (November)
- Close Call for Nominations (end of January)
- Review Nominations & Rank Nominees (February)
- Schedule Interviews (February/March)
- Narrow Nominees (April)
- Present Recommended Slate to Board of Directors (April/May)
- Allow for Petition Period (3 weeks after slate announced)
- Announce Petition Candidates (if applicable)
- Launch Candidate Introductions to Members (June/July)
- Open Election (September)
- Close Election (two weeks after launch)
- Present Election Results (immediately after close)
- Post Election Results to the full Membership

In the third quarter (July/Aug/Sept), the Nominating Committee:
- Reviews the Nominating Committee guidelines and candidate handbook for necessary updates and changes.
- Reviews and updates the process for the Call for Nominations.
In the fourth quarter (Oct/Nov/Dec) each year:

- In October, the SLA Board of Directors shall update the list of desired skill sets and expertise, as well as a census of the current Board of Directors that takes into consideration current Director and Officers’ sector of industry, geographic area of residence, gender, and other important components of ensuring a diverse Board.
- The current Board census and demographic information is presented by SLA President and Executive Director to the Nominating Committee prior to launching the Call for Nominations. Gaps related to industry sector, geography, skill sets, areas of expertise, etc. are identified and incorporated.
- In November, the “Call for Nominations,” inviting the submission of possible nominees 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 Community Leadership, etc.).
  o Each nominee will submit information about themselves and their desire to serve on the SLA Board of Directors. This will include, but is not limited to, demographic information such as industry sector, geographic area, and direct responses to questions about skill sets, experiences and areas of expertise.
  o Staff will provide the Nominating Committee with a list of the responses to the Call for Nominations by the end of January.
- In December, the Nominating Committee meets to review and discuss the list of nominees and the information received from the Call for Nominations thus far. The Nominating Committee notes the individuals that meet the desired criteria to fulfill SLA's commitment to diversity and inclusion and identifies additional nominees that should be considered to submit a nomination. The Nominating Committee makes outreach to those individuals who have not yet turned in the required Call for Nomination information.

In the 1st quarter (Jan/Feb/March) of each year:

- At the end of January, the Nominating Committee will review all of the potential nominees’ applications and rank them based on the criteria listed in the Call for Nominations.
- In February and March, the top individuals will be invited to informal conversations to aid decisions on which nominees 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.
  o There is a standard set of interview questions for each nominee to ensure a fair and equitable process.
- By the end of March/early April, the Nominating Committee will agree on which nominees to put forward for each position on the slate. Following the meeting, Nominating Committee members will:
  o call the nominees to confirm they will run for office; and
  o ask those that have agreed to run to supply a letter of acceptance and an additional written indication of support from their employer; and
  o review the make-up of the nominees along the way to ensure balance, diversity and inclusion.
- Nominees should NOT be informed of the other nominees UNTIL the Board receives the report of the Nominating Committee with the proposed slate.

In the 2nd quarter (April/May/June) of each year:

- The Nominating Committee Chair prepares the report with the slate of nominees for the Board of Directors and presents it at the next Executive Session Board meeting in late April or early May. The Chair will submit with the report the written acceptances of those willing to serve. An informational copy should be sent to each member of the Nominating Committee.
- The Board of Directors will review the report, discuss the recommendations, and receive the report.
  o After the report containing the slate of nominees is received by the Board, staff will contact the individuals regarding biographic information, headshot, candidate handbook, and the schedule of activities.
• The Nominating Committee will send all nominees a follow up communication as well, to close the loop and encourage those not selected for the slate to continue their efforts and consider running again in the future.
  o If the report containing 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/May, the Nominating Committee slate of candidates will be announced to the membership at least one month prior to the Annual Conference.
• Nominations other than the nominations made by the Nominating Committee may be made by a petition entered by no fewer than twenty-five (25) voting members. Such petitions must be filed with the Association staff officer prior to the nomination deadline set by the board and must be accompanied by written acceptance of the nominee. (SLA Bylaws: ARTICLE VII, Section 3)
  o Current Practice: Such petition(s) must be filed with the Association staff officer within a 3-week period, as set by the board, directly after the slate of candidates is announced to the membership and must be accompanied by written acceptance of the nominee(s) and other materials required for the process.
    • Once the petition with 25 signatures and accompanying information is received, the board will hold an executive session to receive the petition.
    • Once the petition is received, SLA will announce the additional petition 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 and/or virtually will be set-up. SLA Staff will send out a congratulatory email advising candidates of 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 and/or virtually, and to manage schedules accordingly.
• Receive email messages regularly reminding them of deadlines and any other important information.
• Be provided with the “Board of Directors’ Orientation Manual.” It is recommended that candidates review this publication so that they become familiar with Board activities.
• Be asked to submit a photograph, short biography, and answers to several questions, all of 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 Meet the Candidates event which is an opportunity for the membership to engage with the Candidates.

In the 3rd quarter (July/Aug/Sept) each year:
• The election will begin in September and close 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 they contact the rest of the Board with the results and send 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 their attendance at various SLA functions during their candidacy. SLA will provide opportunities, during the third quarter, virtually as well as in-person at the Annual Conference, to ensure opportunities for all candidates to engage with members.

As mentioned in Section I, it is highly recommended that each candidate attend Open Board Meetings, Town Halls, and events at the SLA Annual Conference (open houses, community events and receptions and general sessions).

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 or use an SLA Board Candidate virtual background.
- The candidates are invited to attend and are introduced at the Open Board Meeting before the annual conference begins (if applicable).
- The candidates are encouraged to attend all Association-wide events such as the First Timers Reception, International Reception, General Sessions, 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 and based on the format of the meeting. It is encouraged to plan a multi-day commitment for the Annual Conference.
- 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 financial hardship. Please note: once elected the Board members may receive a travel stipend for travel only (registration to SLA events is not included) if the annual budget allows.

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 Councils, Task Forces, partnerships, 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 by the Board of Directors. However, candidates are permitted to make statements regarding their own personal positions, opinions, and/or actions they would like to see as members of the Board. This may include 'vision statements' and 'direction statements' for the future of the Association.

● Candidates may not respond or comment on another candidate's views or positions except in conversations or forums in which the candidates are directly conversing with one another. All such communications should be in a respectful and collegial manner, intended to facilitate productive topic discussion.

● Candidates may be asked to comment on what they perceive to be the key issues of the moment for the Association and how they would address them.

● 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 and do so in a respectful manner.

● SLA Communities or individuals may notify their members that candidates are members of their entity, but must include all candidate members of said entities in all such communications. Entities may not endorse candidates and should actively avoid creating a perception of an endorsement.

● Sitting members of the SLA Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee may not actively support a candidate.

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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(s) from the ballot.

● Individuals may represent themselves as Candidates in any SLA event or setting, but may only speak on their candidacy when invited by coordinators - in accordance with the guidance below where all candidates are invited.

● 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 every candidate appropriate for the event.

      1. For one particular office (i.e. candidates for President-elect), the event is scheduled for a date and time that works for all the candidates for the position. The event may still be held and attending candidates may speak even if any other candidate declines the invitation.

      2. For all offices (meaning all candidates), the event is scheduled for a date and time which could reasonably be expected to accommodate the time zones of all
candidates invited. The event may still be held and attending candidates may speak even if any other candidate declines the invitation.

- Candidates should not ask a community to coordinate any meetings, library visits, events, or speaking engagements on their behalf. However, candidates may request or encourage communities to hold events that include all candidates, in line with the prior guidance.