IGS Governing Board Elections Process

Overview

As stipulated in the minutes of the 51st IGS Governing Board meeting, the **Governing Board Elections Process** will:

1. establish a **Standing Elections Committee**, its formation/membership process, duration of member service, and role with respect to the Governing Board (GB);
2. define how the Standing Elections Committee may **consider and approve or deny AM applications and renewals**, addressing the issue of organizational and geographical balance while fostering inclusivity without inserting personal/professional/organizational bias;
3. determine how Associate Member (**AM) voting** takes place now that a 10-per-organization cap has been lifted in favor of individual AM selection, and recognizing that AMs may move organizations over the course of their membership with the IGS (formerly a task of an Associate Member Committee or ad-hoc Nominations/Elections Committee);
4. prescribe how a **GB Vacancy Call for Nominations** to the Associate Membership may be implemented to solicit candidates for all AM-elected GB positions;
5. identify all **key tasks in a GB elections cycle** and provide a draft **timeline**; and
6. integrate with the upcoming 2019 Terms of Reference revision.

Background

Current (end of 2018) State

According to the 2017 IGS Terms of Reference:
"For the Associates Representatives, which represent components of the IGS that are elected by the IGS Associate Members, a Nominating Committee conducts the elections. The Nominating Committee consists of three members, the chair of which is appointed by the Chairman of the GB and who is a member of the GB holding a position not currently up for re-election. For elections, the Nominating Committee presents to the Associate Members a list of at least two candidates for each position to be filled. The election will be determined by the number of votes received from the Associate Members. In the case of a tie, the election is by the members of the GB."

This typically took the shape of 3-5 Governing Board members volunteering to form an Elections Committee (sometimes also called Nominations Committee) for each election. Members of this

committee were not allowed to be candidates for any of the positions to be filled. Once the committee was formed, a Chair was chosen and committee members contacted other colleagues that they believed were good candidates for particular roles. Often members of the Elections/Nominations Committee were asked to serve on multiple elections, so the pool of potential candidates was somewhat limited by this at times.

Assessment of Alternative Structures

After discussion with current and past committee members, it was determined that the IGS may have outgrown such a method, and that it would be beneficial to establish a Standing Elections Committee for 2-4 year terms so that members could better anticipate their commitment to the IGS via this effort. It was also noted that there is a need for increased Associate Member outreach and engagement, especially in the realm of communicating opportunities for Associate Members to fill vacant Governing Board seats.

Other IAG Services, namely the International DORIS Service, commence their Governing/Directing Board vacancy candidate search with an open Call for Nominations to the general Associate Member population of that service. After much discussion, it was decided that adopting this method would ensure transparency in process for candidate selection, as well as providing an element of sustainability for generational turnover in the service.

Proposed Solution

Create a Standing Elections Committee, comprised of at least one sitting Governing Board member, one Central Bureau member (ex officio), and 2-3 other Governing Board or Associate Members. This committee will serve in two- to three-year terms (depending on member availability and other factors) and positions may have unlimited renewals.

In consultation with the IGS Executive Committee, the Standing Elections Committee will be responsible for two tasks:
1. Review (approval or denial) of Associate Member candidate applications; Standing Elections Committee members may also submit nominations
2. Vetting and selection of candidates responding to Governing Board Vacancy Calls for Nominations

Approval or Denial of Associate Member Applications

The Standing Elections Committee will be mindful of the need for organizational and geographical balance while fostering inclusivity in the IGS community. Candidate Associate Member applications will be reviewed on an individual basis first, then organizational and geographical balance will be considered. References may be contacted, along with other means necessary to determine if the

candidate is qualified for Associate Membership. There is no longer a cap on number of members per organization.

For a detailed description of the Associate Member application review process, please see the *IGS Associate Member Engagement Process.*

Associate Member Voting

All Associate Members will be allowed to vote in all applicable Governing Board elections.

Governing Board Position Candidacy Process

All Governing Board positions expire at the end of the calendar year. In any given year where there are Governing Board vacancies, an open Call for Nominations will be sent out to the Associate Membership via IGSmail, describing each position and inviting serious applicants to submit their credentials and a short statement of interest. The Call for Nominations will be open for two months, from 1 June to 31 July of an elections year.

After the Call for Nominations window closes at the end of July, the Central Bureau will conduct a preliminary check to verify that all candidates are active Associate Members. After this, the candidate profiles will be sent to the Standing Elections Committee for consideration and review. No fewer than two, and no more than five candidates will be selected for each vacancy. If there are two identical positions (for example, Analysis Center Representative) then candidates will be grouped together and the top two most popular individuals will fill the two available positions.

Candidates will be notified of their progress in the cycle mid-August, and asked to confirm their interest in standing for election in a given position as well as willingness to serve the prescribed time (two to four years where shorter than four should only applied in exceptional cases and for good reasons). A longer statement of interest, along with a letter of support from the candidate's home institution/organization, will also be requested.

Two months prior to the December Governing Board meeting, the Central Bureau will generate an online ballot system and distribute this along with candidate statements and CVs to the Associate Membership. Reminders will be sent out twice during the open voting period; one halfway through and one two weeks before closing, with a final reminder given verbally the day of the December Governing Board meeting. Voting will close at the first coffee break of the December Governing Board meeting, or at a time prescribed by the Chair.

Election Timeline (dates are approximate)

Mid June:
- Standing Elections Committee Chairman works with CB to draft Call for Nominations for all GB positions to be contested at the end of the year.
- Associate Member renewal notifications sent out by CB.

Beginning of July:
- Standing Elections Committee Chairman works with CB to send out Call for Nominations to Associate Member mailing list.

End of July:
- Call for Nominations window closes.
- Standing Elections Committee works with CB to verify nominee Associate Member active status and organize nominations.
- Standing Elections Committee vets nominations and makes a selection of viable candidates from this pool.

Mid August
- Candidates are contacted by Standing Elections Committee Chairman and asked to:
  - Confirm interest in running for election.
  - Provide CV, statement of intent, and letter of support from their supervisor/sponsor.

Beginning of November
- CB will generate an online voting system and distribute the link to this along with candidate statements and CVs to the Associate Member mailing list.
- All voting will take place electronically.

Mid November
- Reminder of voting sent to Associate Members.

Beginning of December
- Second reminder of voting sent to Associate Members.

Day before December GB Meeting Day
- Final reminder sent to Associate Members.
- Verbal reminder given at Open Associate Member Meeting (if taking place).
- Voting closes at 17:00 Pacific Standard Time, the day before the December GB meeting.