

November 21, 2017

*Nominating Committee*

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# Developing a Nominations Strategy



The Nominating Committee makes recommendations to the International Federation of Accountants® (IFAC®) Board and Public Interest Oversight Board (PIOB) on the composition of the Public Interest Activity Committees (PIACs) independent standard-setting boards, and is advised by, and reports to, the Public Interest Committee (PIC) on the composition of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB).

The Nominating Committee is guided in its work by the principle of selecting the most suitable person for the position. In so doing, it endeavors to balance the nominee's abilities and professional qualifications with the representational needs of the board. The Nominating Committee also seeks a broad regional and professional representation, representation from countries with different levels of economic development, and gender balance.

# DEVELOPING A NOMINATIONS STRATEGY

A Companion Guide to the Calls for Nominations in 2019

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## **Helping You to Better Understand the Nominations Process**

While the Nominating Committee has made substantial progress in improving the nominations process in terms of providing greater due process, transparency, and consistency, it also makes efforts to improve the process from the standpoint of nominating organizations and self-nominees. Our objective is to provide all stakeholders, including IFAC members, associates, and affiliates; the Forum of Firms; other international organizations; governmental institutions; and the general public with a greater understanding of how they can nominate the right candidates given the current needs of each board and committee.

The Nominating Committee reviews the nominations to recommend the most suitable candidates for the available positions: those who are most likely to enhance the quality of the output of a particular board or committee. In evaluating candidates from what is typically a large pool of candidates, the Nominating Committee considers matters such as relevance of candidates' professional backgrounds, technical skills, past and present contributions to the accountancy profession at regional and international levels, and the ability to make a significant impact on the matters and areas of emphasis reflected in the work plan of a particular board or committee when considered in combination with the mix of current members' backgrounds. While the Nominating Committee also considers gender and regional balance, the most suitable candidate principle is the overriding objective for selection.

## **Providing the Right Candidate for the Right Time**

While the Nominating Committee can never have too many good candidates, in many cases, the Nominating Committee seeks candidates with a certain combination of skills and attributes that correspond to the needs of a particular board or committee with respect to its objectives, current work plan, and membership composition. In this sense, the Nominating Committee seeks not only professional, regional, and gender balance, but also to address the changing demands of each board and committee. A candidate could be highly qualified in general, but not have the specific professional skills or attributes that the board or committee needs in a particular year. To avoid this situation, the Nominating Committee is making every effort to provide nominating organizations and self-nominees with the information and guidance to develop an effective nominations strategy.

## **Why Should You Consider a Nominations Strategy?**

The Nominating Committee generally receives more than a 150 nominations annually for available vacancies.

For 2019, there are 22 vacancies on the independent Standard-Setting Boards (SSBs), excluding Chair positions. For 15 of these vacancies, the current member can be re-nominated and, if considered appropriate, re-appointed for a second term of service. There are 25 vacancies on the IFAC Board and committees, excluding leadership positions. For 16 of these vacancies, the current member can be re-nominated for a second term of service. See vacancy overview table in the *Calls for Nominations* for more information about vacancies.

Nominations for the independent SSBs come from IFAC members, associates, and affiliates; the Forum of Firms; other international organizations; governmental institutions; and the general public. Nominations for the IFAC Board and committees are open to IFAC members only. The key for each of these constituents is to carefully review the *Calls for Nominations* and then research the work plans of the boards and committees to which they believe their nominee(s) can make the most effective contributions. In this way, we strive to build boards and committees where constituents seek not just the objective of membership, but also the

objective of effective participation. Your nominations should be based on the general qualifications and requirements for membership of the specific board or committee.

## **How to Develop a Successful Nominations Strategy**

### **Step 1: Assess the Vacancies on Each Board and Committee**

Naturally, the best place to start is the *Calls for Nominations*. For 2019 volunteer vacancies, the Nominating Committee will issue two *Calls*: the *Call for Nominations for the Independent Standard-Setting Boards in 2019* and the *Call for Nominations for the IFAC Board and Committees in 2019*. The *Calls for Nominations* provide a summary of vacancies on each board and committee, with a brief description of the general qualifications and requirements for membership. Additional valuable information is provided in the section for each board or committee.

After you are familiar with what each board or committee does, as well as which positions are available, you should carefully read the section titled *Call for Nominations*, which provides information on broad professional qualifications sought as well as the professional, regional, and gender targets for each board or committee. For example, in some cases, certain regions may have little or no representation. In other cases, there may be a gender imbalance. In general, this section should provide you with initial guidance, a starting point for considering your own candidates. It should not, however, be an endpoint as more refined approaches should be developed to position your candidates for the respective boards and committees (see Step 4 below).

After appreciating the general qualifications sought, as well as the impact of the vacancies on the diversity of each board and committee, you should also read the section titled *Requirements of Membership*, which explains the commitment required in time and support for each board and committee member. Underestimating these commitments, or putting forward candidates who do not understand them, potentially reduces the effectiveness of the board or committee.

### **Step 2: Organize Your Candidates**

The second step in developing a nominations strategy is to develop a list of potential candidates for prospective board and committee positions.

Build a candidate pool: develop a list of potential candidates from your organization who match the general qualifications sought for each board and committee. This preliminary list should include potential candidates from a variety of professional backgrounds.

This preliminary list will also indicate deficits in the diversity of your own candidate pool. For example, you may have a disproportionate number of practitioners as opposed to non-practitioners, or you may have to consider improving the gender balance of the selection. In cases where imbalances exist, you may need to widen your search for appropriate candidates.

Try to organize your candidates into professional categories, i.e., academic, small and medium practitioners, government, etc. For further assistance on professional classifications, please see *Appendix A* of the *Calls for Nominations*. This step assists in identifying the most qualified candidate for a particular position on a board or committee. It also assists in identifying candidates who may be qualified for positions on more than one board or committee.

### **Step 3: Know Your Candidates**

One of the most practical ways to refine your nominations strategy is to pre-screen your candidates to ensure that they have the optimal background, skills, and interests for membership of a particular board or committee. Equally important, you should pre-screen your candidates to determine if they can make the necessary commitment of time to serve on the boards and committees for which they are nominated. Here are some helpful questions to consider:

- Does the candidate's professional experience correspond to the objectives of the board or committee (relevant information is available from the board or committee Terms of Reference; see the *Call for Nominations* for the appropriate link)? If so, does it add to the existing skill set of current members?
- Is the candidate well-known and respected in the accountancy profession or other relevant constituency in his/her own country and region? If so, does his/her recognition correspond to the area of activity of the board or committee?
- Is the candidate familiar with the work of the board or committee?
- Does the candidate truly have the time to devote to the board or committee in terms of the time required for travel and preparation for meetings and special projects? Does he/she understand the commitment and expectations of the position?
- What specific achievements of the candidate (i.e., management of task forces, project development, policy development or implementation, curriculum development, teaching/instructional experience, etc.) correspond to the objectives of the board or committee?
- Has the candidate published any works in professional journals, textbooks, or news media that demonstrate unique research or contribution in an area of the profession that clearly relates to the board or committee?
- Has the candidate delivered seminars or presentations that demonstrate his/her ability to communicate in the area of activity of the board or committee?
- Does the candidate work well in a group setting? Is he/she comfortable working in a global context among many different cultures?

### **Step 4: Learn More about the Boards and Committees**

Once you have an accurate idea of your candidates' backgrounds, skills, achievements, and professional interests, you should be in a position to assess which candidates correspond to specific vacancies on the boards and committees and why some candidates would be more appropriate than others. Earlier, it was noted that more refined approaches can be applied toward positioning candidates for specific boards and committees. This step, which has in the past represented one of the most neglected steps in the nominations process, involves learning about the strategic plan, current projects, and issues facing the particular board or committee so that your candidate can be positioned to address them effectively. To find this information, please download the following documents from the relevant sections of the IFAC website:

- The most recent strategy and work plan for the board or committee.
- Key exposure drafts, pronouncements, or publications of the board or committee to assess the technical nature of its work.
- The Terms of Reference and due process document (where applicable) to learn about the rules and procedures of the board and committee.

- Newsletters and press releases to learn about current issues facing the board or committee.
- Meeting materials (if available to the public) to assess the schedules, workloads, and project status of the board or committee.

### **Step 5: Positioning Your Candidates for the Nominating Committee**

The fifth step in developing a nominations strategy is the submission of your candidates' information on the candidate nomination form. This form provides the fields of information to be input. While some answers are selected from drop-down menus or checkboxes, others require written responses. In the latter case, the individual who provides this information (whether it is the candidate or a representative of the nominating organization) must organize the information in a coherent, logical manner so that the Nominating Committee can identify key points in an efficient, orderly manner when reading the forms. The following are suggestions for submitting such information:

- Provide all fill-in answers first by listing or describing information that is most relevant to the actual position on the board or committee. The Nominating Committee would like information on exactly how your candidate will contribute to a position before learning about his/her professional history.
- List the candidate's skills and achievements in order of their relevance to the specific board or committee.
- Provide specific information on how the candidate can address challenges and provide contributions to the board or committee before outlining his/her general abilities and skills.
- Provide the Nominating Committee with an indication that the candidate has more than a general understanding of the board or committee through the answers you or he/she provides.
- List published work in order of its relevance to the board or committee.
- Motivation and objectives sections of the nominations form should be filled by the candidate in the first person format.

### **Step 6: Prepare and Support Your Candidates**

The final step in developing a nominations strategy is to prepare and support your candidates. The nominating organization should brief its candidates on the activities of the boards or committees and the general qualifications and specific requirements for membership, ensuring they are interested in serving on the boards or committees and able to commit the required time. This will also prepare the nominees, should they be selected for interview. Here are some helpful points that you might consider discussing with your candidates:

- Objective, strategy, structure, and processes and procedures of the relevant board or committee.
- Current work and recent activities of the specific board or committee.
- The relevance of the candidates' backgrounds and skills to the work of the specific board or committee, including standard-setting experience.
- The issues facing the particular board or committee.
- Professional and political developments in the region of the nominating organization relevant to the work of the specific board or committee.
- The time commitment requirement, including preparation for, travel to, and participation in, meetings of the specific board or committee and its task forces.

- The role of the technical advisor, and other support to be provided by the nominating organization.

The nominating organization is responsible for a member's cost to attend full meetings and—where applicable—task force meetings of the board or subcommittee. The nominating organization is also strongly encouraged to provide technical support to the member.

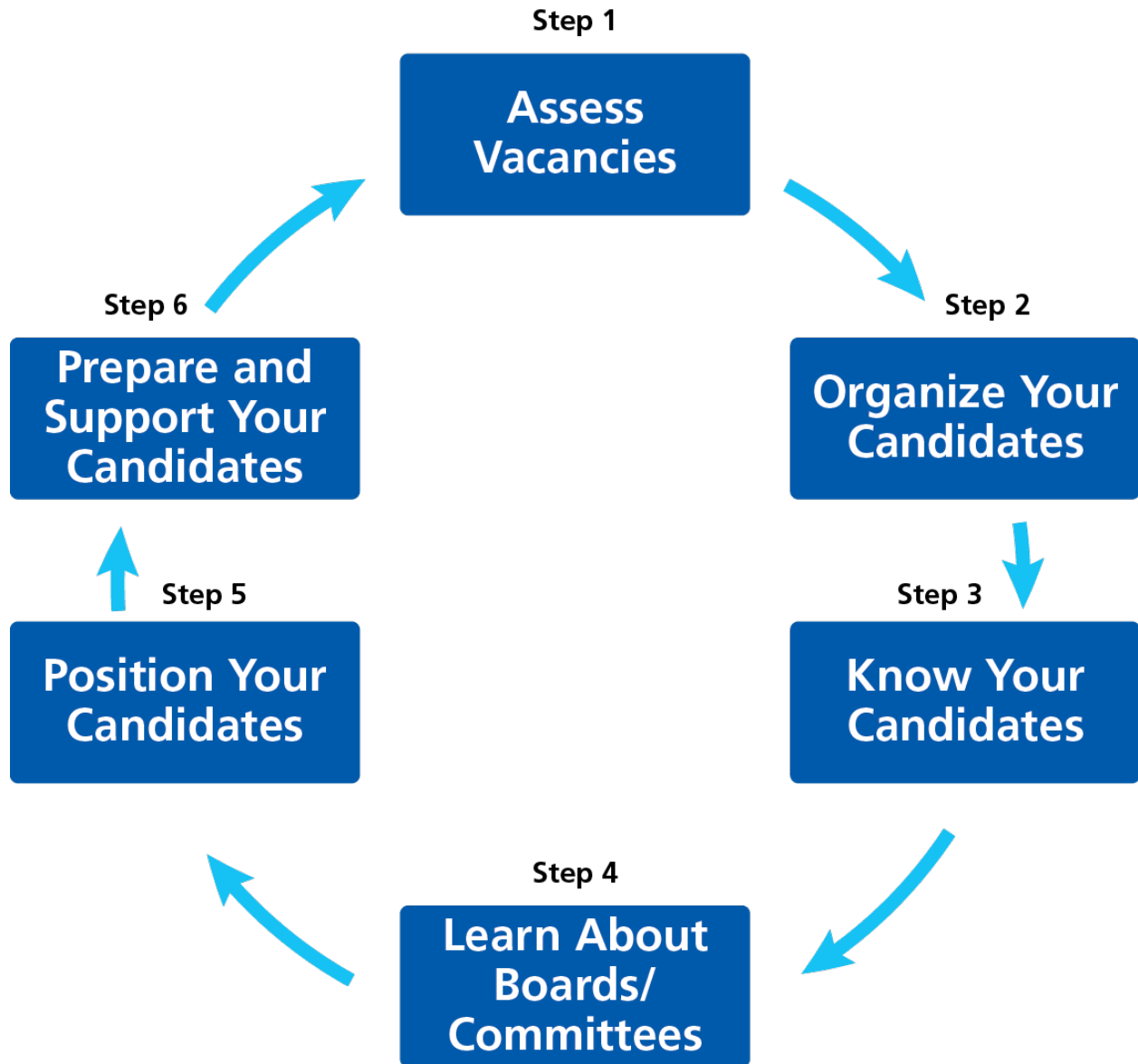
If necessary, IFAC covers the cost of Public Members' attendance at meetings of an independent SSB. IFAC also provides travel support to qualifying members—see the *Calls for Nominations* for more information in this regard. Travel support should be requested when completing the candidate nomination form.

### **Questions about Developing a Nominations Strategy**

Please submit any questions about the *Calls for Nominations* or developing a nominations strategy to Elena Churikova, Senior Manager, Governance, via email at [elenachurikova@ifac.org](mailto:elenachurikova@ifac.org).



## A Successful Nominations Strategy



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