

Professional Speaking Association – Director/Board Member Recruitment Process

Overview

The Professional Speaking Association is committed to ensuring that our governance practices are of the highest standard. To achieve this, we have implemented a comprehensive recruitment process for our Director and Board Member roles, based on skills, qualifications, and articulated vision for the PSA, rather than the traditional stand-up elections at AGMs.

By doing so, we hope to attract a wider range of talented volunteers from within our membership base, to create a more diverse, inclusive, and representative leadership team.

This process is transparent and accountable, ensuring that our members have greater input into the selection of our leaders and that we can identify and develop the skills and talents required for effective governance.

This process helps us to achieve our goal of becoming a sector leader in promoting best practices in governance and leadership.

Outline Process

1. Define the Role

The board positions are clearly defined, outlining their responsibilities, required qualifications, skills, and competencies. This approach sets unambiguous expectations for potential candidates, allowing them to self-assess their suitability and facilitating the board's evaluation process. It's important to have a well thought out and detailed description of the role, as this will ensure that candidates have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what they can expect from the position.

Each of Board roles are recruited with an expectation of a 3-year tenure, with the option for that to be extended once more for a further three years.

We also do not want to include so many requirements that it excludes or discourages applications. Recognising the voluntary nature of roles, we will not we commit to detailing absolute pre-requisites versus those skills we can train or developed in the role.

This process also helps the board to identify any potential gaps in the requirements and make any necessary adjustments.

2. Advertise the Role

The role is advertised internally on platforms including the association's website, email newsletters, and social media channels, encouraging broad member participation. It's important to advertise the role widely to ensure that a diverse range of candidates apply. This will also help to increase awareness of the association and its activities to members.

In the first instance internal PSA members will be considered. Should there be insufficient applicants for the role then the Board will reserve the option of recruiting external candidates.

3. Application Process

Interested candidates must apply using the provided template, that includes their personal overview of their speaking and PSA involvement, a personal statement detailing their motivation for applying, and their vision for the role (up to 500 words).

The application process is to be clear and straightforward, with all necessary information provided to potential candidates. This will help to ensure that candidates understand what is expected of them and are able to provide all the necessary information in a timely manner.

It is essential that candidates are not deterred from applying due to the processes laid out and will ensure that reasonable adjustments for accessibility and alternative options are made available.

4. Shortlisting

A selection panel comprising existing Board members and, where possible, external advisors and paid up members, past Board Members or Regional Presidents, assesses the applications and shortlists candidates based on the pre-defined role requirements.

The shortlisting process should be thorough and objective, with all candidates assessed against the same criteria. It's important to ensure that all candidates are given a fair and equal opportunity to be considered for the role.

5. Interviews

The panel conducts interviews with the shortlisted candidates to gain a deeper understanding of their vision and suitability for the role. The panel will then propose up to three candidates for the Chair of the Board to conduct a second interview. This is to allow candidates to reflect on questions and fully understand the board's role and the specific

position they've applied for. Unless the Chair has a strong view to the contrary, they will follow the recommendation of the panel.

The interview process is structured and consistent, with all candidates asked the same questions. This ensures that all candidates are assessed against the same criteria and that the selection process is consistent and will ensure reasonable adjustments are made for those who need it, so that everyone can compete fairly with equity.

6. Decision Making

The panel, having conducted the interviews, shortlist the most suitable candidate(s) based on the evaluation criteria. Therefore, the selection process remains fair, transparent, and objective. This will help to ensure that the most suitable candidate(s) are shortlisted for the role.

7. Appointment Process

The shortlisted candidate(s) will then be voted upon and approved by paid up members of the association in an online secure poll. If there is more than one candidate put forward for a vote and approval, then the candidate that polls a majority of the recorded votes will be appointed to the position.

Each candidate will have the opportunity to put forward 500 words to accompany their entrance into the member's poll. No canvassing or other influencing activities should be entered into by the shortlisted candidate(s).

The winning candidate will be announced and appointed to the board, and this will be noted and recorded at the AGM.

8. Handover Period

After the new board member is selected, a handover period is implemented, of potentially 6-months, during which the new member will work closely with the current board member. This ensures a smooth transition, prepares the new member for their role, and maintains continuity within the board.

It's important that the handover period is well planned and structured, with clear objectives and expectations set for the new board member. This will help to ensure that the new member is able to hit the ground running and make a valuable contribution to the board from day one.

Benefits of this approach

Diversity and Inclusion: unified criteria selection process encourages diversity and inclusion, ensuring that all qualified individuals have equal opportunities to join the board. To further promote diversity, where 2 or more candidates score equally against the unified criteria. the selection committee may consider factors such as ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic background in addition to qualifications. This approach ensures that the board is representative of the communities it serves.

Quality of Candidates: This process helps identify the most qualified and suitable candidates from those who apply, emphasising their skills and vision over their popularity within the organisation.

Smooth Transition: The handover period helps the new board members better understand their roles, promoting efficiency and effectiveness of the board. During this period, the new members can receive training on their new roles and responsibilities, as well as have access to resources that will help them be successful in their positions.

Reduced Bias: This recruitment process helps minimise potential bias, basing decisions on objective criteria. rather than relying upon subjective opinion or an interviewer's prior knowledge of the candidate.

FAQs

Q: *Will members still have a say in the board appointment process?*

A: Yes. While the recruitment process is internal, the final appointment will be ratified at the following AGM. The membership can veto appointments with due cause, maintaining members' input in the board's composition.

Q: *How will this process ensure the best leadership for the PSA?*

A: The process is designed to identify candidates based on their qualifications, skills, and vision for the PSA, which helps ensure that the board comprises individuals best suited to guide the PSA.

Q: *Why is the role not advertised externally in the first instance?*

A: The PSA believes in the potential and capabilities of its existing members. Hence, we prioritise providing opportunities to those who have shown dedication to our association.

Q: *How will diversity be maintained in the recruitment process?*

A: The criteria-based recruitment process ensures that all eligible members, regardless of their identity or background, have an equal opportunity to serve on the board, promoting diversity and inclusivity.

Q: *Who can apply?*

A: All paid-up members of the Association, including Associates, Professionals, and Fellows, are eligible for roles on the Board and in other positions. However, the applicant for any position must also be eligible to hold a Directorship of a UK Limited company.