

## **Membership Committee Report June 2023**

The Membership Committee recently met to review our current process for nomination and the criteria we use. We wish to place a few recommendations before the Board for consideration.

The current member driven nomination process, which has been in place since 2018 along with the admission criteria also developed at that time, is generally working well. We have been successful in attracting quality candidates from across the globe. We need to continue to reinforce the importance of the role of the two sponsors in the nomination process. The hope and expectation is that in agreeing to sponsor an individual, that sponsor either knows the nominee well or has taken steps to familiarize themselves with the nominee. The sponsor is vouching that this person is a suitable candidate.

### *Metrics*

The metrics we use (years in practice and number of mediation days completed) is one evaluation tool. We also look at alternative experience including teaching and work advancing the cause of mediation. These criteria are generally working well and we are not recommending any change to the metrics.

There remain occasional challenges in assessing candidates from developing or emerging markets where it is sometime difficult to know how to classify the extent to which mediation has developed in a market we are not familiar with. We currently look at things like how long mediation has been in use, whether there is Court mandated mediation, and whether there are fulltime as opposed to only part time mediators in that jurisdiction. Again, the knowledge and input of the sponsor is invaluable on this topic as well as the nominee's own description of their mediation practice in the context of the region is also helpful. We are not recommending any changes to this process, although the committee will begin to track, as best we can, how various countries are classified as they come before the committee, recognizing of course that this will be a moving target when we think of emerging markets. Having some record of these assessments for future membership Committees will be helpful.

If we wish to remain a truly international organization, we need to remain open to considering candidates from a wide range of mediation markets, all the while looking for the very best and brightest in those regions.

### *Conference attendance*

The committee is recommending that the Board consider a modification of the requirement to attend / not attend an in-person conference before nomination. There was a time when attendance at a conference was a pre-requisite for nomination. When COVID hit and we cancelled in-person conferences for a time and then went to one in-person conference per year. The Board allowed attendance at a virtual conference before nomination as satisfying this requirement. More recently, the Board further revised this to allow nomination without attendance at either an in-person conference or a virtual conference, as long as the nominee was told they were expected to attend within the first 12 months of nomination.

The Committee is recommending that we return to the requirement that nominees attend at an in-person conference as a pre-requisite to seeking nomination. There is no good substitute for having the opportunity of meeting potential nominees in person and getting to know them over a

causal coffee or dinner event or as part of a breakout session. It also gives the nominee the chance to get to know us and decide if they wish to be part of IAM. We considered whether this could be accomplished by attending only a virtual conference, but we felt in-person was far better. Attendance in advance of nomination is also demonstrates a strong commitment to IAM. We want members who are engaged and willing to share and learn from others. That is a hallmark of IAM, and we should continue to promote that collegiality by requiring in person attendance.

We also recommend that the Board have the discretion to waive the attendance requirement on a case-by-case basis if there are good reasons to do so.

The Committee recognizes that this change may result in some delay in bringing forward candidates (while they await the opportunity to attend an in-person conference) but we feel this is out weighted by the benefits of attracting candidates who are committed and who will be great additions to IAM because they know us and we know them.

Until the Board makes a determination on these suggested changes, the committee is not bringing forward any nominees for consideration by the Board.

#### *Committee Structure*

In terms of how our committee is structured, it currently considers of membership, recruitment, and member retention, all as separate sub committees. In practice, the work of recruitment and membership is virtually the same so there is little need to treat these as separate committees. Member retention has not figured largely in our work to date, but to the extent retention issues might arise, they can be considered by the membership committee.

In light of the foregoing, we suggest that we streamline these committees and simply have one Membership Committee tasked with recruitment, consideration of nominations, and member retention.

#### *Member demographics*

When we last surveyed our members, in 2018, we found that a significant percentage of our members were at an age that made it likely many our members would be retiring sometime in the coming decade or so. Our recruitment efforts have been successful in attracting new members, although many of these are in the same age cohort as our existing membership so this does not fully address the aging issue or allow us to better plan for growth. It would be useful to conduct another member survey, to obtain current data so that we can understand the “greying” of our membership so as to allow the Board to make plans and adjustments in terms of how the work done by the Membership Committee fits into overall plans for a sustainable organization.

Respectfully submitted,

Membership Committee