

INTRODUCTION TO ILA BOARD SERVICE

Thank you for your interest in supporting the International Literacy Association (ILA) and its [mission](#). We are excited about the future and value your membership with and service to ILA.

This guide provides an overview for those considering Board service, including information about the role Board members play, what they are expected to do, how they are selected, and what the process entails.

**The nomination cycle for 2018 opens on October 16, 2017,
and closes on December 20, 2017.**

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

By law, the Board of Directors is the governing body of ILA, responsible for overseeing the short- and long-term financial health and well-being of the organization. Here are some key responsibilities Board members are expected to fulfill during their three-year term:

Advancing the mission of ILA

- Actively promoting the mission of ILA, contributing your ideas and expertise
- Engaging with ILA members, member communities, and partners
- Being informed about ILA's mission, services, policies, and programs
- Informing others about ILA and its activities to enhance the organization's public image

Ensuring effective organizational planning

- Strategizing for, determining, and monitoring the organization's programs and services
- Participating in the development and/or monitoring of a strategic plan to accomplish the mission, overseeing its implementation, and evaluating its success

Actively participating in all Board activities

- Attending all Board meetings
- Reviewing agenda and supporting materials prior to Board and committee meetings
- Serving on Board committees and periodically taking on special assignments
- Suggesting nominees to the Board who can make significant contributions
- Assessing the Board's performance and your own performance as a Board member

Managing resources effectively

- Carrying out the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board, such as reviewing the organization's annual financial statements, selecting an auditor, and receiving the auditor's report
- Recruiting members, volunteers, and conference participants
- Making a personal contribution to the organization

COMMITMENT TO THE BOARD

Board service requires a serious but rewarding commitment of time and energy. It is estimated that Board members spend at least 50 hours a year on ILA activities, excluding travel time for the conference, meetings, and other Board-related work.

The Board meets face to face for two days three times per year, and for 60 to 90 minutes via conference call three to five times a year. In addition, there is a full-day orientation and meeting scheduled at the beginning of ILA's annual conference. A week or two before each regular meeting, the Board receives a 20- to 60-page packet to read and reflect on in advance. The Board also receives periodic updates from ILA headquarters throughout the year.

Each Board member is expected to serve on one or more committees or task forces. The committees of the Board include Finance, Audit, Evaluation, and Governance, and each committee meets virtually for approximately 90 minutes four or five times a year. Besides attending meetings, committee members often volunteer to complete tasks or projects.

BOARD COMPOSITION

The strength of the ILA Board of Directors is its mix of talents, experiences, perspectives, and expertise. To be considered, each candidate must have many of the essential qualifications listed below in the areas of experience, commitment, and skills. As the needs of the organization shift, the ideal Board composition and the talents and knowledge needed from individual Board members change accordingly.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Experience

- Board service
- Resource development
- Financial expertise
- Global or multicultural mind-set
- Expertise in the field of literacy or education

Commitment

- Enthusiasm for ILA's mission, vision, values, and strategic plan
- Active participation in ILA
- Willingness to leverage networks and contacts for ILA
- Pledge to work constructively and collegially with Board members and staff

Skills and Competencies

- Leadership and followership
- Strategic planning
- Fiduciary awareness
- Resource development
- Communication
- Recruitment

FOCUS AREAS

In addition to the essential qualifications, the Board of Directors has prioritized the following focus areas to guide selection of a diverse slate of Board candidates aligned with ILA's strategic direction:

- Geographic reach (global network and deep cultural identity outside of the United States with an emphasis on Canada, Southern/Eastern Europe, or Oceania/Asia—areas where we are building on existing ILA membership strengths)
- Racial, cultural, and generational diversity
- Leadership networks
- Connections to foundations, corporations, and practitioners
- Rich Board experience and expertise

HOW CANDIDATES MAKE THE BALLOT

Board members are elected by ILA members in good standing, via electronic ballot. To be added to the ballot, candidates must be [nominated](#) (either self-nominated or by a colleague) and vetted by the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee is authorized annually by the ILA Board of Directors. They evaluate candidates using the essential qualifications and focus areas detailed in this guide. Each nominee who wishes to move forward in the process is asked to complete a detailed information packet which is thoroughly reviewed by the Committee. The Committee then invites the nominees who best meet the organization's needs to interview. The Committee then meets to select the candidates for the ballot and submits their recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval.

The [Board nomination form](#) is available year round at literacyworldwide.org/elections. Although nominations may be submitted at any time, there are deadlines attached to each year's cycle that are reflected on most materials.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION CYCLE TIMELINE

Please note that each year specific dates are settled upon in the months prior to each cycle.

- In *early-to-mid October*, the cycle opens with a formal call for nominations and the assembly of the Nominating Committee.
- In *mid-to-late December*, nominations close for the cycle year.
- In *early January* of the election year, nominees who wish to move forward must have completed and submitted to ILA detailed information packets.
- In *early March*, candidates are confirmed for the ballot.
- *At the end of March*, the election opens.
- In *early May*, the election closes and the cycle concludes with the Board's approval of the results, candidate notifications, and public announcement of the results.

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COMPLIANCE ITEMS

Nominees who choose to complete information packets will be asked to acknowledge and—if chosen for the ballot—state that they will comply with ILA’s [campaign policy](#).

Newly elected Board members will be required to sign and comply with the [Board of Directors Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement](#) and the [Board of Directors Code of Conduct and Commitment Agreement](#).

For other important information about ILA such as its mission and financial statements, visit literacyworldwide.org.