

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for ICSD Elections

Approved by the ICSD Board 18 May 2026

Purpose

The Standard Operating Procedures provide clarity on processes to be followed to ensure a transparent, fair, and efficient approach for conducting elections within the International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD). The SOPs complement the more general provisions outlined in the ICSD Constitution.

Nominating and Election Committee Composition

- To be constituted by ICSD President in consultation with the Executive Council for board elections. To be constituted by the ICSD President in consultation with the Chairperson of the branch and the Executive Council for branch committee elections.
- Three members of the ICSD Board (for board elections); One member of the ICSD Board and two members of the branch (for branch election).
- Consideration given to regional representation (for board elections) and country diversity (for branch elections).
- Committee appoints a chairperson to coordinate roles and responsibilities.

Nomination Phase

1. **Membership Verification:** Committee requests membership list from Associate Secretary General: Membership. Committee reviews membership list, noting membership that has lapsed within the past month, or which is soon-to-expire. Committee requests Associate Secretary General: Membership to send out renewal reminders to ensure that members whose membership has recently lapsed are not inadvertently excluded from process.
2. **Criteria:** Minimum requirement for nomination is full one year of ICSD membership. Committee may decide on additional criteria for specialised positions in consultation with the Executive Council.
3. **Announcing the election:** The call for nominations also serves as the announcement of the upcoming election. The call for nominations should include the nomination announcement date, nomination due date, voting period and expected date of announcement of result. Once the nomination committee invites nominations the membership list is locked for the purposes of voting; i.e. new

members to the ICSD will not be able to vote in that election once voting ballot has been sent. This is to avoid a situation where individual members recruit new members for the purposes of creating a lobby block for an election.

4. **Call for nominations:** For the purposes of board elections the call is sent to all current members via the members' mailing list. For branch elections the call is sent to the branch members. The call includes the available positions, criteria for nomination to specific positions, and closing date (typically 2 weeks).

NOTE: The membership sign-up form has only recently been updated to include country of residence, making it difficult to draw a membership list for branches. For this reason, it is permissible to send the call for nominations to a wider list of people who have been active in branch activities. However, all nominated candidates must be members of the ICSD and therefore appear on the ICSD membership list and should be primarily resident in the region. This provision is in place until such time as the membership list includes country of residence for all members.

5. **Submission Platform:** Use MS Forms or Google Forms to collect nominations. Required fields: name, surname, email, institution, membership type (institutional or individual), motivation for nomination (nomination committee must provide clear guidelines and a uniform template for information that should be included in the motivation. The template should speak both to the caliber of the individual and their expertise in relation to the position they are being nominated for). Additional fields could be added if necessary.
6. Election committee should actively encourage nominations by reaching out to branch committees and ensuring that the ICSD social media channels are used to announce the call for nominations.
7. Committee ensures fair representation across regions, countries, race, culture, gender, etc. in the nomination process as per the ICSD Constitution. This is best done by ensuring that there are a range of members nominated for positions rather than needing to call for additional nominees to make up for diversity shortfalls after the nomination process has closed.

Review of Nominations

- Committee verifies membership status and eligibility of all nominees based on the membership list provided by Associate Secretary General: Membership.
- Institutional membership must be checked carefully as individual members may be missed if their membership is covered by institutional membership.

- Two committee members conduct membership verification of nominated candidates.
- Ineligible candidates are disqualified unless diversity considerations (e.g., underrepresented regions) or specialised skills justify exceptions. Where there is a case to be made for including a nominee who has not been a member for at least a year, a clear case should be presented to the Executive Council for approval. This may affect election timelines.
- Final nomination list is ratified by the full election committee.

Election Process

1. **Platform:** Use secure, verified systems (e.g., [Balotilo.org](https://balotilo.org)). Avoid MS Forms or Google Forms as these do not have the election checks and balances in place. Note that Balotilo.org is not suitable for member-at-large elections. Election committee to identify a suitable alternative that ensures secure voting procedures.
2. **Ballot Setup:** Election committee member sets up ballot; other members added as observers.
3. **Testing:** Ballot tested internally in the committee before release.
4. **Eligibility to vote:** Only paid-up members who were members at the time that the call for nominations was made are eligible to vote. Only individual members are eligible to vote.
5. **Communication:** The voting platform will send an automated email to the identified ICSD members. A committee member should also send a separate email notifying members to expect the email as automated emails can end up in Spam folders.
6. **Voting:** Voting should be conducted anonymously. Duration set by committee (minimum two weeks/ 10 working days).

Voting Systems

- **Single Position to be filled:** Simple vote.
- **Multiple Appointments to the same Positions (e.g., Members-at-Large):** Identify a system that allows for voter preference for a set number of individuals (the same number as available positions).

Ratification and outcome

1. **Vote counts:** The system selected should provide the vote counts and outcome. Individual and institutional membership votes are equal in weight.
2. **Verification:** Committee reviews and ratifies results before reporting to ICSD President.
3. **Announcement:** President authorizes chair of the committee to announce results. Results should be announced first by email to the membership list and then on website and social media channels as well as in the newsletter.

Documentation

- Election records maintained for 5 years.
- Committee submits report to Executive Council after each election.

Review Cycle

- It is recommended that due to the challenges with drawing accurate branch membership lists, that this SOP be reviewed in 1 year and thereafter reviewed every 3 years to incorporate lessons learned and evolving best practices. Next review process will begin in May 2027.
- Key consideration for the next review:
 - To ensure that we have accurate lists of branch membership, where primary country of residence is available.
 - To ensure that we clarify how institutional members can name individuals (staff or students) and how many they can name. This will affect whether they can be nominated and may also affect whether they can vote or not.