

Project Management Institute® West Bengal

PMI West Bengal Chapter

Election Process Guidelines

Version 4.2

1. BACKGROUND:

Elections are an integral part of the organization's existence and required by law. The election process is another avenue to inform the membership of the organization's mission, demographics, programs, services, and available opportunities to cultivate new volunteers. Successful elections are an important element of conducting successful board transitions.

2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that:

- The PMI West Bengal Chapter has a clear, fair, non-exclusionary, and transparent election process, enabling members in good standing to nominate candidates, run for office, and vote for the Board of Directors
- The Chapter has in place documented guidelines for a semi-autonomous body –Nomination Committee, accountable to the chapter Board via a Board Liaison.
- The Chapter has in place guidelines documentation to aid Nominations Committee to conduct clear, fair, non-exclusionary, and transparent election process.

3. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

- Nominating Committee (NC) acts as an independent body responsible for conducting a free and fair election as per the Election process of the Chapter and agreed with the Chapter Board.
- Is appointed by the Board and is valid for the period required to conduct the election. It is suggested that VRMS can be used for inviting application for NC members.
- As the Nominations Committee is appointed by the Board, no board member can be a part of the committee. The Board shall notify the membership of the formation of the Nominating Committee at least thirty (30) days in advance of an election.
- Shall consist of minimum of 3 members. Shall appoint a Lead who will act as the Election Commissioner and interact with the Chapter Board through the Board Liaison and PMI CD team. The Chapter Board cannot select/appoint the Chair of the NC.
- NC membership is a voluntary and an honorary role
- NC members are not eligible to contest this election and are currently not Executive Office bearers of the Chapter.
- The members of the Nominating Committee shall not vote. The only exception to this is in the event of a tie, where the Nominations Committee can use voting privileges to decide a winner.
- Preference should be given to those with previous experience of volunteering with Chapter and ~~conducting Chapter elections~~ and those who understand chapter governance, by-laws and the election process.
- NC members have to sign the Conflict Of Interest (COI), PMIWBC Code of Conduct & Confidentiality Agreement form and any applicable Declaration required by the Chapter
- NC members should have a good understanding of the objectives, policies and functioning of PMI and its Chapters.
- NC members should familiarize themselves with the rules and procedures of functioning of Societies in India.

4. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND AUTHORITIES OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

- The Chairman of Nominations Committee shall preside over chapter elections in accordance with Chapter Handbook, Chapter Election Policy, and Chapter Guidelines and process.
- The Nominations Committee is responsible for:
    - Publicizing board responsibilities
    - Announce nomination criteria
    - Evaluating, Accepting/Rejecting nominations
    - Checking nominees' credentials and experience
    - Implementing the timeline of the election process to maintain the highest integrity of the process
    - Communicating timelines, processes, and results
- The Nominating Committee can use the chapter facilities and resources as may be required but shall not use these for any purpose other than to conduct the elections.
- The Nominating Committee must obtain specific consent from the Chapter for the following:

- Any Exceptions to the Election collaterals or process of the Chapter
- Eligibility Criteria for the Directors
- Election Communication to members
- Any change in the constitution of the Nominating Committee and its authority, roles and responsibilities
- Any expenses that may have to be incurred towards conducting the elections.

- The Nominations Committee can use the Chapter facilities and resources as may be required but shall not use these for any purpose other than to conduct the elections.
- Membership data that is shared with the Nominations Committee is confidential information and must not be shared with any of the candidates.
- Nominations Committee should mandate that all election related discussions should be avoided in any Board/Chapter meetings & events during NC tenure.

5. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND AUTHORITIES OF BOARD LIAISON

- The Chapter Board will appoint a Board Liaison, who is not contesting for upcoming elections to work with the Nominations Committee.
- The Board Liaison will provide the Nominating Committee with:
  - The Election Collaterals required for conducting the elections.
  - Email address to be used specifically for election requirements.
  - Electronic file space and physical folders to store all documents, applications and forms related to the Elections.
- The Board Liaison will support the Nominating Committee in distributing the Emails to its members for communicating information during the various stages of the Election process.
- Assist the Nominating Committee in coordinating with PMI and help set up the electronic voting platform

6. ELECTION COLLATERALS:

- The Chapter will share with the Nominating Committee the following collaterals used in the previous elections and based on which the next Election is to be conducted:
  - Election Process and Guidelines – as per Chapter Handbook, Byelaws, PMI Charter Agreement and any proposed amendments by the Board to the above as per Chapter's needs. It is the responsibility of the Chapter to get the amendments approved by the responsible authorities. The Nominating Committee will accept the amendments as approved by the Chapter Board and presented to it for use.
  - The above includes the Job Descriptions, eligibility criteria, consent forms, instruction forms, evaluation criteria for the positions to be put up for elections
  - Content / Format for Communication for Inviting Applications, for Election Announcements and for announcing the results to be used during the Election. This can be adapted, improved, modified by the NC as appropriate. Board needs to agree with the content that is being communicated to its members.
  - The NC along with email communication can choose to use social media platforms and the Chapter website to make the membership base aware of ongoing elections. This can be executed by the Communications VP.
- The final set of collaterals used during the election must be submitted by the Nomination Committee back to the Board at the end of the election

7. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTIONS:

- In accordance with PMI policies, practices, procedures, rules and directives, no funds or resources of PMI or the Component may be used to support the election of any candidate or group of candidates for PMI, Component or public office.
- No other type of organized electioneering, communications, fund-raising or other organized activity on behalf of a candidate shall be permitted.
- The Nominating Committee will be the sole distributor of all materials related to the Elections.
- All complaints from the general public during the entire elections duration must immediately be submitted in writing (or via email) to the Nominating Committee responsible for overseeing the Elections, within 24 hours of the incident. The Nominating Committee will then conduct a meeting to decide on the outcome of the complaint,
- In the event that there is only one nomination for any office, that nominee shall be deemed elected un-opposed

- Group election will not be allowed. Board members will be elected individually.
- Discrimination in election and nomination procedures on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, or unlawful purpose is prohibited.

8. OPEN POSITIONS

- The Board positions would fall vacant as a result of expiry of term, due to resignation or removal of existing Board Members. The terms in office of the elected officer positions are staggered so that approximately two-third (2/3) for a three-year term and half (1/2) for a two-year term of the elected members still stay while the other positions, i.e., one-third (1/3) for a three year term and half (1/2) for a two year term will be going for election. The intent is to ensure that not all positions of the board are up for elections.
- Minimum 3 roles will go for election in particular Election Year.
- The positions for each Board shall be elected by full Board in the first Board meeting following the elections.

9. ELIGIBILITY FOR NOMINATIONS

Candidates filing nominations must meet the following criteria:

- Has been a member of both PMI and the Chapter for at least one year at the time of election
- The applicant must not be PMI certified ATP owner or trainer at the time of contesting elections or during their tenure.
- Candidates must have 5+ years of work experience.
- Candidate must be resident of Kolkata and its suburban region and should be in the state for majority time during his/her tenure in the Board.
- Willingness to devote at least 20 hours per month as an Officer of the Chapter;
- Will attend at least 75% of Board meetings throughout the year;
- Is keen to promote the profession of project management;
- Has a solid understanding of project management principles and experience as a project manager;
- Has other relevant characteristics and personal attributes deemed necessary for a leadership role;
- Will sign a non-disclosure agreement regarding Board operations and related information;
- Is prepared to follow the processes and procedures defined by the Board;
- For existing Board Directors who are re-nominating, an evaluation of their performance in the current term and previous terms of office;
- Additional criteria, as the Nominating Committee at its sole discretion determines to be appropriate, and are communicated to the chapter members in advance;
- Candidates can file their nominations for only one position at a time;
- Must commit to retain membership during their tenure on the Board.
- Should be a resident of West Bengal in general and will be in West Bengal most of the time during their tenure.
- Must have prior experience in taking up voluntary activities, preferably with the West Bengal Chapter or PMI or other chapters of PMI
- Must have been a Chapter member in good standing and the present occupation must not have general conflict of interest with the chapter initiatives and activities;
- Must not be under the employment of the West Bengal Chapter or PMI or other Chapters/ATPs of PMI at the time of contesting elections or during their tenure;
- Must be willing to provide at least two references, if required;
- If candidate is contesting for President, Treasurer or Secretary positions, he/she must have been a member of the Chapter Board for at least one tenure;
- If candidate is contesting for Treasurer Position he/she should have handled Financials as part of professional/volunteer experience for at least 3 years.

10. OFFICE TERM

- In accordance to Article V of Chapter Handbook – "Term of office shall be 3 (Three) years, limited to 2 consecutive terms in the same position, and no more than 4 (four) consecutive terms on Board in general."
- Candidates who are elected shall take office on the first day of January or one month following their election.

- The elections will be conducted preferably during the months of September or October with official transitions taking place in January of the following year usually to give sufficient time for newly elected board members to meet with those in current office for a smoother transition.
- Elected members shall hold office for the duration of their terms or until their successors have been elected and qualified.
- The positions for each Board shall be elected by full Board in the first Board meeting following the elections.

11. CHAPTER BOARD POSITIONS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Please refer Sections 10 to 19, Article – V of Chapter Handbook for information on Chapter Board Positions, Roles and Responsibilities.

12. ELECTION PROCESS

1. Frequency

Election should be conducted annually. Typically, election is held in September / October with newly elected Officers taking their positions from first day of January or first of the month following the announcement of election result.

2. Information
   - President or Board Liaison must inform Chapter Development (CD) Team as soon as the election planning is started.
   - After the Nominations Committee is appointed, the President/Board Liaison must inform the CD Team with details of the Nominations Committee members and the Chair / Election Officer, to collaborate further for the forthcoming election and oversight.
3. Nominating Committee (NC) Formation
   - The Nominating Committee is announced by the Board.
   - Kickoff of the Nominating Committee Meeting
   - The committee reviews the Election collaterals, plans and agrees on the Nominating Committee processes and timelines to be followed for the election.
   - Sample Election Calendar

	Milestone Activity	Completion Date
1	Appoint the Nominating Committee Members	
2	Announce Elections, with names and details of Nominating Committee	
3	Call for Nominations for the Positions that are up for elections	
4	Announce the Final Shortlisted Nominees and Positions for Elections to Chapter members	
5	Complete the Setup in electronic voting tool and Go-live Readiness Check	
6	Initiate Electronic Voting in electronic voting tool	
7	Voting Ends	
8	Present Results to the Board / Members	
9	Election Process Closure approved by Board along with lessons learned with NC	

4. Nomination Process
   - Election process is initiated by sending a communication to all Chapter Members, as per CRS database downloaded on the date of election announcement.
   - Election initiating communication to members should consist of
     - List of open positions, along with the roles and responsibilities for each of these positions
     - Eligibility for nominations, for each of the positions
     - Introducing the Nominating Committee
     - Election calendar with key dates

- Process for filing nominations
- The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate containing nominees for each Board position and shall determine the eligibility and willingness of each nominee to stand for election.
- Candidates for Board positions may also be nominated by petition process established by the Nominating Committee or the Board.
- Candidates with Incomplete Nomination Forms or unable to furnish the required information within stipulated date will be automatically rejected.
- Each shortlisted candidate is invited to submit a brief biographical statement (limited to 250 words) for publication by the Chapter. The candidates also need to send in Consent Form, Conflict of Interest and PMIWBC Code of Conduct & Confidentiality Agreement Form.
- Candidates are evaluated and scored on the basis of their Nomination form and interviews prior to finalizing the Shortlisted Nominees.

5. Setting up the Online Ballot
   - Nominating Committee can use the electronic voting system used by other PMI Chapters for conducting the elections.
   - Chapter wants to use Online Ballot facility for faster, fairer, error-free election process. Ensures only chapter members in good standing can vote and each member can cast vote only once.
   - A lead time of 7-10 working days will be required to set up the Online Ballot
   - Online Ballot will manage communication to voters, collection of votes and collation of results
   - The Chapter shall provide support to Nominating Committee to gain familiarity, set up the tool, and provide technical assistance in the usage of the tool for conducting the elections.
   - A set of collaterals are required for setting up the Online Ballot:
     i. List of voters* – this must be provided at least 7 days prior to vote open date
     ii. Email to voters announcing the vote
     iii. Name of ballot
     iv. Timeframe for election– open date, close date
     v. Instructions verbiage to Vote – this is the start page of the ballot
     vi. Positions that are up for elections
     vii. Candidate Names & Bios, Positions that they are applying for.
     viii. Web address we want the voters to be sent to after they confirm their vote
     ix. Thank you/confirmation verbiage for Voting

6. Voting Process
   - The online tool initiates the voting process by sending out a mail to eligible voters. All the current PMI West Bengal Chapter members (as on date of election announcement) in good standing will be eligible to vote.
   - At the end of the voting period a Thank you / Closeout mail is sent to announce the closure of the voting process.
   - No proxy/absentee votes shall be permitted.

7. Announcement of Results and Closure
   - The candidate who receives a majority of votes cast for each office shall be elected.
   - Ballots shall be counted by the Nominating Committee or by tellers designated by the Board.
   - In case of a voting tie, the candidate with longer period of continuous membership with the Chapter will be declared the winner.
   - In case no nominations are received or found eligible for a particular position during the Election Process, the Nominating Committee would declare the position “Vacant”.
   - The results are presented to the Board and the Chapter Members
   - Closeout meeting is conducted to discuss the lessons learnt and the documents related to the elections are filed for future reference.

8. The positions for the elected Board Members will be selected by the full Board in the first Board Meeting immediately after the Election results are announced by the Election Officer – Chair of the Nominations Committee.
    - A Board Meeting, where, full or 75% of the board is present.
    - Candidates are given proper orientation regarding the election process
    - The Eligible candidates for each of the position would be published based on the eligibility criteria for the specific positions viz. President, Secretary and Treasurer etc.
    - The candidates can nominate themselves for the position or can be proposed by other board members.
    - If there are more than one nomination for a particular position, the Board will elect the respective office bearers among the eligible candidates elected by the chapter membership through a Secret-ballot system.
    - Candidates are given a chance to present their viewpoint on the position and value add they wish to bring to the role.
    - Ballot is conducted in the presence of all the present board members
    - Counting is by an unbiased 3rd party, who will announce the results
    - The candidates would abide by the decision of this election
    - If the board is unable to come to a consensus, a simple majority vote will be conducted (eg. Raising up hands etc). In the event of a tie, a lot shall be drawn to determine who shall take up the role.
    - The Board Members would formally accept the portfolios allocated as an outcome of this meeting.
    - The Chapter Secretary or a representative of the Chapter Board would inform the Chapter members, PMI, Local authorities and the relevant stakeholders of the Appointees to the Board positions including any shift of portfolios of existing Board Members.

13. ARBITRATION PROCESS
    - Any conflicts would be mitigated through the official PMI conflict resolution program.

14. DEFINITIONS:
    - Chapter: PMI West Bengal Chapter
    - Absentee vote: A vote cast by a Chapter member who is unable to be physically present at the location where the chapter election is taking place (e.g. at the Annual General Meeting).
    - Election: A formal and organized process for Chapter members to elect candidates from the Chapter membership to its Board of Directors.
    - Nominating Committee: A semi-autonomous group formed by Chapter members for the purpose of nominating candidates for Chapter Board positions and executing the Chapter's documented elections process in a transparent, inclusive, and fair manner.
    - Proxy vote: A vote cast by one Chapter member on behalf of another Chapter member.

Version Change details:

Sr. No	Version	Date	Changed by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Comment
1	Version 4.0	10th Aug 2019	Tamal Banerjee	Sumit K Sinha		Changed Point 10 and added Point 8 about how the Elected board's position will be decided.
2	Version 4.1	3rd Sep 2019	Subimal Chakraborty & Tamal Banerjee	Sumit K Sinha		Update and elaborate the points related to adopting the

						Open Election process for the Chapter.
3	Version 4.2	23rd Jul 2021	Nabhanil Mondal	Saon Sen Nandi		Updated points as part of the Project Librarian guidelines.

16. APPENDIX

- Appendix-A: Invitation for Nominations Committee
- Appendix-B: Election Notification Template
- Appendix-C: Candidate's Nomination Form
- Appendix-D: Validation Guidelines for Nomination form
- Appendix-E: Election Ballot Template
- Appendix-F: Announcement of Result Template

