

AFRINIC NomCom Guidelines

23 February 2016

In terms of the AFRINIC Bylaws section 9.2,¹ “The NomCom shall report to the Board and operate under such guidelines as may be prescribed by the Board.” This document provides guidelines from the Board to the NomCom. The Board reserves the right to provide additional guidelines at any time before the election.

Responsibilities of the NomCom are defined in section 9 of the AFRINIC bylaws and include the following:

- Report to the Board and follow guidelines set by the Board;
- Call for candidates for all open positions;
- Prescribe criteria and qualifications for eligibility to stand for election;
- Interview candidates, if appropriate, prior to finalising the slate of candidates;
- Finalise the list of candidates for every election;
- Supervise the conduct of the polls by the Election Committee on election day.

Relevant Bylaws: NomCom should take care to operate in accordance with the AFRINIC Bylaws.

The following sections are especially relevant:

- Section 9: “The Nomination Committee”;
- Section 10: “Election Committee”;
- Section 12.14(i): Deals with nominations from Members, the information that must accompany a nomination, and approval of nominations by the Board.

Eligibility: In terms of section 9.1 of the Bylaws:

- No candidate for election to the Board may be a member of the NomCom;
- No person domiciled in a region whose Board seat is open for renewal may be a member of the NomCom; this means that the 2016 NomCom may not include people who reside in Northern Africa or Western Africa.

The Board further expects NomCom members to:

- be neutral; to have no interest in the results of the elections;
- be trusted members of the AFRINIC community;
- have good knowledge of the AFRINIC business environment;
- do their best to fulfill their responsibilities.

¹ AFRINIC Bylaws <<https://www.afrinic.net/en/about/bylaws>>

Remuneration: NomCom members do not receive any remuneration.

Number of members: In terms of section 9 of the Bylaws, the NomCom shall consist of a chairman and three other members as appointed by the Board. In other words, the Board appoints four members, and one of those will be the chairman.

The Board's practice is to appoint the four members as follows;

- One member selected from within the AFRINIC Board;
- Three members selected by the AFRINIC Board from the community.

Selection of Chair: The four members of the NomCom shall choose a chairman, who shall be one of the three community members (not the Board member). This is to ensure that the Board member does not have too much influence.

Role of AFRINIC staff: The Bylaws do not provide a role for AFRINIC staff in the NomCom. However, AFRINIC staff may provide logistics support on request from the NomCom chair to the CEO. Such support includes publication of the list of nominees, compilation of comments, mailing list moderation, website update, communication with nominees and other duties pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of the NomCom.

AFRINIC staff may also answer questions about factual issues relating to AFRINIC membership or participation in meetings.

Under no circumstances should AFRINIC staff participate in NomCom's discussion of the merits of any candidate.

Voting: NomCom decisions may be made by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the issue shall be discussed further, and then the vote shall be repeated. In the event of a second tie, the Chair of the NomCom has an additional casting vote.

Role of the Board representative: The Board representative is a full voting member of NomCom. The Board representative may report to the Board on the general activities and progress of NomCom, including the number of candidates and whether individual candidates are found to be qualified or not, but shall not report on confidential discussion of the merits of individual candidates.

Communication with the Board: Since the Board representative is part of Nomcom then he/she can summarize the activities of NomCom to the Board, however, the official communication channel between the Board and NomCom will be between the NomCom Chairman and Board Chairman, with CEO in copy.

Criteria and qualifications: In terms of the Bylaws section 9.3(ii)(b), the NomCom shall prescribe criteria and qualifications for eligibility to stand as candidate.

Before publishing the “criteria and qualifications”, NomCom shall submit a draft to the Board for comments. Responsibility to set the criteria and qualifications for eligibility to stand as candidate lies with the NomCom, but NomCom should consider the Board’s comments.

Call for candidates: In terms of the Bylaws section 9.3(ii)(a), the NomCom shall call for candidates for elections held by AFRINIC.

The call for candidates shall include information about the open positions, the “criteria and qualifications” set by the NomCom, and the nomination process.

Nomination requirements: Nominations for Board elections must be handled in terms of Bylaws section 12.14(i). Nominations for other elections should be handled in the same way as far as possible.

Note the requirement in the Bylaws 12.14(i) that nominations for Board elections must be from members. This implies “Members in good standing” (so they must not have any unpaid fees). Also, each member may make no more than one nomination (for each open position). To assist in verifying this, nominators should be required to state their AFRINIC org-id on the nomination form, and the person submitting the nomination must be an authorized contact for the Member organization. The same requirement should apply to all elections where the AFRINIC Members vote (e.g. Board, Governance Committee), but in elections where the AFRINIC community or PDWG votes (NRO NC representative, PDWG co-chair), the nominator does not need to be a Member.

Note the requirement for “the full name and address of the nominated person as well as a short description of the person, including the person's professional background, age, nationality, residential address and the region, which the person is proposed to represent.” The nomination form should have required fields for all this information.

Board approval of nominations: After nominations are received, the Board must approve them in terms of Bylaws section 12.14(i). This must happen early in the process, before NomCom spends much effort in finding the best candidates.

Checking of criteria: Candidates should be checked against “criteria and qualifications” published during the call for nominations.

Interviews: In terms of the Bylaws section 9.3(ii)(c), the NomCom may interview candidates. AFRINIC staff will facilitate telephonic interviews on request from the NomCom chair.

Number of candidates: In terms of the Bylaws section 9.3(i)(a), the NomCom must “use its best effort towards ensuring that a satisfactory number of individuals from the African internet community stand as candidate”.

The Board recommends that NomCom should attempt to find at least three candidates for each position. If there are too few candidates, then NomCom may extend the time limit, or proactively look for more candidates.

If there are many candidates for an open position, then NomCom may use interviews and its own judgement to choose the best candidates, so that the final number of candidates presented on a voting ballot is reasonable. There is no set number of candidates that would be reasonable.

Finalising the list of candidates: When NomCom has prepared a draft slate of candidates for each position, NomCom should allow the Board to examine it and offer non-binding advice. In terms of the Bylaws section 9.3(ii)(d), NomCom has the responsibility to “finalise the list of candidates for any election”, and this should be done after considering any advice from the Board. Final responsibility lies with NomCom, and NomCom is not obliged to follow the Board’s advice.

Relationship with Election Committee: The Election Committee consists only of AFRINIC staff, and does not include any NomCom representatives (Bylaws section 10). However, in terms of Bylaws section 10.1(iii), the Election Committee must “liaise with the Chairperson of the Nomination Committee, set up under Article 9 of the Constitution, for the holding of polls on election day.”

Duties on election day: In terms of the Bylaws section 9.3(b), NomCom shall “have general responsibility for, and shall supervise the conduct of the polls by the Election Committee on election day.” In terms of the Bylaws section 10.1, the Election Committee has various duties. The NomCom chair shall work with a member of the Election Committee designated by the CEO to ensure that the election proceeds smoothly.

Proceedings on election day: The Bylaws are not specific on the detailed proceedings during an election. The NomCom has general responsibility in terms of Bylaws section 9.3(b), but the Election Committee is also involved. The Board suggests this procedure:

- NomCom introduces the election, describes the responsibilities and the term;
- NomCom gives each candidate a chance to speak;
- Election Committee performs the election;
- Online voting should close at the same time as in-person voting closes, but may open earlier;
- Election Committee reports the result to NomCom chair;
- NomCom chair announces the result.

List of elections: The following elections are expected to be held in 2016.

AFRINIC Board of Directors:

Three Board seats are up for election, to serve three-year terms from July 2016 to June 2019:

- Western Africa (currently held by Sunday Folayan);
- Northern Africa (currently held by Haitham el Nakhel);
- Non-geographical seat 1 (currently held by Aminata Garba).

Policy Development Working Group:

One PDWG co-chair position is up for election, to serve a two-year term from June 2016 to June 2018. The seat is currently held by Sami Salih.

Governance Committee:

The AFRINIC Governance Committee will be constituted for the first time in 2016. In terms of the draft terms of reference published at <http://www.afrinic.net/images/afrinicgovernancecommitteeproposal-2.pdf>, four members should be elected using a process similar to that for Board elections. Some will serve one-year terms and some will serve two-year terms.

NRO NC/ASO AC:

One member of the NRO NC/ASO AC needs to be elected during 2016, to serve a three-year term from January 2017 to December 2019. The seat is currently held by Fiona Asonga.

Note that AFRINIC's two elected members of the NRO NC/ASO AC will automatically also serve on the IANA Numbering Services Review Committee.

In the past, AFRINIC has usually conducted NRO NC/ASO AC elections during the November/December meeting. However, it is useful for the results to be known several months before the end of the year, so this year the NRO NC/ASO AC election will be held in June 2016.