



EMA Electoral Policy and Guidelines

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Contents

Introduction	2
Purpose	2
Scope	2
Definitions	2
Time of Elections	3
Electoral Management	3
Applications for Candidacy	4
Preliminary Voting	5
Campaigning	6
Right to Vote	7
Voting Procedure	7
Implementation	7
ANNEX 1: IDEAL TIMELINE	8

Introduction

Voting in the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association ('EMA' or the 'Association') refers to both the selection of *“the agenda and proposals, and for the purpose of election of the President and the Vice-President of EMA”*, as defined by EMA's Internal Regulations. **For the purpose of these Policy and Guidelines, the term Election (and any derivative thereof) will only be used to refer to the latter of the previously mentioned cases, i.e. the democratic process of selection of the President and the Vice-President of EMA.**

Purpose

1. These Policy and Guidelines have been formulated to complement the articles and sections of the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association's (hereinafter called "EMA" or the "Association") Statutes and Internal Regulations that deal with **elections**.
2. These Policy and Guidelines establish the framework for the Association to:
 - a. Conduct fair and transparent elections;
 - b. Maintain the Association's highest standards and values in the exercise of democracy.

Scope

3. These Policy and Guidelines apply to any ordinary member who:
 - a. Applies as a Candidate for President or Vice-President;
 - b. Wishes to exercise their vote during the election to select a President or Vice-President.
4. The Association takes a comprehensive approach to enable fair and transparent internal elections. This approach, in addition to the present EMA Electoral Policy and Guidelines, also includes the following documents:
 - a. EMA Statutes;
 - b. EMA Internal Regulations;
 - c. The Policy against Disinformation;
 - d. Other policies or such applicable documents of EMA.

Definitions

5. For the effect and purpose of this policy, the following terms have been defined as:
 - a. **Ordinary Member**: individual person that has applied for and been granted ordinary membership in the Association, as described in Title IV of EMA's Statutes and Article 1 of EMA's Internal Regulations.
 - b. **Campaign/campaigning**: efforts by Candidate(s) to win voter support in a specific period preceding an Election.

- c. **Candidate:** any Ordinary Member who desires to contend for the position of President or Vice-President and whose eligibility has been confirmed and announced by the Electoral Committee.
- d. **Election(s):** The election(s), in the form of voting held during a GA, conducted in the second year following the preceding Elections for President and Vice-President of the Association.
- e. **Election Period¹:** It shall consist of the following:
 - i. Application Period: the time period from the announcement of Election(s) till the deadline for receipt of application of candidacies;
 - ii. time for announcement of Candidates;
 - iii. time for preliminary voting (*as per Clause 8.1 of Internal Regulations*);
 - iv. time for announcement of results of preliminary voting;
 - v. campaigning time;
 - vi. Election days: dates of Election(s) in CEST time-zone;
 - vii. time for announcement of results.
- f. **Preliminary Voting:** The voting conducted to select the two final Candidates for the position of President or the Vice-President, prior to the Election(s). It shall be conducted only in case there are more than two eligible Candidates for either of the posts.

Time of Elections

- 6. The Election(s) to the positions of the President and Vice-President of the Association shall be held during the Primary GA, i.e., latest in the last week of the month of May, in the second year following the preceding election year or during an Extraordinary GA, if necessary. The specific date(s) of the Election Period, will be decided by the Management Board, preferably ninety (90) calendar days and at least sixty (60) calendar days before the Election Days, i.e., the GA.
- 7. The Election Period will be communicated to all the EMA members, preferably sixty (60) calendar days and at least thirty (30) calendar days (in line with Article 7.2 of the Internal Regulations) before the Election Days, i.e., the GA.

Electoral Management

- 8. As described by EMA's Statutes (Title V) and Internal Regulations (Article 9), a Selection Committee shall be formed for the purpose of overseeing the elections of President and Vice-President, having a limited role of ensuring fair and transparent elections. The formed Selection Committee, for the purpose the present Electoral Policy and Guidelines, shall be called the Electoral Committee.
- 9. If the incumbent Vice-President or any incumbent member of the Management Board (MB) is part of the Electoral Committee, and have submitted their application for candidacy to either the President or Vice-President post, such person will necessarily

¹ An ideal timeline for the Election Period has been included in the Annex of this Policy Document.

- step down from their position, duties and responsibilities in the Electoral Committee, in order to ensure fair and transparent elections and to avoid any conflicts of interest.
10. The Electoral Committee should be formed at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the Election Days, i.e., the GA.
 11. The Electoral Committee will be the entity in charge of receiving, reviewing and accepting or rejecting the applications for candidacies for the President or Vice-President positions.
 12. After the close of the application period, the Electoral Committee shall finalize and publish the list of eligible Candidates for the President and Vice-President positions within two (2) working days.
 13. The Electoral Committee shall also be responsible for governing the campaigning conducted by the Candidates and shall be responsible for receiving complaints for violation of the code of conduct, and any other policies, and take the necessary actions for the same.
 14. The Electoral Committee shall appoint necessary team members to smoothly conduct the preliminary-voting as well as the Election(s) during the GA, in lines with Article 8.1 of the Internal Regulations.
 15. The Electoral Committee shall also be responsible for organizing separate public debates for the final two Candidates for the position of President and Vice-President, either virtually (before the GA) or physically (during the GA).
 16. The Electoral Committee will cease to exist after it announces the Election(s) results. The members of said defunct Electoral Committee may be part of the Selection Committee which has been put together to select the rest of the members of the Management Board (i.e. the Directors of the different Units). Said Selection Committee shall be formed according to EMA's Statutes, Internal Regulations, and Volunteer and Personnel Policy.

Applications for Candidacy

17. As described by EMA's Internal Regulations (Article 8), any Ordinary Member has the right to apply as Candidate for President or Vice-President, and perform the acts necessary for registration of their candidacy.
18. The minimum qualification criteria for the position of President and Vice-President shall be decided by the Electoral Committee and approved by the Management Board, prior to the start of the Election Period (as described in Article 8.1.a. of the Internal Regulations). These criteria, among others as decided by the Electoral Committee, shall include:
 - a. Letter of application: expressing their desire to stand as a Candidate for the specific post (President or Vice-President) and confirming:
 - i. their compliance with the requirements of this Policy,
 - ii. their good standing in the Association,
 - iii. their understanding of the rights and full scope of responsibilities of the position, as described in EMA's Statutes and Internal Regulations, and
 - iv. their ability to stand as Candidate.

- b. Proof of EMA ordinary membership (diploma or acceptance letter from an Erasmus Mundus programme);
- c. Curriculum Vitae or Resume, presenting the relevant experience for the applied position;
- d. Recommendation letters (maximum 2), with contact information (email and phone number) of the referees.

The exact requirements and criterion can be set, added or modified by the Electoral Committee, in conjunction with the Management Board, through an official publication, in the allotted time frame established by the Internal Regulations (Article 8.1.a.).

- 19. Only complete applications for candidacies will be considered by the Electoral Committee. It is the sole responsibility of the Candidate to submit a complete application for candidacy.
- 20. On receipt of any application for candidacy, the Electoral Committee would communicate the acceptance or rejection of the same to the applicant within three (3) working days, thereby allowing the applicant to rectify the application and meet the requirements and criterion as stated above. In case the application or re-application is made less than three (3) working days before the last date for receipt of the applications, then the Electoral Committee shall communicate the acceptance or rejection at the earliest, but shall not be responsible for any delay in such scrutiny.
- 21. The applications for candidacies shall be submitted from the announcement of the Elections up to twenty (20) calendar days prior to the Election Days. Any application for candidacy submitted outside this period shall not be considered.
- 22. Any dishonesty, and/or omission of past conduct and/or malfeasance to the Association or any of its members, in the presented qualification criteria and application documents, of any Candidate, will result in the disqualification of said Candidate, regardless of how advanced the electoral process is.

Preliminary Voting

- 23. In case there are more than two (2) eligible Candidates announced after the close of application period, then a Preliminary Voting shall be conducted for selection or shortlisting of the two (2) final Candidates for the purpose of Elections(s).
- 24. The Preliminary Voting (if required) shall be conducted at least ten (10) calendar days before the start of the Election Days and in accordance with the Article 8.1 of the Internal Regulations. The exact details about the same, including the procedure and period of voting shall be announced along with the list of the eligible Candidates by the Electoral Committee.
- 25. In addition to the requirements set in the application for candidacy above, for the purpose of Preliminary Voting, each Candidate can also be called upon by the Electoral Committee to submit materials like short video(s) and/or brochure(s), banners(s), pamphlet(s) describing the past contributions, proposals and future plans for EMA. Details of such publicity materials, shall be announced together with the

- announcement of Candidates and the Preliminary Voting (if applicable) by the Electoral Committee.
26. In case the Preliminary Voting is being conducted, then the aforesaid video/publicity materials of all the eligible Candidates shall be published/communicated to all the Ordinary Members of EMA (i.e. the voters) by appropriate channels and in a non-discriminatory manner under the supervision of the Electoral Committee. No personal campaigning by any of the Candidates shall be allowed during this phase of Election Period.
 27. In addition to the above, the Electoral Committee can decide about any other means of spreading information about the eligible candidates, Preliminary Voting, answering questions of the voters etc. and take other such steps for facilitating a fair, transparent and informed Preliminary Voting.
 28. The Preliminary Voting shall be conducted for a minimum period of forty-eight (48) hours.
 29. The Electoral Committee shall announce the results of the Preliminary Voting, i.e., the list of final two Candidates, within twenty-four (24) hours of the closure of the period for Preliminary Voting (if conducted, for either or both positions).

Campaigning

30. Campaigning is strictly allowed only in the period between the announcement of the two (2) final Candidates for the President and Vice-President positions (i.e., either after the close of application period or after the announcement of results of Preliminary Voting, as the case may be), up to forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Election Days .
31. The use of EMA resources, including, but not limited to '@em-a.eu' email ids, member information, the association's physical or digital resources, volunteering time and any other information, medium or tool belonging to EMA, in order to campaign for any available position, by any Candidate, shall lead to commensurate disciplinary actions, depending on the nature of misuse, as decided by the Electoral Committee.
32. Should misuse of EMA resources be undertaken by any other Ordinary Member, specific proof of collaboration must be provided prior to sanctioning the Candidate. Nevertheless, the Ordinary Member shall be subject to commensurate disciplinary actions, as decided by the Electoral Committee.
33. In line with the Policy against Disinformation, no disinformation will be allowed in the Candidates' campaigns or in the period immediately prior to the Elections. Candidates and/or campaigns utilizing such tactics will also result in commensurate disciplinary actions, as decided by the Electoral Committee.
34. The disciplinary action referenced in the previous articles may include public warning, suspension of campaigning, even immediate disqualification and ineligibility to run for the position of President/Vice-President office, in the current or future Election, or even any other Management Board position for the current or future term. If the Electoral Committee is of the opinion that the nature of misuse, disinformation or violation is in the nature of violation of EMA's reputation, interest or EMA's Mission,

Vision or Aims, then it shall recommend the Management Board to take necessary action against such Candidate or under Article 9 of the EMA Statutes.

Right to Vote

35. An Ordinary Member has the right to vote for President or Vice-President, in line with the provisions of EMA's Statutes and Internal Regulations (Article 7), unless they are serving any prior disciplinary action.

Voting Procedure

36. EMA's Statutes (Articles 15.3. and 15.4.) and Internal Regulation (Articles 7.2 – 7.6, 8.1) govern the corresponding voting procedures.
37. If the Elections have started and a Candidate has been disqualified by the Electoral Committee, the Electoral Committee shall make appropriate announcement of the same and the votes cast for such Candidate shall be annulled.
38. The Elections shall preferably begin at 08:00 hrs on the first day of GA and close at least one (1) hour before the scheduled end of GA, on the last day of GA.
39. The results of the Election(s) will be communicated publicly by the Electoral Committee at the latest within twenty-four (24) hours after the closure of the voting process.

Implementation

40. The implementation of these Policy and Guidelines should be carried in conjunction with EMA's Statutes and Internal Regulations. In case of any requests for extension of the deadlines as present in this policy, the Electoral Committee shall be deciding the same on a case to case basis. Nevertheless, in case of discrepancies, the provisions of the Statutes and Internal Regulations shall prevail.
41. In an extreme situation where no Candidate can be elected for the positions of President and/or Vice-President, the relevant clauses of Article 4 of the Internal Regulations shall be invoked appropriately.
42. These Policies and Guidelines shall be reviewed by the Management Board at least once every two years and at least 3 months before any upcoming Election(s).
43. These Policies and Guidelines shall be reviewed, and updated if necessary, by the Management Board immediately after any changes are made to EMA's Statutes and/or Internal Regulations.
44. These Policies and Guidelines shall enter into force immediately after voted into effect by the Management Board and shall be publicly available for all members.

ANNEX 1: Ideal Timeline

Event	Ideal Date / Period	Applicable Clause
Decision by Management Board on Election Period	Preferably ninety (90) calendar days and at least sixty (60) calendar days before the GA	6
Formation of Electoral Committee	At least 60 days before the GA	10
Call for Candidacy applications (Start of application period or the Election Period)	Preferably sixty (60) calendar days and at least thirty (30) calendar days before the GA	7
Rejection of Candidacy Applications (if any)	Within 3 working days after receipt of application	20
Last Date of Candidacy applications (Closure of application period)	At least 20 days before the GA	21
Announcement of Candidates	Within 2 working days after last date of applications, i.e., around 16-18 calendar days before the GA	12
Preliminary voting	Opens at least 12 days and closes at least 10 calendar days before the GA <i>Time period - at least 48 hours</i>	24
Results of Preliminary Voting	Within 24 hrs of the end of preliminary voting	29
Campaigning Time	From announcement of Final Candidates up to 48 hrs before the Election Days <i>(this can be directly after the announcement or after the Preliminary Voting)</i>	30
Election Days	General Assembly (GA)	38
Announcement Result of Election	Within 24 hrs after the end of the Election Days	39

