

NON-REGENT MEMBERSHIP ON BOARD COMMITTEES

BACKGROUND

At its May 5, 2008, meeting, the Board of Regents adopted the following recommendation of the Governance and Nominating Committee:

The Committee recommends that Board capacity be broadened by aggressively, but prudently, adding non-Regents to its committees. In doing so, the Committee recognizes that to be effective, non-Regent members must be considered full and equal members of committees for all purposes. Moreover, the Committee concludes that non-Regent members are most productive if they possess significant ties to the Smithsonian beyond a committee assignment. Accordingly, primary consideration should be given to leaders of the Smithsonian advisory boards and Regents Emeriti, who can bring diversity and a wide-range of experience and skills to the operations of the Board.

PROCESS

1. In implementing this recommendation, the Regents, with the assistance of the Secretary, rely on a database maintained by the Office of External Affairs that contains background and expertise data on the over 600 members of various Smithsonian advisory boards. [Membership requirements to become an advisory board member vary by board. See Smithsonian Directive 123.]
2. On an at least a biannual basis, the Governance and Nominating Committee will request a large slate of potential committee member candidates from the Secretary. The Secretary, with the assistance of the Office of External Affairs, will consult, as appropriate, with the unit directors and advisory board chairs to further refine the potential pool.
3. The candidate pool for each committee is then reviewed by the relevant committee chair, who, in consultation with the Secretary and Chair of the Board of Regents, will request that the Governance and Nominating Committee consider the strongest candidates for membership. Non-Regent candidates will be considered based on their expertise in areas subject to a committee's oversight responsibilities. [See individual committee charters <http://si.edu/about/regents/committees.htm>.]

The Governance and Nominating Committee will review the candidates and make recommendations to the full Board for appointment, usually at the Board's January meeting.

4. Pursuant to the Board's direction, non-Regent members of committees "are considered full and equal members of committees for all purposes," including being subject to the Smithsonian's ethical guidelines for board members and Regents' performance assessments.
5. Individuals who do not currently serve on a Smithsonian advisory board but are interested in serving on Regents' committees may request consideration by contacting the Office of the Regents. Contact information is at <http://si.edu/about/regents/contact.htm>.