

APPLYING FOR VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Member Question: *Why do I need to submit a CV and a letter of interest when I apply for a volunteer position?*

ASHT Executive Director: In the past, many appointments were made by individuals, (the President, Division Directors, Committee Chairs), not by the board of directors. One consequence of this practice is that ASHT leadership has at times been accused of being a closed group. We want to change those negative perceptions of the board of directors and the appointment process, and to be open and transparent in all our appointment procedures. We also want to foster emergent leadership and encourage members at all levels to consider applying for leadership opportunities. At the same time, we want to select the best candidate for each position.

Additionally there is a governance matter at stake. The ASHT bylaws specify that "All ASHT powers shall be exercised by the Board of Directors, except as expressly provided by law, or by the Certificate of Incorporation." In other word, the board makes the decisions, not individuals. This is best practice in association management.

As a result of all these factors, we have implemented number of changes.

- We have established criteria for appointment for vacancies.
- There is a position description for each vacancy.
- We advertise all positions to the membership.
- We ask that all applicants provide a brief statement of interest and a current CV.
- The person or group responsible for filling the vacancy reviews all the applications and makes a recommendation to the board of directors for approval. The board votes to approve the candidates.

There are times when we do not receive enough candidates to fill all our open positions. (This was the case with the Awards Committee this year.) In such a case, we may approach suitable candidates and encourage them to submit an application. Like all the candidates, we ask invited candidates to go through the same transparent appointment process.

There are also times when we have too many qualified applicants for a position. This happened earlier this year when we had three applicants for the position of 2012 Hand Therapy Chair for the Electives in Hand Surgery. In such a case, board members need the application information to help them make the best decision for the Society.

Finally, the ASHT bylaws and standard operating procedures occasionally set limits on particular leadership positions. For example, no member can serve more than three consecutive terms on the Nominations Committee. Having the candidates' CVs allows us to review past experience and ensure appointments are in line with established procedures.

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