

USAIN Procedures and Rules

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I. USAIN MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

- A. The Network membership business meeting will be held in conjunction with the biennial conference.
 - 1. The President officiates at all such meetings or arranges for an alternate, following the same order of succession as for Council meetings (see [II.G.3.](#)).
- B. The Network holds program conferences approximately every two years to provide educational and professional development opportunities for the membership.
 - 1. Policies and guidelines for the organization of conferences are developed by the Council and implemented by the Conference Committee.
 - 2. Conferences may be sponsored in cooperation with other agricultural or information organizations if such cooperative ventures are in the best interests of the membership.
 - 3. The Council must approve agreements with co-sponsoring organizations before conference planning can begin.

II. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

A. Function:

1. The Executive Council (hereafter called the Council) manages the affairs of the Network and makes decisions for the Network between meetings of the membership.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Council acts on behalf of the Network and is responsible for its fiscal affairs, budgeting, and overall planning.
2. The Council determines all policies for the Network, within the limits of the Bylaws; approves the annual budget; determines the locations and dates of Network business meetings and biennial conferences; takes such actions as it considers necessary to carry out the objectives of the Network and to preserve its records; upon recommendation of the Awards and Honors Committee, approves the designation of Honorary Members of the Network; and, performs such other functions as the membership may direct.
3. The Council acts on special expenditure funding requests as presented to the Council by the President.

C. Composition and Organization:

1. The Council consists of eleven Councillors, ten elected and one ex-officio.
2. The ten elected Councillors are the President, President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, most recent Past President, and six Directors.
3. The ex-officio Councillor is a representative of the National Agricultural Library and a non-voting member of the Council.

D. Terms of Office and Vacancies:

1. The ten elected Councillors take office as of June 1 following their election and serve until May 31 at the end of their term of office. If there is an election delay, all serve until their successors are elected and assume their duties.
2. The president-elect serves for one year, succeeding to the office of President in the second year and remaining on the Council as the most recent Past President in the third year.
3. The Secretary/Treasurer and the Directors serve two-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.
4. In the event of disability or withdrawal of the President, the title and all duties and obligations are assumed by the president-elect. Should further succession to the office become necessary, the title, duties, and obligations are assumed by the most recent Past President.
5. The Council from among the Directors presently serving fills any vacancy on the Council created by succession to the presidency. Other vacancies in the membership of the Council are filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the Council. The length of each appointment is determined by the circumstances of the vacancy.

E. Committees and Interest Groups.

1. All Committees are responsible to the Council, which delegates such powers and functions to them as are needed for carrying out their responsibilities. Standing Committees are Awards and Honors, Bylaws, Conference, Legislative and Government Relations, Membership, Communications, and Nominations and Elections. The Council may establish additional Standing and Special Project Committees.
2. Petition of fifteen members and approval of the Council establish Interest Groups relating to areas of interest actively represented among the membership of the Network. Each Interest Group develops a statement of purpose or scope which represents the consensus of the Group on the common interest or concern to be addressed by the Group's activities. Interest Groups have Conveners who coordinate activities; this individual is either appointed by the President or elected by the Group from among their number, with Council approval. Further organizational structure is optional. The Council dissolves inactive Interest Groups.
3. Committees and Interest Groups report annually to the Council and provide additional reports at the request of the Council or the President.

F. Archives:

1. The President appoints an Archivist to maintain the Network's historical records. The Council determines the composition of the archives and approves guidelines for use of the archives by officers and committee chairs in depositing materials in the archives.

G. Meetings of the Council:

1. The Council holds at least one meeting annually and may hold additional meetings at the call of the President or upon written request (including electronic mail) of any two members of the Council. Six members of the Council constitute a quorum.
2. Council meetings are open to all members of the Network and to nonmembers by invitation of the President.
3. The President presides at all meetings of the Council, as Chair. In the absence of the President, the president-elect presides. In the absence of both the President and the president-elect, the order of succession to the duty of presiding is the Secretary/ Treasurer, the Past-President, and a Director.
4. When the President believes that a question should be resolved by vote of the entire Council between meetings, the Council votes by mail, telephone, or electronic means, as provided in the Bylaws. A two-thirds vote of the Council members for the action being considered is required in these cases.
5. Conduct of meetings:
 - a. *Notice.* The President sends written notice of all Council Meetings to all members of the Executive Council at least 30 days before each regular or special Council Meeting.
 - b. *Agenda.* Councillors may introduce items of business for any scheduled meeting by contacting the President at least fifteen days before the meeting and furnishing appropriate background information for the agenda. At the beginning of each meeting, the proposed agenda is submitted for adoption, and then additional substantive items are added or deleted by amendment.
 - c. *Rules.* These Procedures and Rules and the Bylaws of the Network govern meetings of the Council and the Network. The latest edition of Cannon's

Concise Guide to Rules of Order is the parliamentary authority on matters not covered by these documents.

- d. *Minutes*. The Secretary/Treasurer maintains a draft set of minutes, which is furnished to each Councillor within thirty days after each meeting. At the next meeting, these minutes are presented for adoption. The minutes may be amended to make factual corrections concerning debates or votes, but cannot be changed to modify actions previously taken.
- e. *Motions*. All decisions of the meeting are made by means of motions from voting members of the Council, seconded by other voting members, or from committees. Motions are stated by the Chair, offered for debate, and then put to a vote by the Chair. Motions are always stated in the positive, not in the negative.
- f. *Debate*. The Chair gives preference to the maker of the motion to speak first, but not to the seconder next. Recognition should alternate, so far as practicable, between those favoring and those opposing the question. All debate is directed through the Chair.
- g. *Closing Debate*. If the Chair determines that there has been ample debate, with full opportunity for both sides to be heard; or if the Chair sees that, after several speakers, there is no opposition, the Chair, on its own initiative, may propose that debate be closed.

III. COUNCILLORS

A. **Qualifications:**

All Councillors must be Individual Members of the Network or the designated representatives of Institutional Members.

B. **Duties and Responsibilities:**

All Councillors are expected to:

1. Attend all meetings of the Council and of the membership;
2. Prepare an annual estimate of expenses of the office, to be included in the budget developed by the Finance Committee;
3. Contribute information on the activities of the office for incorporation into the Annual Report on Network activities submitted to the Council and the membership;
4. Review the appropriate sections of the Procedures and Rules document at the conclusion of his or her term and to submit proposed corrections and revisions as needed for inclusion in the next edition;
5. Arrange for the transfer of files to a successor or to the Network archives.
6. Perform other duties specific to each office.

C. **Financial Support:**

A dollar amount from line 665 in the budget is available each fiscal year for the elected members of the Executive Council to use to help defray expenses for attendance at Executive Council meetings or business meetings when not covered by the incumbent's organization. It is the responsibility of the current members of the Council to decide and vote each year on how they would like to allocate the funds.

IV. PRESIDENT

A. Function:

The President serves as chief executive officer of the Network and of the Council.

B. Appointments and Assignments:

The President is responsible for the following:

1. Appointing the chairs of all committees except the Awards and Honors, and Nominations and Elections Committees, and the Budget Task Force;
2. Appointing the members of all committees except the Awards and Honors and Nominations and Elections Committees, and the Budget Task Force, or arranging for their appointment by the Committee Chairs;
3. Assigning Committee Liaison responsibilities to the Directors;
4. Appointing the conveners of Interest Groups or arranging for appointment from among the membership of the Group, with the approval of Council;
5. Appointing liaisons to other organizations, agencies, and to meetings of other associations;
6. Appointing the president-elect or other Councillor as alternate in performance of presidential duties when necessary;
7. Appointing a parliamentarian to advise the Chair on correct parliamentary procedure during Council meetings and Network business meetings.

C. Duties:

The duties of the President are:

1. To recommend to the Council measures considered desirable to further the objectives and broaden the effectiveness of the Network;
2. To call and schedule at least one membership business meeting of the Network biennially in conjunction with the biennial conference of the Network;
3. To set the agendas for all Council meetings and all membership business meetings;
4. To preside at all meetings of the Council and the membership;
5. To arrange for a mail, telephone or electronic vote of the Council on any question requiring action of the entire Council which cannot await a regular or special meeting, provided that all Council members have consented to voting by such means, and that a two-thirds affirmative vote of all Council members with voting privileges is received for a measure to pass;
6. With the Secretary/Treasurer, to sign all contracts and legal documents, unless otherwise determined by the Council, and to serve on the Budget Task Force;
7. To notify individuals of their designation as Honorary Members of the Network and to make the public announcement of this honor and all awards given by the Network;
8. To notify successful candidates for Network office and announce the election results.
9. To issue a letter of congratulations and endorsement to organizers of any planned East European Round Table conferences.

D. Reports and Records:

The President is responsible for the following:

1. Preparing an Annual Report of Network activities for submission to the Council and the membership;
2. Assuring that the Secretary/Treasurer has prepared the minutes of Council and membership meetings and submitted them in accordance with Network guidelines;
3. Preparing appropriate news or activity items for dissemination on USAIN-L, and/or the USAIN web site including the minutes of Council and membership meetings.

E. Special Expenditures Funding

1. Funding requests for special expenditures must be submitted in writing to the USAIN President. The President will then provide copies to the Executive Council, along with a timeline for the decision making process. The council may ask for additional information or documentation, in order to make a final decision. Standing committees and task forces are encouraged to use the existing procedures and rules regarding budgets and expenditures, and rely on these special procedures sparingly.
2. The President has the authority to approve unbudgeted expenditures of less than \$500, up to 2 times in his or her term. The total of these expenditures may not exceed \$1,000.
3. All unbudgeted expenditures greater than \$200 must be presented to and approved by the Executive Council. All expenditures over \$5000 must go through a bid process. As a rule there should be 3 bids presented to the Executive Council at one of the bi-annual Board of Directors meetings. However, there may be some special circumstances in which fewer than three bids will be feasible. These would be in cases that because of the nature of the project, there may not be a large group of expertise to choose from to satisfy the requirement of three bids. In such cases the "Sole source justification concept" will be considered. The project director will be responsible for managing the bidding process.
4. All unbudgeted funding requests for any amount must meet the criteria below and be in the form outlined or they will not be considered.

CRITERIA

Criteria for funding must fit in one or more of the following categories.

Funding will be used:

1. to further the work of USAIN
2. for a special project requested by any USAIN member
3. to encourage participation in USAIN
4. to benefit a charity, cause, or to further agriculture related or library work.

FUNDING REQUEST FORMAT

All requests for funding must be in writing and must include the following:

Title of Project or Initiative

Amount requested
Date of request

Date or duration of project or initiative

Member name and contact information
Criteria category with explanation/description
Date needed by
Date used by
Rationale for the special funding request and expected outcome of the project

If funding is approved, there should be progress reports on achievement, preferably every three months. A final report of how much money was spent and an accounting of the expenditure of funds must be provided to the Executive Council within 4 weeks of the completion of the project. The Executive Council has the right to cancel the project if there are major problems.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR DRAWING UP A CONTRACT WITH A CONSULTANT

In general the project director is responsible for setting up a contract and having a discussion with the person who will be doing the actual work. Once the project director (and perhaps the Executive Council if that is necessary) has created an RFP with the guidelines and expectations, the potential consultant would be able to respond. The consultant may be the best person to actually draw up the contract. The contract would include a statement in advance of what the research will entail, the expected deliverables and outcome, the responsibilities on each side, the due dates or a time-line, and the penalties for not producing. In addition, there should be an escape clause, including any disclaimers, disclosures and limitations on the part of the consultant. The contract would also include the amount of money and how it is paid, e.g. in installments, at the end, or when a time line is met. This serves as a protection for the consultant.

Once the contract is drawn up, the Executive Council will vote on whether or not to accept the proposal.

V. PRESIDENT-ELECT

A. **Function:**

The President-Elect serves as a member of the Council, participates at the request of the President in the general supervision of Network activities, represents the Network at the request of the President, and assumes the duties of President in the event of the absence or withdrawal of the President.

B. Appointments:

The President-Elect may begin appointing Chairs of certain Committees before succeeding to the presidency.

C. Duties:

The duties of the President-Elect are:

1. To preside at meetings of the Council and of the membership in the absence of the President;
2. To serve on the Budget Task Force;
3. To assist the President with any projects, policy planning or other business affairs which the President might designate;
4. To serve as Chair of the Awards and Honors Committee.
5. To serve as the Recorder of Action Items during the Executive Council meetings.

VI. SECRETARY/TREASURER

A. Function:

1. The Secretary/Treasurer serves as chief financial officer of the Network and is a member of the Council.

B. Duties Related to Membership:

1. Acts as the Council's liaison with the Membership Committee

C. Duties Related to Meetings and Correspondence:

1. Arranges for sending written notice of all business meetings to the membership at least 30 days before each regular or special business meeting;
2. Maintains a draft set of minutes for each Council meeting, to be furnished to the Councillors within thirty days after each meeting. At the next meeting, these minutes are presented for adoption;
3. Maintains a draft set of minutes for each Network business meeting, to be distributed to all members of the Council and to the membership on USAIN-L. At the next business meeting, these minutes are presented for adoption;
4. Maintains official copies of the approved minutes of all Council and Network meetings in chronological order in a binder or folder set up for that purpose, to include any committee reports and documents submitted at the meetings covered by the minutes, a copy of the Network Bylaws, and a copy of the Procedures and Rules;
5. With the President, signs all contracts and other legal documents;
6. Conducts official Network correspondence; supervises all mailings concerned with Network business, including membership renewal notices and Bylaws amendment ballots; and maintains a file of current records;
7. Serves as the liaison to the business manager (Long and Associates);
8. Is responsible for monitoring the Rules and Procedures Document.

D. Duties Related to Finance:

1. Chairs the Budget Task Force which is comprised of the Secretary/Treasurer, Past-President, President-Elect, President, and one other member; submits for Council approval each year a budget prepared by the Budget Task Force; and

submits a statement of account of the Network's funds at each Council and membership meeting; *Note: the **budget year** is a calendar year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31), the **budget cycle** is for 2 years--the budget has to balance in a 2-year period (the conference is every other year and advances for expenditures come from one year's budget and are paid back after the conference the following year);*

2. Coordinates with the business manager the collection and deposit of funds for the Network as required and authorized by the President or Council and draws all checks written against Network funds, maintaining the appropriate account information and supporting documentation;
3. Develops and implements procedures and forms for use by officers and committee chairs in requesting funds and reporting expenditures.

E. Reports and Records:

The Secretary/Treasurer is responsible for the following:

1. Maintaining accurate and detailed financial records of the Network and of the Council, including appropriate receipts for all monies expended, and furnishing such financial statements as may be required by the Council.
2. Receiving and checking the quarterly statements supplied by the business manager.

VII. PAST PRESIDENT

A. Function:

The immediate Past President serves as a member of the Council to provide that body with the benefits of knowledge gained as the Network's chief executive officer.

B. Qualifications:

The Past President is an individual who has just completed a term as President, or a member with comparable experience who has been appointed to fill the remaining term of a Past President.

C. Duties:

The duties of the Past President are:

1. To advise the President on Network matters requiring a historical perspective;
2. To Chair the Nominations and Elections and Bylaws Committees, and to serve on the Budget Task Force;
3. To collect suggestions for revisions to the Procedures and Rules for review by the Bylaws Committee and consideration by the Council, and to serve the President or Council in other capacities as called upon.

VIII. DIRECTORS

A. Function:

The six Directors serve as members of the Council.

B. Duties:

1. Each Director is assigned Committee Liaison responsibilities as determined by the President;
2. A Director may also be appointed by the Council to fill a vacancy in the office of president-elect or Past President created by succession to the office of President;
3. Directors are also expected to perform such other assignments as the President or the Council may direct.

IX. ARCHIVIST

A. Function:

The purpose of the Archives is to collect, preserve, and make available for research and reference use those official Network records and those related records of the agricultural information community of sufficient historical, legal, fiscal and/or administrative value to warrant permanent preservation. "Official Network records" include any and all documentation in any form produced or received by any member of the Network's Executive Council or the Network's standing or special projects committees while engaged in the conduct of official Network business. "Agricultural information community" includes individual members of the Network as well as other individuals and organizations whose activities have relevance for the Network.

B. Appointments and Composition:

The President appoints the Archivist for a two-year term, in the odd (or even) year with unlimited successive terms.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Archivist is responsible for preserving and maintaining, in an organized manner, a viable and accurate record of the Network's history including copies of all publications, relevant correspondence and reports, proceedings and memorabilia of the Network. These records should be available for use when needed;
2. Notify all incoming officers and/or members of the types of materials to be saved for deposit in the archive;
3. Maintain a record of costs required for the storage of materials in the Network archive
4. Maintain a quick reference file on the history of the Network, Network officers, key events, etc;
5. Periodically review and update this information. Annually review the contents of the archives and weed materials in accordance with the Guidelines;
6. Report annually to the Network and membership and as appropriate;
7. Maintain a procedure notebook that contains a quick guide to the contents of the archives along with the retention schedule. This notebook is to be passed onto each incoming Archivist.

X. BUDGET TASK FORCE

A. Function:

The Budget Task Force prepares the Network budget for Council approval with input from officers and committee chairs. At the request of the Secretary/Treasurer, assists

in monitoring income and expenditures against the budget, reviewing and recommending investment options for Network funds, and providing guidance on expenditures for unbudgeted items.

B. Composition:

The Committee consists of the Secretary/Treasurer as Chair, the Past President, the President, the President-Elect, and one other members of the Network who is not a members of the Council, but who has knowledge of the activities of the Network and who is well-informed in financial matters.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

Subject to the approval of the Council, the Committee:

1. By December 1, prepares a budget for the Network covering the next calendar year, based on input gathered from the officers and committee chairs and on previous years' financial experience;
2. Monitors income and expenditures against the approved budget and provides guidance on expenditures for unbudgeted items to ensure that all Network funds are spent in the best interests of the organization and its members;
3. Investigates investment options with the business manager for available Network funds and recommends investment policies and guidelines;
4. Is responsible for ensuring the business manager performs an annual internal audit review and that an annual external audit review is performed either by a non-Council member or by a qualified financial management resource recommended by the business manager.
5. Once approved by the Council shares the budget with the membership and the business manager.

XI. COMMITTEES

A. Identification, Establishment, and Delegation of Powers:

1. Standing Committees are Awards and Honors, Bylaws, Communications, Conference, Legislative and Government Relations, Membership, and Nominations and Elections;
2. The Council may establish additional Standing and Special Project Committees;
3. Additional Standing Committees are established when the Council decides there is a long-term continuous need for a committee to function in an area not already covered by one of the Standing Committees identified in the Bylaws or these Procedures and Rules. These additional committees are subsequently identified and described in the Procedures and Rules according to the charges given to them by the Council;
4. Special Project Committees are appointed to fulfill specific objectives of the Network. They may be of short or long-term duration, according to the parameters of the project; their activities are subject to annual review by the Council and they continue to function as USAIN committees only so long as the Network continues to support the objectives they were established to fulfill;
5. All Committees are responsible to the Council, which delegates such powers and functions to them, as the Council finds desirable for the conduct of business and achievement of objectives.

B. Composition and Organization:

1. The Chairs and members of all Standing and Special Project Committees must be Individual Members of the Network or the designated representatives of Institutional Members;
2. The Chairs of all Standing and Special Project Committees should be actively involved in USAIN activities and should have served previously on committees they are appointed to chair (if at all possible);
3. The Chairs of all Standing Committees except the Awards, Bylaws and Nominations Committees are appointed by the President and serve for one year. They may be re-appointed, but no member may chair any one Committee for more than four consecutive years;
4. Members of all Standing Committees except the Awards, Bylaws, and Nominations Committees may be appointed either by the President or by the Committee Chair; appointments are for two years, and members may be re-appointed, but may not serve continuously on any one committee for more than six years;
5. A Chair or two co-chairs and the members of each Special Project Committee are appointed by the President; appointments to long-term Special Project Committees shall be made to provide continuity of membership; the President may solicit recommendation from current or past members of a Special Project Committee when making appointments;
6. The President shall either serve, ex officio, on all Special Project Committees or designate another member of the Executive Council to serve;
7. Each Director is assigned Standing and/or Special Project Committee Liaison responsibilities as determined by the President.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. All committees report annually to the Council on activities, expenditures, and future plans; they also provide additional reports at the request of the Council or the President;
2. All committee chairs:
 - a. Maintain and publish an up-to-date list of the committee's members, including their years of service and any subcommittee assignments;
 - b. Prepare an annual estimate of committee expenses, to be included in the budget developed by the Finance Committee;
 - c. Review the appropriate sections of the Procedures and Rules at the conclusion of their terms and submit proposed corrections and revisions as needed for inclusion in the next edition;
 - d. Arrange for the transfer of committee files to their successors or to the Network archives.

D. Expenses:

The Network provides the following financial support to each Committee:

1. Funding for such expenses as postage and telephone calls, when not covered by the Committee members' organizations.
2. Other expenses as authorized by the Council.

XII. AWARDS AND HONORS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Awards and Honors Committee administers all special recognition programs developed by the Network, including Honorary Membership, establishing subcommittees as needed to administer specific awards and honors.

B. Preferred Qualifications:

1. The President-Elect will Chair this Committee. Every effort should be made to appoint past award winners to the Committee. In all other respects membership in this Committee complies with [Article XI. Part B](#). Composition and Organization of Committees.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To develop and interpret criteria for Honorary Membership in the Network, for a Service to the Profession Award, and for two Conference Scholarships and a Student Conference Scholarship given out biennially. To publicize the availability of the designation, receive written nominations and supporting documentation for proposed candidates, and to recommend individuals to the Council for this honor;
2. To judge applications and select winners, either as the full Committee or through appropriate subcommittees, according to criteria established for specific awards, following these guidelines:
 - a. Prepare announcement for distribution on USAIN-L, the USAIN web site, Conference programs, and other appropriate outlets. Announcements for awards and honors should include purpose, eligibility requirements, deadline date, name and address of the appropriate Chair, and other pertinent information.
 - b. Process entries to ensure equitable treatment of all candidates for award(s)
 1. Chair codes entries to permit blind judging when appropriate. In these cases, committee members receive copies of coded essays only.
 2. Each committee member rates all applications on the basis of quality and adherence to award guidelines and provides ratings to the Chair.
 3. Chair compiles all ratings and selects award winners, then notifies winner(s), requesting acceptance of award(s) in writing. The Chair also notifies the President and the Secretary/Treasurer of all winners.
 4. Chair prepares a report to the President on committee activities to include, but not limited to: how awards were publicized, number of submissions received, any disqualifications, names of awardees, and future plans/goals/suggestions from the Committee or subcommittees.

3. To notify the President and the Secretary/Treasurer when awards will not be made because there are no suitable entries.

D. Procedures for Awards:

1. Conference Scholarships, including the Conference Scholarship for Students

- a. The Awards Committee will prepare a Scholarship Award Announcement to appear on USAIN-I, the USAIN Web site, the conference pre-announcement, and in other sources.
- b. The submission deadline in the announcement will be approximately four and a half months prior to the conference.
- c. The Committee will make its selection and notify the Executive Council of their choice prior to notifying the recipients by approximately three and a half months prior to the conference.
- d. The Chair of the Awards Committee will notify the scholarship recipients approximately two and a half months prior to the conference.

2. Service to the Profession Award

- a. Criteria Individuals nominated must meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - demonstrated leadership in advancing the field of agricultural information
 - established new directions or visions for the field of agricultural information
 - contributed to the development, application or utilization of new or improved methods or techniques in the organization or delivery of agricultural information
 - conducted significant studies/research in agricultural information
- b. Procedures
 1. Prepare a draft of the Call for Nominations approximately 8 months preceding the conference and submit the draft to the Executive Council for review/approval.
 2. Post the approved Call for Nominations to USAIN-I, the USAIN website, and other professional publications, etc. approximately seven months prior to the conference. Notices of the award nomination should also appear in the conference pre-program.
 3. Deadline for submission of applications in the Call for Nominations will be approximately five months prior to the conference.
 4. The Awards Committee is to make its recommendation to the Executive Council approximately three and a half months prior to the conference.
 5. Approximately two and a half months prior to the conference, the President will contact the award winner(s) and obtain their agreement to appear at the conference.
 6. Chair of the Awards Committee will work with the Conference Program Committee on arrangements for a formal presentation of the award(s). This may be at a separate ceremony, a banquet, luncheon, or some other function at the conference that will be attended by the majority of attendees.

3. Honorary Membership Award

a. Criteria

An Honorary Member shall be an individual who is not a member of the Network, but who has been either an outstanding individual in the field of agricultural information or who has provided outstanding service or support to the Network. Honorary Member award recipients will be given a life membership in the Network, but are unable to hold offices in USAIN unless they maintain a paid membership. Awards may be given to persons outside the field of agricultural information. Criteria for nominees might include:

- . leadership in advancing the field of agricultural information from outside the profession
- i. outstanding support of Network activities and directions

b. Procedures

1. Prepare a draft of the Call for Nominations for distribution approximately seven months prior to the conference.
2. Post the approved Call for Nominations to USAIN-I, the USAIN Web site, and other professional publications as appropriate, six months prior to the conference.
3. Call for nominations will be six months prior to the conference.
4. The Awards Committee will present applications received to the Executive Council for consideration three and a half months prior to the conference.
5. The combined Executive Committee and Awards Committee will vote on each nomination. If selected, the honoree will be contacted by the President four months prior to the conference and the award made. The Awards Committee will work with the Conference Program Committee on arrangements for a formal presentation of the award(s) at the next conference.
6. The Awards Committee will prepare a press release about the honoree and distribute it widely.

CONFERENCE AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

To assist in defraying the cost of attending the conference, USAIN is offering two (2) awards to library school graduates who are USAIN members new to the field of agricultural information (less than three years) or a first time USAIN Conference attendee. USAIN also offers an award to a graduate student in library/information science. The Awards consist of a \$750 travel stipend for each awardee.

To apply:

1. ***For persons new to the profession:*** provide a cover letter with applicant's name, address, phone number, email address, job title/description, place of employment, and length of time spent in the field of agricultural information and/or a statement as a first-

time attendee.

For students: send a cover letter including name, address, e-mail address, and phone number, along with information about the program of study and a brief explanation for interest in attending the USAIN conference or how agricultural information is relevant to career plans.

2. Submit a double-spaced typed essay of no more than 750 words addressing the theme of the Conference or an issue of importance to persons involved in agricultural information.

Essays will be judged on the basis of thoughtfulness, quality of writing, and adherence to application guidelines as described above. Submitted essays will not be returned.

Submit all information by assigned date. Submissions postmarked after that date would not be considered for the Awards.

All applicants will be notified of their status by assigned date.

Checks will be presented to the Award winners at the USAIN Business Meeting at the Conference.

Mail entries to: Awards Chair name and address

USAIN reserves the right to withhold the awards if there are no suitable applicants.

XIII. BYLAWS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Bylaws Committee, which may be a committee of one, serves the Network by drafting proposed Bylaws revisions, reviewing revisions proposed by the Council or members of the Network, and do the same for the Procedures and Rules to ensure that they do not conflict with the Bylaws.

B. Preferred Qualifications:

The Chair is the Past President who appoints others as needed.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Continuously reviews the Bylaws of the Network to ensure that they reflect current practice of the organization and drafts proposed revisions as appropriate;
2. Reviews all Bylaws amendments proposed by the Council or written petition of fifteen voting members to determine if they reflect current practice and are

- acceptable parliamentary practice according to Cannon's Concise Guide to Rules of Order;
3. Prepares proposed Bylaws amendments approved by a two-thirds vote of the Council;
 4. Review and revise the Procedures and Rules to ensure that their provisions are in accord with the applicable Bylaws sections;
 5. Provides the Membership Chair with a copy of the current version of the Bylaws.

XIV. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

To provide information and further discussions between members and potential members, the Communications Committee is responsible for development and maintenance of such means of communication as the USAIN web site and USAIN-L.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Maintains active communication channels with USAIN President and Executive Council to gather accurate information for updating and expanding the web site;
2. Periodically evaluates and updates the USAIN Web site; announces major changes on USAIN-L.
3. Identifies information that could be made accessible via the web site or USAIN-L that would be useful to members and potential members. This may be annotated links to sites, special reports, gateway access to web journals on agriculture or other information the committee considers important for agricultural librarians.

C. Web Site Coordinator

1. The current web site coordinator is an ex-officio member of the communications committee.
2. The home institution of the web site coordinator shall receive an annual stipend of \$1500 to be paid out on July 1 of each year.

XV. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Conference Committee is responsible for all phases of planning and implementation for a biennial program conference of the Network, following the selection of the conference site and approval of any co-sponsorship agreement, in accordance with policies and guidelines developed by the Council.

B. Preferred Qualifications and Appointment:

1. The Chair should have prior conference planning experience.
2. The Committee is appointed at least 24 months before the Conference dates and serves until all post-Conference reports have been completed.
3. Every effort should be made to include a representative from a previous Network Conference Committee.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

Subject to the approval of the Council, the Committee:

1. Chooses a conference theme, determines the content and speakers for the general sessions, and plans other appropriate conference-wide events.
2. Prepares for Council approval a budget containing estimates of Conference income and expenses
 - a. Estimates of income should include registration fees, exhibit rentals, and other sponsor support.
 - b. Estimates of expenses should include:
 1. preparation and distribution of conference announcement;
 2. complimentary registrations, meals, honoraria and other speaker costs;
 3. translation, recording and/or publication of papers;
 4. identification badges and ribbons;
 5. registration packets;
 6. postage, telephone, copying and other office expenses not covered by the Committee members' organizations;
 7. travel costs for the Chair or designee to make required reports at Council meetings.
 - c. Costs of meals to be included in announced Conference registration fees should be budgeted to ensure that registration fees and charges for accompanying persons are set high enough to recover all outlays.
3. Appoints subcommittees as needed to assume responsibility for specific segments of Conference planning activities. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Conference program
 - b. Contributed papers
 - c. Equipment needs and trouble-shooting
 - d. exhibits and vendor support
 - e. hospitality
 - f. local arrangements
 - g. meals and catering
 - h. printed program
 - i. publication of proceedings.
 - j. registration
 - k. session monitoring and evaluation
 - l. social events
 - m. Speaker introductions
 - n. Translation of presentations
4. Updates the conference binder and passes it along to the next committee.

XVI. LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. **Function:**

The Legislative and Government Relations Committee monitors issues associated with information activities relating to agriculture, as defined in the Bylaws, which are of

special interest to the membership, serving as a focal point for coordination of Network government relations activities.

B. Qualifications:

The Chair should have an interest in and knowledge of legislation and policies, which affect agricultural information.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Committee Chair or designee:

- a. Acts as a point of contact and distribution of information on government affairs between the Network and other organizations with an interest in agricultural information, especially the National Agricultural Library (NAL).
- b. Serves as the Network contact when important items of legislation or regulation are under consideration, alerting members to help government officials better understand the issues before them and the impact of their actions upon the agricultural information community.
- c. Identifies experts in the Network who might prepare a statement or provide information on government policies or proposed legislation.
- d. Works with the President and representatives of NAL to determine the most appropriate methods and timing for providing support for programs and services of the NAL.
- e. Works with Chairs of other Legislative or Government Relations Committees (ALA, SLA, et al.) to coordinate appropriate activities; networks with these groups to enhance the exchange of information regarding issues relevant to agricultural information.
- f. Prepares and distributes on USAIN-L and the USAIN web site a regular update of legislative and government relations issues for the USAIN membership as appropriate.

2. The Committee Members:

- a. Monitor various government activities, regulations, and legislation affecting agricultural information.
- b. Notify the Chair and other members of current issues the Committee may want to investigate or act upon.

XVII. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Membership Committee serves the Network by maintaining accurate and timely records of Network membership and by developing and implementing effective membership recruitment and retention activities.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

1.

- a. The official Network membership database is maintained by the membership person at the USAIN Business Manager's Office.

- b. The Business Manager's Office produces and maintains current and past membership lists (rosters).
 - c. The Business Manager's Office publishes a Membership Roster that is distributed to the membership each year. Membership cards are included in this mailing.
 - d. The Business Manager's Office writes timely letters of "welcome to USAIN" when new membership applications are received and provides copies of the roster, a membership card, and any other appropriate materials to all new members.
 - e. Membership services such as doing mailings, providing mailing labels, and providing printouts of various membership listings are done by the USAIN Business Manager's Office. All renewals are sent from the Business Manager's Office to the Chair.
 - f. All monies generated by memberships are handled through the Business Manager's Office.
- 2.
- a. The Membership Committee Chair works closely with the Business Manager's Office on notifications of new and renewing members. There is a manual for these procedures.
 - b. The Chair responds promptly to requests for membership information from non-members and makes information about USAIN available at meetings and conferences of other organizations when requested to do so
 - c. The Committee does follow-ups on non-renewals starting January 15th of the new year.

XVIII. NOMINATIONS/ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Nominations/Elections Committee secures candidates for all Network offices and conducts the annual election, in accordance with provisions of the Bylaws.

B. Appointment and Composition:

- 1. The Committee consists of five voting members, chair is current Past President. Other members serve two-year terms on a rotating basis, so experience handling the election is available through current committee members.
- 2. The members of the Committee the President, Chair, or Council appoints no later than September 1 of each year.
- 3. The Nominations/Elections Committee must include individuals who are familiar with the operation of the Council and the Network and must be representative of the membership of the Network.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

- 1. Each year the Committee presents two candidates for President-elect and two candidates for each open Director position, in accordance with the provisions of Bylaws Article III, Section 2.
- 2. In alternate years, the Committee also presents two candidates for Secretary/Treasurer.
- 3. In developing a list of candidates for each election, the Committee:

- a. Aggressively solicits the names of suggested candidates from the membership and presents a slate of nominees that is representative of the composition of the membership;
 - b. Obtains the written acceptance of each nominee prior to submission of its report;
 - c. Requests biographical data from all nominees in a standard format to include current position, education, previous positions, other professional participation, and specific USAIN interests, so that the information can be compiled for the election ballot with minimum modification;
 - d. Submits a written report to the Council at the close of the election.
4. Conducts the annual election, making every effort to ensure fairness and confidentiality, which includes performing or overseeing the following activities:
- a. Submits names and accompanying biographical data to the business manager;
 - b. Works with Long and Associates to prepare and send out ballot. Use all available means to publicize the election.
 - c. Tallying returned ballots, with candidates receiving the largest number of votes for each office being declared elected
 - d. In case of a tie vote, determining the successful candidate by lot conducted by the Chair
 - e. Reporting the results to the President, who notifies all the candidates before announcing the election results to the general membership.
 - f. Destroying ballots one month after results are announced.
5. The following procedural suggestions are provided for guidance:
- a. A space for write-in candidates should be provided.
 - b. Plenty of lead-time should be allowed for printing and distributing the election materials.
 - c. A return envelope addressed to a member of the Committee should be included with each ballot; this envelope must also include a space for the member's name and address.
 - d. Instructions should state that ballots will not be counted unless return address is completed and that any exceptions to instructions provided will render ballots invalid.
 - e. Instructions and ballots should state the return deadline.

XIX. INTEREST GROUPS

A. Function:

Interest Groups are expected to sponsor programs and discussion sessions at the USAIN biennial conference. Other activities may include advising the Council on matters pertaining to the Group's area of interest and collecting and disseminating information related to the Group's interest.

B. Composition and Organization:

1. All members may participate in the activities of all Interest Groups whose concerns they share.
2. Members with common concerns may form a new Interest group by petition of 15 members and approval of Council.

3. Each Interest Group should develop a statement of purpose or scope which represents the consensus of the Group on the common interest or concern to be addressed by the Group's activities.
4. A Convener for each Interest Group is appointed by the President or chosen from among the membership of the Group, with the approval of Council. Further organizational structure is optional and requires Council approval.
5. Inactive Interest Groups may be dissolved by the Council.

C. Activities, Duties and Responsibilities:

All Interest Groups:

1. Must prepare an annual estimate of any anticipated expenses, to be included in the budget developed by the Finance Committee;
2. Are expected to sponsor programs and discussion sessions at USAIN biennial conferences, presenting a summary report at an all-conference session and following up with expanded reports to the membership on USAIN-L and the USAIN web site.
3. May engage in additional Council-approved activities which do not require face-to-face meetings, including the collection and dissemination of information related to their area of interest.
4. Must report annually to the Council on their activities, expenditures and future plans, and provide other reports as requested by the Council or President.
5. Must prepare and submit an annual Statement of Purpose, which will be posted on the web site and used to foster discussion among the Group.

XX. NETWORK AFFILIATES AND LIAISONS

A. Principles for Relationships with Other Organizations:

1. To help USAIN achieve its mission to promote and improve agricultural library and information services.
2. To fulfill a specific need related to current USAIN goals and objectives or to contribute in a significant way to the cooperating organization while using USAIN's name and its resources effectively.
3. To benefit as much as possible from a reciprocal relationship in the form of finances, expertise, experience, public relations, or other advantages.

B. Composition and Organization:

1. Affiliate Representatives and Liaisons will be appointed by the President on a biennial basis.
2. They must be active members and directly involved in USAIN activities.

C. Duties and Responsibilities of Affiliate Representatives:

1. Acts as official USAIN contact to the outside organization.
2. Ensures the timely exchange of minutes and membership directories between organizations.
3. Serves as ex officio member on outside organization's governing body if appropriate.
4. Provides reciprocal access to listserv and/or homepages.

5. Develops reciprocal conference and other programming as appropriate.
6. Announces meetings and other activities of mutual interest to members of both organizations.
7. Submits proposals to the Council regarding special services such as reduced conference fees for the outside organization's members.
8. Assists in fund raising activities particularly related to sponsoring attendance at each organization's conference and in joint proposals.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of Liaison Officers:

1. Provides two-way communication and information dissemination between the Network and the outside organization.
2. Ensures the timely exchange of minutes and membership directories between organizations.