

Report to FIG Council - Engagement Committee

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide FIG Council with a synopsis and evaluation of the inaugural implementation of the FIG Engagement Committee (the EC). This appraisal of the EC includes descriptions and reviews of the tasks undertaken, a subjective analysis of the EC's findings, and a list of recommendations to improve the EC process.

Overview of Tasks and Evaluation

Overall, the success of the EC can be categorised as a very respectable outcome and effort; and therefore the initiative should continue for the next round of FIG elections. This conclusion was predicated on two (2) key performance criteria. The first measure of success was to gauge or rate the ability of the nominated EC representatives to co-operate, develop a plan and implement processes to engage in dialogue with prospective candidates. The second measure was more quantitative, and focused on the result of the engagement, which was the number of formal nominations (from National Member Associations) submitted to the FIG Office by the deadline of 1 March 2022. Considering this, and noting the evaluation process was undertaken by the EC, the EC's performance in relation to their capability to collaborate and carry out the relevant activities was appraised to be of above average standard and expectations. Furthermore, the resulting number of official nominations lodged for the FIG President and Vice – President roles, which were attributed to EC engagement, almost met EC expectations. In numerical terms, a total of "5" were lodged for both positions, compared to the anticipated total of six (6); that is at least two (2) for each vacant position was the EC's target.

In more detail, the EC convened five (5) meetings, and each meeting was conducted in a professional, respectful, friendly, and open manner. This environment facilitated robust discussions, the sharing and exchanging of ideas, and the execution of a plan designed to deliver the desired number of nominations set by the EC, as well as the overarching outcomes of FIG Council. The EC had logistical and administrative support, as well as guidance on FIG Council workings, from the FIG Director. Access to this assistance and advice provided an alternative insight, from a corporate or administrative perspective, thus enabled the EC to consider other pathways to resolve the challenges encountered, to have clarity on related matters, and to focus primarily on the aims, and their assigned tasks.

The EC recognised there was a possibility of National Member Associations nominating a limited number of candidates for the upcoming elections, therefore the EC needed to be proactive in soliciting nominees. As a consequence, the EC identified prospective candidates for the upcoming 2022 elections of FIG President and two (2) FIG Vice Presidents. From the EC perspective, prospective candidates should have relevant working experience at Commission Chair level, and knowledge (or suitable understanding) of the operations or administrative functions of FIG. In addition, when selecting potential candidates, the EC recognised the importance of enacting FIG's policy on diversity, gender balance, and inclusion, and consideration of prospective candidates who possess leadership qualities, communication and people management capabilities, and be known amongst our FIG and sister organisation communities. As a consequence, the EC developed a list of prospective candidates to engage with, totalling 18 and comprising of:

- Five (5) persons for the position of FIG President; and
- Thirteen (13) persons for the two (2) FIG Vice President positions.

The engagement process began 1-2 weeks prior to the Christmas 2021 / New Year 2022 period and during the months of January and February 2022. All prospective candidates were initially engaged visually via web base conversations, and follow up talks through the same or alternative digital media. The EC also prepared guidelines (“hints and tips”) on the process, as well as a “how to” effectively engage with prospective candidates. Please refer to Attachment A.

By the application deadline of 1 March 2022, the number of nominations submitted by National Member Associations (NMAs) and received by the FIG Office were “3” for FIG President and “5” for FIG Vice President; and with respect to those nominations lodged and the prospective candidates that the EC engaged with, anecdotal analysis indicated the number was “5”.

From a subjective analysis of the ECs administration of the engagement process, and conversations with identified prospective candidates (PCs), the EC representatives observed and noted the following:

- During the December 2021 to Feb 2022 period, it became apparent that the EC were only engaging with PCs who were identified by the EC; that is the EC were not contacted by or did not engage with any other PCs regarding nomination or the process.
- No NMAs contacted the EC to inquiry about nominating candidates or the associated processes. In fact, the EC contacted some NMAs to remind or prompt them of FIG nominations.
- Some PCs were surprised that they were identified as a potential candidate by the EC.
- Some PCs were not aware of the EC and its purpose
- Most PCs where appreciative, honoured and somewhat humbled to be identified as a potential candidate for the vacant FIG positions
- Most PCs recognised and emphasised the need for the engagement process to be confidential
- Most PCs advised that they had not been contacted by their NMA seeking them as a potential candidate
- All PCs expressed the engagement process was a useful initiative
- Some PCs were interested in nominating but needed to have a conversation with their NMA (and / or employer) to ascertain interest, support, and level of commitment.
- Some PCs would consider nominating for future FIG senior roles, as presently this was not the opportune moment, due to their personal situation and / or work obligations not allowing sufficient time to effectively undertake or commit to the subject FIG positions.
- Some declined as they were considering retirement or changing careers (professions); while some PCs felt they were not ready for such roles within FIG.

Recommendations for improvement

To improve this initiative, the EC recommend to FIG Council the following for consideration –

- The FIG Director continue to provide administrative support, corporate knowledge and advice to the EC.
- Retain the present membership or representation of the EC, if they are able to continue.

- For upcoming (future) FIG Commission Chair and Vice President elections, appoint additional EC representatives from (a) the South America region, (b) the North Asia region, and (c) the Chair of ACCO; so as to further enhance FIG's member outreach program, and agenda regarding diversity, gender balance and inclusion.
- More promotion of the role and activities of the EC within the FIG community so as to increase the awareness and value of the EC. This could be achieved through multiple digital and social media notifications, leading up to and during the nomination period; regular EC reports and presentations to the General Assembly and events pre and post elections; and circulation of EC material to NMA Presidents, Chairs and Vice Chairs of Commissions, Networks and Task Forces.
- Target and empower NMAs to be more active / involved in FIG, and in particular challenging them to identify, nurture, support and nominate future leaders for FIG roles. This could be supported by circulating information, and having participatory discussions or information sessions at the NMAs Presidents meeting on topics such as (a) the benefits of active engagement and collaboration, (b) the important role and responsibility of NMAs to the workings of FIG, (c) the success of FIG is dependent on the quality FIG leadership / governance and active involvement of the NMAs

Open Query to FIG Council

The EC also discussed the issue of the current membership of the EC remaining until 2025, and the likelihood of existing members having to leave or resign from the EC due to unavailability or other commitments or possible conflict of interest. As a result of deliberations the EC formed the opinion that FIG Council should consider reviewing the appointment of EC members several months prior to each election phase, meaning the term of appointment to the EC should be re-assessed every two years.

Guidelines for Members of the Engagement Committee

The following are “hints and tips” for approaching and discussing with potential candidates their nomination for senior voluntary roles in FIG, such as President or Vice-President or Commission (Network) Chair of FIG -

- Arrange a suitable time for a conversation and / or virtual meeting with the potential candidate; for example, several weeks prior to the New Year holiday season; and then follow up conversations in the New Year as required.
- Advise the candidate they have been identified as a potential candidate for the position by the Engagement Committee (EC) or their National Member Association (NMA).
- Be ready to explain why they were identified by the EC or the NMA.
- Advise the candidate the engagement and conversations are confidential, and only “general” content from meeting discussions will be shared with other EC members.
- If necessary, describe the aims (objectives), roles / responsibilities, and expectations of the EC to the candidate. Refer to the website - https://www.fig.net/organisation/general_assembly/engagement_committee.asp .
- If necessary, highlight to the candidate that the EC are independent and are impartial with advice that is the EC are neutral. Also emphasis the EC role is to–
 - **NOT** Be part of any evaluation or selection of interested candidates
 - **NOT** Guarantee the candidates election or influence the outcome as it is a General Assembly decision
 - **NOT** Advise on how to present or promote themselves to the FIG community, nor assist with preparing or be mentioned in the candidate’s nominations, associated advertising documents or presentations
- Be honest, open and frank with your opinions and information
- Be encouraging and supportive as the EC outcome is for candidates to consider applying for a position, submit a quality nomination, and be confident / comfortable with the process.
- Build rapport, and keep the conversation positive
- Be factual, and provide information about the position, and the process of nomination
- Be prepared to answer queries about the positions, in particular: time, commitment and financial expectations. For example, as an EC representative the response needs to be genuine, be based on personal knowledge of and experiences with FIG; and have available the information supplied by the FIG Office such as overview of the position descriptions, tasks, responsibilities, indicative financial and time commitment etc.
- If the candidate decides to NOT apply or are hesitant or reluctant ask “why”.

- If the candidate decides to apply then –
 - Reassure the candidate about nominating
 - Guide and advise the candidate on how to explore this opportunity with their NMA and their employer. (Ensure a copy of the email that the FIG Office send to the NMAs re nominations, is available to answer any queries regarding process)
 - Be aware, for some candidates they may also need to talk with family and other possible stakeholders so you may need to become familiar and understand their personal circumstances.
 - Remind the candidate that they need commitment and support from their employer and endorsement of their NMA, as the official nomination will need to be submitted by the NMA before March of each year election year.
 - Provide a copy of the FIG nomination form and assist with this form where necessary OR alternatively take questions on notice and then seek advice from the FIG Office. Note, in some situations regarding nomination queries it could be more appropriate to re-direct the query to the FIG (Office)
 - Suggest to the candidate that part of their nomination should also include a resume to support demonstrated FIG experience, knowledge and participation; outline why they are nominating, what they intend to do and how; and what are their professional / personal qualities make them an exceptional candidate.
 - Suggest to candidate they might look at submittals by previous candidates if unsure about what to include in their documentation.
 - Be available to discuss or provide advice (or re-assurance) on their nomination
 - Follow up if necessary.