

Guidance for DEI Council's Review of Member At-Large Governor Applications

Background

Under [WSBA Bylaws, Article VI\(C\)\(3\)\(a\)](#), the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Council “shall forward at least three candidates who have a lived experience and knowledge of the needs of those members whose membership is or may be historically underrepresented in governance to the end that the BOG will be a more diverse and representative body than the results of the election of Governors based solely on Congressional Districts may allow.”

The Bylaws provide that “diversity refers to meaningful representation of, and equal opportunities for, individuals who have a lived experience as a member from one or more historically underrepresented communities in the legal profession.”

The Bylaws further provide that “underrepresentation encompasses and is not limited to, race, disability, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.”

Selection Process

Interviews

The DEI Council should offer every applicant that meets threshold eligibility¹ an interview on the date and timeframe specified for a given election cycle which will be posted on the WSBA website when applications open. The interview is optional and not required for the DEI Council to consider forwarding an applicant onto the ballot.

The interviews will be conducted by members of the DEI Council. The length of the interviews will vary depending on how many people apply.

All applicants will be given the interview questions before the interview. The interview questions will include the following:

¹ The threshold eligibility is any active member of the Bar (except a person who previously served as a Governor for more than 48 consecutive months (WSBA Bylaws, Art. VII(A)(2)(a)) who timely submits their application by the stated deadline.

March 2026

1. Can you share about your lived experience and knowledge of the needs of members who have been historically underrepresented in governance at WSBA?
2. What is your understanding of the purpose of the Member At-Large role and how do you intend to fulfill the obligation of the role?
3. General Rule 12.2 provides that the WSBA should strive to promote diversity and equality in the legal profession and courts. How do you think the Board of Governors should carry out this responsibility under 12.2?
4. The WSBA Board of Governors approved the new WSBA Equity and Justice Plan in May 2025. How will your experience and knowledge help the Bar advance the Plan?

Selection Criteria and Deliberation

The DEI Council is encouraged to forward all applicants who meet [WSBA Bylaws, Article VI\(C\)\(3\)\(a\)](#):

“have a lived experience and knowledge of the needs of those members whose membership is or may be historically underrepresented in governance so that the BOG will be a more diverse and representative body than the results of the election of Governors based solely on Congressional Districts may allow.”

When deciding which applicants to forward to the ballot, the DEI Council will consider whether the applicant:

- Has lived experience and knowledge of the needs of those members who are or have been historically underrepresented in the legal profession;
- Demonstrates a commitment to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the legal profession and the legal system;
- Demonstrates an understanding of and desire to promote and deliver on the WSBA’s mission statement, activities outlined in General Rule 12.2 and the WSBA’s Equity and Justice Plan;
- Has leadership experience including service on a board or other decision-making entity; and
- Has volunteer experience with WSBA and/or other organizations that serve the public.

The DEI Council will determine who to forward to the ballot based on their review of the applicants’ materials and interview (if they choose to be interviewed) and criteria outlined above. The Council may use a rubric with a scale for each criteria in its deliberation and decision-making process.

March 2026

After the DEI Council considers each applicant, they will vote on which applicants should be forwarded to the ballot. Every applicant – whether they opted into being interviewed or not - who receives a majority of votes from the Council members (who were present for the interviews and deliberation) will be forwarded to the ballot.

The Council is encouraged to forward three or more applicants but need not forward applicants who do not demonstrate meeting the criteria outlined above. If the DEI Council forwards three or more applicants, the Executive Director shall place those applicants on the ballot to be elected by all eligible members. In the event that fewer than three are forwarded, the Board of Governors may select additional qualifying candidates from the pool of people who timely submitted their application for inclusion on the ballot.