

ABSW Election Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

This document outlines the election policy for the Association of British Science Writers (ABSW) and sets out the rules and procedures governing the nomination, voting, and appointment of members to the Executive Board. It ensures compliance with the ABSW's [Memorandum of Association, Articles of Association, and Standing Orders](#), while promoting fairness, transparency, and inclusiveness.

2. Executive Board Structure

The Executive Board consists of:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

(All above are Directors of ABSW Ltd)

- European Representative (who may also be the Chair)
- Up to five elected members
- Up to four co-opted members, appointed at the Board's discretion (Standing Order 8)

Board members serve two-year terms. The Chair and Vice-Chair may not serve more than three consecutive terms. Co-opted members serve one-year terms.

Only posts whose terms have expired or posts where individuals have resigned their post early are open for election in a given year.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Voter Eligibility

Members entitled to vote in ABSW elections are:

- Life Members
- Full Members (*see also 3.3 Membership status*)
- The Honorary President

Student, Associate, and Corporate members are not entitled to vote.

3.2 Candidate and Nominator Eligibility

Members eligible to stand for election or nominate candidates must be Life Members or Full Members (*see also 3.3 Membership status*).

Student, Associate, and Corporate members may not run for office or nominate candidates.

Any nominator or candidate with a financial relationship with the ABSW (e.g., a contractor working with the ABSW), or any other conflict of interest, must declare this during the nomination process.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure their nominators are eligible. The Tellers have the authority to disqualify nominations that do not meet eligibility requirements.

3.3 Membership Status and Responsibilities

Members are responsible for ensuring that their membership is current and that they meet the eligibility criteria to vote, nominate, or stand for election. Specifically:

- Full Members are defined as those with a current paid subscription or within the specified grace period for payment (currently one month). The AGM is the date used to define if someone is a valid/current member.
- Those planning to stand or nominate candidates should confirm that their membership is current up to and including the date of the AGM.
- Members can check their account via the ABSW website to confirm subscription status and renewal dates ([see how here](#)).

- Life Members are automatically eligible.

All election-related communications and nomination forms will include reminders about eligibility and deadlines. The ABSW expects candidates to take responsibility for the eligibility of their nominators and to take personal responsibility for their own eligibility.

4. Nomination Process

- Nominations open at least five weeks before the AGM.
- Any eligible ABSW member may be nominated for any open position.
- Each candidate must be nominated by two eligible ABSW members.
- Nominations must be submitted via the official online form, which is hosted in the members-only section of the ABSW website.
- Nominators will be contacted automatically via email to confirm their nomination.
- All nomination communications and forms are reviewed and validated by two independent Tellers.

5. Role of the Tellers

Two Tellers, appointed by the Executive Board, oversee the entire election process. They must not:

- Be Board members
- Be standing for election
- Nominate any candidates

Tellers are responsible for:

- Validating all nominations and voting forms
- Ensuring compliance with eligibility rules and election procedures
- Ensuring fair conduct of the process
- Reporting the verified results during the AGM

6. Voting Procedure

- If more than one nomination is received for a role, an electronic ballot will be held.

- Voting opens once nominations are validated and closes at **noon on the day of the AGM**.
- The ballot will be hosted in the members-only area of the ABSW website and set up to:
 - Prevent duplicate voting
 - Require voter identification (name, email, membership category)
 - Issue an automatic confirmation email upon voting
- Votes will be manually checked against membership records for verification of eligibility.
- Voters will be responsible for checking that their membership is valid as per the rules above – the tellers will automatically discount votes from those without valid memberships.
- Members may vote for one candidate per contested role. A simple majority determines the winner.

If a position is uncontested, the candidate will be presented for ratification by eligible members at the AGM.

7. Announcement and Formal Appointment

- Voting results are announced at the AGM.
- Board members are formally appointed at the AGM, even if the vote occurs in advance.
- A quorum of at least ten eligible voting members is required for the AGM to proceed.

8. Accessibility, Inclusion, and Disputes

The ABSW is committed to accessibility and inclusion. If a nomination is incomplete due to accessibility-related challenges, the Board may invite candidates to rectify the submission.

Complaints or issues relating to the election procedure should be addressed to the Executive Board, which will respond as promptly as possible.

Last update on 3 October 2025.