

## Recommended Governance Model and Bylaws Changes

### Overview:

The proposed model includes three distinct groups:

- the Assembly (focusing on the profession)
- the Network (driving communication and engagement of the membership), and
- the Board (positioning the association)

**The Assembly** is a completely new element. This forward-thinking group is a think tank that will focus on the needs of the profession (collegiate recreational sports), an element that didn't previously exist in our governance structure. The Assembly is an important mechanism for germinating ideas, developing leaders, and sharing knowledge; these additional opportunities for member engagement are meaningful and important to the growth and development of our field. The Governance Commission envisions an Assembly of 20-24 people, with one face-to-face meeting at the conference.

**The Network** expands and enhances the strong regional network of NIRSA and creates numerous opportunities for member involvement and leadership development. In the current structure, vice presidents are given two very different sets of responsibilities, serving on the Board and representing their region; each area requires a significant amount of time to do well. Separating these responsibilities among two different elements in the governance structure has several benefits: creating a more sustainable workload, opening up opportunities to members who previously could not meet the significant time requirements, and increasing the value, and quality, of the regional responsibilities. The Network will focus on: outreach, engagement, advocacy, local constituent communication, nurturing and developing members in their region, networking, grassroots growth of the field, overseeing the state/provincial directors and student representatives, and facilitating regional education opportunities.

**The Board of Directors** is the visionary leadership that strategically positions and drives the Association. The Board is responsible for strategic planning, establishing policy, supervision of the Executive Director, oversight of fiduciary responsibilities, oversight of legal responsibilities, and serving as the sole shareholder of the NSC. By appropriately delineating responsibilities between the Network and the Board, the Board will now be able to maintain a global focus, increase operational efficiency and effectiveness, and be able to proactively position NIRSA.

**The Role of Students** is essential to the growth of our profession and is an integral element of the shared governance model. Students represent our future both as young professionals, and the future leaders of our Association. The proposed model provides expanded opportunities for student input, involvement, influence, and leadership development. A National Student Leader will be elected to lead the Student Leadership Team, which includes students elected within the Regions of NIRSA. The Student Leadership team will set the student agenda for the year, have a valuable connection with the BOD, meaningful participation on the Assembly, and a leadership role within The Network. The Student Leadership Team will also provide a valuable conduit for student member recruitment, networking, communication, and student development and education. The NSL will be a voting member of the Nominations and Appointments Committee, and the SLT will be responsible for recommending student appointments on the Assembly, work teams, and committees. In addition, numerous opportunities will be available at the State and Regional level.

### Composition:

**The Assembly** will include broad constituency membership, including but not limited to:

- Individuals with broad working knowledge of the profession
- Young professionals in the first five years of professional membership
- Student members
- Past Presidents' Representative-elect
- Members with Strategic Expertise
- One NIRSA Board member to serve as liaison and convener

To ensure diverse and broad participation opportunities, there will be no more than one person per institution, no more than five members per region, and members in certain positions (i.e., BOD, Member Network, NSC, Foundation, standing committees) are not eligible to serve on the Assembly during the term of their other position.

**How will Assembly members be appointed?** The Nominations and Appointments Committee, the Member Network, and the President will each have authority to make some appointments. Terms will be staggered to ensure consistency and vitality.

**What are the qualifications to serve on the Assembly?** An interest and energy to serve in a dynamic and highly participatory think tank, a commitment to advancing the profession and positioning NIRSA as a leader in higher education, an ability to be a catalyst for action and results, a broad working knowledge of the profession, a capacity to contribute to current and relevant topics, and/or strategic expertise.

**The Network** will consist of the following 15 members (the Network will choose its own leader):

- Six Regional Directors, elected by the respective regional membership, serving staggered two year terms
- Six Student Regional Directors, elected by the respective student regional membership, serving one year terms
- The National Student Leader, elected by student members, serving one year term
- Past Presidents' Representative
- A member of the BOD to serve as liaison to the BOD

Note:

- The state/provincial directors and state/provincial student representatives will report to the members of The Network
- A member of the six Regional Directors is selected by the group to serve as Chair/Convener

**How will Network candidates be selected?** Each Region will have the authority and responsibility to forward their preferred slate of candidates to the Nominations and Appointments Committee for certification. This model greatly increases the autonomy and authority of each region, as they will now determine the appropriate process and protocol, the composition of the selection committee, the selection criteria, desired qualifications, etc.

**How will Network candidates be elected?** The Regions will now have the authority and responsibility to determine the process for conducting regional elections; the successful candidate must be elected no later than 60 days before the Annual Conference.

**What are the qualifications to serve on the Member Network?** A commitment to expanding and enhancing the strong regional network through networking and grass root efforts; ability to foster student and professional leadership development; an interest in facilitating educational conferences/workshops in the region; solid communication skills.

**The Board** will consist of the following seven members:

- President (year three of three-year term), elected by voting members
- President Designate (year two of three-year term), elected by voting members
- President Elect (year one of three-year term), elected by voting members
- Three at-large Board members, serving staggered three year terms, elected by voting members
- One Board Delegate, elected by the Board, to serve one year term that is renewable for one consecutive year.

**How will the Board candidates be slated?** The **Nominations and Appointments Committee** becomes a standing committee with greatly increased importance in the new model, slates candidates for all Board positions and the National Student Leader. This committee also certifies appointments to the Assembly, certifies the slate of candidates for regionally elected positions, and makes various committee appointments. This committee will also create the process to review and certify credentials for all NIRSA leadership positions.

The **Nominations and Appointments Committee** will consist of two voting members from each region (to be selected by each region), the National Student Leader, and two members of the Board of Directors; one of the Board members will serve as chair of the committee. Additional ex-officio members may be added to assist with the various duties (e.g., additional students could serve to assist in vetting student candidates).

Notes:

- This board configuration means at least four of the seven members will be returning to the board any given year, which is important for consistency and progress; having the President in the third year allows for additional experience and knowledge; having a delegate position gives the board the opportunity to choose an additional member based on expertise that is needed for that particular board.

**How will the Board candidates be elected?** Elections will be conducted on-line at least 60 days before the Annual Conference. Technology will be utilized to share information about the candidates.

**What are the qualifications to serve on the Board?** Clear commitment to the Association with progressive and substantial involvement in NIRSA; demonstrated leadership skills within a variety of roles and working environments (institution, NIRSA, other Associations/agencies, service on other boards); demonstrated competence and ability to provide high level strategic and visionary thinking; managing complex budgets; making sound legal decisions; thoughtful stewardship of resources; excellent verbal and written communication skills; and the ability to interact effectively with all layers of the association.

## Benefits of the Future First model:

- VP no longer has to do two jobs (BOD and regional representation), which will allow more time to do each job well. Will open up BOD and Network positions to folks who previously couldn't commit to the excessive time requirements.
- First time in our history that we'll have a group (the Assembly) devoted to growing the profession
- Creates broader student representation and student influence
- Creates intentional opportunities for young leaders
- Develops and grows leaders
- Right-sizes roles, allowing involvement and significant impact
- Increases strong member driven involvement
- Expands on the tradition of strong member networking
- Expands leadership roles needed to perform the duties of NIRSA from 11 to over 40, but makes the roles more manageable and meaningful (meaning a more sustainable model)
- Better balance of time and resources needed for leadership positions creating greater opportunities for involvement
- Engages robust nominations process
- Stronger and enhanced regional involvement and representation
- Engagement of students with strong leadership and influence roles for the future
- Intentional focus on the growth and development of our profession

NOTE: Transition work teams, with broad member involvement and investment in the process, will be charged with additional analysis and implementation details.