



# **WSAVA Policy & Process Manual**

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## How to use the policy and process manual

The WSAVA Policy & Process Manual has been designed as a ‘one stop shop’ for WSAVA team members. It contains all policies and processes relating to the strategic and operational running of our association. Bringing all content together in one place will inevitably result in a large document. Therefore, we have identified a variety of sections which are recommended to various roles.

Role / Area of WSAVA	Sections
Committee Members	About WSAVA Governance at WSAVA Code of Ethics Conflict of Interest Secretariat Committees Travel Policy Social Media Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process
Committee Chairs	As Committee Members, plus: Financial Planning
Member Representatives	About WSAVA Governance at WSAVA Code of Ethics Conflict of Interest Secretariat Member Association Policy & Process Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process
Sponsors/Industry Partners	About WSAVA Governance at WSAVA Code of Ethics Secretariat Complaints and Dispute Resolution Process

## Questions, Comments, and Updates

If you have any questions or comments regarding this manual, or if you spot any errors, you can share them with WSAVA [HERE](#). This document will be reviewed in full annually, and updates published in/around April. All updates will be summarised in the [change log](#).

## About WSAVA

WSAVA was formed in 1959, following a decision by the then International Association of Small Animal Specialists (IASAS) to rename itself as the World Small Animal Veterinary Association.

Today, WSAVA remains as a federation, that is, we are an association of associations that are comprised of individual members. WSAVA's member associations are typically the national companion animal veterinary associations of each of the world's countries, or associations with a direct interest in companion animal veterinary practice. Together, WSAVA member associations represent more than 200,000 veterinary team members.

Our vision is all companion animals worldwide receive veterinary care that ensures their optimal health and welfare. We set out to achieve this by advancing the health and welfare of companion animals worldwide through an educated, committed, and collaborative global veterinary community. WSAVA's strategic plan for 2023 to 2025 outlines five focus areas, which collectively assist us in advancing our mission. They are:

- Setting Standards for Companion Animal Veterinary Practice
- Personal & Professional Development for Companion Animal Veterinary Teams
- Campaigning for Change
- Strengthening the WSAVA Community
- Our Enabling Factors.

## Further Reading

[WSAVA Strategic Plan 2023 to 2025](#)

[WSAVA Bylaws](#)

[WSAVA Annual Report 2023](#)

## Governance at WSAVA

Governance is a system that provides a framework for managing organisations. It identifies who can make decisions, who has the authority to act on behalf of the organisation and who is accountable for how an organisation and its people behave and perform. Governance enables leadership to run an organisation legally, ethically, sustainably, and successfully, for the benefit of stakeholders, including members, employees and volunteers, customers, and for the good of the wider public.

Good governance is one of the ways organisations in all sectors achieve their purpose. It is equally essential whether that purpose is commercial, charitable, or to provide public services. Organisations that have good governance use clear decision-making processes, behave transparently by reporting on their activities, actively engage with their stakeholders, effectively manage the risks they face, and take responsibility for controlling and protecting their assets, including their reputation.

WSAVA is a not-for-profit corporation registered in Canada and governed by the Canadian Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (NFP Act). The NFP Act states: “the directors shall manage or supervise the management of the activities and affairs of a corporation”. At WSAVA it is the voting members of the Executive Board who are the directors. The Executive Board are accountable for ensuring WSAVA operates within the law, by WSAVA rules and regulations, and that WSAVA advances their mission<sup>1</sup>. WSAVA member associations elect individuals to Executive Board.

The Executive Board are supported by the following roles and sub-committees in ensuring they comply with their governance responsibilities:

- **Executive Director:** is responsible for day-to-day management of the WSAVA and for implementing the strategic plan set by the Executive Board. The Executive Director line manages the WSAVA Secretariat.
- **Membership & Nomination Committee:** is responsible for reviewing applications to join the WSAVA and for overseeing committee member nomination and selection.
- **Financial Advisory Committee:** assists the Executive Board in fulfilling its obligations and oversight responsibilities relating to financial planning and financial reporting by advising on these matters.
- **Learning & Development Committee<sup>2</sup>:** oversees WSAVA's work relating to continuing education and professional development for the companion animal veterinary team.

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<sup>1</sup> See [Executive Board Terms of Reference](#) for further details on voting members.

<sup>2</sup> To be established in late-2024.

- **Communications & Advocacy Committee<sup>3</sup>:** is responsible for overseeing WSAVA's activities to become better known, understood, and respected, by the companion animal veterinary community worldwide. They are also responsible for developing WSAVA's advocacy and campaigns work.
- **Veterinary Development & Impact Committee<sup>4</sup>:** is responsible for monitoring the external environment and identifying emerging trends relevant to companion animal veterinary practice. They make recommendations on which strategic projects should be prioritised by the WSAVA.

### Bylaws

The NFP Act requires WSAVA to have bylaws. Bylaws set out the rules for governing and operating WSAVA. The WSAVA bylaws are all contained in one document. They outline policies and processes such as:

- Membership categories
- Termination of Membership
- Meetings of Members (the General Assembly)
- Directors and Officers
- Dispute Resolution.

The most current version of the WSAVA bylaws can always be found on the WSAVA [website](#).

### General Assembly

The NFP Act states that WSAVA must hold an annual meeting of members. WSAVA refers to this meeting as the General Assembly. The General Assembly is attended by a representative from each of the WSAVA's member associations. The General Assembly agenda is traditionally split in two. The first half is a members' forum, where items of strategic importance to the WSAVA are discussed. The second half is where the following formal business is conducted (as outlined by the WSAVA bylaws):

1. Elections for ordinary executive board member positions on the executive board.
2. Elections for officer positions that are to be appointed by members' vote (including the President-Elect, and Treasurer).
3. The addition, acceptance, and termination of voting members, but only to the extent that such matter of addition, acceptance or termination of a member cannot otherwise be dealt with by the executive board in accordance with the provisions hereof.
4. All expenditures by WSAVA more than the sum of fifty thousand US dollars (\$50,000.00 USD).
5. All borrowing by WSAVA more than the sum of fifty thousand US dollars (\$50,000.00 USD).

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<sup>3</sup> To be established in late-2024.

<sup>4</sup> To be established in late-2024.

6. The review and approval of the financial statements and the report of the auditors of WSAVA for the prior year.
7. Appointing WSAVA's auditors.
8. Any other matter which the executive board wishes to refer to eligible voting members for consideration or determination.

For further information on the General Assembly, please see the [WSAVA bylaws](#).

#### **Confidentiality<sup>5</sup>**

Respecting the privacy of our members, users, sponsors, team members, and of the WSAVA itself is a foundational value of WSAVA. Personal and financial information is confidential and should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without permission or authorization from the [Executive Director](#). Care shall also be taken to ensure that confidential information is always protected to restrict it to authorised individuals only. This requires (but is not limited to) attention to any verbal discussion on WSAVA topics or use of any WSAVA documentation.

WSAVA team members may be exposed to information which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. Confidential information will be labelled as such. It is the policy of WSAVA that such information must be kept confidential both during and after service. All team members are expected to return physical materials containing privileged or confidential information at the time of their WSAVA service concluding. If the material is digital and WSAVA has a copy, then it is expected that those files be deleted.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline.

#### **Structure of WSAVA**

To assist with the achievement of WSAVA's vision, mission, and strategic goals, the WSAVA is structured with both volunteer and paid team members. Paid team members are part of the Secretariat. Volunteers are part of the WSAVA's various committees. Further information on the [Secretariat](#) and [Committees](#) can be found in the respective sections of this document. Each of the governance sub-committees are supported by one or more of the WSAVA Secretariat. In some cases, they are also chaired by a member of the Secretariat. The WSAVA structure is briefly given overleaf.

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<sup>5</sup> Reproduced from [www.councilofnonprofits.org](http://www.councilofnonprofits.org)

Governance Sub-Committee	Secretariat Support
Finance Advisory	Executive Director
Strategic Advisory	Executive Director
Education	Chief Learning & Development Officer
Membership & Nomination	Global Operations Manager
Advocacy & Communications	Digital Content Manager

### **Expanded Leadership Circle**

The Expanded Leadership Circle (ELC) is composed of the Executive Board, Secretariat, and Chairs of Committees and Project Groups. The ELC's composition is chosen based upon the impact and influence the roles have over the wider WSAVA community, particularly volunteers. Therefore, the ELC was established to ensure more effective dialogue between its members on WSAVA strategy and operational matters. Generally, the ELC meet twice per year, once online and once in person. The online meeting usually takes place in the first quarter of the year. The in-person meeting takes place the day before the General Assembly, held in conjunction with the WSAVA World Congress.

### **Official Language, Time, and Dress Code**

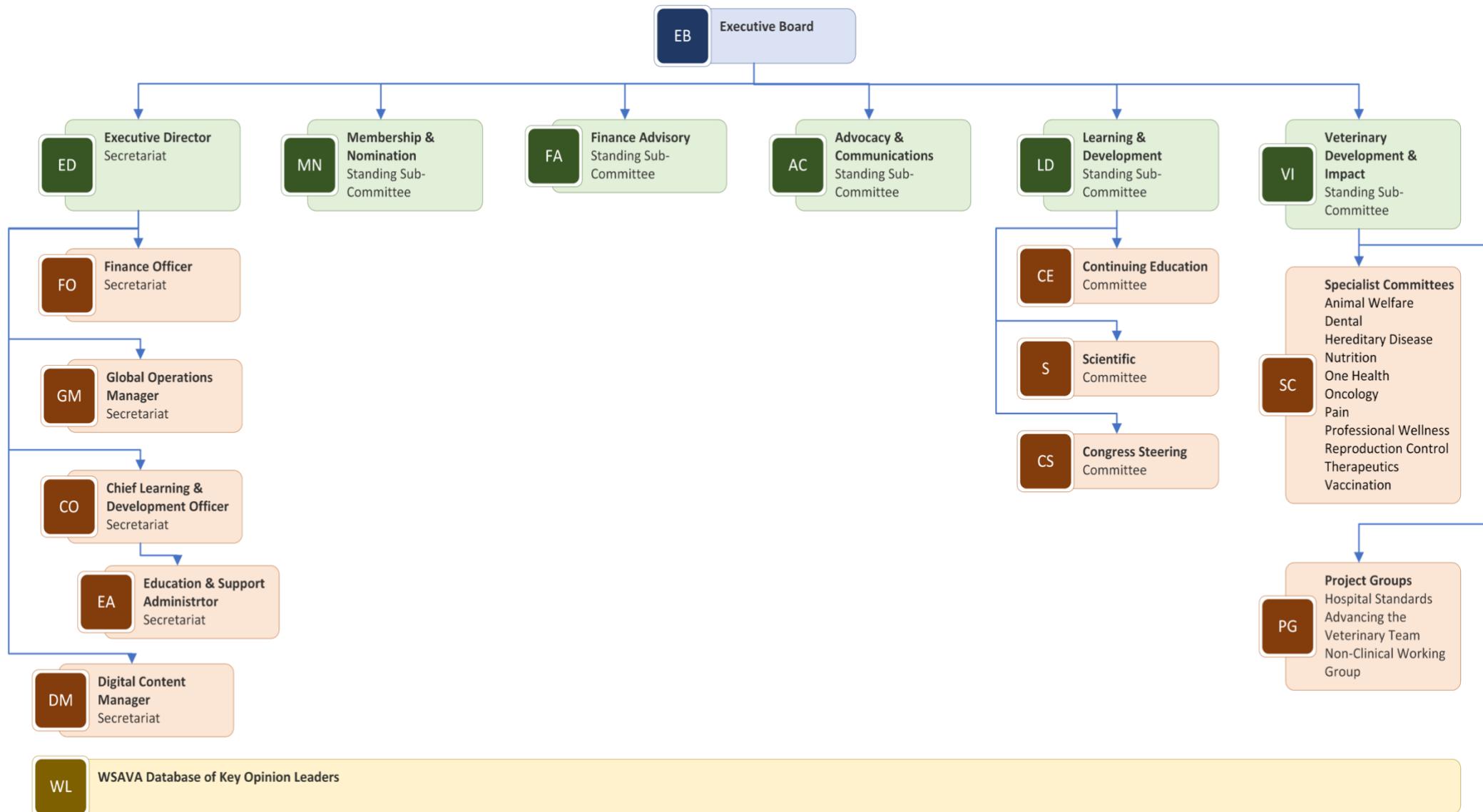
The official language of WSAVA is English. All WSAVA documents will be published in English. All WSAVA events will be delivered in English. Where resources and funding are available, WSAVA will endeavour to make French and Spanish translations available. These languages have been selected because they are core languages of the United Nations, but they are also official languages of many nations where WSAVA has a member association.

WSAVA welcomes member associations and partner organisations who wish to translate our resources, but approval must be sought first from the WSAVA Education Committee. This approval process is in place to ensure that WSAVA documents are presented in a consistent format, and that WSAVA can commit to efficiently implementing the translated materials once they are received.

Regarding events, all online meetings will be scheduled and communicated in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). Where events are held in person, the time zone used will be local and the dress code is business casual<sup>6</sup>. All attendees officially representing WSAVA are expected to follow the dress code. If an event has a different dress code, this will be communicated in the invitation.

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<sup>6</sup>Unsure about what constitutes business casual? Check out this guide from [Reader's Digest](#).



## Code of Ethics<sup>7</sup>

### Introduction

The WSAVA Code of Ethics is one of the ways we hold ourselves accountable to the highest ethical standards. It outlines our organisation values which guide our actions and decisions, and the behaviours expected of all members of our community. In addition, it highlights the types of behaviours which WSAVA will take a zero-tolerance stance on. The WSAVA Code of Ethics can be used as the ultimate reference point for any community member who witnesses behaviour that makes them uncomfortable or raises concerns.

### Who does the WSAVA Code of Ethics apply to?

All members of the WSAVA community play an integral part in building an inclusive community where all feel welcome and empowered regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, religion, political affiliation, or any other facet of identity. As such, every member of the WSAVA community is responsible for adopting and upholding the values and behaviours outlined in the Code of Ethics. This includes all paid and voluntary team members, including the Executive Board and representatives of WSAVA member associations, as well as industry partners and suppliers. Participants at all WSAVA events are expected to abide by the Code of Ethics.

### Why does WSAVA ask industry partners and suppliers to follow our Code of Ethics?

The network of individuals and organisations with who WSAVA collaborate and partner, strongly reflects on us as an association. If one of our partner organizations becomes known for harassment in the workplace or improper treatment of their team members, WSAVA may become indirectly associated with this behaviour. This has the potential to affect our reputation and cast a shadow on how our community view WSAVA. By asking our industry partners and suppliers to also follow our Code of Ethics, we are holding others accountable to the standards we have set for ourselves. This not only demonstrates our authenticity; it also contributes to positive and meaningful changes outside of WSAVA.

### Values

WSAVA's organizational values are the highest values that guide our decisions and actions, helping to unite our community, and define us as an organisation.

**Integrity:** We conduct our organization without conflicts of interest, by promoting transparency, honesty, fairness, and consistency in honouring our commitments.

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<sup>7</sup> The Code of Ethics replaces the Code of Conduct which was in place up to 2023.

**Professional:** Our organization reflects the character of our profession. We are passionate, competent, qualified, capable and we strive to represent and uphold the status of our profession.

**Engaging:** We are an inclusive community, welcoming member associations, members, volunteers, committees, staff, strategic partners and are always accessible for those seeking opportunities for involvement.

**Empowering:** We believe that to lead the profession we must create leaders by welcoming the minority opinion while striving for consensus, and to provide support and capacity building with local communities and members to be key drivers of development according to their own determined needs and goals.

#### **Expected Behaviours**

All WSAVA community members have both the right to feel included as well as the responsibility to include others. All our community members are expected to act in accordance with the following behaviours.

**Equality & Fairness:** The appointment to volunteer and paid roles at WSAVA is based strictly on merit, accomplishment, and professional qualifications. WSAVA strictly prohibits any discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cognitive style, age, nationality, disability, mental health, religion, pregnancy status, political ideals, or any other demographic trait or identity factor<sup>8</sup>.

**Harassment and Discrimination:** WSAVA will not tolerate harassment or discrimination of any team member or group of team members by any individual or group. If you have personally experienced discrimination, you are strongly encouraged to speak to report the incident(s) to the Executive Director or report your experience anonymously. If you have witnessed or have been a bystander to harassment or discrimination, it is your duty and responsibility to report the incident(s). Every team member at WSAVA should be an active ally (and not a passive bystander).

**Allyship:** Allyship encourages all team members to learn from and listen to colleagues from under-represented backgrounds. You are expected to be an ally to your peers by using your voice to speak up for (without speaking over) marginalized groups, breakdown barriers and promote equity<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> WSAVA understand that many barriers faced by under-represented communities occur because of unconscious bias (v. conscious discrimination). WSAVA commit to raising awareness of this through the provision of and signposting to training on diversity and unconscious bias. WSAVA endorses the Journey for Teams training programme, developed in part by WSAVA member association the American Veterinary Medical Association. For further information visit: [www.journeyforteams.org](http://www.journeyforteams.org)

<sup>9</sup> For further information on allyship, see the AVMA's [allyship resource](#).

**Upholding the Law:** Whilst representing WSAVA all team members must uphold the applicable rules, regulations, and laws. Consideration must be given to the laws of the country WSAVA business is being conducted in, which may differ from those the team member is familiar with. Team members who are in any doubt should consult with the [Executive Director](#) prior to travelling to or conducting business with such countries or regions.

**Conflicts of Interest:** All WSAVA team members will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the association on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. Further details on how WSAVA manages conflicts of interest may be found in the [Conflict-of-Interest Policy](#).

**Confidentiality & Data Protection:** WSAVA takes great care to protect information as part of our data protection responsibilities. Likewise, we expect our team members to follow the steps we put in place to protect data, including the use of WSAVA provided resources where applicable. We expect members of the WSAVA community to protect any personal or confidential information to which you may have access. Those who confide in WSAVA team members should feel assured that their confidentiality will be always respected, with the exception being if you believe anyone to be at risk of harm.

### **Zero Tolerance Policy**

WSAVA's zero tolerance policy is part of our commitment to providing a safe and dignified environment for all our community. Its intention is to create a culture of mutual respect and it outlines examples of behaviours which WSAVA outrightly does not condone and will take a zero-tolerance stance on. When WSAVA becomes aware of prohibited conduct, the Executive Board and / or Executive Director will take immediate action to safeguard the relevant parties, whilst an investigation is conducted. The [WSAVA Complaints and Dispute Resolution Process](#) will be followed. If appropriate, the party(s) involved may be removed from the environment and/or suspended. For further information on how to make a complaint, refer to the [Complaint & Dispute Resolution Process](#). However, if preferred or urgent, the matter can be reported immediately to the [Executive Director](#) (Richard Casey +44 743 222 1538), or [Executive Board](#).

The following conduct is prohibited at WSAVA.

- 1. Harassment:** Workplace harassment is any one-time or repeated unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, uncomfortable or toxic environment. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:
  - making threatening remarks
  - sexual assault
  - gender-based insults or jokes causing embarrassment or humiliation.
  - repeated unwanted social or sexual invitations.

- inappropriate or unwelcome comments on a person's physical attributes or appearance.

2. **Bullying:** Bullying is any physical, verbal, and non-verbal conduct that is malicious or insulting. Bullying can make a person feel vulnerable, excluded, humiliated, undermined, fearful or threatened. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal, and non-verbal conduct. Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- physical threats
- psychological threats
- overbearing or intimidating levels of supervision
- shouting at colleagues in public or private
- spreading malicious rumours.

3. **Discriminatory behaviour:** Discrimination refers to behaviour that treats people differently or adversely because of one or more of the facets of their identity, including race, colour, ethnic origin, gender expression, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, or genetic characteristics. Examples of discrimination include, but are not limited to:

- making insensitive jokes
- factoring an individual's identity into a hiring decision
- purposefully excluding a colleague based on their gender.
- using a racial slur.

4. **Micro-aggressions:** Micro-aggressions refers to obvious or subtle, direct, or indirect behaviours and comments which reference an individual's personal identity, such as their race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, or age. Over time, micro-aggressions can have lasting emotional and mental effects on the individual or individuals targeted and can contribute to a toxic and non-inclusive workplace. Examples of micro-aggressions in the workplace can include, but are not limited to:

- calling a woman "bossy"
- repeatedly calling a racialized team member by the name of a different person of the same race
- asking a racialized team member where they are "really" from
- commenting on a person's physical appearance in reference to racial characteristics such as skin tone
- Repeatedly scheduling regular meetings or important deadlines on religious or cultural holidays<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> The exception to this includes the dates for WSAVA World Congress which due to venue availability and country choice, may be scheduled during religious events.

## Conflict of Interest Policy<sup>11</sup>

WSAVA is dedicated to advancing the health and welfare of companion animals worldwide through an educated, committed, and collaborative global community of veterinary peers. The integrity of WSAVA, and the activities it undertakes, depends on the avoidance of conflicts of interest, or even the appearance of such conflicts, by the individuals involved in those activities.

At the same time, WSAVA recognizes that its diverse community have significant professional, business and personal interests and relationships. Therefore, WSAVA has determined that the most appropriate way to address actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest is initially through open disclosure of any relationship or interest which might be construed as resulting in such a conflict.

Disclosure under this policy should not be interpreted as creating an assumption of misdeed or as automatically precluding someone from participating in a WSAVA activity or decision-making process. Rather, it reflects WSAVA's recognition of the many factors that can influence one's judgment and a desire to make as much information as possible available to other participants in WSAVA-related matters.

### **Who is covered by this policy?**

This policy applies to all WSAVA volunteers and paid team members.

### **What is a conflict of interest?**

A conflict of interest may arise when a WSAVA team member has some other interest that might suggest divided loyalty on the part of the team member between obligations to WSAVA, on one hand, and to some other organization or cause, on the other. For example, the "other interest" may arise from a transaction between WSAVA and a third party, or team member's paid or unpaid relationship with a third party, which may compromise the team member's ability to provide unbiased and undivided loyalty to WSAVA. In addition, a "perceived" conflict of interest arises when a team member's interests or relationship creates an appearance of an actual or potential conflict even where no such conflict may actually exist.

### **What are the obligations under this policy?**

To proactively address conflicts of interest, all WSAVA team members are required to disclose, orally or in writing, any interests or relationships that may reasonably give rise to an actual, potential, or perceived conflict with WSAVA interests. Disclosures should be made to the

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<sup>11</sup>This policy has been adapted with permission from the American Veterinary Medical Association's own policy on conflict of interest for volunteers.

members of the entity upon which the team member serves (such as the committee or team). To expedite the resolution of any potential conflicts, team members should review the agenda materials provided to them as soon as they are available to determine if any items present an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest. If so, timely disclosure will enable the other entity members to evaluate the information to determine whether further action is necessary. See section below for further information on how to address conflicts of interest.

Team members must disclose the following information, but only to the extent that it reasonably involves the interests of the WSAVA regarding a specific matter that is under consideration by the WSAVA upon which the team member serve.

1. Relationships with other organizations, including any current or prospective leadership role in, or other relationship with, any other association, society, or foundation (e.g., board member, committee member, advisor, contributor).
2. Employment, consulting, or other compensation arrangements, including honoraria, that are current, prospective or have occurred within the past three years.
3. Material financial interests of the team member, or anyone within the team member's immediate family or with whom the team member directly shares income, held in a commercial entity that provides products or services to the WSAVA, or reasonably may be anticipated to conflict with the interests of the WSAVA. Monetary amounts and percentages need not be disclosed. Material financial interests include stock ownership or options.
4. Any other interests or relationships of the team member, or anyone within the team member's immediate family or with whom the team member directly shares income, that may potentially conflict with the interests of the WSAVA.

Team members should disclose a relationship or interest if there is any uncertainty as to whether the relationship should be disclosed. Team members are under a continuing obligation to disclose actual, potential, or perceived conflicts as they arise.

### **How should actual or potential conflicts be addressed?**

It is the responsibility of the neutral members of the WSAVA group upon which the team members serve (or the affected decision-making body in question with guidance from the MNC or Executive Director) to interpret and apply this policy. The affected WSAVA group may request additional information from the team member detailing the nature of the relationship or interest giving rise to the potential conflict of interest so that those affected has sufficient information to determine whether a particular relationship or interest constitutes an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest. This determination shall be made in any situation in which a credible potential for a conflict of interest is identified either by an individual team member or by a third party.

In most cases, disclosure of an actual or potential conflict of interest coupled with the ability of the neutral team members to fairly evaluate the specific matter under consideration is sufficient to ensure that the best interests of the WSAVA are served. However, if any of the other team members believe that the "conflicted" member's continued participation regarding the matter may result in the recommendation of a policy or the undertaking of activity that is not in the best interest of the WSAVA, the other team members may raise their concerns and attempt to resolve this conflict through discussion. If the conflict cannot be resolved through discussion, the WSAVA team, by formal vote, shall resolve the conflict in a manner it deems appropriate, including, without limitation, in one of the following manners:

1. Waive the actual, potential, or perceived conflict as unlikely to affect the team members ability to act in the best interests of WSAVA, or to negatively affect the integrity or image of the WSAVA.
2. Determine that the team member should not be included in discussions and/or decision-making related to the particular transaction or specific matter at issue.
3. Recommend to the team member and/or the Executive Board that he/she resign from his/her service to WSAVA because the actual, potential, or perceived conflict is so pervasive that the individual would seldom, if ever, likely be able to act in the best interests of WSAVA.

**When team members join WSAVA, how can they disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts?**

Prior to appointment, each team member will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held, by completing the [Conflict of Interest and Disclosure of Interests](#) form, which will be shared with the MNC. This disclosure will be kept on file by the Secretariat.

**How will WSAVA document matters involving conflicts?**

When a matter arises that may involve an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest, the relevant meeting minutes shall document all proceedings relating to the conflict, such as the disclosure by the individual, the determination by the team, the resolution of the conflict, and the team's ultimate disposition of the agenda item at issue.

**What is the procedure for dealing with a conflict where the conflict is with the meeting Chair?**

Where the conflict is with the Chair of the meeting the Chair must stand down as Chair and allow the participants of the meeting to elect a new Chair for that meeting. The replacement Chair should notify the Executive Director of the situation immediately after the meeting has concluded.

**Where should questions or concerns regarding this policy be directed?**

All questions about this policy should be directed to the Executive Director, who may consult with the MNC and Executive Board as appropriate to respond to such matters.

## Executive Board Terms of Reference

Supporting Documents	The Executive Board (EB) Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with the WSAVA bylaws AND the <a href="#"><u>Conflict of Interest Policy</u></a> .
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### Purpose and Responsibilities

The EB's purpose is to oversee the activities of WSAVA and make decisions regarding those activities. Many of their responsibilities are mandated by WSAVA bylaws and the Canadian Not-for-Profit Act, which WSAVA is governed by. Specifically, the EB's responsibilities to WSAVA may be summarised by:

- **Duty of Care:** The EB takes care of the WSAVA by ensuring prudent use of all WSAVA assets, including people, good will, and finances.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** The EB ensures that WSAVA's activities and transactions are, first and foremost, advancing its mission. They recognize and disclose conflicts of interest and make decisions that are in the best interest of WSAVA, not in the best interest of an individual EB member or any other individual or organisation.
- **Duty of Compliance:** The EB ensures that the WSAVA obeys applicable laws and regulations; follows its own bylaws; and that WSAVA adheres to its stated purpose and mission.

Specific responsibilities of the WSAVA EB include:

1. Setting WSAVA's strategic direction to ensure advancement of WSAVA's mission.
2. Governing all matters at WSAVA unless stated otherwise in the bylaws.
3. The EB delegate day-to-day management of WSAVA to the Executive Director.
4. The EB will appoint, compensate, set goals, and key performance indicators, and review performance of the Executive Director.
5. Through the President, the EB advises and works with the Executive Director to ensure the smooth functioning of WSAVA and resolving any important matters that may arise.
6. Through the Treasurer, the EB works with the Executive Director to set the annual budget for WSAVA including the budgets of individual committees.
7. Through the Treasurer, the EB works with the Secretariat to ensure the annual audit is completed.
8. The EB will approve the establishment of committees and working groups as necessary and ensure they have clear terms of references which outline how the committee or working group contributes towards the strategic plan or mission.
9. The EB facilitates a collaborative approach and clear line of communication / decision-making in issues related to all WSAVA Committees.

10. The EB facilitates the establishment of the WSAVA strategic plan and delegates responsibility for its implementation to the Executive Director.
11. The EB supports the Executive Director in their development of an annual operational plan in line with the strategic direction.
12. The EB is responsible for ensuring good governance practices including adherence to policies and practices.
13. The EB will ensure workplace issues that are not in line with WSAVA policy are dealt with swiftly, fairly, and in-line with the relevant policy and process.
14. The EB ensures an appropriate onboarding process is in place so that all WSAVA team members learn about how WSAVA operates and their requirements and responsibilities while working or volunteering for WSAVA.
15. The EB will ensure that the WSAVA meets all obligations associated with being an incorporated not-for-profit entity registered federally in Canada.
16. All EB members will attend the WSAVA World Congress.

#### **Powers of the Executive Board**

The powers of the EB are mandated by the Canadian Not-for-Profit Act which under section 124 states: 'the directors shall manage or supervise the management of the activities and affairs of a corporation'. Please note, the directors of the WSAVA are the voting members of the EB. In addition, the WSAVA bylaws provide the EB with the following powers.

1. To administer the affairs of WSAVA in all things and make or cause to be made for WSAVA, in its name, any kind of contract which WSAVA may lawfully enter into and, save as hereinafter provided, and generally, may exercise all such other powers and do all such other acts and things, including the formation of committees, as WSAVA is by its charter or otherwise authorized to exercise and do.
2. To authorize expenditures on behalf of WSAVA from time to time to a maximum of Fifty Thousand Dollars US DOLLARS (US\$50,000.00) per expenditure.
3. To enter a trust arrangement with a trust company or bank for the purpose of creating a trust fund in which the capital of and interest generated therefrom may be made available for the benefit of promoting the interest of WSAVA in accordance with such terms as the executive board may prescribe.
4. To take steps to enable WSAVA to acquire, accept, solicit, or receive legacies, gifts, grants, settlements, bequests, endowments, and donations of any kind whatsoever for the purpose of furthering the objects of WSAVA.
5. To appoint such agents and engage such workers as it shall deem necessary from time to time and at such remuneration as the executive board deems appropriate and such persons shall have such authority and shall perform such duties as shall be prescribed by the executive board at the time of such appointment.
6. The power to do such other matters as are necessary to further the objectives of WSAVA.

7. Borrow money and grant security over the assets of WSAVA up to a maximum of Fifty Thousand Dollars US DOLLARS (US\$50,000.00).

#### **Composition of Executive Board**

The number of directors, term of office of directors, officers of WSAVA, and how directors and officers are appointed, is governed by the WSAVA bylaws (section: Directors and Officers). The Executive Board is composed of ten (10) voting members. These voting members consist of the following roles:

- President
- President-Elect
- Treasurer
- Ordinary Board Members x7

Each of the WSAVA regions has an allocated number of Ordinary Board Member positions. They are:

Region	Continent/Countries	Number of Guaranteed Ordinary Board Members
1	Asia	2
2	Australasia, Europe, and North America	2
3	Latin America and Caribbean	1
4	Middle East and Northern Africa	1
5	Sub-Saharan Africa	1

The voting members of the EB are supported by a variety of non-voting members, who attend meetings of the Executive Board in a non-voting, advisory capacity. These roles include:

- Immediate Past-President
- Executive Director
- Plus, invited guests.

#### **Qualifications of Voting Executive Board Members**

The Canadian Not-for-Profit Act (Section 126 – 1) lists persons that are disqualified from being a director of a corporation. Therefore, the following persons are not able to be a voting member of the WSAVA EB:

- Anyone who is less than 18 years of age.
- Anyone who is incapable.
- A person who is not an individual; and
- A person who has the status of a bankrupt.

In addition to the above statutory requirements, the WSAVA bylaws state that voting members of the EB must be a member of a WSAVA General or Affiliated Member Association. Furthermore, certain roles require specific experience. The requirements for all voting EB member roles are listed below.

Role	Requirements	Tenure
Ordinary Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the statutory requirements to be a director.</li> <li>• Be able to speak, read, and write in English.</li> <li>• Be a member of an eligible WSAVA member association within the region there is a vacancy and RESIDE within the region.</li> <li>• Two (2) years of experience within the WSAVA community (this is likely to include being a member of a WSAVA committee or a Member Representative to WSAVA).</li> <li>• Be in good standing with WSAVA.</li> </ul>	Two (2) years. May stand for re-election for one further two (2) year term.
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the statutory requirements to be a director.</li> <li>• Be able to speak, read, and write in English.</li> <li>• Be a member of an eligible WSAVA General or Affiliated member association.</li> <li>• Two (2) years of experience within the WSAVA community (this is likely to include being a member of a WSAVA committee or a Member Representative to WSAVA, and ideally the WSAVA Financial Advisory Committee).</li> <li>• Be in good standing with WSAVA.</li> </ul>	Two (2) years. May stand for re-election for two further two (2) year terms).
President-Elect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the statutory requirements to be a director.</li> <li>• Be able to speak, read, and write in English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two (2) years. May not stand for re-election for further terms. Immediately following the conclusion of</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a member of an eligible WSAVA General or Affiliated member association.</li> <li>• Two (2) years of experience within the WSAVA community (this is likely to include being a member of a WSAVA committee or a Member Representative to WSAVA).</li> <li>• Must have served on a WSAVA committee.</li> <li>• Be in good standing with WSAVA.</li> </ul>	their two (2) year term, the President-Elect becomes President for two (2) years, and then Immediate Past President for two (2) years.
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### **Functioning of the Executive Board**

EB meetings, vacancies, appointment of Officers, and renumeration are governed by the WSAVA bylaws. In addition to the bylaws, these terms of reference dictate:

1. The President will chair all meetings of the EB.
2. A quorum for the holding of an EB meeting requires a majority of the EB members to be present.
3. All EB members will have a single vote at EB meetings, with a tie decided by the President.
4. The EB will meet monthly for two hours via video call.
5. The EB will meet in person for up to one week in the first quarter of the year, and again in the week prior to the WSAVA Congress. These meetings replace the EB video call during the months they take place.
6. The Executive Director in consultation with the President will set the agenda for EB meetings. All EB members can put forward agenda items.
7. Executive Board meeting agendas are intentionally focussed on strategic matters; the what and the why but not the how. Operational reports and routine congress updates where there are no significant matters to report will be included in the consent agenda.
8. Items for inclusion on the monthly Executive Board meeting agenda can be submitted via this [online form](#). For inclusion on the agenda, all submitted items must be accompanied by an overview of the matter to be discussed.
9. EB meeting agendas and pre-read are issued at minimum the Friday before the meeting takes place.
10. All Executive Board meetings will start with participants declaring any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise due to matters on the agenda.

## Expenses

The EB provides their time to the WSAVA in a voluntary capacity. To compensate for the routine costs, they incur whilst carrying out their EB responsibilities, they are provided with the following allowances, which are pro-rata if a tenure concludes short of a full year.

- Stipend: \$1,250 USD per quarter, totalling \$5,000 USD per year.
- Technology & Internet Allowance per year: \$850 USD.

## Executive Board Nomination Process

When vacancies on the EB arise because of an EB members tenure concluding, a call for nominations will be issued between April to June of the year the vacancy will arise. The call for nominations will be issued to all WSAVA member associations, via their appointed member representative, and published on all WSAVA communication channels. The call for nominations will include details of the roles available, requirements for the role, and how and when to submit a nomination. In addition, it is possible that the WSAVA may wish to attract nominees with specific knowledge, skills, or experience, that will support the advancement of the strategic plan and mission. If this is the case, the desired requirements will be listed in the call, but they are not essential requirements. Any potential nominee may contact the [Executive Director](#) for an informal conversation about the role.

The call for nominations will require any interested party to provide:

1. Up-to-date curriculum vitae / resume.
2. Letter to WSAVA members which outlines why they are interested in the role, how they meet the roles requirements, and if there are any desired knowledge, skills, or experience, how they meet those.
3. Letter of support from their member association.
4. Conflict of interest declaration.

Nominees are strongly encouraged to record a short video message outlining the content of their letter to members. This will be published on the WSAVA website along with the documents supporting their nomination.

All nominations will be reviewed by the WSAVA Membership and Nomination Committee. Incomplete nominations will not be considered. Nominations that meet the required criteria will be put forward for election. Election will take place at the WSAVA General Assembly, which coincides with that years WSAVA Congress. The WSAVA General Assembly decide who is elected.

It is possible that a nomination may meet the required criteria but be found to have an actual or perceived conflict of interest. If this is the case the nomination will be put forward for election, with an accompanying statement from the Membership and Nomination Committee. The General Assembly will make the ultimate decision.

### **Responsibilities of Individual Executive Board & Officer Roles**

In addition to the responsibilities already outlined herein, the following EB and Officer roles have additional responsibilities: [President](#), [President-Elect](#), [Treasurer](#), Past President, and [Executive Director](#). Candidates wishing to hold these roles may also require specific skills, knowledge, and experience. Further information may be found the relevant role description document. The WSAVA Officer group meet monthly ahead of the monthly Executive Board meeting for the purposes of discussing operational matters which do not require whole board discussion. It is important to note that while individual EB members have distinct board member responsibilities, they do not have any power or authority on their own. WSAVA's EB influence comes only from the collective board.

### **Current Executive Board**

The following is correct up to September 2024. Clicking on the relevant EB members name will allow you to email them directly.

Name	Headshot	EB Role	Voting (Y/N)	Term of Current Position Ends <sup>12</sup>	Full Years on EB <sup>13</sup>	Location
<u>Jim Berry</u>		President	Y	October 2026 – will become President-Elect from then on.	5	Canada
<u>Ellen van Nierop</u>		Immediate Past President	N	October 2025	11	Ecuador
<u>Jerzy Gawor</u>		President-Elect	Y	October 2025 – will become President from then on.	3	Poland
<u>Oscar Umana</u>		Treasurer	Y	October 2025 – eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	3	Costa Rica
<u>Nalinika Obeyesekere</u>		Board Member for Asia	Y	September 2026 – eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	4	Sri Lanka

<sup>12</sup> Please note, whilst September is listed the actual month is dependent on when the WSAVA Congress takes place which may be in September or October of any given year.

<sup>13</sup> Rounded to nearest full year.

<u>Natasha Lee</u>		Board Member for Asia	Y	September 2026– eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	1	Malaysia
<u>Veronica Leibaschoff</u>		Board Member for Latin America and Caribbean	Y	September 2026– eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	1	Argentina
<u>Roula Shaaban</u>		Board Member for Middle East and North Africa	Y	September 2026– eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	1	United Arab Emirates
<u>Julie Stafford</u>		Board Member for Australasia, Europe and North America	Y	September 2026– eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	1	USA
<u>Derick Chibeu</u>		Board Member for Sub-Saharan Africa	Y	September 2026– eligible to stand for re-election to one further term of two years	1	Kenya
<u>Felisbina Queirgoa</u>		Board Member for Australasia, Europe and North America	Y	August 2025 – term will conclude in October 2026 and not eligible to stand for re-election for Ordinary Board Member	5	Portugal

## Secretariat

The WSAVA Secretariat is responsible for the day to day running of WSAVA. It works closely with the Executive Board and Committees to implement the WSAVA's strategic plan. Members of the Secretariat are paid for their time and have defined roles and responsibilities. Having paid team members located in many different countries will naturally present many unique human resource challenges. To minimise these challenges WSAVA has contracted an association management company, Kenes Association Management, to recruit and contract the WSAVA Secretariat. Whilst the WSAVA's Secretariat are contracted to Kenes Association Management, they work solely for WSAVA and solely under the direction of the Executive Board. The WSAVA Secretariat is made up of the following roles and responsibilities.

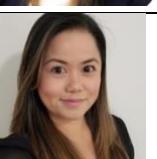
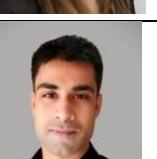
Role	Purpose	What Can They Help With?
<i>Executive Director</i>	Overseeing the day-to-day running of WSAVA and implementing the strategic plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sponsor relations.</li><li>• Complaints</li><li>• New opportunities / projects</li><li>• WSAVA policies / process</li><li>• Risk management.</li><li>• Budgets</li></ul>
<i>Chief Community officer</i>	Supporting and developing WSAVA members, committees, and partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work plans.</li><li>• Project support</li><li>• Member outreach</li><li>• Recruiting volunteers</li><li>• Travel</li><li>• Meeting &amp; events</li><li>• General Assembly</li></ul>
<i>Chief Learning &amp; Development Officer</i>	Oversee all WSAVA learning & development activity, including the congress programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Congress programme development</li><li>• Learning &amp; development initiatives</li><li>• Developing new guidelines / standards</li></ul>

<i>Chief Communications officer</i>	Ensure WSAVA becomes better known, understood, and loved by the global veterinary community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website updates</li> <li>• Social media activity</li> <li>• Webinars</li> <li>• Digital design</li> <li>• Communications planning</li> </ul>
<i>Chief Partnerships Officer</i>	Overseeing and developing all partnership and sponsorship relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship Management</li> <li>• Industry Insight</li> <li>• Sponsor Updates</li> </ul>
<i>Finance Officer</i>	Ensure WSAVA accounts are kept up to date, including payments to / from WSAVA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reimbursement of expenses</li> <li>• Paying invoices</li> <li>• Raising invoices</li> </ul>

### Contact Details

An [online form](#) is available for general enquiries. Once submitted your enquiry will be automatically directed to the relevant team member. Alternatively, you can always email [admin@wsava.org](mailto:admin@wsava.org) and it will be routed to the best person to help you.

Richard Casey		Executive Director	United Kingdom	<a href="mailto:richard.casey@wsava.org">richard.casey@wsava.org</a>
Liat Geller		Global Operations Manager	Israel	<a href="mailto:liat.geller@wsava.org">liat.geller@wsava.org</a>

Debbie Gray		Chief Learning & Development Officer	United Kingdom	<a href="mailto:debbie.gray@wsava.org">debbie.gray@wsava.org</a>
Cecilia Westerdahl		Digital Content Manager	Argentina	<a href="mailto:cecilia.westerdahl@wsava.org">cecilia.westerdahl@wsava.org</a>
Joyce Dao		Finance Officer	Canada	<a href="mailto:finance@wsava.org">finance@wsava.org</a>
Barun Mohanty		Education & Support Administrator	India	<a href="mailto:barun.mohanty@wsava.org">barun.mohanty@wsava.org</a>
Lolita Bizune		Chief Partnerships Officer	Spain	<a href="mailto:lolita.bizune@wsava.org">lolita.bizune@wsava.org</a>

## Volunteering

Volunteers are an essential part of how WSAVA delivers on its mission. WSAVA is committed to involving a diverse range of people in our work through both formal volunteering and other forms of community activity. We do this because we believe that:

1. Volunteers, in their diversity of age, experience, cultural background and their involvement within communities, bring to our work a value which adds to our understanding of, and response to, the needs of the companion animal veterinary community.
2. Through the involvement of volunteers, WSAVA contributes to the building and support of active and sustainable veterinary communities based on equality, professionalism, integrity, and a commitment to advancing companion animal health and welfare.
3. The development and support of active community networks and the individuals within them is vital to the advance of WSAVA's mission.
4. We work more effectively with and on behalf of the companion animal veterinary community by providing opportunities for people to use their skills, knowledge, and experience through volunteering.
5. People of all ages care about and want the opportunity to contribute to making companion animal veterinary practice a fulfilling and enjoyable experience for everyone.
6. By involving volunteers, we can offer opportunities for genuine involvement, learning and development for individuals.
7. Without the contribution of volunteers, we would only be able to achieve a small percentage of our work for companion animal health and welfare.

WSAVA believe that our relationship with volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment. We aim to ensure that volunteers enjoy their involvement with us and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives. WSAVA will always endeavour to devote sufficient resources and support to all volunteers in their role.

A volunteer is anyone who freely chooses to support WSAVA through the giving of their time, skills, and experience without financial remuneration beyond out-of-pocket expenses. Volunteering at WSAVA may be both short- and long-term. Examples of volunteer roles include, but are not limited to:

- All Executive Board Members including the WSAVA President.
- Committee Chair's
- Committee Members
- Member Association Representatives to WSAVA
- Congress Volunteers.

### **Reward & Recognition**

In recognition of their contribution, all WSAVA volunteers receive complimentary registration to the WSAVA Congress, regardless of whether their committee is holding a meeting at the Congress. This includes those registered on the WSAVA Key Opinion Leader database. In addition, all WSAVA volunteers receive a Certificate of Service when their volunteer service concludes.

## Committees

### Types of Committees

The WSAVA has a variety of committees. Each have their own defined purpose, remit, and decision-making powers. Some are established for defined periods of time and others are permanent.

**Standing Committees:** A standing committee is a permanent committee made up of a small number of members. These committees analyse and give opinions on matters in a specific area of WSAVA, such as, for example, finance and membership. These committees are often enshrined in the WSAVA bylaws due to their significant contribution to WSAVA governance. Often, standing committees do not make decisions on WSAVA matters but they will make recommendations to the Executive Board. Currently, the WSAVA consists of the following sub-committees. Those with an \* are in development and expected to be launched in late 2024.

- Membership & Nomination Standing Committee
- Finance Advisory Standing Committee
- Learning & Development Standing Committee\*
- Advocacy & Communications Standing Committee\*
- Veterinary Development & Impact Standing Committee\*

**Specialist Committees:** Specialist committees are set up to provide expert opinion on a given area of companion animal veterinary practice. Their members are often key opinion leaders in the committee's area of specialism. This type of committee will often be established to develop WSAVA Global Guidelines. Once their guidelines are published, the Committee may continue and develop a variety of tools and resources within their area of specialism, or the committee may disband. Given that specialist committees are composed of experts in that field, the majority or consensus opinion of the committee will normally form the WSAVA's position on that subject. Currently, the WSAVA has the following specialist committees.

- Animal Welfare
- Dental
- Hereditary Disease
- Nutrition
- One Health
- Oncology
- Pain
- Professional Wellness
- Reproduction Control
- Therapeutics
- Vaccination

**Project Groups:** Project Groups are established for a specific purpose and will have clearly defined objectives. Once their work is complete the committee disbands. The members of this type of committee may consist of WSAVA key opinion leaders and / or members of other WSAVA standing or specialist committees. They will often be established for matters that are time sensitive or to define the scope of a particular project. Currently, the following start and finish committees are in development:

- Essential Standards for Companion Animal Veterinary Practices
- Advancing the Veterinarian-Led Team
- Non-Clinical Working Group

**Key Opinion Leader (KOL) Database:** Whilst not a committee as such, the WSAVA KOL database plays a crucial role in the delivery of WSAVA's mission. The database consists of KOL's on a large selection of subjects specific to companion animal veterinary practice. WSAVA KOL's will often be the first to be invited to participate as speakers in the WSAVA Congress, and to join start and finish committees. Joining the KOL database follows the same policy and process as the Nomination and Selection Process for Committees. The KOL database is currently in development and expected to launch in early-2025.

#### **Roles on a Committee**

Officially, the only formally defined roles on a committee are Chair and Committee Members. However, many committees find benefit in having other defined roles. This is often the case in standing committees and well-established specialist committees, where the Chairperson may wish to delegate some of their responsibilities to another Committee Member. When this does happen, role titles used have included: Vice Chair, Secretary, etcetera.

A Vice Chair will often deputise for the Chair and the role can be a good opportunity for the role holder to gain experience and confidence for when a chairperson role becomes vacant. A Secretary may take on the task of scheduling meetings and taking minutes. It is important to note that the presence of a Vice Chair, Secretary, or other defined role in a committee does not remove accountability for the tasks delegated to them from the Chair.

#### **Tenure of Committee Members**

The tenure of committee members shall be three years with the ability to renew once for a second 3-year term (maximum of 6-years). A second term is approved by the committee via secret ballot. In the case of new committee formation, member tenures must be staggered to ensure that all members do not stand down from the committee at the same time. Terms must not be longer than 3-years, with the ability to renew once as per above. The tenure of Committee Chair's is a maximum of 3-years. Volunteers shall sit on no more than two committees at any one time. However, if there is need for specialized knowledge, volunteers may sit on a third or more committee in a temporary capacity.

### Decision Making

No one committee member including the Chairperson may decide on a matter without first consulting with the whole committee. Committee decisions are made based on a majority vote. In cases where there are an equal number of votes then the Chairperson casts the deciding vote. The only exception to decisions by vote is committee expenses, which are approved by the Chairperson as it is they who act as budget holder for the committee.

### Committee Support

The Secretariat is the first point of contact for all matters relating to support and guidance for committee members. The [online enquiry form](#) can be used, and your question automatically routed to the relevant team member, or you can email [admin@wsava.org](mailto:admin@wsava.org). In most cases, WSAVA's [Operations Manager](#) will be your day-to-day contact. If they are not able to resolve your query on first contact, they will take responsibility for researching the matter and reporting back to you. They are also available to assist you with the planning of any committee activities and projects, particularly if the work involves input from experts outside of the committee, and/or organising events and meetings.

In addition, every standing committee will include at least one member from the Executive Board (EB), who participate in a non-voting capacity. They provide advice and guidance on the overall strategic direction of WSAVA. Secretariat members of committees may or may not hold voting rights. When they do not this will be clearly defined in the committee terms of reference.

### Committee Meetings

Committees should aim to meet regularly via video call and at minimum, at least once every three months. If committees need to meet in person, then WSAVA Congress is the preferred venue. In order to justify travel expenditure, all in person meetings should have an agenda lasting for at least one full day and be focussed on tangible outcomes which contribute to the committees aim and objectives.

### Chairperson Role Description

**What the role involves:** Chairpersons of WSAVA committees play a critical role in the success of their committee and of the WSAVA. As a chairperson you will be responsible for the following types of tasks:

- Chairing and leading regular meetings to discuss the running of the group and making sure decisions are made collectively.
- Ensuring the committee has identified medium- to long-term goals related to their area of focus and have a plan for the positive impact they intend to have on the WSAVA community.
- Work with the WSAVA Secretariat and Membership & Nomination Committee to recruit, induct and support volunteers in the committee.

- Manage any performance matters which may arise within the committee.
- Keeping the WSAVA Secretariat informed of the group's activities, such as contributing to the production of WSAVA's mid-year and annual reports.
- Submitting budget proposals for the committee's work.
- Making sure the committee reflects WSAVA's values and all committee work is in line with WSAVA policy and process.
- Provide updates on the committee's work to relevant sponsors.
- Attending the WSAVA World Congress and General Assembly, and other relevant internal/external events to act as ambassador for the work of your committee.
- Participate in WSAVA's Expanded Leadership Circle, which meets the day before the General Assembly at World Congress, and occasional online meetings up to twice a year.

**Who this role might suit:**

- You should have an interest in the subject that the committee specializes in.
- Due to the chairperson's focus being to ensure the committee is planned, organized, and led effectively, it is not essential that you are an expert in the subject, but it would be beneficial.
- You will be experienced in taking the lead in personal or professional settings and be comfortable with developing project plans and budgets.
- Someone who enjoys managing small groups of people in the pursuit of producing tangible products and services for the veterinary community.
- You need to be a great communicator and have good organizational and IT skills.
- It would be very helpful if you were experienced and comfortable chairing online meetings as most of the committees' work will be done online.
- You should be good at motivating people, allowing them to have a say, and encouraging them to voice their opinions.
- Experience of organisation governance practices is valuable but not essential.

**What the role can offer you personally:**

- As a chairperson you will play a significant role in supporting and developing not just the volunteers in your committee, but also raising awareness of your committee's focus amongst the global veterinary community.
- The role provides an opportunity to engage with the global veterinary community, meet new people and to lead and develop a vibrant and engaging committee.
- It also offers you a chance to gain and develop professional skills and increase your reputation and employability by volunteering with a well-respected global non-profit association.
- Many of our committee chairs say that they feel like they are making a difference and giving something back to the global veterinary community.

**Training for this role:** We provide all our committee chairs with training, so they feel confident in the role. Mandatory training for this role includes the WSAVA volunteer induction<sup>14</sup>.

**Remuneration for this role:** All WSAVA committee members including the chairperson are volunteers. However, reasonable expenses occurred whilst carrying out WSAVA duties will be reimbursed, in accordance with our travel and expenses policy.

**Time commitment:** The tenure of committee chairpersons is a maximum of three years. The average time required each month will be dependent on the committees' activities, which may be more or less at certain periods of the year, or at times when the committee is actively working on project(s). Most committees will meet for one hour a month, in a virtual format. Committees may have one, sometimes two, face to face meetings per year. On average, you can expect to provide up to four hours of time to the role each month.

#### **Recruiting New Committee Members**

This policy and process has been produced to ensure the nomination and selection of volunteers for WSAVA committees to be open, transparent, and standardized. All positions on WSAVA committees are to be open nominations as per the protocols set out below. This should enable a greater diversity of volunteers to be canvassed for positions on committees. Please note, the term committee is used throughout this document and is an umbrella term for all types of committees, except for the Executive Board.<sup>15</sup>

**Nomination Criteria:** All nominees must be a member of a WSAVA member association unless there are special circumstances. For example, specialty committees where members are expertise based and may not necessarily be veterinarians or members of a WSAVA member association (nominees for committees such as finance and communications may be two such examples).

**Role Descriptions:** Any role at WSAVA must have a role description which summarises its purpose, responsibilities, essential and desirable criteria, and an estimate of the amount time commitment required (in hours per week / month). It is the responsibility of the committee chair to draft such job descriptions, with the support of the WSAVA secretariat. Role descriptions will be reviewed and approved by the Membership and Nomination Committee (MNC). The MNC do these checks to ensure consistency across WSAVA.

**Call for Nomination Process:** Once a role description has been reviewed and approved by the MNC it will be passed to the Secretariat who will publish a call for nominations on WSAVA communication channels. Nominations will remain open for a minimum of forty-five (45) days with the official closing date stated in the call. In some circumstances it may be necessary to

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<sup>14</sup> Launching late 2024

<sup>15</sup> Recruitment for members of the EB follows a similar nomination process with some additional requirements. See the [Executive Board Terms of Reference](#) for further information.

have an open-ended call for nominations. For example, in cases where a role may require specialty skills that are uncommon. When this is the case, the call will clearly state that this is an open-ended call, and it may close at short notice. All nominees will be asked to provide:

1. Up to date curriculum vitae / resume.
2. Letter outlining the reasons why they wish to be appointed and how they believe they meet the required criteria.
3. Declaration of any conflicts of interest.
4. Letter of good standing from the WSAVA member association they are a member of.

Once the closing date has passed the Secretariat will forward all nominations to the MNC who will check the nominations for completeness and provide comments for the recruiting Chair to consider. Incomplete nominations will not be considered and will not be passed to the recruiting Chair.

**Candidate Selection:** It is the recruiting Chair who is responsible for reviewing the nominees against the required criteria. A scoring system should be followed, and a template is available from the Secretariat. A scoring system is intended to minimize conscious and unconscious biases and ensure fairness. The Chair should ensure the opinion of their committee members is sought. In the event of two nominees having equal scoring the Chair may wish to conduct an interview. All candidates must be asked the same questions and a scoring system followed.

Once the recruiting chair has completed the review process, they will send a summary of their nominee scores, their preferred nominee and why to the Operations Manager. The Operations Manager will ensure the information provided is added to the upcoming Executive Board meeting agenda for them to ratify the decision. If approved, the Operations Manager will inform the candidates and introduce the successful candidate to the Chairperson. When informing the successful candidate, the Operations Manager will provide them with the WSAVA Policy & Process Manual to review. The Chairperson should then arrange an introductory meeting.

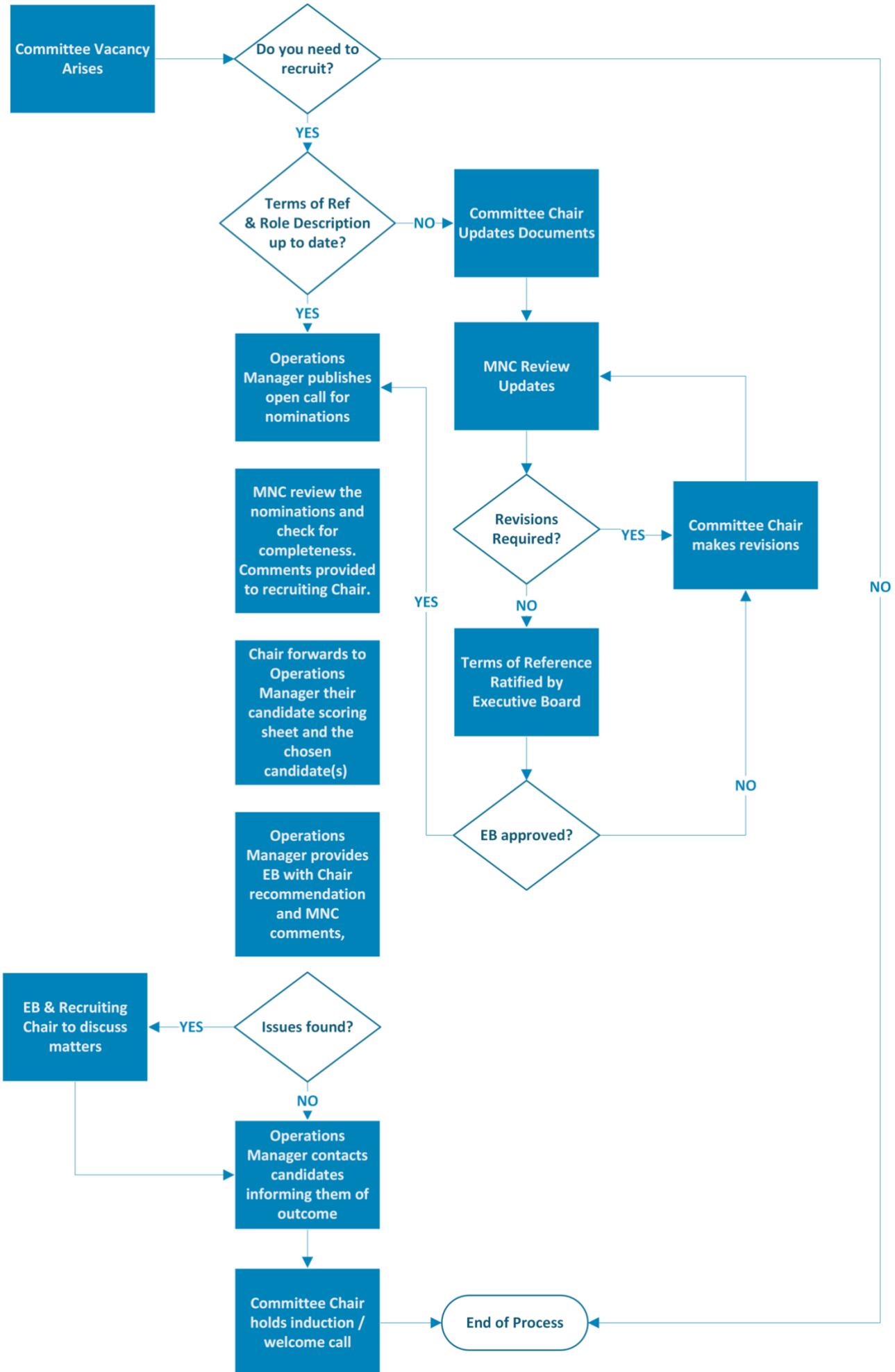
**Candidate Selection for Committee Chair Vacancies:** Due to the significant leadership role Committee Chairs have on the direction of WSAVA policy and volunteer experience, Committee Chair vacancies will follow an open call for nominations. Committee Chair nominees will also be invited to attend a short interview. The interview will be conducted at minimum by one (1) member of the MNC and one (1) member from the recruiting committee. If there is not a member of the recruiting committee who feels comfortable participating in the interview process, the interview may be conducted by two (2) members of the MNC or with support from the Executive Board or Secretariat. A set of standard competency-based questions for Committee Chairs will be asked, and a scoring system used. The highest scoring candidate will be appointed.

**Nomination Process and Candidate Selection for MNC:** In the case of vacancies that arise in the MNC, the Executive Board will take on the role normally filled by the MNC.

**New Committees:** See the policy and process on the establishment of new committees for further information.

**Executive Board Nomination & Selection:** See the [Executive Board Terms of Reference](#) for further information on the nomination and selection process Executive Board members.

**Selection Disagreements and Complaints:** If disagreements arise during the nomination and selection process, or there is a complaint received following the process conclusion, the Secretariat may provide informal advice and guidance. If the matter is not resolved, the WSAVA's [Complaints and Dispute Resolution Process](#) should be followed.



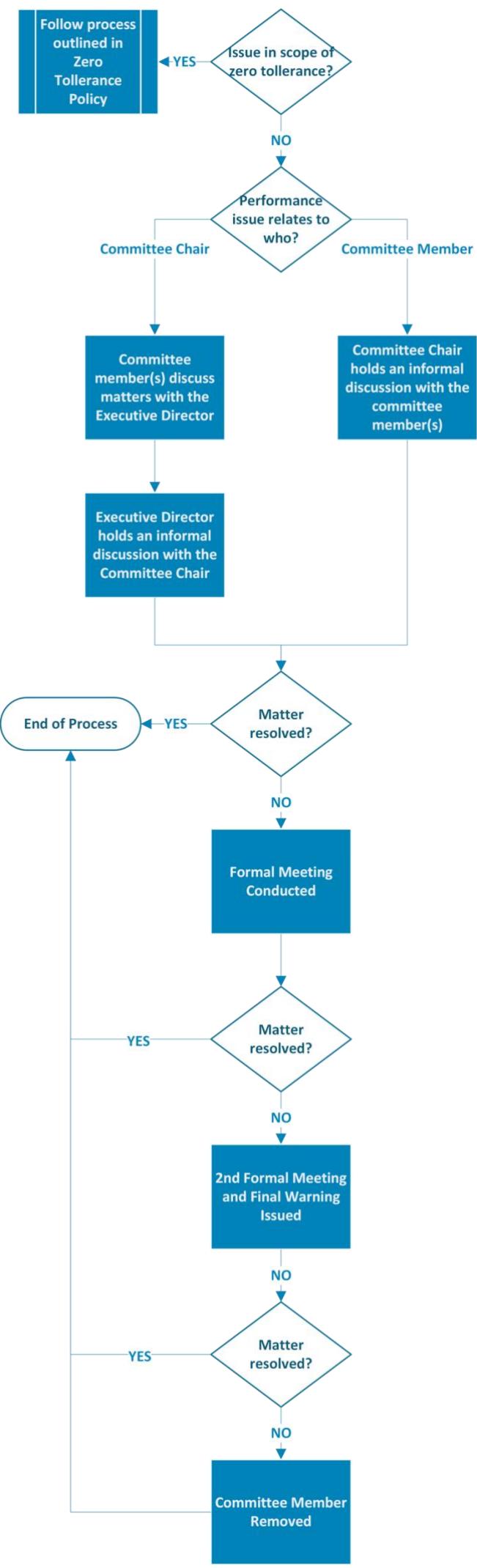
### **Establishing a New Committee**

It is the responsibility of the Veterinary Development & Impact Committee to monitor the external landscape and identify emerging trends or issues. They will review such matters and make recommendations to the Executive Board on whether a new committee should be established. WSAVA stakeholders, whether member associations, individual members of member associations, or other interested parties, may submit proposals to the Veterinary Development & Impact Committee, which will be considered. Any party wishing to submit a proposal can do so [online](#). They are encouraged to include as much data as possible on the subject, with particular emphasis on the relevance of the topic to the global companion animal veterinary community.

### **Managing Performance and Issues**

From time to time, it is possible that a committee member may not be performing their duties as expected. Examples, of this may include but are not limited to, not attending meetings, not contributing to discussion(s), providing late feedback or no feedback at all to committee documents or email discussions, rude or unprofessional conduct, failing to call regular meeting(s), and failure to adhere to the WSAVA Code of Ethics. When these incidents do occur and particularly when they form a pattern, they must be managed so to avoid further impact on the committee. It is the Committee's Chair's responsibility for managing the performance of committee members with the support of the Secretariat. In the case of underperformance of Committee Chairs, committee members can report the matter in confidence, to the [Executive Director](#).

In the first instance, issues will ideally be dealt with informally, such as a short meeting to highlight the concerns and ask if there is anything contributing to these concerns and is WSAVA able to offer any support. There is no need to document this meeting but if chosen to, doing so via email is sufficient. If the matter is not resolved via an informal discussion, a formal meeting should be held. During this meeting the concerns and their impact should be clearly highlighted, along with the expected change and by when. It should be discussed whether the individual requires any support from WSAVA. This formal discussion should be recorded on a WSAVA letterhead and emailed to the recipient. If the issues continue to occur, a final written warning can be given. If the issues continue after a final written warning, the individual can be removed from the committee. Any removal of a committee member should not be agreed until the matter has been discussed with the [Executive Director](#). For the avoidance of doubt, the Committee Chair is authorised to make the final decision on the removal of a Committee Member, providing the above process has been followed.



### Disbanding Committees

With advancements in science and technology, the breadth and depth of subjects that WSAVA could have a committee to focus on is ever increasing. As such and so that WSAVA remains relevant and economically sustainable, committees will be periodically reviewed by the Veterinary Development & Impact Committee. Recommendations will be made to the Executive Board. Recommendations may include but are not limited to:

1. A committee review and update their Global Guideline as several years have passed since their publication.
2. A committee be retained for a set number of years whilst existing projects or activities are completed. For example, activities associated with the post-publication of a Global Guideline.
3. A committee be disbanded.

Please note, the members of any committee that is disbanded will automatically be invited to join the WSAVA Key Opinion Leader Database.

### Template for Committee Terms of Reference

The following template should be used for drafting terms of reference for committees and project groups. All terms of reference whether new or updated must be reviewed by the Membership and Nomination Committee and approved by the Executive Board.

<b>Committee Name</b>	<i>All WSAVA committees use the following naming convention: 'SPECIALISM' followed by Committee or Project Group.</i>
<b>Purpose / Aim</b>	<i>Here, state the overall long-term goal of the committee. Tip: it should be simple, use clear and easy to understand language, and be motivational.</i>
<b>Objectives</b>	<i>Here, it should be outlined what the committee or project group intend to deliver. As much as is possible, objectives should be clear and tangible.</i>
<b>Membership</b>	<i>If there are specific knowledge, skills, or behaviours required on the committee, these should be clearly stated here. If regional representation is required, this should also be stated.</i>
<b>Meeting Arrangements</b>	<i>If there is a regular meeting schedule this should be stated here. For example, the committee will meet monthly for one hour via video call.</i>
<b>Other</b>	All WSAVA committee and project group members agree to abide by the policies and processes set out within the WSAVA Policy and Process Manual.

## Member Association Policy and Process

Supporting Documents	This section should be read in conjunction with the WSAVA bylaws on Membership.
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This policy outlines the eligibility criteria, obligations, rights, and procedural requirements for veterinary associations seeking or holding membership with WSAVA. It supports a consistent and transparent approach to WSAVA membership and is designed to ensure alignment with WSAVA's mission of advancing the health and welfare of companion animals worldwide through an educated, committed, and collaborative global veterinary community.

This policy reflects the provisions set out in the WSAVA Bylaws. In all cases, the WSAVA Bylaws take precedence over this policy. To aid with readability and clarity, the relevant Bylaws have not been repeated in full, but instead, reference is made to the applicable Bylaw or other supporting WSAVA policies where appropriate.

### **Categories of WSAVA Membership**

WSAVA offers two categories of membership: Voting and Non-Voting. These are defined in Bylaw 5. Further details on the rights, obligations, and eligibility criteria for each membership type are provided in the WSAVA Bylaws and this policy.

#### ***Voting Members:***

Voting members are entitled to vote in the WSAVA General Assembly, in accordance with the provisions set out in the WSAVA Bylaws. There are three types of voting membership:

**General Membership:** General Membership in WSAVA shall be limited to formally established veterinary associations concerned with the medicine and surgery of companion animals.

**Associate Membership:** Associate Membership in WSAVA is available to formally established veterinary associations that can satisfy the general assembly that its financial resources and/or technical abilities to thrive as an association are limited.

**Affiliate Membership:** Affiliate Membership in WSAVA is open to formally established specialty veterinary associations, veterinary student associations and non-veterinarian team member associations.

#### ***Non-Voting Members:***

There is one type of non-voting membership: Adjunct Membership. This type of membership is for associations that face significant barriers that prevent them from

obtaining General Membership. Further details on the criteria for Adjunct Membership are provided below.

#### **Membership Eligibility Criteria for all Membership Categories**

To qualify for WSAVA membership, a veterinary association must meet the following criteria:

1. **Legal Status and Non-Profit Nature:** Be a legally constituted membership association, non-profit in nature. Associations must have been formally established in their country of registration for a minimum of one year.
2. **Purpose and Alignment:** Be primarily focused on advancing veterinary practice, education, and/or animal welfare in the field of companion animal veterinary practice or be able to demonstrate clear alignment with this purpose.
3. **Governance and Structure:** Have a formal constitution or bylaws and an established governance structure, such as an executive committee or board, that reflects the association's accountability and leadership.
4. **Membership Base:** Have a minimum of 50 members. For associations applying for General, Associate, or Adjunct membership, the association must represent a defined membership base of veterinarians, of which at least 50% of their membership practices companion animal medicine. If the association does not have 50 members, their membership must represent at least 10% of veterinarians in the country practicing companion animal medicine.
5. **Strategic Direction:** Have clearly defined objectives and goals that guide the association's work and its contribution to the veterinary profession.
6. **Member Communication:** Maintain effective communication channels with its members, ensuring timely dissemination of information and opportunities for engagement.
7. **Activity and Reporting:** Be able to demonstrate evidence of ongoing activity, including an annual programme of work, and provide a report outlining key activities undertaken during the previous 12 months.
8. **Commitment to WSAVA:** Demonstrate a commitment to the mission, values, and strategic objectives of WSAVA, and agree to comply with WSAVA's Bylaws, policies, and membership obligations as outlined in this policy, bylaws and the WSAVA Policy and Process Manual.

#### **Additional Criteria for Associate Membership**

Associate Membership is available to veterinary associations that do not meet the requirements for General Membership but are aligned with WSAVA's purpose and

demonstrate a willingness to engage. This membership category is designed to recognise and support associations that may:

1. Be in the early stages of establishment or association development.
2. Have a small or emerging membership base.
3. Operate in regions with limited access to resources or where companion animal veterinary infrastructure is still developing.
4. Face political, economic, or regulatory barriers that limit their ability to grow or function at full capacity.
5. Be actively working to build internal capacity and strengthen their role within the national or regional veterinary community.

When applying for Associate Membership, in addition to the criteria in section 3.3, associations must clearly explain why they are unable to apply for General Membership. This may include details of structural, contextual, or capacity-related challenges that currently limit them. Associate Membership offers a pathway for growth and inclusion. WSAVA encourages such associations to progress toward General Membership over time, as outlined in the WSAVA bylaws, with access to guidance and support from WSAVA.

#### **Additional Criteria for Adjunct Membership**

Adjunct Membership is a non-voting membership category reserved for associations that, despite sustained effort and engagement, are unable to meet the criteria for General Membership due to significant and ongoing limitations. Adjunct Membership may apply in the following circumstances.

**Post-Associate Membership Transition:** Associations that have completed one or two terms as Associate Members and remain unable to progress to General Membership may apply for Adjunct Membership. In doing so, they must provide a clear and detailed explanation of the enduring circumstances, such as political, economic, geographic, or regulatory constraints, that prevent them from fulfilling the General membership criteria.

**Direct Application to Adjunct Membership:** New associations may apply directly for Adjunct Membership if they can demonstrate that beginning as an Associate Member is not suitable or that, even with support, they do not expect to be able to progress to General Membership after a period as Associate Members. These applications must include a rationale explaining why the pathway through Associate Membership is not appropriate, alongside evidence of alignment with WSAVA's purpose and values.

Adjunct Members are expected to meet all other member obligations and remain actively engaged with WSAVA. While Adjunct Membership recognises that some associations face

long-term limitations, WSAVA remains committed to supporting their participation in the global veterinary community.

### **Applying for WSAVA Membership**

Veterinary associations seeking WSAVA membership must:

1. Complete the official WSAVA Membership Application Form.
2. Provide supporting documentation including:
  - Constitution or bylaws
  - Evidence of legal status or registration
  - Details of leadership structure
  - Membership size and composition
  - Description of association activities and objectives
3. Submit the application to the WSAVA Secretariat for initial review.
4. Undergo assessment by the WSAVA Membership and Nomination Committee, which may request additional information.
5. Be presented for approval at the next General Assembly.

WSAVA reserves the right to request clarification or reject applications where eligibility is not met.

### **Applications Where a National WSAVA Member Already Exists**

WSAVA recognises there may be occasions where membership applications are received from an association based in a country where an association is already a WSAVA member. WSAVA does not consider it appropriate to insist on extensive structural or governance changes within existing member associations as a condition to accommodate potential new member associations. Such changes may require significant time, legal support, and resourcing, which is often not feasible, particularly given that many WSAVA member associations are volunteer-led. Furthermore, there may be situations where bringing a new applicant under the governance of the existing national member is fundamentally unworkable.

In cases where an application for membership is received from an association in a country where there is an existing member association, WSAVA seeks to ensure fairness, transparency, and the continued integrity of its global membership. The following process will be followed:

1. The Membership and Nomination Committee, supported by the Chief Community Officer, will conduct an initial review of the application.
2. The existing national WSAVA member association will be formally consulted and invited to provide feedback on the application.

The applying association must clearly demonstrate:

1. A distinct association focus or constituency not currently represented by the existing member.
2. That it operates in a collaborative and non-conflicting manner with the existing national association or provide reasons why this is not possible.

The Membership and Nomination Committee will assess the application using the criteria outlined in the table below. This framework will guide a consistent and evidence-based evaluation. Once all feedback and relevant information have been received, the Membership and Nomination Committee, with the support of the Chief Community Officer, will prepare a report for the General Assembly. The General Assembly will make the final decision on whether to accept or reject the application. This process ensures that WSAVA's membership structure remains inclusive while also preserving unity, avoiding duplication, and fostering collaboration within national contexts.

### **Criteria For Assessing Membership Applications from a Country where a WSAVA Member Association Exists**

Does the new association meet all other criteria for WSAVA membership?

Does the new association from the same country represent a different region and/or a different language group?

Do the number of veterinarians within the country justify more than one national association?

Members do not overlap or have less than 25% overlap?

There is no channel in place for the new association to be a part of the existing association e.g. legal restrictions, by-law restrictions, capacity of existing association?

There have been requests for affiliation to existing association but were rejected?

The new association has plans to co-operate with existing one?

Existing Member association is OK with this new application?

### **Obligations For All Members**

All WSAVA member associations are expected to:

1. **Formalize Commitment:** Upon acceptance into membership by the General Assembly, the association's official representative must sign a declaration of rights and obligations, confirming their understanding and acceptance of the responsibilities associated with WSAVA membership.

2. **Maintain Good Standing:** Remain in good standing with WSAVA bylaws, policy and process, and ensuring all membership dues are paid.
3. **Participate in the General Assembly:** Participate in the WSAVA General Assembly, either in person (preferred) or virtually when available, and exercise their right to vote through (where applicable).
4. **Nominate a Representative:** Nominate and maintain an official representative to serve as the primary liaison with WSAVA. Any changes to the association's leadership or official representative must be promptly communicated to the WSAVA Chief Community Officer.
5. **Support WSAVA Outreach:** Actively support and promote WSAVA's mission, initiatives, guidelines, and Congress within their country, region, and membership, including forwarding WSAVA communications and resources to their own members.
6. **Engage with WSAVA Communications and Consultations:** Maintain regular and responsive communication with WSAVA, including replying to official correspondence and contributing to WSAVA surveys, consultations, and committee requests.
7. **Uphold Ethical Standards:** Uphold professional and ethical conduct that reflects positively on WSAVA and its global community of veterinary professionals.

#### **Additional Obligations for Associate Members**

In addition to the responsibilities expected of all WSAVA member associations, Associate Members are required to meet the following obligations during their term:

1. **Engage in Association Development:** Each Associate Member is required to complete the WSAVA Certificate in Veterinary Business Development, which is provided free of charge. This programme is designed to support the development of core leadership and management capabilities within emerging associations.
2. **Make Use of WSAVA Support Structures:** Associate Members will have access to the WSAVA Chief Community Officer, who can offer tailored advice and guidance on matters relating to association development, capacity building, and strategic planning.
3. **Plan for Progression:** Associate Membership is intended as a developmental pathway. By the end of their term(s) as an Associate Member, associations are expected to either:
  - Transition to General Membership; or
  - Transition to Adjunct Membership, if General Membership remains unfeasible due to ongoing contextual limitations.

WSAVA will support Associate Members in preparing for this transition and reserves the right to review an association's status at the end of the Associate Membership term to determine the most appropriate category moving forward.

## Rights for Member Associations

WSAVA member associations are entitled to the following rights as outlined in the WSAVA Bylaws and Policy and Process Manual:

- Voting Rights:** General, Associate, and Affiliate Members are entitled to vote in the WSAVA General Assembly. The number of votes allocated to each eligible member association is determined in accordance with the WSAVA Bylaws (Bylaw 5.1.2). Adjunct Members do not have voting rights at the General Assembly.
- Participation in the General Assembly:** Participation in the annual WSAVA General Assembly Meeting, either physically (preferred) or virtually when available, including the right to propose agenda items as outlined in WSAVA Bylaw 6.

One complimentary registration to WSAVA Congress is provided to enable the association's Member Representative to attend and participate in the General Assembly. Member associations are expected to support their representatives' attendance and engagement.

- Committee Representation:** The right to propose suitable members of their association for nomination to WSAVA Executive Board, Committees, Working Groups, and Project Teams, as outlined in the WSAVA Policy and Process Manual section on Committees. Associate and Adjunct Members do not qualify for nominating candidates to the Executive Board (Bylaw 5.1.1.c and 5.2).
- Use of WSAVA Branding:** The right to use the WSAVA Member logo following WSAVA brand guidelines, signifying affiliation with the global WSAVA community.
- Member Engagement:** Participation in the WSAVA Members' Forum, surveys, consultations, and other mechanisms of collective engagement.

## Membership Dues

The membership dues payable by member associations depends on their type of membership. These are summarized by the following table and subject to annual review by the Executive Board.

Category	Type	Dues
Voting	General	General Members shall pay an annual membership fee. The membership fee is calculated as the square root of the number of members the membership association has, multiplied by 30, with a multiplier that is compounded on a year-to-year basis to consider inflation. There is a minimum membership fee based on 50 members, as well as a cap on the maximum amount of dues.
	Associate	Associate Members shall pay a membership fee to the start of each term of Associate Membership.

	Affiliate	Affiliate Members shall pay an annual membership fee of USD 750.
Non-Voting	Adjunct	Adjunct Members shall pay an annual membership fee of USD 50.

## Regions

For the purposes of improving communication between WSAVA and Member Associations, Member Associations are divided into five regions. The World Congress rotates between these regions. Member Associations representing global members may choose to join a region where they have much of their membership based, or where their association is registered.

Region	Continent/Countries (in alphabetical order)
1	Asia & Oceania
2	Europe
3	North America
4	Latin America and Caribbean
5	Middle East and Northern Africa
6	Sub-Saharan Africa

## Financial Planning

### Roles & Responsibilities

**Executive Board:** The Executive Board have overall accountability for the WSAVA's finances. They are responsible for ensuring policies, processes, and systems are in place to ensure that WSAVA funds are used sensibly, so that the risk of financial shocks is minimised. The Executive

Board approve the annual and long-term budgets, and the annual audited financial statements.

**Treasurer:** In addition to their collective Executive Board responsibilities, the Treasurer will work with the Executive Director on annual and long-term financial planning, the annual audit by our external and independent auditor, and on making recommendations to the Executive Board on financial matters. The Treasurer sits on the Financial Advisory Committee in a non-voting capacity. The Treasurer is also the final signoff for all payments from WSAVA. See the [Treasurer's role description](#) for further information on their role and responsibilities.

**Finance Advisory Committee:** The Financial Advisory Committee assist the Executive Board in fulfilling their obligations and oversight responsibilities relating to financial planning and financial reporting by advising on these matters. They make recommendations to the Executive Board on relevant financial policies and process, such as the reserves policy and membership dues.

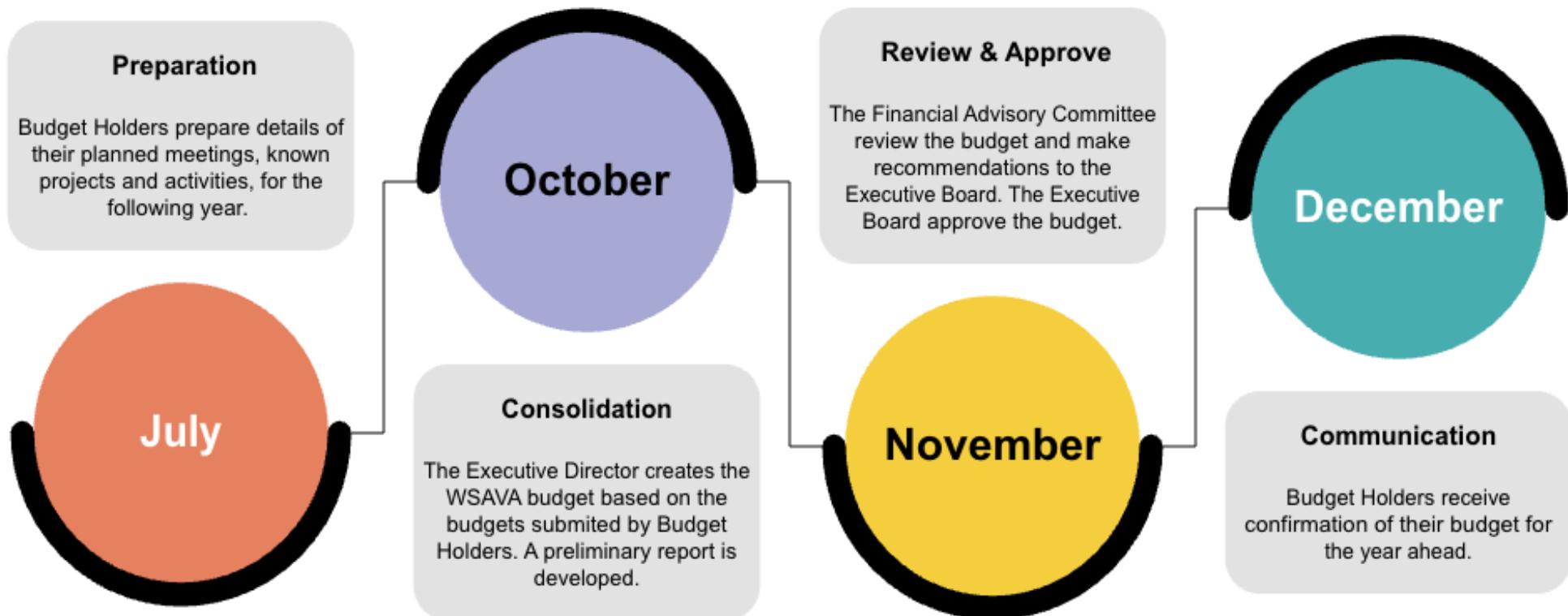
**Executive Director:** The Executive Director is responsible for producing and monitoring the WSAVA's annual and long-term budgets with the support of the Treasurer and input from budget holders. They work with the Finance Officer and Treasurer on the annual audit process and sit on the Finance Advisory Committee to provide operational and continuity knowledge.

**Finance Officer:** The Finance Officer is responsible for maintaining WSAVA's financial accounts, including making and receiving payments, under the supervision of the Executive Director and Treasurer.

**Budget Holders:** There are a variety of budget holders in WSAVA. They are responsible for proposing annual budgets and monitoring performance against the approved budget. Budget holders will be the first stage approver of any expense in their budget.

## Budget Planning

Budget planning is an essential part of management for both commercial and non-profit organisations. WSAVA's financial year runs from January to December. The budget planning timeline is as follows.



### **Budget Planning (continued)**

By the end of July, Budget Holders are expected to submit their proposed activities (including budget) via an [online proposal form](#). At this stage, it is expected that only proposals for known in person meetings, and planned projects or activities that are ready to start, are submitted. When submitting a proposal, only one unique activity or project should be included on the proposal form. Budget Holders can submit another proposal form for other activities. If Budget Holders are not ready to submit budgets by the end of July, then they may submit a proposal for budget at any time throughout the year. This will be considered by the Executive Board monthly, and in line with the budget available in a general fund.

## Reserves

A new WSAVA reserves policy is in development. This section will be updated in late-2024.

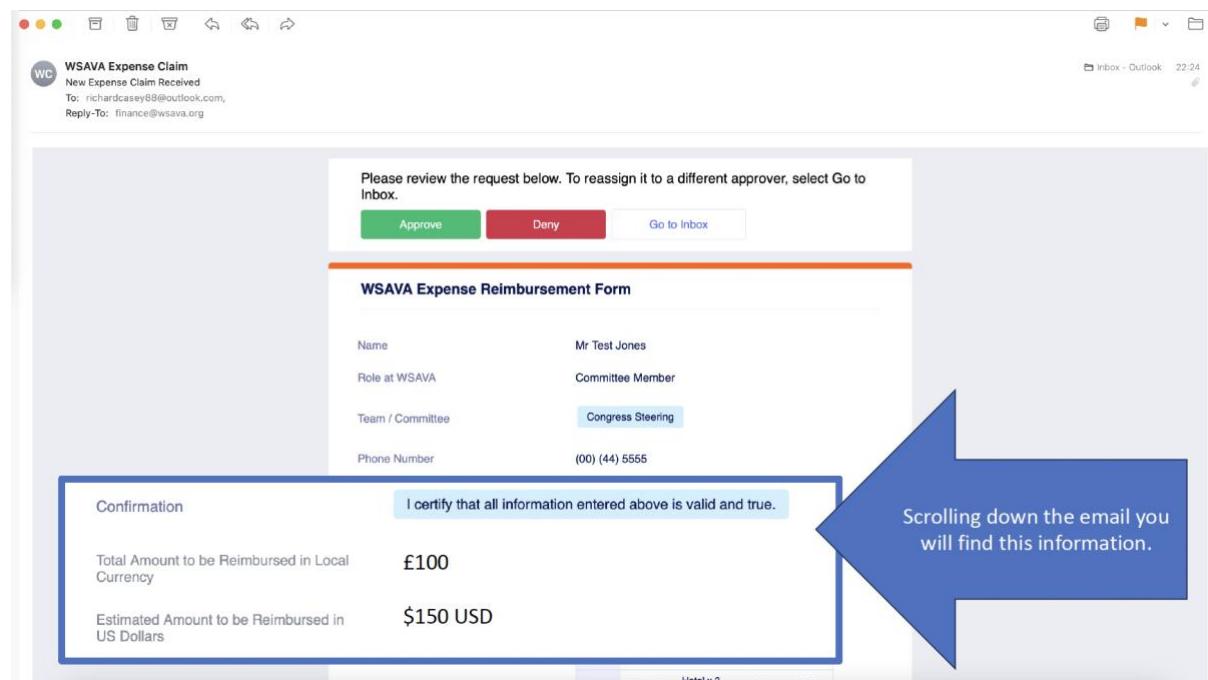
## Expenses Reimbursement & Approval

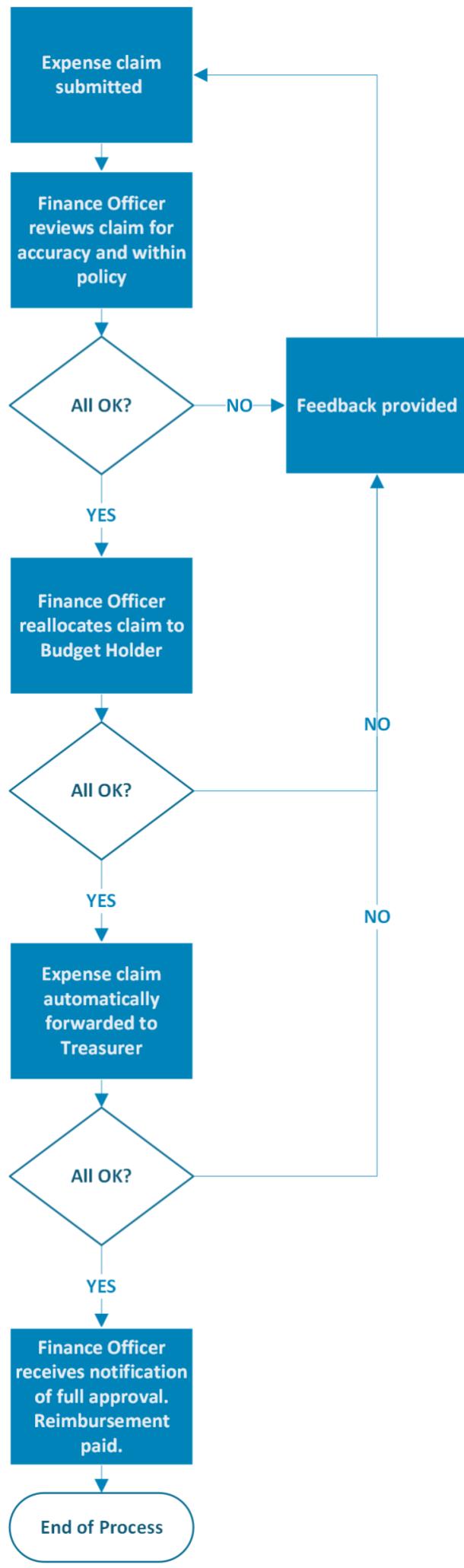
All expense reimbursements and invoices are approved twice. First by the budget holder and second by the treasurer. Budget holders are usually a committee chair, or manager from the Secretariat. WSAVA uses an online and automated form for the submission of expenses which can easily be accessed at [wsava.org/expenses](http://wsava.org/expenses). All expense claims must be accompanied by receipts and be received within thirty (30) days of the expense occurring. The process in full is given on the following page.

### What do Budget Holders receive when asked to approve an expense?

You will receive an email from WSAVA EXPENSE CLAIM. It will look like the example below, and will include a breakdown of who is claiming, what they are claiming, and the total amount in US Dollars.

If you approve the claim, you just need to select the green approve button. If you do not approve the claim, you select the red deny button (it will also allow you to give a reason for declining). The Finance Officer will receive notification of any denied claim. It is expected that the individual denying the claim provide the claimant with feedback.





## Travel Policy

### Introduction

The WSAVA travel and expense policy explains the rules for booking travel and managing expenses. Following our travel policy is important and helpful for everyone, not just the administrative team, but also our travellers. The WSAVA travel policy helps us:

- Keep track of travellers' safety
- Promote fairness in association travel expenses.
- Save time on manual tasks.

Thank you for reading and following our policy. Please direct any questions to [admin@wsava.org](mailto:admin@wsava.org).

### Travel Booking Process

**How To Book Trips:** Before booking travel, you should get your budget holders approval. This should be done in writing (email / instant messaging). The budget holder may be your line manager, Committee Chair, or Executive Board member. WSAVA team members can book their own travel using the [WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform](#)<sup>16</sup>. The WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform includes travel policies and will not allow you to book outside of these policies. If you need approval for a trip outside of the policies, approval can be requested via the platform. Out of policy bookings will be reviewed by the Executive Director.

**Use of Frequent Flyer Programs:** You may save your frequent flyer programs and hotel loyalty information for use inside of the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform, and apply your program numbers at time of booking, but you may not choose more expensive options only to get loyalty points.

**Leisure extensions:** Extending your business trip for personal leisure reasons is allowed so long as:

- The vacation days have been approved by your line manager (paid team members only)
- The leisure extension will not interfere with the purpose of the business trip.

WSAVA will pay for the return flight or travel accordingly, so long as the trip is booked in advance and the dates do not result in an increase in flight or ground transportation cost

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<sup>16</sup> You will be asked to login using the email address you use for WSAVA communications. When you enter your email address you will be sent an authentication code by email. If your email address is not recognised contact [admin@wsava.org](mailto:admin@wsava.org) and you will be registered on the WSAVA Travel Perk account.

of greater than 10%, otherwise you must pay the cost difference. The cost of lodging, food, and other expenses during the designated leisure days are your own responsibility.

**Upgrades:** You cannot book upgrades via the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform. If you wish to upgrade your travel and pay the difference yourself, you must book the economy option via the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform. Once you have received the booking confirmation you can access your booking via the airlines own website and purchase your upgrade directly.

#### **Expense Categories**

You should prioritize the lowest cost that meets your travel needs. The WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform should be always used. If this is not possible, please contact [admin@wsava.org](mailto:admin@wsava.org) with an explanation why. Please note, if you find travel options cheaper elsewhere, there is the option to report this to Travel Perk. Select the Concierge option when you have logged in to Travel Perk.

**Dynamic Budget and Upper Limits:** To identify an upper limit for hotel and flight expenses, the WSAVA uses a feature in Travel Perk called dynamic budget. This will allow you to book flights and hotels based on the median market rate for the route or city, plus 10%.

For example, you are travelling to a city where the median rate for a hotel is \$200 USD. Travel Perk will allow you to book a hotel up to \$220. Any option above this would be out of policy and you will not be allowed to book (it will submit the booking to WSAVA leadership for approval). The same principle will apply to flights.

#### **Flights:**

- All team members are required to fly economy for all trips.
- Team members over 177cm in height can purchase extra leg room when available. Extra leg room can also be purchased when the flight is over five hours.
- Flights must be booked at least 30 days in advance.
- Direct flights will always be the preferred choice but where material savings can be made and the flight time not excessively extended, indirect flights should be considered.
- Flight changes and cancellations are paid for by WSAVA when the reason is related to health and safety purposes, or other exceptional cases where the circumstances are unforeseen.
- Where airlines charge for luggage, the following applies. Carry-on luggage may be purchased for domestic trips up to 4 days. Carry on and checked-in luggage may be purchased for trips over 4 days, or when international. Exceptions to this are when the traveller is required to carry with them materials / equipment for WSAVA purposes.

## **Lodging:**

### Hotels

- You must book standard rooms. Room upgrades are allowed if offered on site at no additional cost.
- All lodging should be booked with the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform and at least 30 days in advance.
- Additional hotel costs that can be reimbursed include:
  - WIFI fee
  - Hotel parking
  - Breakfast fee that fits within daily allowance
  - Reasonable staff tips

**Airbnb:** You may book rooms or apartments on Airbnb if the nightly rate is within company policy and/or the price is equivalent to or lower than the cost of a standard room at a 3-star hotel in the same city. You must book Airbnb using the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform. Please do not book with Airbnb directly, or your trip will not be tracked properly. To book Airbnb via Travel Perk, select the Concierge feature when you have logged in to the platform.

**Apartment Rentals (direct):** The cost of temporary apartment rentals varies greatly by city. There are no standard guidelines. The total cost of the apartment rental must be in line with or less than the total cost of the equivalent hotel stays.

## **Ground Transportation:**

Rail Transportation: When booking rail transportation, you must book the most economic class.

Taxis and Ride Sharing: Ride hailing apps such as Uber are the preferred method, but taxis may be reimbursed when Uber is not available.

Rental Cars: When renting vehicles, you must choose economy, compact or mid-size. You may accept an upgrade on site if offered by the rental company at no additional charge. Use a single rental car for up to 4 team members. For rental vehicles, money spent on gas is reimbursable. Please follow expense and reimbursement guidelines below. The car rental should be returned with the amount of gas requested. Sufficient car insurance should be purchased from the rental company, which will be reimbursed by WSAVA.

Use of Personal Car: You are eligible for reimbursement for kilometres driven using your personal vehicle for WSAVA purposes. We reimburse \$0.67USD per kilometre. Please include the total kilometres driven as well as the reimbursement amount on your expense report.

**Travel to / from Airport:** When travelling to / from your home airport the cheapest mode of transport should be used. There will be times when it is acceptable to book a more expensive mode of travel. Such as in the interests of traveller health and safety, or the cheapest mode of travel significantly extends the journey time. Examples may include:

- Using an airport transfer service instead of driving when the return flight to your home airport is over five hours and the onward journey by road is over two hours.
- When you are required to be at the airport between midnight and 6:00am, a hotel for the night before may be booked.

**Meals:** WSAVA will reimburse up to \$100 USD per day for meals. This is inclusive of breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

**Mobile Phone Usage / Data:** The WSAVA will reimburse the cost of a local sim card to use for personal and business contact purposes while away on WSAVA business. The sim card / package purchased should cover the duration of WSAVA business. If you have a mobile phone that is compatible with an eSim it is recommended, you use this type of service as it will allow you to top up your data if needed. Examples of travel eSim providers include Alo Sim.

**Insurance:** WSAVA does not have travel insurance for team members travelling on behalf of the association. As such, all travellers on WSAVA business must acquire adequate travel insurance to meet their needs (such as coverage for any existing health conditions), and that covers the WSAVA activities planned in the trip, prior to travelling on behalf of the WSAVA. Travel insurance costs for the duration of travel on WSAVA business may be reimbursed. Team members who travel routinely for WSAVA may reimburse the cost of an annual travel insurance policy.

**Vaccinations:** Vaccinations and preventive care, such as anti-malarial medications, may be reimbursed if they are required by the country being travelled to, or as a requirement of your home nation.

**Visas and Permits:** If a country that you are travelling to for WSAVA business requires you to have a visa or permit, WSAVA will reimburse the costs. Single-entry visas should be acquired unless there is a business need for a multi-entry visa. Visa assistance companies may be used when there is a justifiable need. For example, when an embassy visit is needed and the passport must be collected at a later date, and the applicant lives a considerable distance from the embassy.

#### **Non-Reimbursable Purchases**

- In-flight purchases
- Excess baggage fees (unless the reason for excess baggage is WSAVA related)

- Childcare, pet care and pet boarding
- Toiletries or clothing
- Airline club memberships
- Minibar purchases or bar bills
- Laundry or dry cleaning
- Parking fines or traffic violations
- Airline ticket change fees (unless the reason for the change is related to health, safety, or unforeseen circumstances, or for WSAVA reasons)
- First-class rail transportation
- Premium, Luxury or Elite car rentals
- Movies, online entertainment, or newspapers
- Spa and health club usage
- Flowers, sweets, and confectionary (unless for WSAVA related purposes, such as thank you gifts, condolences, etcetera)
- Room service fees
- Additional beds or bedding
- Loss or theft of goods
- Damage to personal vehicles.
- Expenses related to travel companions.

### **Expense Reporting and Reimbursement Process**

When you book travel via the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform there is no need to submit an expense claim as all costs are invoiced directly to WSAVA. For all other purchases that are reimbursable according to the guidelines laid out in Expense Categories, please use the [WSAVA Online Expense Claim Form](#)<sup>17</sup> to submit your claim. You will be asked for the following information: vendor name, amount, date, description of the purpose of the expense, receipt.

Expense claims must be submitted within 30 days of the expense occurring. You will receive reimbursement by bank transfer within 30 days of submittal. If bank transfer is not possible a cheque may be provided. Any fees imposed by your bank for receiving international payments will be reimbursed by WSAVA (you should include these on your expense claim). If you have questions or need to follow up an existing expense claim contact [finance@wsava.org](mailto:finance@wsava.org).

### **Travel Support and Safety**

**Keeping Track of Our Travellers:** Please use the WSAVA Travel Perk booking platform to book all WSAVA travel, so that we can automatically track where everyone is traveling and act in the event of an emergency.

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<sup>17</sup> You can also access the expense form at [www.wsava.org/expenses](http://www.wsava.org/expenses)

**High-Risk Travel:** WSAVA does not support travel to any country deemed high-risk, such as those classed as war zones. Team members travelling on WSAVA business should consult the advice and guidance of their home government before booking travel. Travel should not be booked if the travellers home nation advises against travel to the destination. In addition, team members are empowered to decline travel to / via a destination if they are uncomfortable with the countries policies and customs. All travellers are expected to obey the laws and customs of the country they are within.

**Support for Emergency Needs:** In the event of an emergency while travelling, after you've received attention from a local emergency service, please inform a member of the WSAVA leadership team. They can be contacted as follows.

- Richard Casey, Executive Director, United Kingdom - +44 74322 21538

### **Alcohol Consumption**

Alcohol use is permitted within reason during company events and business trips.

**Appropriate Drinking Conditions:** Alcohol can be responsibly consumed during client meetings, team events, and company events. Alcohol consumption is discouraged at other times. At work events where alcohol is freely provided, team members are encouraged to drink no more than three alcoholic beverages. Team members under the drinking age in their home country should not drink during work hours or work events in foreign destinations, regardless of the drinking age of that country.

**Reimbursement:** Team members may purchase and expense up to two alcoholic drinks per person when taking a client out for lunch or dinner. WSAVA leadership may purchase and expense up to two alcoholic drinks per person for team lunches and dinners. Alcoholic drinks purchased outside of these limits are the financial responsibility of the team member and cannot be submitted for reimbursement.

**Safe Travel:** After the consumption of alcoholic beverages, team members are not allowed to drive, even if using a personal vehicle. When leaving a work event, team members are encouraged to use a ride-sharing service to travel safely and may expense this amount and submit it for reimbursement.

## Social Media<sup>18</sup>

### Introduction

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images, and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge, and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Social media is essential to the success of communicating WSAVA's work. It is important for some team members to participate in social media to engage with our community, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of WSAVA's work.

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to WSAVA's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all WSAVA team members and applies to content posted on both a WSAVA device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, team members must read this policy. This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of WSAVA, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help team members support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the WSAVA and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

### Point of Contact

Our [Digital Content Manager](#) is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring, and management of our social media channels. Contact them if you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels.

### Channels Used by WSAVA

WSAVA uses the following social media channels:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- X – formerly known as Twitter
- You Tube

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<sup>18</sup> Reproduced from charitycomms.org.uk

## Guidelines

1. The Secretariat and specifically the Digital Content Manager are responsible for setting up and managing all WSAVA's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Executive Director will have access to these accounts.
2. WSAVA will not set up other Facebook groups or pages, X accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of WSAVA Committees. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the WSAVA can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Content must reflect WSAVA's values and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines set out our tone of voice that all team members should refer to when posting content on WSAVA's social media channels.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for WSAVA, and accurately reflects WSAVA's agreed position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help, and engage with them.
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings, or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images. See also the appropriate use of animals in imagery guidelines.
7. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
8. If team members outside of the Secretariat wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the Digital Content Manager about this.
9. WSAVA will not post content about community members without their express permission. If we share information from our community or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from WSAVA. Although very rare, if using content that clearly identifies a child or young person, we must ensure we have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
10. Always check facts. Do not automatically assume that material is accurate and reasonable steps should be taken where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
11. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
12. Team members should refrain from offering personal opinions via WSAVA's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking' or 'sharing'. If you are in doubt about WSAVA's position on a particular issue, please speak to the relevant committee or Executive Director.
13. It is vital that WSAVA does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a poor handling technique or dangerous procedure.

14. WSAVA will not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
15. WSAVA is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.
16. If a complaint is made on WSAVA's social media channels, team members should seek advice from the Executive Director before responding. If they are not available, then team members should speak to the President.
17. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the WSAVA's reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the WSAVA.

The Secretariat regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of WSAVA so we can catch any issues or problems early. If any member of the WSAVA community become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on WSAVA's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Digital Content Manager immediately.

#### **Personal Social Media Accounts**

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. WSAVA's team members are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with WSAVA's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive WSAVA. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of WSAVA. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about WSAVA's work, you should use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent WSAVA's positions, policies or opinions."
2. Team members who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they are involved at WSAVA should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their senior team member, such as their line manager or Committee Chair. Similarly, team members who want to start blogging and wish to say that they are involved with WSAVA should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their senior team member.
3. Those in senior WSAVA roles, and specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing WSAVA's view.
4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with WSAVA and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the public, colleagues, partners, and sponsors.

5. If a team member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to WSAVA, they should first talk to the Digital Content Manager before responding.
6. WSAVA is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing WSAVA, team members are expected to hold WSAVA's position of neutrality. Team members who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from WSAVA and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
7. Always protect yourself and WSAVA. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely.
8. Think about your reputation as well as the WSAVA's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
9. We encourage team members to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage team members to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Digital Content Manager who will respond as appropriate.

#### **Further Guidelines**

**Libel:** Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether team members are posting content on social media as part of their role or in a personal capacity, they should not bring WSAVA into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

**Copyright law:** It is critical that all team members abide by the laws governing copyright. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

**Confidentiality:** Any communications that team members make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that WSAVA is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

**Discrimination & Harassment:** Team members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official WSAVA social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, or belief.
- using social media to bully another individual.
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.

**Protection & Intervention:** The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a team member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Secretariat immediately.

**Young and Vulnerable People:** Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming. It will be extremely rare that WSAVA will communicate with those under the age of 18. However, where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, team members should ensure the online relationship with WSAVA follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship.

Team members should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Team members should also ensure that the choice of social media platform is suitable for the young person and WSAVA's content and other content is appropriate for them.

**Responsibilities & Breach of Policy:** Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of WSAVA is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For team members, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Refer to our Dispute and Complaint Resolution Process for further information on how disciplinary action will be managed. Team members who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the [Digital Content Manager](#).

## Complaint & Dispute Resolution Process

Supporting Documents	The Complaint & Dispute Resolution Process should be read in conjunction with the WSAVA bylaws (section 12).
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### Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that we handle complaints fairly, efficiently, and effectively. This policy provides guidance to our team members and people who wish to make a complaint on the key principles and concepts of our complaint management system.

### Terms and Definitions

**Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about us, our services, team members or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

**Complaint Handling/Management System:** All policies, procedures, practices, team members, hardware and software used by us in the management of complaints.

**Dispute:** An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of our organisation.

**Feedback:** Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly, or implicitly, to or about us, about our services or complaint handling system where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

**Grievance:** A clear, formal written statement by an individual team member about another team member or a work-related problem.

**Policy:** A statement of instruction that sets out how we should fulfil our vision, mission, and goals.

**Procedure:** A statement or instruction that sets out how our policies will be implemented and by whom.

### Guiding Principles

An effective complaint handling system must be modelled on the principles of fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, efficiency, and integration into organisational culture.

**People Focus:** We are committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints about our services, systems, practices, procedures, products, and complaint handling. Any concerns raised in feedback or complaints will be dealt with within a reasonable time frame.

People making complaints will be:

- Provided with information about our complaint handling process and how to access it.
- Listened to, treated with respect by team members and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate, and
- Provided with reasons for our decision/s and any options for redress or review.

**No Detriment to People Making Complaints:** We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

**Anonymous Complaints:** We accept anonymous complaints if there is a compelling reason to do so and will carry out a confidential investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

**Accessibility:** We will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made is well publicised on our website. We will ensure that our systems to manage complaints are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance. If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/ or resolution of their complaint, we will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g. advocate, family member, legal or community representative, another organisation).

**No charge:** Complaining to us is free.

**Early Resolution:** Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with us.

**Responsiveness:** We will acknowledge receipt of complaints within five working days. We will assess and prioritise complaints in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.

We are committed to managing people's expectations, and will inform them as soon as possible, of the following:

- The complaints process.
- The expected time frames for our actions
- The progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay
- Their likely involvement in the process, and
- The possible or likely outcome of their complaint.

We will advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed (if known and appropriate).

We will also advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to meet our time frames for responding to their complaint and the reason for our delay.

**Objectivity and Fairness:** We will address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective, and unbiased manner. We will ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any team member whose conduct or service is being complained about. Conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly. In particular, internal reviews of how a complaint was managed will be conducted by a person other than the original decision maker.

**Responding Flexibly:** Our team members are empowered to resolve complaints promptly and with as little formality as possible. We will adopt flexible approaches to service delivery and problem solving to enhance accessibility for people making complaints and/or their representatives.

We will assess each complaint on its merits and involve people making complaints and/or their representative in the process as far as possible.

**Confidentiality:** We will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate. Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by us as permitted under the relevant privacy laws, secrecy provisions and any relevant confidentiality obligations.

**Complaints Involving Multiple Agencies:** Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, we will work with the other organisation/s where possible, to ensure that communication with the person making a complaint and/or their representative is clear and coordinated.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between the parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint involves multiple areas within our organisation, responsibility for communicating with the person making the complaint and/or their representative will also be coordinated.

Where our services are contracted out, we expect contracted service providers to have an accessible and comprehensive complaint management system. We take complaints not only about the actions of our staff but also the actions of our service providers.

**Empowerment of Team Members:** All team members managing complaints are empowered to implement our complaint management system as relevant to their role and responsibilities.

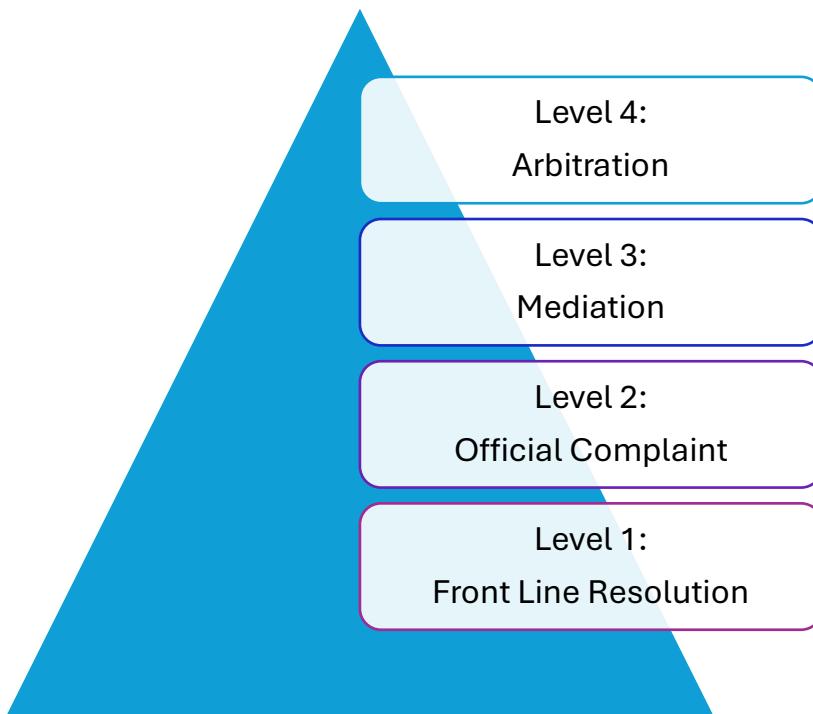
Team members are encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of our complaint management system.

**Managing Unreasonable Conduct by People Making Complaints:** We are committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach us with feedback or complaints. At the same time our success depends on:

- Our ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient way possible.
- The health, safety, and security of our team members, and
- Our ability to allocate our resources fairly across all the complaints we receive.

When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with us, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of our work. As a result, we will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects us and will support our team members to do the same in accordance with this policy.

#### WSAVA's Four Levels of Complaint Handling



**Level 1:** We aim to resolve complaints at the first level, the frontline, when and where they happen. Wherever possible team members will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training, and supervision.

**Level 2:** When it has not been possible to resolve a complaint when and where it occurs, or when it has been first brought to our attention, the complaint should be put in writing and reviewed by a senior member of the WSAVA team.

**Level 3:** If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily at level 2, the next stage will involve mediation.

**Level 4:** If the complaint is not resolved by mediation, the next and final stage is arbitration.

### **Making a Complaint**

Complaints can be submitted via our [online form](#).

In most cases the Executive Director will review your complaint. If the complaint is about the Executive Director, it will be reviewed by the President, or other relevant member of the Executive Board. If you would prefer to discuss your complaint in person, please contact the relevant team member by email: [executivedirector@wsava.org](mailto:executivedirector@wsava.org) or [president@wsava.org](mailto:president@wsava.org). If you are not comfortable with the complaint being received by either the current Executive Director or President, please contact an alternative member of the Executive Board via the contact links [HERE](#).

If submitting your complaint by email, please provide the following information:

- Contact information for the complainant (email, telephone number, etc).
- Specifics of your complaint, such as what happened, who was involved, when.
- Your desired outcome
- Any other relevant information and any additional support the person making a complaint requires.

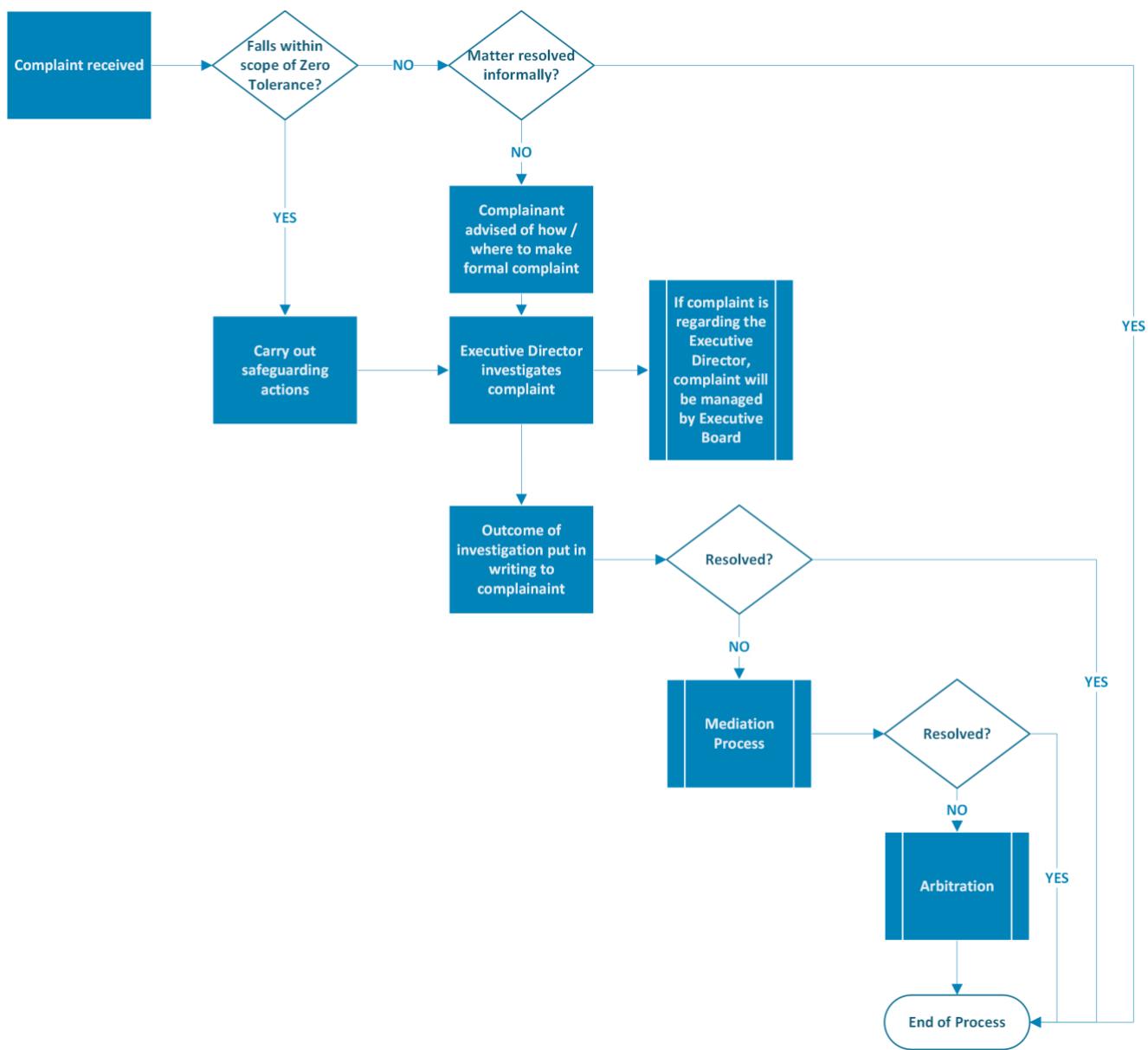
### **Mediation and Arbitration**

The dispute or controversy shall be submitted to a panel of mediators whereby the one party appoints one mediator, the other party (or if applicable the executive board of WSAVA) appoints one mediator, and the two mediators so appointed jointly appoint a third mediator. The three mediators will then meet with the parties in question to mediate a resolution between the parties. The number of mediators may be reduced from three to one or two upon agreement of the parties.

If the parties are not successful in resolving the dispute through mediation, then the parties agree that the dispute shall be settled by arbitration before a single arbitrator, who shall not be any one of the mediators referred to above, in accordance with the provincial or territorial legislation governing domestic arbitrations in force in the province or territory where the registered office of WSAVA is situated or as otherwise agreed upon by the parties to the dispute.

The parties agree that all proceedings relating to arbitration shall be kept confidential and there shall be no disclosure of any kind. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding and shall not be subject to appeal on a question of fact, law or mixed fact and law. Parties are responsible for the costs of their own mediators. All costs of the arbitrators appointed in

accordance with this section of the bylaws shall be borne by such parties as may be determined by the arbitrators.



## Appendices

### President Role Description

The following are in addition to the President's responsibilities as a WSAVA director and member of the Executive Board. For further information on the requirements and responsibilities of Executive Board members, please see the [Executive Board Terms of Reference](#).

**Purpose:** The President acts as the public face of WSAVA, providing leadership and direction to WSAVA's Executive Board, to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of WSAVA. The President represents WSAVA externally as appropriate. The President oversees the development of the WSAVA's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the bylaws and other regulatory and legal guidelines and provides support and guidance to the Executive Director to ensure that Executive Board decisions are acted upon and that the WSAVA is managed in an effective manner.

**Accountability:** The President is accountable to Executive Board and the Members of WSAVA and, as a director, more generally to Industry Canada and the public at large.

**Main Responsibilities:** The main responsibilities of the President are to:

- Oversee, the development, delivery, and review of the WSAVA's strategy, structure, and policies.
- Ensure that WSAVA functions within the legal and regulatory framework and in accordance with the bylaws.
- Provide support and guidance to the Executive Director in the implementation of WSAVA's strategy and policies and monitor their performance.
- Ensure the smooth functioning of the Executive Board and of relationships between the Executive Board and the Secretariat
- Ensure that WSAVA manages its resources carefully and applies them exclusively in pursuance of its mission.
- Uphold the duty of care invested in the position, undertaking such duties in a way that adds to public and member confidence and trust in WSAVA.

**Main Duties:** The main duties of the President are to:

- Promote WSAVA and decisions of Executive Board and to act as an ambassador and public face for WSAVA.
- Monitor the work and activities of WSAVA including approval of the annual accounts.
- Support the Executive Director, other members of the Secretariat and volunteers in the achievement of their work.

- Consider any other matters that affect the work, performance, and reputation of WSAVA.

**Carrying out the Role:** The President is expected to commit an average of one to two days per week to WSAVA, which will vary over the course of the year, and to:

- Chair meetings of the Executive Board which are held every month online for two hours. In addition, the Executive Board meet in-person twice a year for one week at a time.
- With the Executive Director, agree and manage the agendas for Executive Board meetings, ensuring that Executive Board Members have the necessary information and time for discussion of complex or contentious issues and that the style and tone of the debate invites open discussion and promotes effective decision-making.
- Promote a culture of collegiality, challenge, openness, and trust with opportunities for full and frank, but constructive, airing of views.
- Chair the WSAVA's Annual General Assembly and ensure effective communication between the Members and Council.
- Meet regularly with the Executive Director to give support and guidance and act as a sounding board and mentor.
- Represent WSAVA from time to time at functions, external events and meetings which given the global nature of WSAVA are highly likely to be international.
- Serve, at the request of the Executive Board, on Committees of WSAVA.
- Ensure that processes are in place to review periodically the performance of the Executive Board.
- Maintain absolute confidentiality of sensitive/confidential information received while undertaking the role of the President and/or a director of WSAVA.
- Always act in the best interests of WSAVA.

**Term of Office:** The President holds office for two years from the General Assembly they take office and up to the second general assembly after they take office.

#### **Ideal Skills, Experience, and Abilities:**

- A passion for companion animal veterinary practice, and a strong knowledge of the opportunities and issues facing the global companion animal veterinary community.
- Experience of successful leadership and board-level decision-making within a sizeable and complex organisation in business and/or the non-profit sector, particularly membership organisations.
- Experience of and skill in chairing meetings with a broad agenda and in obtaining consensus.
- Able to work as part of a team and to lead that team and/or intervene as appropriate.

- Proven commercial and financial acumen with an ability to think strategically and exercise independent judgement.
- Experience at Board level of large project evaluation and performance management
- Success in building, protecting, and enhancing the reputation of an organisation with external bodies, the media, members/customers, and the public.
- Ability to communicate effectively, including public speaking to large groups and talking to the media, and to act as an organisation champion with a variety of stakeholders.
- Effective, engaging, and approachable with people at all levels, both internally and externally.
- Capacity to command respect and to exercise authority.
- Possession of a network of contacts with the capacity to make relevant new links for WSAVA.
- Comfortable with networking events.
- Director experience of good corporate and non-profit governance.
- Able and willing to give an average of one to two days per week to WSAVA matters.

#### **President-Elect Role Description**

The President-Elect is elected for a term of two years. After two years they automatically progress to the office of President. As such, the ideal skills, experience, and abilities of the President-Elect are identical to that of the President. In addition to their responsibilities as a member of the Executive Board, the President-Elect will deputise for the President if the President is unable to perform their duties.

#### **Treasurer Role Description**

The following are in addition to the President's responsibilities as a WSAVA director and member of the Executive Board. For further information on the requirements and responsibilities of Executive Board members, please see the [Executive Board Terms of Reference](#).

**Purpose:** The Treasurer with the support of the Executive Director advises the Executive Board on WSAVA's financial affairs.

**Accountability:** The Treasurer is accountable to the Executive Board and members of WSAVA and, as a director, more generally to Industry Canada and the public at large.

**Main Responsibilities:** The main responsibilities of the Treasurer are:

- To oversee the delivery of budgets, accounts, and financial statements to the Executive Board.
- Through liaison with the Executive Director and Finance Officer, ensure that proper accounts and records are kept, ensuring that financial resources are spent and invested in

line with good governance, legal and regulatory requirements and specifically in pursuance of WSAVA's mission.

- To uphold the duty of care invested in the position, undertaking such duties in a way that adds to public and member confidence and trust in WSAVA.
- To ensure that WSAVA functions within the legal and regulatory framework and in accordance with WSAVA's bylaws.

**Main Duties:** The main duties of the Treasurer are to:

- Oversee sound financial management of WSAVA's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the WSAVA's mission and that investment activities meet accepted standards and policies.
- Ensure the development of appropriate financial policies for WSAVA.
- Monitor the work and activities of WSAVA including approval of the annual accounts.
- Promote WSAVA and the decisions of the Executive Board and to act as an ambassador for WSAVA.
- Support the Executive Director and Finance Officer in the achievement of their work.
- Consider any other matters that affect the work, performance and standing of WSAVA.

**Carrying out the Role:** The Treasurer is expected to:

- Meet regularly with the Executive Director and Finance Officer, to give them support and guidance, and to monitor their performance.
- Attend meetings of the Executive Board which are held every month online for two hours. In addition, the Executive Board meet in-person twice a year for one week at a time.
- With the support of the Executive Director, present budgets, accounts, and financial statements to the Executive Board, at the Annual General Assembly, and at other meetings as required.
- Serve, at the request of the Executive Board, on Committees of WSAVA and specifically to attend all meetings of the Financial Advisory Committee.
- Represent WSAVA from time to time at functions, external events, and meetings.
- Maintain absolute confidentiality of sensitive/confidential information received in the course of the director and Treasurer's responsibilities to WSAVA.
- Always act in the best interest of WSAVA.

**Term of Office:** The Treasurer is appointed for a term of two years, expiring at the end of the second General Assembly following their election. The term is renewable, by election, for one further term of two years.

**Essential Skills, Experience, and Abilities:**

- Knowledge of and demonstrable experience in reviewing financial statements, including profit and loss, cash flow, and balance sheets.

### **Executive Director Role Description**

**Purpose:** The primary function of the Executive Director is to act as operational lead for the organization and to plan, organize and coordinate the association's operations and strategic priorities. The Executive Director is responsible for the overall administrative functions of the association, and as such initiates, implements and oversees efforts to achieve the mission from both an organizational and business perspective.

#### **Administrative and Executive Management**

- Overall responsibility for and management of the WSAVA secretariat to deliver to association standards and guidelines.
- Staff and contractor oversight, including operations, communications, finance, PR, and educational positions.
- Preparation of detailed work plans and timelines in line with strategic plan and coordination of work across the team and contractors
- Liaison and support to the Executive Board, committees and external stakeholders as required.
- Oversight of and attendance at the Executive Board, Extended Leadership, General Assembly and Member Forums.

#### **Strategic Planning**

- Facilitate the development of the WSAVA strategic plan in conjunction with the Executive Board and key stakeholders.
- Development of the annual business and operational plan based on the identified strategic priorities.
- Work with Executive Board on positioning and Advocacy goals.
- Communication and dissemination of strategic plan

#### **Governance**

- Maintenance, development and adherence to standards and procedures
- Management of elections according to association guidelines
- Point of contact for complaints and follow up according to complaints procedure.
- Advice to the Executive Board on governance issues

#### **External Relations**

##### **Members**

- Oversee membership management.
- Ensure regular communication with members.
- Active recruitment of new members

- Liaison with member representatives as required.

### Industry Partners

- Maintain relationships with existing partners.
- Identify and follow up new prospects.
- Draft and maintain contracts.
- Compile annual KPI reports.
- Monitor committee future goals proposals and ensure KPIs are met.
- Liaise with PCO Industry Manager

### Educational Partners

- Maintain existing relationships.
- Identify new relationships and opportunities for collaborations.

### Other Partners

- Maintain MoUs, letters of agreement and other relationships.
- Review and reporting.

### **Financial Management:**

- Responsible for financial growth and sustainability through development of business plan
- Produce and manage annual budget.
  - Drafting of secretariat budget
  - Oversee process of committee budgeting
- Manage associations finances and fiscal requirements including.
  - Liaison with Financial Officer and Treasurer to produce management reports and annual accounts.
  - Annual audit and filing
  - Association registration updates
- Identify new revenue streams.

### **Communications:**

- Develop and implement marketing and communications plan in line with strategic plan.
- Manage marketing and communications budget.
- Oversight of all association publications and communications activity
- Define and maintain association branding and visibility.

### **Annual World Congress:**

- Oversee preparations for the annual congress.

- Liaison with congress scientific committee, PCO and local host to execute annual congress and future educational meetings.
- Attend monthly teleconferences.
- Site visits to congress destination with PCO
- Request for annual bids and manage congress bidding process.
- Maintain SOP for the congress.
- Oversight of delivery of all association activities at the congress

**Continuing Education:**

- Determine overall strategy and direction for the WSAVA educational activities including webinars, podcasts, online courses and the WSAVA Academy in line with overall strategic plan.
- Identify partner opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for additional income streams i.e. monetise the academy.

**Interfaces:**

- Association Officers, Executive Board, Committees and Working Groups
- Member Representatives
- Industry partners
- Educational partners, affiliated organizations, national and international bodies
- External providers and partners (web providers, sponsors, different contractors, and service providers)
- Congress Organizer

## Change Log

Date	Change	Actioned by
18 April 2024	First Published	RC
14 May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added clarity that volunteers may not sit on more than two committees at any one time.</li> <li>Section added regarding committee meetings, their frequency, and criteria for in-person meetings.</li> <li>Added template for committee and project group terms of reference.</li> <li>Added Sponsors and Industry Partners to section on 'How to use this manual'.</li> </ul>	RC
April 16 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated to reflect Executive Board composition following Special General Assembly approval to increase Executive Board size from 5 to 10 voting members.</li> <li>Added requirement for all EB members to be fluent in written and spoken English.</li> <li>Added requirement for OBM's to reside within the region they are nominated to represent.</li> <li>Added clarity on EB meeting agendas being strategy focussed.</li> <li>Added clarity on the declaration of actual or perceived conflicts of interest.</li> <li>Updated current EB and Secretariat profiles</li> </ul>	RC
19 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replaced the membership policy and process in full, with that approved at the General Assembly 2025</li> </ul>	RC

The following policies or processes are in development. WSAVA expect to include them in this document soon.

- Policy on Personal Relationships in WSAVA
- Policy on Cash Handling
- Policy on Sponsorship
- Policy on Dealing with Emergent Issues & Events

- Policy on Data Management
- Policy on the Development and Publishing of WSAVA Global Guidelines
- Policy & Process on WSAVA World Congress (including the role and remit of the appointed Professional Congress Organiser)