

EFA Board Membership: Eligibility & Responsibilities

Updated: 23 September 2015 by Jon Lawrence

This document provides information to prospective Board Members about the operation of the EFA Board and Board Members' responsibilities and activities.

Eligibility for Board Membership

General

Any financial member of EFA may be nominated by another financial member, or may self-nominate, for election to the Board at the Annual General Meeting (normally held in October or November). Nominations for a minimum of five of the ten Board positions are called at least 42 days before each AGM. In addition, the Board is empowered to co-opt up to three Board Members at any time during the year, who normally remain in the position until the next AGM (at which time they may nominate for election).

There are no specific qualifications for Board membership. It is expected that Board Members are people who support EFA's objectives and policy positions and who are willing to assist in one or more areas of EFA activity.

It is recognised that a Board Member may have a higher level of interest in one topic than others, and/or that time constraints may limit a Board Member's ability to be, or remain, up to date on all issues with which EFA deals. Board Members with detailed knowledge or specific interest in one particular topic can be of great assistance to EFA.

Compliance with EFA Board Member Code of Conduct

Prospective Board Members are required to agree to comply with the EFA Board Member Code of Conduct, prior to their nomination being accepted or being co-opted to the Board. This Code covers EFA Board Members' obligations regarding matters such as conflicts of interest and confidentiality. If any prospective Board Member has any questions or concerns about the Code, they are encouraged to direct same to the Board for further information.

The Code of Conduct is available at:

<https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/EFA-Board-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

Board Operations

Management and Administration

The EFA Board is responsible for strategic direction, decision-making and oversight of organisational activities and administration.

The Board consists of volunteer Board Members supported by one part-time staff member (the Executive Officer). As resources permit and at the discretion of the Board, additional staff may also be appointed. Board Members act in a voluntary capacity; they are not remunerated for time spent on EFA activities. The Executive Officer is appointed by and reports to the Board (with the Chair as formal line manager) and is remunerated. The Executive Officer attends Board meetings but does not vote.



The volunteer Board Members include the Officers of the Association (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) who are elected by the Board after each Annual General Meeting.

Board Communications

The effective operation of EFA depends on regular communications between Board Members, the vast majority of which take place online. In addition to the regular formal Board meetings, the Board makes many decisions and action plans via the Board email list on a continuous basis.

Board email list

The Board is effectively always in session via the Board email list. Traffic on the list can vary greatly depending on current issues/activities at the time.

Any Board Member may propose a motion as a Call for Votes (CFV) at any time, usually allowing a minimum of 48 hours for votes. Sometimes CFVs are called without considerable discussion taking place prior to calling for votes. Depending on what is proposed a longer period for discussion may be required, for example, policy decisions on an issue the Board has not previously discussed.

Board Members are therefore expected to check their email as close to daily as possible. If a Board Member expects to be out of email contact for more than two days, it is desirable that they advise the Board in advance, so that if any matters are coming up for decision, an attempt can be made to ensure all Board Members will have the opportunity to participate.

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held via teleconference at least once every two months. Scheduled dates are reviewed when Board membership changes, with the aim of ensuring all Board Members will be available on scheduled dates. Occasionally the Board meets in real life, at most once per year.

Publication of Board Member profiles

The names and brief profiles of EFA Board members are published on EFA's web site at: <https://www.efa.org.au/about/>.

It is expected that new Board members will provide a profile for publication on the web site very soon after being elected to the Board.

Board Member Duties and Responsibilities

Apart from responsibilities arising from holding the position of Board Member, as set out in the EFA Board Member Code of Conduct, Board Members' duties and responsibilities depend on what roles or activities they volunteer to undertake from time to time.

Various Board Members volunteer to take on specific responsibilities, such as office bearers - Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer (office bearers are elected by the Board after the AGM), heading a sub-committee, in addition to carrying out general work on behalf of EFA. Division of responsibilities is reviewed as and when the Board considers necessary, for example, when Board Members join or leave, or members' time availability changes.

Various working groups and committees are established, or may be established, to deal with certain issues or functional areas.



Standing Committees

The majority of EFA's activities take place through a number of Standing Committees (also referred to as Functional Teams). Board Members are encouraged to actively participate in at least one Standing Committee.

Policy & Research

The Policy & Research team regularly prepares submissions to various parliamentary committees and government agencies. It is also responsible for drafting policy position statements and maintaining relevant content on the website.

Campaigns & Communications

The Campaigns & Communications team is responsible for planning and executing campaigns and communications activities, including social media and media relations.

The Executive Officer is the primary media contact but Board members are encouraged to undertake media work relevant to their expertise, availability and location.

EFA has a strong and active presence on social media, with over 13,000 Facebook followers and over 5,700 Twitter followers.

Fundraising

The Fundraising team plans and implements EFA's strategic fundraising activities.

Governance & Finance

The Governance and Finance team oversees EFA's Governance and Financial arrangements.

Systems

The Systems team manages EFA's existing systems and plans and implements new systems.