

INTERNATIONAL NEPALI LITERARY SOCIETY (INLS)

Election Guideline Recommendations January 2008

I. INTRODUCTION

International Nepali Literary Society (INLS), a notforprofit and tax-exempt organization headquartered in the United States of America, is dedicated to preserving and promoting Nepali identity by uniting Nepali people around the globe and through encouraging their involvement, participation and contribution in the development and promotion of Nepali language, literature and culture.

II. GOVERNANCE

INLS is a public organization and therefore it shall be managed by officers duly elected by its members who qualify to vote. The management team hereafter called the “Executive Board” as per the Article VII (1) of the INLS Bylaws shall consist of the following:

- A. President
- B. Senior Vice President
- C. Regional Vice President – Northern America and Latin America
- D. Regional Vice President – Asia
- E. Regional Vice President – Europe
- F. Regional Vice President – Oceania and Africa
- G. General Secretary
- H. Secretary
- I. Treasurer
- J. Three members at large
- K. Editor in Chief
- L. Immediate Past-President
- M. Board of Trustee members

III. GENERAL ELECTIONS POLICY

a. The President of INLS in consultation with the rest of the Executive Board shall appoint an Election Commission with a membership of either three (3) or five (5) who will be fully entrusted to carry out the election of all officers under VII (1) of the Bylaws.

b. The Board shall also appoint one of the commissioners to act as the Chief Election Commissioner who will work with other members of the Commissions and coordinate all affairs of the Election Commission.

c. The Election Commission shall be appointed at least three (3) months prior to the expiration of the term of the currents officers.

d. The initial announcements for elections shall be made at least six (6) weeks prior to the expiration of the term of the current officers.

e. The President in consultation with the Executive Board shall certify and provide the Election Commission with an official list of those members who qualify to vote in the general elections.

f. The Election Commission shall strictly follow the eligible voter list that is certified by the President in consultation with the Executive Board members.

g. The Election Commission shall refer back to the Executive Board for necessary resolution on any dispute over the authenticity and qualification of the voter(s).

h. The election work shall begin as soon as the Election Commission is formed and entrusted with the responsibility or at least three (3) months prior to the expiration of the term of the current Board of Directors.

i. The Election Commission, if deemed necessary, may devise its own administrative procedures to carry out the election process.

j. The Election Commission shall have the full authority to plan and implement the elections within the given time frame and under the set rules, regulations and standards and within the scope of the INLS Bylaws.

k. The Election Commission shall have the full authority to declare the final results of the elections. Candidate(s) securing a simple majority of the votes shall be declared winner (s).

l. The Election Commission shall have the authority to settle any complains and grievances expressed by any of the voting members and declare the outcomes of the elections. The Election Commission's decision on any disputed or contested issues, except the qualification of voters (see III:f) related to the elections shall be final.

m. The Board of Directors and any other voting members shall not interfere with Election Commission's work, except providing some logistical support if the Commission deems necessary.

n. One candidate shall not file his/her candidacy for more than one position.

IV. GENERAL ELECTION PROCESS/PROCEDURES

A. ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE

All INLS members in goodstanding who fall within Article V (1, 2, 3, and 4) of the Bylaws shall be eligible and entitled to vote by using any form of voting mechanism determined by the Election Commission.

B. ELECTION TIMELINES

The Election Commission shall publish a detailed timeline for the elections which may include, but not limited to:

1. Deadline for voter qualifications/registration

2. Publication of final voters list

3. Deadline for nomination calls from candidates

a. Deadline for verification and withdrawal of candidacy and resolving issues related to any candidate being contested or challenged for its validity and qualification.

b. Deadline for election related campaign.

c. Deadline for the distribution of ballots both conventional (print) and electronic methods.

d. Deadline for returning the completed ballots.

e. Deadline for counting and recounting of the ballots and declaration of the final results

C. NOMINATION

The Election Commission shall prepare a nomination notice that specifies the process for submitting nominations; the offices to be filled and duties of each position if applicable. Once the notice calling for nominations is published, candidates should ensure that they are qualified to be nominated. Members may nominate themselves for any particular position. However each nomination should be supported by at least two qualified voters. All nominations shall be filed in writing and one person shall be

limited to filing for one position only—no individual candidate shall file nominations for multiple positions.

D. NOMINATION FEE

Following fee shall apply for the nomination:
President US \$100.00
All other officers \$50.00

E. VOTING

In order to ensure fair opportunity for all INLS qualified members to participate in the voting process, various voting system shall be adopted, election system (paper or electronic) should be verifiable and provide audit trail. However, in view of the globalized nature of the INLS, any form of voting system that deemed feasible shall be adopted or one or combination of both of the following methods shall be considered:

1. Print ballotmailing (the conventional way), and
2. Electronic voting system (both web and email based systems, whichever is feasible).

F. DISTRIBUTION OF BALLOTS AND VALIDITY

- i. The Election Commission shall adopt mechanism and apply efforts to distribute ballots to each INLS member who qualifies or is entitled to vote on the matter presented to him/her.
- ii. The Commission shall mail the ballots to member's postal address, or notice of the electronic posting of the ballot on the INLS website or any other reliable and appropriate sources/mechanism.
- iii. The voting members shall have the option of either returning written ballots by conventional mail or electronically.
- iv. The Commission shall ensure a secure means of voting by both electronic means via the internet and written ballots by mail.
- v. The Election Commission shall establish and assign to each voting member a Code or a PIN identification system. The Election Commission shall have the right to reject a ballot if the ballot does not bear a PIN or Code.
- vi. The election Commission shall have authority to make final decision on any questionable circumstances.
- vii. Election Commission will minute the reasons (and produce before public or regulatory body if necessary) for rejecting/disqualifying any ballot, and/or candidacy.

G. ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND PUBLICITY

1. Each candidate shall provide the Election Commission with a maximum of two (2) pages long (12 point font size and single spaced) document highlighting why voters should vote for him/her.
2. The Election Commission shall make such information readily available to all the voters electronically where it is applicable or through conventional mailing system.
3. The Election Commission shall create an electronic distribution list of all the voters, including the candidates.
4. Candidates are entitled to communicate to the voters through an egroup created by INLS. This egroup shall consist of all the eligible voters and each of them shall have a password protected login system.

i. VOTING SUPERVISION

In order to ensure that the INLS elections are conducted free, fair and transparent manner, the Election Commission shall adopt some form of supervision mechanism which guarantees the authenticity of the entire election process. This has to be consistent with the provisions of INLS Bylaws and any other applicable election policies and guidelines such as these.

ii. VOTING BY PROXIES

Voting by Proxies shall not be allowed. The qualified voting members of the INLS shall exercise their voting rights personally and may not be exercised by alternates or by proxy or any other similar arrangements.

iii. UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS

If only sufficient valid nominations are received to fill advertised vacant, the Election Commission upon thoroughly reviewing the nominations shall declare nominee elected at the end of the entire election process.

iv. DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS

At the completion of the entire election process, the Election Commission shall declare the results in writing and send a copy of the election results to the current President of INLS and concerned candidates who have successfully contested the elections. Election commission shall publish statement of total number of votes cast, invalid votes and reason thereof and total valid votes along with the election result. All election related documents including the ballot and other communication materials shall be kept at the INLS Headquarter for two years after the completion of the entire election process.

V. TERMINATION OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION

A week after the completion of the entire election process and final announcement of the election results, the Election Commission of INLS shall automatically dissolve.

VI. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CANDIDATES:

a. Candidates will be provided with copies of election rules and regulations, candidate will have to return the signed (electronically or hard copy whatever is convenient) copy of regulations to the Commission stating that they agree with it and non compliance will result in penalty per INLS by laws and these guidelines.

b. Candidates will have the opportunity to communicate with the Election Commission.

c. Candidates should make themselves available for any conference coordinated by Election Commission with other candidates or commission members.

d. Candidates will be provided election schedule.

e. Candidates should campaign in such a way that it...

i. helps foster friendship among the Nepali literary community.

ii. does not offend Nepali literary community around the world.

iii. does not tarnish Nepal and Nepali's image.

iv. is aligned with INLS Bylaws and these guidelines.

v. No personalized nature of attacks are made and/or directed to any particular candidate or candidates.

f. If the results are within 1% Candidates can request a recount of votes no later than 3 days of results announcement.

VII. ELECTION COMMITTEE CODE OF CONDUCT:

a. Election Commission as a whole and each member shall remain impartial and fair in words and deeds to all candidates. No committee member shall in any way indulge in favor of or against any candidate and group of candidates.

b. Election Commission should not negotiate in favor or against any or group of candidates.

c. Election Commission shall be transparent in its proceedings and shall avoid contradictory messages, announcements, promises, and decisions.

d. Election Commission shall fulfill its duties to ensure, to the best of its ability, that members shall exercise the right to vote without pressure, intimidation, or delay.

e. Election Commission shall consult INLS executive body and candidates on key issues concerning the process, procedures, and execution of the election.

f. Election Commission shall remain accessible to all interested candidates and general members/executive committee members of INLS during entire election process.

g. INLS Executive Commission or BOT shall not interfere with the election process or schedule once finalized.

h. Election commission shall report on the progress of its activities and proceedings as agreed to INLS executive committee.

i. Communications of Election Commission shall be equally available to all concerned parties.

j. All Election Commission members shall maintain the confidentiality of committee discussions and decisions. No one shall approach media or discuss election matters in a way that will impact or influence elections.

k. Election commission shall prepare and distribute election Code of Conduct to all candidates and voters in the beginning of election process.

l. No members of the Election Commission shall be eligible for presenting him/herself as a candidate for any positions.

m. Election Commission can disqualify any candidate or voter to participate in INLS election if it finds such candidate or voter not complying with Election Code of conduct.

n. INLS Executive Board reserves the right to add or remove any member of Election Commission if it finds any election committee member not complying with these codes of conduct or is acting against INLS constitution. However, INLS shall provide plausible reason of removal to the election commission, and member subjected to removal and voters.

VIII. In areas where these guidelines are not clear or are deemed to be insufficient, Election Commission shall use INLS by laws as the basis for addressing any election related issue.

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(It is submitted by INLS Election Guidelines Drafting Committee and approved by INLSHQ)

January 9, 2007

Dear INLS President,

We, the members of the INLS Election Guidelines Drafting Committee are please to submit proposed guidelines regarding the planning and implementation of INLS future elections. Although the guidelines presented in this document are not absolute, we hope that you will find them to be useful. We assure you that members of this committee have sought ideas and feedbacks from various people within the INLS camp and we have attempted to incorporate all the good suggestions and ideas from various people. As a result, we believe that these guideless will prove to be a solid foundation for planning and conducting INLS elections in a fair and transparent manner.

Despite all our sincere effort, it is possible that we might have included some recommendations that might not have been within the prescribed scope and limitations of the current bylaws of the International Nepalese Literary Society. In such circumstances, we hope that the INLS Board will carefully examine the recommendations and align them with the provisions of the bylaws. We believe that it is up to the INLS Board to either partially or fully accept or reject the recommendations provided in the document.

Finally, we thank you for this opportunity to be a small part of INLS.

We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Mr. Tara Niraula, Coordinator
Mr. Binod Roka, Esq., Member
Mr. Prem Sangraula, Member
Mr. Bhim Karki, Member
Mr. Basant Shrestha, member

Section II of this document has been modified per new by-laws adopted by the INLS 18th General Assembly meeting 2009.