



# Membership Guidelines

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## **Guidelines on Admission to Membership and Maintenance of Membership Hereinafter, "Guidelines"**

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## **A. Preamble**

The mission of the Association is to advance the essential role of a global community of publishers whose mission is to ensure academic excellence and cultivate knowledge.

The purposes of the Association are to encourage dissemination of the fruits of research and to support university presses and other non-profit scholarly publishers in their endeavor to make widely available scholarly knowledge and the most important results of scholarly research; to provide an organization through which the exchange of ideas relating to the functions of university presses and other non-profit scholarly publishers may be facilitated; to afford technical advice and assistance to learned bodies, scholarly associations, and institutions of higher learning; and to do all things incidental to and in furtherance of the foregoing purposes without extending the same.

## **B. Types of Membership**

The Association admits members in three categories: (1) regular membership, (2) affiliate membership, and (3) introductory membership.

### **1. Regular Membership**

Eligible for regular membership are: (i) the non-profit scholarly publishing arm of a university or college, or of a group of such institutions within a defined geographic region, or (ii) the scholarly publishing arm of a non-profit organization (as constituted under local law) that functions in a manner substantially similar to as an entity described in clause (i) herein, which satisfies the following criteria:

- a. Eligible university presses and other non-profit scholarly publishers must be an integral part of one or more such parent institutions, and should be so recognized in the manual of organization, catalogue, website, or other official publication of at least one such parent institution. The organization and functions of the university press or other non-profit scholarly publisher must lie within the prescription of its parent institution or institutions.
- b. Both of the following editorial criteria: (i) a committee or board of the scholars (or other officials of directly comparable rank and authority) of the parent institution or institutions shall be charged with certifying the scholarly quality of the publications that bear the institutional imprint; and, (ii) the peer review of their scholarly publications in a manner consistent with commonly understood notions of peer review among university presses, including such notions as they may be expressed in any written guidelines for best practice which the Association may from time to time issue or update.
- c. Publication of ten or more scholarly titles in a given twenty-four month period. Scholarly books, journals, and digital projects that include original scholarly content will all be counted to satisfy this requirement. The word "scholarly" is used here in the sense of original research of a character usually associated with the scholarly interests of a college, university or comparable research institution college. (Publications for which the press serves solely as a printer and/or distributor for other departments or divisions of the parent institution are not to be included in the aforementioned minimum scholarly publishing requirement.)

- d. An acceptable scholarly publishing program shall have the benefit of the service of not fewer than three full-time equivalent staff, of whom one shall have the functions of director. This official shall report, organizationally, to the president of the university or college, or to an officer at the vice-presidential or decanal level (i.e., an officer reporting either to the president or to the chief academic officer) having both academic and fiscal authority, or to the designated representative of a group of such institutions who shall have both kinds of authority, or to an individual of directly comparable rank and authority to one of the three preceding classes of individuals.

Any university press or other non-profit scholarly publisher satisfying these requirements shall be eligible in principle for election to regular membership in the Association.

## **2. Affiliate Membership**

Eligible for affiliate membership shall be university presses and other non-profit scholarly publishers who meet some but not all of the criteria for regular membership, and more specifically which satisfy at least the following criteria:

- a. The non-profit institutional affiliation required for regular membership.
- b. Either of the following editorial criteria: (i) the committee or review board criteria required for regular membership; or, (ii) the peer review of their scholarly publications in a manner consistent with commonly understood notions of peer review among university presses, including such notions as they may be expressed in any written guidelines for best practice which the Association may from time to time issue or update.
- c. (c) Either of the following indicia of sustained commitment: (i) publication of five or more scholarly titles in a given twenty-four month period; or, (ii) the benefit of the service of at least one full-time equivalent staff.

## **3. Introductory Membership**

Eligible for introductory membership are non-profit scholarly publishers that intend to apply for Association of University Presses membership in one of the other categories either during their introductory term or at the end of that term.

Candidates for introductory membership will be expected to provide evidence concerning the scholarly character of their publishing programs and information about present staffing, reporting relationships, review processes, and also any changes or developments proposed in these areas, but they will not be expected to meet the publication rate, staffing, or organizational requirements of full membership. Presses may not stay in the introductory category for more than five years.

At any time during the introductory period introductory members may apply for membership in the regular or affiliate category. If a press does not wish to continue as an introductory member for five years, it may resign from the Association after payment of its current annual dues. At the end of five years, the introductory membership is automatically terminated.

## C. Application, Admission, and Cancellation

### 1. Application

All inquiries from prospective applicants for membership in the Association are to be directed to the Association's Executive Director, or such staff member as he or she may designate. The Executive Director, or his or her designee, shall advise the candidate of the substance of these Guidelines on Admission to Membership and Maintenance of Membership, and shall require as evidence of satisfactory compliance with the following materials for submission to the Committee on Admissions and Standards:

- a. One copy of each of 10 or more different scholarly titles published by the applicant and certified by its faculty editorial board or committee in the twenty-four months preceding the date on which the application for membership is filed, and full runs of the issues of any journals for the year or years in which a journal serves as one of the titles. If original digital publications are submitted, the applicant will provide access to committee members.
- b. A list of the peer reviewers (names and affiliations) for each of the books or original digital publications submitted as part of the application. Published reviews of the titles and information about scholarly awards received may be submitted as part of the application.
- c. Copies of the applicant press's catalogs for the past two years for each member of the Committee on Admissions and Standards.
- d. A complete list, by name and title, of the staff of the applicant press, to be prepared in that form in which such information is given for active members in the most recent edition of the Directory of the Association of American University Presses. For part-time staff the list should indicate the percentage of time each person devotes to the press.
- e. A statement from a senior administrative officer of the parent institution, or the designated representative of a group of institutions, outlining the immediate and long-term intentions and financial expectations of the institution or group of institutions for its press, and reflecting a realistic appreciation of the cost of supporting a serious program of scholarly publication.
- f. Copies of its financial operating statements for the two most recently completed fiscal years.
- g. Documentation demonstrating the non-profit status of the applicant and/or its parent institution.

With respect to the scholarship of published works, the Association will in general accept the certification of the press's own faculty board or committee and will not pass judgment on the scholarship of any individual work. However, the Committee on Admissions and Standards will take into account the observance by the press of commonly accepted standards of editorial review, ordinarily including at least one positive evaluation by a qualified scholar not affiliated with the author's own institution.

Applicants for regular membership shall be expected to adhere strictly to all submission requirements.

Applicants for affiliate membership shall be expected to adhere strictly to those submission requirements relevant to the eligibility criteria upon which they are basing their application for membership.

Applicants for introductory membership shall be expected to make a good faith effort to adhere to as many submission requirements as practicable.

## **2. Admission**

Following the filing of a formal application for regular, affiliate, or introductory membership and notification by the Association's Executive Director to the applicant of its acceptance for consideration, the candidate press shall be regarded as having entered a period of probation, which will last for a period of time no longer than one year.

A press shall be elected to regular or affiliate membership by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Association's regular members at the Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting, a quorum being present, on the recommendation of the Board of Directors. Such action shall be taken by the Board only on the prior recommendation of the Committee on Admissions and Standards, which shall be responsible for determining that the applying press satisfies the minimum requirements for membership.

Admission of a new member to the Association shall take effect immediately following approval by the members as described herein. Admission to introductory membership shall be made at the discretion of the Executive Director after favorable review by the Committee on Admissions & Standards.

To maintain its active membership status, each member shall be required to submit each year to the Central Office of the Association, for publication in the annual Directory of members, both a roster of its current staff and an indication of the number of books, journals, and original digital publications that it has published in each of the two calendar years preceding and that have been certified as to scholarship by its editorial board or committee.

## **3. Cancellation**

An Association of University Presses member, by its very nature, must be devoted to scholarly and educational ends; the failure of a press to pursue such ends as its fundamental business shall constitute grounds for canceling its membership in the Association. Any accusation of such a failure will be brought to the Committee on Admissions and Standards for a recommendation to the Board. Cancellation of membership shall be effected, on recommendation of the Board of Directors, by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at the Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting, a quorum being present.

It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director, or his or her designee, to review each listing of an active member in each annual edition of the membership Directory, and to undertake action as follows when any member seems to have fallen below the qualifying criteria for membership: (a) to make an inquiry and, if current standards are not being met, offer the assistance and cooperation of the Association in bringing about satisfactory corrections to the member's deficiencies; (b) to advise the Committee on Admissions and Standards, and the Board when notification of an apparent delinquency has been sent and an offer of assistance made; (c) to inform the Committee on Admissions and Standards, and the Board of any response received from the member press following the offer of assistance.

Should the delinquent press fail to resolve its deficiencies within one year of the Executive Director's notice, the Committee on Admissions and Standards shall submit to the Board of Directors a full report of the situation, and recommend, for endorsement by the Board and transmission to the membership for ratification, that the membership of the delinquent press be terminated. Two years from the date of its expulsion, a press shall be entitled to apply for readmission through initiation of the application procedures herein prescribed.

## **D. The Committee on Admissions and Standards**

The official agency for the administration of these Guidelines shall be the Committee on Admissions and Standards, which shall operate under authority delegated by the Board of Directors, and which shall consist of between four and six members, at least three of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors and at least two of whom shall be the director of a member press. The incoming President will appoint the chair of the committee from among members of the current committee with at least one year of service. The chairs shall each serve a term of one year as part of their three-year term on the committee and may not succeed themselves in office. Consistent with the requirements of the Association's Policies & procedures, and in consultation with the President and the Executive Director, the chair shall appoint the remaining committee members. Terms of the committee members normally will be three years. Committee members will not be eligible to serve more than two successive terms.

## **E. Amendments**

Members may propose changes to these Guidelines by submitting the proposed change and its rationale to the Executive Director. S/He will arrange for the Board's review of any such proposal at the next appropriate Board Meeting. If the Board recommends Association approval of the proposed change, the change will be presented with at least thirty days advance notice to the membership at the next Annual Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose at which a quorum is present. A change to the Guidelines requires a majority of all Members eligible to vote (in person or by proxy). Whenever there is a conflict between the By-Laws and these Guidelines, any Statement of Governance, or a resolution of the membership, Board of Directors, or Executive Committee, or any other document published by the Association, the By-Laws shall prevail.

In the event the Board recommends against approval of a proposed change, the member proposing the change may call a vote on the measure at the Annual Meeting or at a Special Meeting for that purpose, provided thirty days' notice is given and thirty percent of the Association's voting members sign a request that that said proposal be voted upon. Requirements for adoption of the measure in such circumstance are as stated elsewhere in this Article.