

## **Code of conduct for the elections**

The following code of conduct applies to the conduct of all RTPI elections. Candidates are asked to agree that they will abide by the code of conduct when submitting their nomination.

### **1. Timetable**

The timetable for the election will be published on the RTPI's website no later than 28 days before the date when voting commences. The 'election period' shall commence with the opening of nominations and conclude with declaration of the result.

### **2. Returning Officer**

- a) For all elections, the Board of Trustees shall delegate the role of Returning Officer to the Chief Executive.
- b) The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the good conduct of all elections and is empowered to act with due discretion in the resolution of disputes according to the facts at the time in accordance with paragraph 10 below.
- c) The Returning Officer may refer any candidate in the elections to the Institute's conduct and discipline processes should they consider that person to be in breach of this code of conduct and/or the RTPI Code of Professional Conduct.

### **3. Nominations**

- a) The nominations process may be administered by RTPI staff or the independent ballot and election supplier. RTPI staff and the independent ballot and election supplier shall act in a strictly neutral manner throughout the election period and in accordance with this code of conduct.
- b) Nominations may be made only by using the prescribed form. Candidates must return a complete nomination by 5.00 pm on the closing date given on the form and in the election timetable. Any nomination received after the closing date shall be invalid.
- c) Candidates may not alter or amend their nomination in any way after 5.00 pm on the closing date. For the avoidance of doubt, candidates may not correct any spelling or grammatical errors in their nomination after 5.00 pm on the closing date for nominations.
- d) Candidates must meet the requirements for nominations as set out in the Institute's Byelaws and Regulations and the requirements given on the nomination form. Candidates must state if any findings have been made against them under the Institute's conduct and discipline processes.
- e) Candidates' statements must focus on their career and what they could offer to the Institute. They should not include comments on other candidates' character and abilities, or comments which would adversely reflect on the RTPI's professional status and reputation. Candidates' conduct during the election period and their statements are not exempt from complaint and possible disciplinary proceedings under the RTPI Code of Professional Conduct.
- f) Nominations shall be subject to verification by the Returning Officer. Nominations which do not meet the requirements of the Institute's Byelaws and Regulations and

this code of conduct will be deemed invalid. Candidates will be notified if their nomination is invalid and the reasons for it being invalid.

#### **4. Independent ballot and election supplier**

The RTPI shall appoint an independent ballot and election supplier to conduct the voting in all elections.

#### **5. Voting**

- a) Eligibility to vote will be defined by membership status held on the day on which voting commences.
- b) Ballot papers together with statements and accompanying information will be sent to every member who is entitled to vote. Votes may be cast by either electronic means or by post.
- c) For each contested election, ballot papers and information about candidates shall list the candidates in alphabetical order by the last name of the candidate.

#### **6. Canvassing**

- a) Canvassing (soliciting the votes of members) is permitted, to the extent of candidates contacting friends and colleagues about their candidacy. However, candidates are not permitted to promote their candidacy using email address lists constructed by the RTPI, or via RTPI social media sites or pages.
- b) Complaints about canvassing should be sent to the Returning Officer for consideration and will be subject to the procedures listed in paragraph 10 below.

#### **7. Use of RTPI resources**

- a) In order to maintain strict neutrality in the election period, candidates may not use, or seek to use, RTPI resources (including staff, website, RTPI social media accounts or social media pages, funds, equipment and other materials) to prepare their nomination or support their candidacy.
- b) Complaints about use of RTPI resources in the elections should be sent to the Returning Officer for consideration and will be subject to the procedures listed in paragraph 10 below.

#### **8. Conduct of RTPI business during the election period**

- a) Any communications by the RTPI, Regions, Nations, Networks, subsidiaries or other associated bodies relating to the election and candidates must treat all candidates fairly and equally and list them in alphabetical order by the last name of the candidate.
- b) During the voting period, existing office holders who are election candidates shall continue in their RTPI roles and attend internal and external events. However, candidates should not use these events to further their election campaign.
- c) Once their nomination has been published, candidates who are serving the RTPI in any voluntary capacity should make it clear, occasion by occasion, whether they are

speaking in an official capacity in line with their voluntary role, or in a personal capacity in line with their candidacy for election.

- d) RTPI staff should not support any candidate in word or deed once a valid nomination has been published.

## **9. Counting of votes and notification of results**

- a) The independent ballot and election supplier will count the votes received. All votes cast will be received and counted by the independent supplier in strictest confidence, subject to paragraph 10 below.
- b) The Returning Officer and other RTPI staff shall not be involved in distributing and counting the ballot papers in any of the elections.
- c) The Returning Officer and all other RTPI staff shall not seek details of how individual members have voted, unless it is strictly necessary to address a dispute or complaint raised under paragraph 10 below.
- d) Details of the election results, including the turnout, total number of votes cast in each election and where the candidate was placed in the contest, will be notified to each candidate individually. Following the notification of candidates, this information will be published on the RTPI website.

## **10. Disputes and Complaints**

- a) Notwithstanding the responsibilities of the candidates to behave in accordance with the RTPI Code of Professional Conduct and in the spirit of the competition, the Returning Officer is responsible for the good conduct of the election and as such is the sole judge of fact in relation to the management of the contest.
- b) Candidates participating in an election are required to abide by the decisions of the Returning Officer throughout the election period.
- c) Candidates and members who wish to raise a complaint about the conduct of an election may do so in writing to the Returning Officer, who shall have the authority to act, including suspending or cancelling an election, disqualifying candidates and requiring candidates to take what steps of redress the Returning Officer considers to be necessary, should a candidate be deemed to have broken this code of conduct or engaged in conduct prejudicial to a fair election.
- d) Complaints about the conduct of an election or a dispute about the results should be received within 30 days of the announcement of the election results, after which no further complaints or disputes may be accepted. In the event that a complaint is received within 30 days of the announcement of the election results, the Returning Officer is required to adjudicate and allow complainants time to appeal within ten working days of receiving the complaint or dispute. Following the resolution of the complaint or dispute, the Returning Officer will announce the outcome of the adjudication.

### Contact for further information

Further information about the:

<p>Board of Trustees and General Assembly Elections is available from:</p> <p>Sukhpreet Bhatia Governance Manager</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:elections@rtpi.org.uk">elections@rtpi.org.uk</a> Telephone: 020 7929 9494</p>	<p>RMB, RAC and NEC Elections is available from:</p> <p>Sarah Woodford Head of English Regions</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:regions@rtpi.org.uk">regions@rtpi.org.uk</a> Telephone: 020 7929 9494</p>
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