



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Guidelines for the CIC SIG Election Process

**Consulting and
Independent Contracting
Special Interest Group**

Copies available from:
Society for Technical Communication
901 N. Stuart St., Suite 904
Arlington, VA 22203-1822
(703) 522-4114
stc@stc.org
www.stc.org

Contents

Contents	1
Guidelines for the CIC SIG Election Process	2
Overview of Election Process	2
Set Up Nominating Committee.....	2
Solicit for Candidates for Elected Positions	3
Develop Slate of Candidates	4
Conduct Election.....	6
Report Election Results.....	6
Exhibit A - CIC SIG Board of Directors Elected Position Descriptions	8
Elected Officers	8
Manager’s Responsibilities	8
Assistant Manager’s Responsibilities	8
Secretary’s Responsibilities	9
Treasurer’s Responsibilities.....	9
Immediate Past Manager’s Responsibilities	9
Exhibit B – Sample Solicitation Letter for Candidates to CIC SIG Membership	10
Exhibit C – Content from Example Spreadsheet of Candidates	12
Exhibit D – Candidate Information Statement Sample Template	13
Exhibit E – CIC SIG Candidate Bios Template.....	14
Candidate Name - Candidate for CIC SIG Position (select 1 of n)	14
Exhibit F – Example Announcement of CIC SIG Election Results	15

Guidelines for the CIC SIG Election Process

This guideline describes the overall process used to complete the annual election cycle for the elected offices for the Consulting and Independent Contracting (CIC) Special Interest Group (SIG).

Overview of Election Process

The CIC SIG election process comprises five phases as follows:

- Set up nominating committee
- Solicit for candidates for elected positions
- Develop slate of candidates
- Conduct election
- Report election results

Each of the following subsections describes in detail the steps for completing its corresponding phase.

Tip: In addition to this guideline, a ***CIC SIG Election Toolkit*** can be downloaded for your use. This .zip file includes samples and templates for use in completing the CIC SIG election process. The individual documents in the ***CIC SIG Election Toolkit*** are called out in the applicable places of this guideline.

Set Up Nominating Committee

The basic guidelines for setting up a CIC SIG Nominating Committee are as follows:

- The current CIC SIG Board of Directors (those elected during the previous year), under the leadership of the CIC SIG manager, is responsible for appointing a CIC SIG Nominating Committee Manager.
- The CIC SIG Nominating Committee should comprise at least two members so that one can serve as a “check and balance” for the other.

- At the discretion of the CIC SIG Board of Directors, the other member(s) of the CIC SIG Nominating Committee can either be appointed by the Board or drafted by the CIC SIG Nominating Committee Manager and then approved by the Board.
- All members of the CIC SIG Nominating Committee must be members in good standing of the CIC SIG itself and must be well versed in the procedures described in this guideline.
- No member of the CIC SIG Nominating Committee can be a candidate for election to a CIC SIG Board of Directors position.
- A member of the current CIC SIG Board of Directors can be a member of the CIC SIG Nominating Committee only if that person is not running for a position to return to the CIC SIG Board of Directors.

Solicit for Candidates for Elected Positions

The basic guidelines for soliciting candidates for elected position are as follows:

- Confirm which positions are to be elected positions. The elected position descriptions have been included here as *Exhibit A - CIC SIG Board of Directors Elected Position Descriptions*.

Tip: For the CIC SIG, these are documented in *CIC SIG Elected and Appointed Position Descriptions - May 2006.pdf*. This document has been included in the *CIC SIG Election Toolkit*.

- Draft a letter to CIC SIG membership to solicit responses that indicate interest in running for office. In the request for response, ask each respondent to indicate which position(s) are of interest. *Exhibit B – Sample Solicitation Letter for Candidates to CIC SIG Membership* contains example content for this letter.

Tip: This document has been included as *Example e-mail to Solicit Candidates.doc* in the *CIC SIG Election Toolkit*.

- Post the letter as an e-mail to the membership, using both the CIC SIG listserv and the general membership information listserv. Be sure that the e-mail addresses of all members of the CIC SIG Nominating Committee are included as “respond to” e-mail addresses. **Do not** include requests to respond to any of the current members of the CIC SIG Board of Directors; in fact, potential candidates should not!

Tip: You may need to be given access permission to post to the general membership information listserv. Check with the current CIC SIG Manager to confirm.

- Poll the current CIC SIG Board of Directors to determine interest in continuing in the currently held position or in running for a different position, or possibly both.

Develop Slate of Candidates

The basic guidelines for developing a slate of candidates are as follows:

- Create an MS Excel spreadsheet to record information about respondents to the solicitation letter and current board members interested in serving again. *Exhibit C – Content from Example Spreadsheet of Candidates*, shows some sample content taken from an MS Excel spreadsheet of candidates used for a past CIC SIG election.

Tip: An MS Excel spreadsheet template has been included as *Spreadsheet of Candidates example.xls* in the *CIC SIG Election Toolkit*.

- Send an acknowledgement e-mail response to each individual that responds to the solicitation letter.
- Record the information about each respondent in terms of name, contact e-mail, and position(s) of interest. Note anything else of interest in a *Comments* area on the MS Excel spreadsheet.
- For individuals who respond, but indicate interest in something other than running for an elected position, record these as well on the spreadsheet. These individuals may have an issue that needs to be resolved or may be interested in active participation in some other role than an elected position.
- When all potential candidates have submitted and the deadline has passed from the solicitation letter, submit the list of candidates to the STC Office so that they can be vetted.

- Vetting entails confirmation that each candidate is an STC member in good standing and a CIC SIG member in good standing. For the CIC SIG Manager position only, each candidate must be an STC Senior Member.

Tip: Any individual who meets the vetting criteria must be allowed to run for the desired position. Since there is no petitioning process in place for a person to run who was not selected by the CIC SIG Nominating Committee, the committee itself cannot preclude anyone.

- If you do not have a full slate of candidates (i.e., at least one candidate for each elected position, you may need to get creative to fill the unfilled positions. This can include any combination of the following:
 - Asking candidates to consider other positions if you have multiple candidates for one position and no candidates for a second position.
 - Contacting potential candidates on an individual basis.
 - Completing a second solicitation letter cycle that focuses strictly on the unfilled position(s).
- Send a congratulatory e-mail to each candidate that indicates clearly that the individual is to be included on the CIC SIG ballot and for which position. Include a link to the ([Guideline for running for STC office](#)).
- Attach to the e-mail a copy of a template for the candidate to fill out that provides information about self, the office that the candidate is seeking, why the candidate is seeking the position, and the candidate’s vision for the CIC SIG. *Exhibit D – Candidate Information Statement Sample Template* provides an example.

Tip: An MS Word sample has been included as *Candidate Information Statement Sample.doc* in the *CIC SIG Election Toolkit*.

- Ask the candidate to include an electronic photograph (.tif or .bmp format) with the response.
- Using the material provided in each candidate’s response, build the election ballot. *Exhibit E – CIC SIG Candidate Bios Template* shows a sample ballot configuration.

Tip: An MS Word sample has been included as *CIC SIG Candidate Bios Template.doc* in the *CIC SIG Election Toolkit*.

- If you do any editing to a given candidate’s responses, get the candidate’s approval of the changes.

Conduct Election

The basic guidelines for conducting the election are as follows:

- Post the ballot information on the CIC SIG Web site.
- Arrange for an unbiased electronic voting mechanism to which the Assistant to the President for Virtual Communities and the STC Office only has access.
- Either arrange for voting to require member ID to determine voter qualification in advance of voting or that the member ID be required to vote.

Tip: As of the writing of this guideline, STC was in the process of developing a SIG wide solution to electronic voting. However, if the solution has not been reached yet, consider using SurveyMonkey.com or a similar mechanism that allows for password control on a need-to-know basis. Check with the Assistant to the President for Virtual Communities and the STC Office for guidance.

- Post an e-mail to the membership, using both the CIC SIG listserv and the general membership information listserv, that announces the slate of candidates:
 - Include a link to the ballot information location.
 - Include a link to the electronic voting location.
 - Include the start date and end date for voting.
 - Do not include the ballot information itself.

Report Election Results

The basic guidelines for reporting election results are as follows:

- **Receive the election tallies from the STC AP for Virtual Communities and the STC Office, as arranged previously.**
- Notify all candidates of the election results for their particular election. ***For contested elections, do not release the results to anyone, including the winning candidates, until the losing candidates have been notified first..***

Tip: For a losing candidate, it is strongly recommended that you contact the candidate by telephone, if possible. When presenting the news, try to be encouraging to the candidate in terms of becoming or staying actively involved in the CIC SIG.

- Once all candidates have been notified, notify the current CIC SIG Manager, who in turn, notifies the rest of the CIC SIG Board of Directors.
- Write an announcement about the CIC SIG election results. *Exhibit F – Example Announcement of CIC SIG Election Results* shows a sample.

Tip: An MS Word sample has been included as *Example e-mail to Announce Winners.doc* in the *CIC SIG Election Toolkit*.

- Post an e-mail to the membership, using both the CIC SIG listserv and the general membership information listserv, that announces the election results.

Exhibit A - CIC SIG Board of Directors Elected Position Descriptions

These text descriptions of the CIC SIG elected positions were taken verbatim from the *CIC SIG Elected and Appointed Position Descriptions - May 2006.pdf*.

Elected Officers

These lists outline responsibilities for the elected officers. Use them when recruiting new candidates and review them each year in light of the SIG's requirements and goals.

All officers and committee managers must:

- Maintain adequate financial records and submit the following information to the chapter treasurer as requested: preliminary budget, budget updates, and a suggested budget for the next year.
- Develop and maintain procedures for the position.

Manager's Responsibilities

- Assign duties to other officers soon after their election.
- Appoint assistants or committees for tasks not easily managed by standing committees.
- At the beginning of the term, confirm the information in this document and update as necessary.
- Work with the treasurer to supply and maintain guidelines for budgets, expenditures, and other fiscal activities.
- Lead in the formulation of objectives and policies for the SIG.
- Submit reports to the Virtual Community Advocate or other person responsible for submitted SIG reports to the Board.
- Assist in the recruitment of officer candidates and volunteers.
- Review the strategic plan with the management team and make updates as needed.
- Keep informed of all SIG activities and committee work.
- Encourage SIG members to participate in activities.
- Share ideas formally and informally with other SIG managers.
- Attend the international-level leaders' workshop.
- Communicate information to SIG members via email addresses provided by the members to STC International.

Assistant Manager's Responsibilities

- Keep aware of all SIG operations.
- Confer frequently with the SIG manager and assist him or her as needed.
- Help form policy and establish goals and objectives.
- Assume the duties of the SIG manager when he or she is unavailable.

- Work on special projects or manage a committee, based on the SIG's needs.

Secretary's Responsibilities

- Take minutes of management team conference calls and summarize key decisions made via e-mail.
- Post minutes to the SIG Web site.
- Prepare correspondence related to SIG business at the direction of the SIG manager.
- Contact committee managers periodically for status reports.
- Work with the officers and committee managers to keep SIG policies updated.
- Archive information about decisions, surveys, and other SIG-related documents on the Web site.

Treasurer's Responsibilities

- Prepare a call for proposed budget items for the upcoming fiscal year before June 1.
- Ensure that the management team approves the proposed budget and that the approved budget is in place by July 1.
- Review and revise the SIG's reimbursement/payment procedure and obtain management team approval.
- Establish and maintain a checking account.
- Complete signature cards for the SIG bank account.
- Monitor the SIG bank account.
- Deposit SIG funds in checking account and pay invoices promptly.
- Transfer funds from the operating account to a savings account when appropriate.
- Reconcile all financial accounts on a monthly basis.
- Prepare a monthly report of SIG income and expenditures and send it to the management team monthly.
- Prepare reports of income and expenditures on SIG projects.
- Review (or send to STC International) all contracts that involve the SIG.
- Close the fiscal year books on June 30.

Immediate Past Manager's Responsibilities

- Participate in management team email discussions and conference calls.
- Counsel the management team as required.
- Perform other duties as requested by the management team.

Exhibit B – Sample Solicitation Letter for Candidates to CIC SIG Membership

The following content was used for the CIC SIG election in May 2006:

Hello to all CIC SIG members -

The STC year runs from July 1 through June 30, and the CIC SIG, like other STC communities, must elect officers to ensure its continuity and expand its value to you—its members.

Membership in this SIG is invaluable for us contractors and independent consultants! We have all received assistance from the SIG and the effective—proven again and again—way it brings us all together to help one another. The CIC SIG is one of the most active in STC. Besides our active listserv, other opportunities for expanded services are on the horizon.

To build on our success and to implement new professional development opportunities take effort—and we all need to contribute to make sure that the SIG grows and provides services for us all.

The CIC SIG nominating committee is currently looking for those of you who will lead the SIG and contribute to the effort of expanding its value to you and others. Respond to CIC SIG Nominating Committee members name (e-mail address) or name (e-mail address) and let us know how you are willing to serve. Position and their primary responsibilities are listed below. We are looking forward to hearing from you by **Month day, Year**.

SIG Manager -

- Appoints assistants or committees for tasks not easily managed by standing committees.
- Work with the treasurer on budgets, expenditures, and other fiscal activities.
- Lead in the formulation of objectives and policies for the SIG.
- Submit reports to the STC Board of Directors.
- Review and update the SIG strategic plan.
- Attend the international-level leaders' workshop.
- Communicate information to SIG members.

SIG Assistant Manager -

- Assist the SIG Manager as needed
- Help form policy and establish goals and objectives.
- Assume the duties of the SIG manager when he or she is unavailable.

SIG Secretary -

- Take minutes of management team conference calls and summarize key decisions made via e-mail.
- Post minutes to the SIG Web site.
- Prepare correspondence related to SIG business at the direction of the SIG manager.
- Work with SIG officers and committee managers as needed.
- Archive SIG-related information on the Web site.

SIG Treasurer -

- Prepare a call for proposed budget items for the upcoming fiscal year before June 1.
- Ensure that an approved budget is in place by July 1.
- Review SIG's reimbursement/payment procedures with the management team.
- Establish and monitor all SIG accounts.
- Deposit SIG funds in checking account and pay invoices promptly.

- Reconcile all financial accounts monthly and prepare monthly budget vs. actual reports, income, and expenditures for management team review.
- Close the fiscal year books on June 30.

The CIC SIG your SIG! Your assistance is needed to ensure that it will thrive. We look forward to hearing from you by **Month day, Year**.

name (e-mail address)

name (e-mail address)

Exhibit C – Content from Example Spreadsheet of Candidates

This table, extracted from *Spreadsheet of Candidates example.xls* shows examples of the type of content that might be included in a spreadsheet of candidates. The Excel spreadsheet itself should be used by the CIC SIG Nominating Committee to track all responses to the *Solicitation Letter for Candidates* (Exhibit B). For flexibility, use Excel instead of the Word Table provided here.

Position(s) of Interest	Candidate	e-mail address	Nominating Committee Comments	Responses from Candidates
Manager			Note and bio request sent 11 June.	
Manager			Note and bio request sent 11 June.	Received e-mail response on 11 June.
Secretary or Assistant Manager			Note and bio request sent 11 June.	Received bio and pic on 11 June.
Treasurer			Should not serve on Nominating Committee if wants to be a candidate. Note and bio request sent 11 June.	
TBD			Expressed general interest in the process. Sent a follow-up e-mail on 4 June.	
Assistant Manager			Note and bio request sent 11 June.	
			Does not want to run for office, but wants to help. Forwarded name to current CIC SIG Manager	
			Did not want to run for office, but wants more out of the CIC SIG. Wrote to her on 4 June to ask her to get involved. Copied CIC SIG Manager on e-mail chain.	
Assistant Manager			Note and bio request sent 11 June.	Received e-mail response that is interested in being coAssistant Manager.

Exhibit D – Candidate Information Statement Sample Template

Candidate Information – CIC SIG Election

CANDIDATE NAME

1. *What is your vision for the CIC SIG and what would you like to do to make this vision a reality?*

Candidate response.

2. *Describe your professional experience in our umbrella of professions.*

Candidate response.

3. *Describe your STC experience*

Candidate response.

4. *Is there anything else that you would like to add?*

Candidate Response.

Exhibit E – CIC SIG Candidate Bios Template

Candidate Name - Candidate for CIC SIG Position (select 1 of n)

What is your vision for the CIC SIG and what would you like to do to make this vision a reality?

Candidate Response

Describe your professional experience in our umbrella of professions.

Candidate Response

Describe your STC experience.

Candidate Response

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Candidate Response

Photo Here

Exhibit F – Example Announcement of CIC SIG Election Results

The CIC SIG Nominating Committee is pleased to announce that this year's elected slate of candidates is as follows:

Manager -
Assistant Manager -
Assistant Manager -
Secretary -
Treasurer -

Our thanks to all who participated in the election, from the candidates to the more than nnn CIC SIG members who voted. Special thanks to name, who set up the ballots, to name, our Webmaster, who posted the candidate bios, and to name and name for validating and counting the votes!

If you would like to review the bios of our newly elected officers, please visit the CIC SIG Web site at <http://www.stcsig.org/cic/>. There, you can also find a pop-up of the election result details.

Kind regards,

name and name
CIC SIG Nominating Committee