Introduction

There have been a number of frequently repeated questions and comments – and even some "myths" - circulating around how we expect to grow diversity within our community of standards-makers. This document aims to provide answers to the questions and debunk the myths.

Myths & FAQs

Why does BSI need a separate Committee Member / Chair Recruitment Policy and Process in addition to BS 0?

BS 0 outlines the core principles of the member/chair roles and selection processes and does not provide enough detail to offer the level of transparency and clarity we would like.* We also know that member and chair recruitment was not always being done in the same way across the board and we wanted to ensure that in future we were following a consistent set of rules and processes to make recruitment more equitable.
*NB: The new policy / process follow on from what is set out in BS 0, they do not replace or override it. BS 0 is currently under revision and some of the information about the roles and selection process may be changing as a result of that process. The latest edition is expected to be published in March 2021.

Why is BSI changing the policy and process?

Actually, there was no recruitment policy so this is not a change, but a new policy and the processes are a revision and improvement of the existing ones.

Why is employment status / employer information required on the application form?

One of the key parts of the selection process is assessing the impact of the new member on the overall balance of representation and expertise on the committee. In order to do this effectively it is important to understand the applicant's professional activity and affiliations, including employment. In the case of Chairs, it is important to understand employment information and how this may impact on a Chair's ability to remain impartial in light of the make-up of the committee.

Why is BSI collecting personal demographic information in the "additional information section" of the application and how will this be used?

BSI is committed to fostering a diverse community of standards-makers. We therefore strive to reach a wide audience when promoting opportunities to get involved. To help us understand how well we are doing in these efforts it we are asking applicants (both Committee Member and Chair) to provide us with some additional information about themselves and how they heard about getting involved in standards development. Responses to the "additional information" section of the application are entirely optional. Any responses applicants do choose to provide help BSI understand the diversity of our applications for Member/Chair roles and promote diversity and inclusion in standards making. Responses will be anonymized (applicants personal details removed) before they are used for diversity reporting or analysis purposes. Responses are not used when assessing an applicant, nor is a decision not to provide any responses.

Who is on the BSI Chair Selection Panel?

Although it may change from time to time, the Chair Selection Panel is generally made up of:
Director of Standards

Director of Standards Policy
Director of Standards Development
Associate Director, Committees
Associate Director, Operations
Standards-Makers Engagement & Inclusion Manager

How can we increase membership and/or diversity on committees when the industry is small / not diverse and it is difficult to get any members at all?

Generally, when we have compared industry statistics to the representation on BSI committees, we have found the industry is more diverse than the committees. In many, if not most, sectors there are multiple trade associations, professional bodies and networks and usually some of these are for those underrepresented in the sector (e.g. Black Professionals in Construction, Women in Construction and Engineering, EqualEngineering, etc.). We are developing a Knowledge Bank of these organizations and networks so that we can proactively contact them about Committee Member and Chair opportunities. In addition, proactively reaching out to all the other stakeholder groups – beyond just industry – could also be another opportunity to increase the diversity on the committee. Finally, Young Professionals (YP) networks, programmes and organizations are another opportunity for increasing diversity (these tend to naturally be more diverse) and there are many of these explicitly for underrepresented groups. These YP organizations are also included in our Knowledge Bank. We would be more than happy to share the Knowledge Bank with Committee Members / Chairs who are helping with recruitment. We also would welcome information about any organizations to be added to the Knowledge Bank from colleagues and Committee Members / Chairs. The Knowledge Bank is intended to be a living resource.

Do candidates for committee membership put forward by a nominating body need to apply or are they automatically accepted?

Yes, they do need to apply and no they are not automatically accepted. Candidates nominated by nominating bodies, who are not already on any other BSI committees, must complete the application form. All prospective members are assessed for the relevance of their knowledge/experience, stakeholder representation and how their joining would impact the committee. Some examples of why we might need to turn down a candidate nominated by a nominating body would be: the candidate works for an employer which already has other members on the committee; their expertise is already well-represented on or not relevant to the committee; the nominating body already has enough other representatives on the committee. If appropriate, the nominating body may be asked to nominate a different individual.

Do Nominating Bodies need to think about diversity when making nominations?

Yes. We encourage it and it could be equally beneficial for the nominating body too. For example, they should consider making sure they are not always asking the same organizations for representatives to help then engage with more of their members/stakeholders. Nominating organizations should think about diversity of their nominated representatives as a means of supporting their own organization's diversity objectives/programmes (if they have one). Increasing the diversity on committees is an important objective for BSI and we welcome and encourage nominating bodies to help by considering this when they select nominated representatives. It is well documented that diverse groups get better results and create better outcomes, so supporting diversity on committees will also benefit the standards they are developing.

Can there be representatives from two or more different nominating organizations for/in the same sector, subject or area (e.g. British Security Industry Federation and Women in

Security or Federation of Master Builders and Black Professionals in Construction and/or Women in Construction and Engineering)?

Yes. Each of the different nominating organizations will bring a different stakeholder perspective to the committee and including representation from all the different organizations will increase the stakeholder diversity on the committee. This helps to improve the standard, the standards development process and experience to the benefit of all.

In order to increase diversity, is BSI going to favour candidates from underrepresented backgrounds / stakeholder groups or engage in "positive discrimination"?

No. The core criteria for being a member/Chair of a committee remain the same for all candidates: we welcome applications from everyone who is interested in getting involved and all candidates will be treated equally. We expect all committee members to have knowledge / experience that will benefit the work of the committee and/or to represent a relevant stakeholder group. We expect all Chairs to have the skills and attributes and the level of subject matter expertise* which will enable them to effectively Chair the committee. *The level of subject matter expertise will vary between committees.

Is it true that Chairs can never serve more than the recommended maximum of consecutive terms[1]?

No. The term limit is a recommendation and can be exceeded where there is a valid reason for doing so. It is at the discretion of BSI whether the term should be extended. Some of the examples of why an extension to the term limit could be requested by the Committee Manager are: the committees work is at a critical stage which would significantly benefit from continuity of leadership; the committees work is at a critical stage and would be in significant jeopardy if there was a change in leadership; the committee is the midst of a member recruitment drive and the Chair is playing a crucial role in building membership, etc. The request / case to extend a Chair's tenure will then be sent to the Chair Selection Panel and ultimately to SPSC who will make the final decision. If you are a Chair who has exceeded the recommended term limit and you would like to continue as Chair, we recommend you have a conversation with your Committee Manager before you reapply.

Does a Chair have to leave the committee when their tenure ends / when they stand down as Chair?

No, not as a matter of course. Chairs can remain on the committee(s) they chaired if they wish too and if it would be of benefit to the work of the committee for them to do so. We value the accumulated wisdom of experienced Chairs and we want to, insofar as possible, give Chairs the opportunity to transfer it to the next Chair and/or the next generation of members.

What does an outgoing Chair or new candidate for Chair who has already put themselves forward (prior to implementation of the new process) need to do? Do they need to apply?

In order to ensure the successful and equitable implementation of the new Chair application process without causing undue inconvenience to those who already fully completed the old process we have agreed a transitional process. If you already submitted your CV **and** participated in an interview, your application will be progressed and you do not need to do anything further. If you submitted your CV or sent an e-mail stating your interest in standing for Chair of a committee but **were not** interviewed, you will need to complete the new application form in order to progress your request. In both of the above

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[1] This is two terms for committees with a designated Committee Manager and three term for committees managed by the Committee Service Centre.

the scenarios, the roles will be open for applications to ensure any other interested candidates have an equal opportunity to apply.

Will Committee Chair roles be open to all and publicised? Will this include roles where a candidate has already come forward?

Yes and yes. As has always been the case, any time a Chair's term comes to an end / has ended that role effectively becomes a Chair "vacancy" for which any / all interested parties are welcome to apply. All such vacancies will be listed on the new BSI Committee Chair recruitment web pages. The vacancy will also be promoted to all the committee's members and nominating organizations as well as to related committees. Committee Manager will also be promoting the opportunity on platforms such as LinkedIn and other BSI colleagues will be doing general outreach promoting all Chair opportunities.

Has BSI taken committee member / Chair views into consideration when creating the new policy and process?

Yes. One of the big drivers for the changes to the policy and process is the feedback we have received from committee members and Chairs. Some of the feedback we hope the changes will address are:
- It is difficult / impossible to find new committee members
- Chairs feel like they can't retire / step down when they are ready to do so because there are no other candidates
- New Chair candidates don't come forward because it is seen as a "life sentence"
- Not everyone feels equally encouraged / enabled to apply for Leadership roles
- Some committees lack sufficient members / have gaps in expertise / have gaps in stakeholder representation
- The lack of new members / Chairs means that the experienced generation has no-one to whom they can transfer their knowledge

Could Communications and clarity about the Chair recruitment/appointment policy and process be improved? Could they make Chairs feel more valued; show more appreciation for the contribution of Chairs?

Yes. Under the old policy/process this was certainly feedback we had received and there were occasions on which some of our communications were not as we would expect. Some of the most important objectives of the new policy / process are improving clarity, transparency and communications and creating consistency of experience during the process. We will make sure that it is explicitly clear both in what we say and in how we do things that BSI does recognize and value the important role that Committee Chairs play, and we want to make sure we are doing everything we can to ensure that the transition from one Chair to the next is a positive experience for all those involved.