Life Membership Nominations Process

Updated and Approved 14 February 2024

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This document sets out the criteria, process, templates, and other details around nominations for VSA Life Membership.

## VSA Life Membership Context

VSA Life Membership is provided for in the VSA Constitution, which specifies that “*a Life Member is an individual appointed by a General Meeting, on the recommendation of Council, for outstanding service to VSA.”*

The VSA Council Charter outlines thecriteria for the Council recommending Life Membership. Nominees are generally expected to meet all or most of the criteria. The criteria are:

* Active participation and commitment to improving VSA and its work;
* Consistently upheld the values of VSA;
* Held a number of roles in VSA;
* Loyal and lengthy involvement and membership with VSA; or
* Other relevant and exceptional contributions that exemplify the spirit of VSA Life Membership.

Life members would normally be expected to be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents, but it is possible to nominate a non-New Zealander who meets the criteria.

Life Membership benefits:

* Once approved by the membership at a General Meeting, VSA Life Members receive the following benefits:
* Deemed to be financial members for life, without paying a subscription (as outlined in the VSA Constitution).
* Invited to key VSA functions.
* Life Members’ partners will be included in invitations at the same charges (if any) as apply to Life Members. (Note the partner’s privilege will lapse upon termination of the Life Membership unless the Council determines otherwise).

## Life Membership Nomination Process

1. The nominators (nominator and seconder) complete the membership form (see **Annex 1**) and send it to info@vsa.org.nz.
   * Life Membership can be nominated and seconded by VSA members (including other Life Members) and VSA staff.
2. VSA Management will confirm receipt to the nominators.
3. The CEO will forward the nomination form to the Governance and Organisational Performance (GOP) Committee for consideration at its next meeting.
4. The GOP Committee will consider the nomination in accordance with the criteria guidance below and will report to the Council with a recommendation.
   * The Committee may consult with the nominators, VSA staff, other Life Members, and any other people that may provide insight.
5. The Council will consider the recommendation of the Committee at its next meeting and will recommend (or not) to the next AGM or other General Meeting the appointment of the nominated Life Member, and this will be minuted accordingly.\*
6. If the Council agrees to recommend the nominee, the VSA Council Chair (or delegate) will contact the nominee to check they accept the nomination. VSA Management will let the nominators know that the nominee is being recommended to the General Meeting and ask if they are willing to speak to the nomination (if required).
7. If the nominee accepts the nomination, VSA Management will prepare the Notice of Motion (see **Annex 2**), include it in the General Meeting papers and follow processes as outlined in the Constitution/Charter.
   * VSA Management will arrange a certificate for presentation at the General Meeting and complete follow-up actions as outlined below.

\*If the Council does NOT recommend the appointment to a General Meeting, the Council Chair will respond directly to the nominator, setting out the reasons. Unsuccessful nominations can be resubmitted at a later date.

## VSA Management Responsibilities:

1. Ensure that Life Membership is on the agenda of any General Meeting where a nomination has been recommended by the Council.
2. Maintain Life Membership records, including General Meeting minute decisions, and provide a list of Life Members to each AGM and to each other General Meeting where a recommendation for Life Membership is being considered.
3. Arrange new Life Members certificates, signed by both the Council Chair and the CEO, for presentation at the General Meeting.
4. Keep the database up to date and publish Life Member names on the VSA website (if they consent).
5. Inform the nearest Interest Group (if there is one in the area) of new Life Members, so that they can involve the Life Member in Interest Group activities as appropriate.

## Life Membership Nomination Evaluation Guidance

The GOP Committee and Council should consider the following when assessing whether or not to recommend Life Membership for a nominee.

### General Considerations

* The overarching determination is whether the nominee has made a significant and outstanding contribution to VSA that is well-evidenced in the nomination form
* A nominee should generally meet all or most of the criteria, but it is at the Council’s discretion as to when/whether the overarching threshold has been met
* There is no maximum number of nominees for each year/General Meeting, nor a maximum number of Life Members, but the Council may wish to consider perceptions, administrative load, and cadence when making recommendations for Life Membership

### Criteria Guidance

The following table provides guidance for the Committee/Council when evaluating Life Membership nominations and determining whether to recommend a nominee for Life Membership.

| **Criteria** | **Evaluation Guidance** |
| --- | --- |
| Active participation and commitment to improving VSA and its work | * Ideally multiple examples of significant ongoing active engagement with VSA and dedication to supporting VSA’s mahi and kaupapa * Previous examples include long-term (30+ years) Selection Advisors, the UniVol programme initiator/significant supporter, long-serving Council members, long-serving Interest Group Co-Convenors, significant contributions to key VSA projects/activities (e.g. Management training, volunteer briefings, strategic and governance projects) |
| Consistently upheld VSA values | * There should be examples provided of multiple values that the nominee has exemplified in their mahi with/for VSA |
| Held a number of roles in VSA (list roles and years) | * There should be at least three different roles listed (this can include staff and volunteer roles) |
| Loyal and lengthy involvement and membership with VSA | * This should ideally be a minimum of 10 years, but is more likely to be 15+, particularly if being relied on as a key nomination criterion * This should ideally be active involvement with the organisation in a specific role(s)/capacity and not just as a passive Interest Group or financial member |
| Other relevant and exceptional contributions that exemplify the spirit of VSA Life Membership | * This criterion allows for any evidence/circumstances where an exceptional contribution to VSA has been made that is not covered by the other criteria but exemplifies why the nominee is deserving of Life Membership |

## Templates

**Annex 1:** Life Membership nomination form (page 5)

**Annex 2:** Life Membership Notice of Motion for AGM form (page 6)

**Annex 3:** Example of completed Notice of Motion: Appointment of Life Member (page 8)

**Life Membership Nomination Form – [Nominee name in full]**

Please complete this form in conjunction with reading the Life Membership process details, and email to **info@vsa.org.nz**.

**Date**: [insert date nomination form completed]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Phone and email address** |
| Nominee: [nominee name in full] | [nominator to complete] |
| Nominator: [nominator name in full] | [nominator to complete] |
| Seconder: [seconder name in full] | [seconder to complete] |

Brief explanation of how the nominee meets all or most of the Life Membership criteria:

| **Criteria** | **Brief explanation** |
| --- | --- |
| Loyal and lengthy involvement and membership of VSA | [nominator/seconder to complete] |
| Made a significant and outstanding contribution to VSA | [nominator/seconder to complete] |
| Active participation and commitment to improving VSA and its work | [nominator/seconder to complete] |
| Consistently upheld VSA values | [nominator/seconder to complete]  [VSA’s values are:   * Commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi * Respectful partnerships * Working and learning together * Cross-cultural understanding * Fairness, social justice and self-determination * The spirit of volunteering] |
| Held a number of roles in VSA (list roles and years) | [nominator/seconder to complete] |
| Other relevant and exceptional criteria | [nominator/seconder to complete] |

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE ABROAD TE TŪAO TĀWĀHI**

**NOTICES TO AGM**

**Notice of Motion: Appointment of Life Member – [Nominee name in full]**

**Background for Motion**

The VSA Constitution provides that Life Members may be appointed for outstanding service to VSA (clause 8.2) and that VSA Council may recommend to a General Meeting the appointment of Life Members (clause 14.4).

The Council takes into account the following criteria before recommending a person be appointed as a Life Member:

* Active participation and commitment to improving VSA and its work;
* Consistently upheld the values of VSA;
* Held a number of roles in VSA;
* Loyal and lengthy involvement and membership with VSA; or
* Other relevant and exceptional contributions that exemplify the spirit of VSA Life Membership.

[option to add further context here e.g. explanation of the role of Selection Advisors]

**Rationale for Motion**

[nominee name in full] is nominated for life membership by [insert nominator names and roles].

*Comment from nominators*

[provide short summary of any comments on the nominee from the nominators]

*Comment from Council*

In the Council’s view, [nominee name] has made an exceptional contribution to VSA and satisfies [all/many] of the above criteria (a summary of [nominee name]’s contributions to VSA against these criteria is appended). Council therefore recommends that [nominee name in full] be appointed a Life Member.

**Motion**

That [nominee name in full] be appointed a Life Member of VSA.

**Appendix: Life Membership Criteria Contributions – [Nominee name in full]**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Brief explanation** |
| Loyal and lengthy involvement and membership of VSA | [copy here from the nomination] |
| Made a significant and outstanding contribution to VSA |  |
| Active participation and commitment to improving VSA and its work |  |
| Consistently upheld VSA values |  |
| Held a number of roles in VSA |  |
| Other relevant and exceptional criteria |  |

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE ABROAD TE TŪAO TĀWĀHI**

**NOTICES TO AGM**

**Notice of Motion: Appointment of Life Member – Liz Medford [example]**

**Background for Motion**

The VSA Constitution provides that Life Members may be appointed for outstanding service to VSA (clause 8.2.4) and that VSA Council may recommend to a General Meeting the appointment of Life Members (clause 13.7(k)).

Council takes into account the following criteria before recommending a person be appointed as a Life Member:

1. lengthy involvement or membership of VSA
2. significant and outstanding contribution to VSA
3. active participation in and commitment to improving VSA and its work
4. consistently upheld values of VSA
5. having held a number of roles in VSA
6. other relevant and exceptional criteria as agreed from time to time by Council.

VSA has a dedicated group of Selection Advisors who are an integral part of the volunteer recruitment process. They bring expertise from their professional lives to help to ensure that VSA is deploying a high standard of volunteer to local communities.

Selection Advisors participate in the volunteer selection process, which primarily involves undertaking in-depth 1-on-1 interviews. The Selection Advisors assess a volunteer candidate’s attitude, resilience, well-being, relationships, and commitment, before writing a report with a recommendation for the VSA Volunteer Recruitment Services Team. This activity requires sensitivity, risk analysis, and compliance responsibilities, such as those related to the Children’s Act, and the reports produced are highly detailed and thorough.

Selection Advisors also play a role in the return journey of a volunteer – wherever possible, the same Advisor used in recruitment is asked to conduct a wellness check/debrief upon the volunteer’s return. Selection Advisors may charge $135 per interview for their professional services.

The importance of the Selection Advisor’s role cannot be understated. The work that they do is essential to successful volunteer recruitment.

**Rationale for Motion**

Liz Medford is nominated for life membership by VSA Life Member, Carolyn Mark, and VSA Volunteer Recruitment Manager, Bill Backhaus.

*Comment from nominators*

Liz first became involved with VSA while head of the Careers Advisory Service for Victoria University of Wellington. She arranged the university’s careers events and helped to spread the word about VSA to students. Subsequently, Liz used her expertise in interviewing to chair VSA selection panels before moving into a role as an in-depth 1-on-1 Selection Advisor. Liz has a very warm and engaging personality that she uses to put potential volunteers at ease during the rigorous and personal interview process. Since retiring from the university, she has continued to assist VSA. Her commitment to the organisation has never wavered.

*Comment from Council*

In Council’s view, Liz has made an exceptional contribution to VSA and satisfies all of the above criteria (a summary of Liz’s contribution to VSA is appended). Council therefore recommends that Liz be appointed a Life Member.

**Motion**

That Liz Medford be appointed a Life Member of VSA.

**Appendix: Life Membership Criteria – Liz Medford**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Brief explanation** |
| Loyal and lengthy involvement and membership of  VSA | Liz has provided specialist support services to VSA in various areas for 34 years. |
| Made a significant and outstanding contribution to VSA | Liz has been a Selection Advisor since late 1988. In that time, she has regularly made herself available to facilitate Selection Advisor interviews with candidates, contributed to the debriefing of returning volunteers, and participation in Selection Weekends.  In addition to her work as a Selection Advisor, Liz has also been a subject matter expert for panel interviews, a behavioural observer for UniVol interview days, provided advice on VSA youth engagement (including the UniVol program), and has helped to organise VSA representation for Career Expo days at Victoria University of Wellington.  Liz’s involvement with VSA is ongoing, including an upcoming commitment to observe UniVol assessment days and assist with selection interviews. |
| Active participation and commitment to improving VSA and its work | Over her 34 years, Liz has used using her career consultant expertise to play an active role in providing insight and support to the VSA Volunteer Recruitment Services Team on the effectiveness of practices and processes. Liz has also used her contacts with Victoria University of Wellington to extend brand awareness and promote recruitment campaigns, such as for the UniVol program. |
| Consistently upheld VSA values | Liz has consistently upheld VSA’s values in her collaboration with and assistance to the organisation, particularly the spirit of volunteering. She has conducted her interviews in a professional, respectful, warm, and sensitive manner and has shown over 30 years of commendable commitment to VSA and its values. |
| Held a number of roles in VSA | Liz has been a Selection Advisor, chaired selection panels, conducted debriefing interviews with returning volunteers, provided technical subject matter expertise for panel interviews, acted as a behavioural observer for UniVol interview days, and has helped to organise VSA representation at Victoria University of Wellington and promote VSA to its students. |
| Other relevant and exceptional criteria | Liz has always chosen to provide her services to VSA on an unpaid basis. Her contribution to one of VSA’s most important areas of work for more than three decades has been exceptional and invaluable. |