

USAIN Procedures and Rules -- Updated 13 May 2018

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I. USAIN MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

A. Membership Business Meeting:

1. The Network membership business meeting will be held in conjunction with the biennial conference. If required, a special business meeting of the membership may be called and held virtually.
2. The President officiates at all such meetings or arranges for an alternate, following the same order of succession as for Council meetings (see II.G.3.).
3. Notice of upcoming business meetings must be sent to the membership at least 30 days in advance of the meeting by the Secretary.

B. Conferences:

1. The Network holds program conferences approximately every two years to provide educational and professional development opportunities for the membership. Conferences are usually held in the spring of even-numbered years, however, there may be circumstances or opportunities arise that permit moving the conference date.

2. Policies and guidelines for the organization of conferences are developed by the Council and implemented by the Conference Committee.
3. Conferences may be sponsored in cooperation with other agricultural or information organizations if such cooperative ventures are in the best interests of the membership.
4. The Council must approve agreements with co-sponsoring organizations before conference planning can begin.

II. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

A. Function:

1. The Executive Council (hereafter called the Council) manages the affairs of the Network and makes decisions for the Network between meetings of the membership.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Council acts on behalf of the Network and is responsible for its fiscal affairs, budgeting, and overall planning.
2. The Council determines all policies for the Network, within the limits of the Bylaws; approves the annual budget; determines the locations and dates of Network business meetings and biennial conferences; takes such actions as it considers necessary to carry out the objectives of the Network and to preserve its records; upon recommendation of the Awards and Honors Committee, approves the designation of Honorary Members of the Network; and, performs such other functions as the membership may direct.
3. The Council acts on special expenditure funding requests as presented to the Council by the President.
4. The Council may on occasion choose to grant a Special Achievement Award to a member of USAIN who has provided outstanding service or support to USAIN. It will be awarded on an *ad hoc* basis for work performed outside the sphere of the Council, for meritorious service to USAIN.

C. Composition and Organization:

1. The Council consists of twelve Councillors, eleven elected and one ex-officio.
2. The eleven elected Councillors are the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, most recent Past-President, and six Directors.
3. The ex officio Councillor is a representative of the National Agricultural Library and, as specified in the Bylaws, is a non-voting member of the Council.

D. Terms of Office and Vacancies:

1. The eleven elected Councillors take office as of June 1 following their election and serve until May 31 at the end of their term of office. If there is an election delay, all serve until their successors are elected and assume their duties. Newly-elected Councillors may be invited to join the May Council meeting, preceding the start of their terms, to gain some familiarity with the Council's meeting structure and ongoing work.
2. The President-Elect serves for one year, succeeding to the office of President in

the second year and remaining on the Council as the most recent Past-President in the third year.

3. The Secretary, Treasurer and the Directors serve two-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

4. In the event of withdrawal of the President, the title and all duties and obligations are assumed by the President-Elect. Should further succession to the office become necessary, the title, duties, and obligations are assumed by the most recent Past-President.

5. The Council, from among the Directors presently serving, fills any vacancy on the Council created by succession to the presidency. Other vacancies in the membership of the Council are filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the Council. The length of each appointment is determined by the circumstances of the vacancy.

6. The ex officio member is appointed by the Director of NAL and serves an indefinite time as determined by the NAL Director. The ex officio member is to be a source of communication between NAL and USAIN and provides logistical support when possible. In addition, the ex officio member may be able to contribute information or expertise to the committee as requested. However, the primary role in formulating policy or reaching other decisions must rest with the elected members of the Council committee.

E. Committees and Interest Groups:

1. All Committees are responsible to the Council, which delegates such powers and functions to them as are needed for carrying out their responsibilities. Standing Committees are Awards and Honors, Budget, Bylaws, Communications, Conference, Legislative and Government Relations, Membership, Nominations and Elections, and Preservation and Digital Library Committee. The Council may establish additional Standing and Special Project Committees.

2. A petition of fifteen members and approval of the Council establishes Interest Groups relating to areas of interest actively represented among the membership of the Network. Each Interest Group develops a statement of purpose or scope that represents the consensus of the Group on the common interest or concern to be addressed by the Group's activities. Interest Groups have Conveners who coordinate activities; this individual is either appointed by the President or elected by the Group from among their number, with Council approval. Further organizational structure is optional. The Council dissolves inactive Interest Groups.

3. Committees and Interest Groups report annually to the Council and provide additional reports at the request of the Council or the President.

F. Archives:

1. The President ensures that an Archivist is appointed to maintain the Network's historical records. The Council determines the composition of the archives and approves guidelines for use of the archives by officers and committee chairs in depositing materials in the archives.

G. Meetings of the Council:

1. The Council holds at least one meeting annually and may hold additional meetings at the call of the President or upon written request (including electronic mail) of any two members of the Council. The Council's current practice is to meet monthly via conference call. Six members of the Council constitute a quorum. During non-conference years, the location of the annual Council meeting shall be determined by consensus of the Council; current practice is to convene this meeting at the National Agricultural Library.
2. Council meetings are open to members of the Network and, by invitation of the President, to nonmembers.
3. The President presides at all meetings of the Council, as Chair. In the absence of the President, the President-Elect presides. In the absence of both the President and the President-Elect, the order of succession to the duty of presiding is the Treasurer, Secretary, the Past-President, and a Director.
4. When the President believes that a question should be resolved by a vote of the entire Council between meetings, the Council votes by mail, telephone, or electronic means, as provided in the Bylaws. A two-thirds vote (seven members) of the Council members for the action being considered is required in these cases.
5. Conduct of meetings:
 - a) Notice: The President sends written notice of all Council Meetings and a proposed agenda to all members of the Council at least 5 business days before each regular or special Council Meeting; email notice is acceptable.
 - b) Agenda: Councillors may introduce items of business for any scheduled meeting by contacting the President at least three days before the meeting and furnishing appropriate background information for a revised agenda. At the beginning of each meeting, the proposed agenda is assumed to be adopted; additional substantive items may be added or deleted by amendment.
 - c) Rules: These Procedures and Rules and the Bylaws of the Network govern meetings of the Council and the Network. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order is the parliamentary authority on matters not covered by these documents.
 - d) Minutes: The Secretary maintains a draft set of minutes, which is furnished to each Councillor within thirty days after each meeting. At the next meeting, these minutes are presented for adoption. The minutes may be amended to make factual corrections concerning debates or votes, but cannot be changed to modify actions previously taken.
 - e) Motions: All decisions of the meeting are made by means of motions from voting members of the Council, seconded by other voting members, or from committees. Motions usually are stated by the Chair, offered for debate, and then put to a vote by the Chair. Motions are always stated in the positive, not in the negative.
 - f) Debate: The Chair gives preference to the maker of the motion to speak first, but not to the seconder next. Recognition should alternate, so far as practicable, between those favoring and those opposing the question. All debate is directed through the Chair.
 - g) Closing Debate: If the Chair determines that there has been ample debate,

with full opportunity for both sides to be heard; or if the Chair sees that, after several speakers, there is no opposition, the Chair, on its own initiative, may propose that debate be closed.

III. COUNCILLORS

A. Qualifications:

All Councillors must be Individual Members of the Network or the designated representatives of Institutional Members.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

All Councillors are expected to:

1. Attend all in-person meetings of the Council and of the membership to the best of their ability. When the Council meets virtually each month, attend the virtual meetings or provide information to the Chair in advance, that they will be absent.
2. Contribute information on the activities of the office for incorporation into the Annual Report on Network activities submitted to the Council and the membership.
3. Review the appropriate sections of the Procedures and Rules document at the conclusion of their term and to submit proposed corrections and revisions as needed for inclusion in the next edition.
4. Arrange for the transfer of files to a successor or to the Network archives.
5. Perform other duties specific to each office. (See procedures section for duties of a specific office.)

C. Financial Support:

There will be a line item in the budget providing funds each fiscal year for the elected members of the Council to use to help defray expenses for attendance at Council meetings or business meetings when these are not covered by the incumbent's organization. It is the responsibility of the current members of the Council to decide and vote each year on how they would like to allocate the funds.

Financial support is available to Councillors for travel to meetings. The Treasurer will send an email to the Council during the conference registration period in conference years, or at least two months prior to a Council meeting in non-conference years, reminding members of the availability and amount of funds, and soliciting requests for travel assistance. Councillors should submit requests for travel assistance to the Treasurer and President by email. Requests will be kept confidential.

Travel expenses for which funds may be used include transportation or hotel costs (for example, when adding an additional conference day to attend a Council meeting provides a financial hardship for a member). Financial support also can be extended to a Councillor who is engaging in professional travel to any other meeting to represent USAIN.

The President will make all funding decisions. A member who receives financial

support for travel should submit documentation to the Treasurer, showing estimated costs prior to the meeting, and receipts showing actual costs following the meeting. The Treasurer will reimburse the member within one month of receiving documentation of actual expenses.

IV. PRESIDENT

A. Function:

The President serves as the chief executive officer of the Network and of the Council.

B. Appointments and Assignments:

The President is responsible for the following:

1. Appointing the Chairs of all Standing Committees except the Awards, Budget, Bylaws, and Nominations Committees.
2. Appointing the members of all Standing Committees, except the Awards, Budget, Bylaws, and Nominations Committees, or delegating this duty to the Committee Chairs.
3. Assigning Committee and Interest Group Liaison responsibilities to the Directors.
4. Appointing the Conveners of Interest Groups or arranging for appointment from among the membership of the Group, with the approval of Council.
5. Appointing liaisons to other organizations, agencies, and to meetings of other associations.
6. Appointing the President-Elect or other Councillor as an alternate in performance of presidential duties when necessary.
7. Appointing a parliamentarian, as necessary, to advise the Chair on correct parliamentary procedure during Council meetings and Network business meetings.

C. Duties:

Among the duties of the President are:

1. To recommend to the Council measures considered desirable to further the objectives and broaden the effectiveness of the Network.
2. To call and schedule at least one membership business meeting of the Network biennially in conjunction with the biennial conference of the Network.
3. To set the agendas for all Council meetings and all membership business meetings.
4. To preside at all meetings of the Council and the membership.
5. To arrange for a mail, telephone or electronic vote of the Council on any question requiring action of the entire Council that cannot await a regular or special meeting, provided that all Council members have consented to vote by such means, and that a two-thirds (seven members) affirmative vote of all Council members with voting privileges is received for a measure to pass.
6. With the Treasurer, to sign all contracts and legal documents, unless otherwise determined by the Council, and to serve on the Budget Committee.
7. To notify individuals of their designation as Honorary Members of the Network

and to make the public announcement of this honor and all awards given by the Network.

8. To notify successful candidates for Network office and announce the election results.

9. To conduct a survey of the Membership every year, preferably by early September with results distributed by November. Consult with the Heads of Committees, Interest Groups, Program Planner, as well as the Council to gather questions for the survey. Include questions related to the Action Plan.

10. To remind the Committee Heads and IG conveners that USAIN has a paid subscription to a survey tool and that they may conduct surveys as needed of the membership. If they need to survey outside the membership, they must first submit their survey instrument to the Council for review.

11. Annually, to prepare certificates or letters of appreciation for Chairs of Committees and, during conference years, Interest Group Conveners.

12. The President, together with the Chair of Communications and Web Site Coordinator, will re-evaluate the web hosting agreement to determine if it is still satisfactory for all. This shall be done by June 1st every three years, e.g., 2016, 2019, 2022.

13. The President shall appoint a Director to take leadership in revising the Action Plan every 3 years (e.g., 2017, 2020, 2023). See item F.

14. In July of the year prior to a conference year send an announcement to the USAIN –L Listserv to request submission of proposals to host the conference to be held 3 years in the future (e.g. July 2017 call was made for the Spring 2020 conference -- site selected was announced at 2018 conference).

15. Initiate meetings with the business management company to improve communication with the EC (at least one meeting per year).

16. Work with the Treasurer to conduct regular reviews of services performed by the management company (reviews every three years 2017, 2020, etc.).

17. Review and update the USAIN Calendar of Deadlines document.

D. Reports and Records:

The President is responsible for the following:

1. Preparing an Annual Report of Network activities for submission to the Council and the membership.

2. Assuring that the Secretary has prepared the minutes of Council and membership meetings and submitted them in accordance with Network guidelines.

3. Preparing appropriate news or activity updates for dissemination on USAIN-L, and/or the USAIN web site including the minutes of Council and membership meetings.

4. At the beginning of his/her term, the President will prepare a welcome statement that will appear on the USAIN web site.

E. Special Expenditures Funding:

1. Funding requests for special expenditures must be submitted in writing to the USAIN President. The President will then provide copies to the Council, along with

a timeline for the decision-making process. The council may ask for additional information or documentation, in order to make a final decision. Standing committees and task forces are encouraged to use the existing procedures and rules regarding budgets and expenditures, and rely on these special procedures sparingly.

2. All unbudgeted expenditures greater than \$200 must be presented to and approved by the Council. All expenditures over \$5000 must go through a bid process. As a rule, there should be 3 bids presented to the Council at one of the bi-annual Council meetings. However, there may be some special circumstances in which fewer than three bids will be feasible. These would be in cases that, because of the nature of the project, there may not be a large group of expertise to choose from to satisfy the requirement of three bids. In such cases, the "Sole source justification concept" will be considered. The project director will be responsible for managing the bidding process.

3. The President has the discretionary authority to approve unbudgeted expenditures of less than \$500, up to 2 times in their term without the approval of the Council. The total of these expenditures may not exceed \$1,000.

4. All unbudgeted funding requests for any amount must meet the criteria below and be in the form outlined or they will not be considered.

CRITERIA

Criteria for funding must fit in one or more of the following categories.

Funding will be used:

1. To further the work of USAIN
2. For a special project requested by any USAIN member
3. To encourage participation in USAIN
4. To benefit a charity, cause, or to further agriculture-related or library work.

FUNDING REQUEST FORMAT

All requests for funding must be in writing and must include the following:

1. Title of Project or Initiative
2. Amount requested
3. Date of request
4. Date or duration of project or initiative
5. Member name and contact information
6. Criteria category with explanation/description
7. Date needed by
8. Date used by
9. Rationale for the special funding request and expected outcome of the project

If funding is approved, there should be progress reports on achievement, preferably every three months. A final report of how much money was spent and an accounting of the expenditure of funds must be provided to the Council within 4 weeks of the completion of the project. The Council has the right to cancel the

project if there are major problems.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR DRAWING UP A CONTRACT WITH A CONSULTANT

In general, the project director is responsible for setting up a contract and having a discussion with the person who will be doing the actual work. Once the project director (and perhaps the Council if that is necessary) has created an RFP with the guidelines and expectations, the potential consultant would be able to respond. The consultant may be the best person to actually draw up the contract. The contract would include a statement in advance of what the research will entail, the expected deliverables and outcome, the responsibilities on each side, the due dates or a timeline, and the penalties for not producing. In addition, there should be an escape clause, including any disclaimers, disclosures, and limitations on the part of the consultant. The contract would also include the amount of money and how it is paid, e.g. in installments, at the end, or when a timeline is met. This serves as a protection for the consultant. Projects costing over \$5,000 will be reviewed by a legal representative.

Once the contract is drawn up, the Council will vote on whether or not to accept the proposal.

F. Action Plan:

1. Under the guidance of the President the Council reviews and revises the Action Plan every three years (e.g. 2017, 2020, 2023).
 - a) A review committee is appointed by the President 12 months prior to the termination of the current Action Plan.
 - b) Questions related to the Action Plan should be incorporated into the membership survey conducted in the preceding year.
 - c) Comments and suggestions will be solicited from the membership through USAIN-L and/or mail surveys.
 - d) A draft revision is submitted to the membership for comment by April 1 of the revision year.
 - e) The Executive Council votes on the Action Plan by May 1 of the revision year.
 - f) The revised Action Plan takes effect on June 1 of the revision year.
2. Action plans will have a designation of responsibility and a timeline assigned by the Executive Council.
3. An annual report of progress toward completion of Action Plans will be prepared by those designated responsible and submitted to the Executive Council. This may be incorporated into the Annual Report of Network Activities prepared each year by the President.
4. An annual summary of accomplishments will be compiled by the Executive Council with input (statistical if appropriate) from the annual reports and from participant surveys.
5. The Action Plan is posted on the USAIN website. The membership is advised of the location via email.
6. A paper and electronic copy of each final version of the Action Plan will be given

to the Archivist.

V. PRESIDENT-ELECT

A. Function:

The President-Elect serves as a member of the Council, participates at the request of the President in the general supervision of Network activities, represents the Network at the request of the President, and assumes the duties of President in the event of the absence or withdrawal of the President.

B. Appointments:

The President-Elect may begin appointing Chairs of certain Committees before succeeding to the presidency.

C. Duties:

The duties of the President-Elect are:

1. To preside at meetings of the Council and of the membership in the absence of the President.
2. To serve on the Budget Committee.
3. To assist the President with any projects, policy planning or other business affairs that the President might designate.
4. To serve as Chair of the Awards and Honors Committee.
5. To serve as the Recorder of Action Items (the herder list) during the Council meetings.

VI. SECRETARY

A. Function:

The Secretary records actions of the Network and is a member of the Council.

B. Duties Related to Meetings and Correspondence:

1. Sends written notice of all business meetings to the membership at least 30 days before each regular or special business meeting.
2. Maintains a draft set of minutes for each Council meeting, to be furnished to the Councillors within thirty days after each meeting. At the next meeting, these minutes are presented for adoption.
3. Maintains a draft set of minutes for each Network business meeting, to be distributed to all members of the Council and to the membership on USAIN-L. At the next business meeting, these minutes are presented for adoption.
4. Maintains official copies of the approved minutes of all Council and Network meetings in chronological order in a binder or folder set up for that purpose, to include any committee reports and documents submitted at the meetings covered by the minutes, a copy of the Network Bylaws, and a copy of the Procedures and Rules.
5. Conducts official Network correspondence; supervises all mailings concerned with Network business, including membership renewal notices and Bylaws amendment ballots; and maintains a file of current records.
6. Regularly checks the USAIN webmail account, forwarding emails to the

appropriate responder when necessary.

7. With the Past-President, is responsible for monitoring the Procedures and Rules Document.

VII. TREASURER

A. Function:

The Treasurer is the chief financial officer of the Network and is a member of the Council.

B. Duties Related to Finance:

1. Chairs the Budget Committee which is comprised of the Treasurer, Past-President, President-Elect, President, and one non-Council member of the Network.
2. Submits for Council approval each year a budget prepared by the Budget Committee.
3. Submits a statement of account of the Network's funds at each Council and membership meeting. Note: The budget year is a calendar year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) The budget cycle is for 2 years and the budget has to balance over a 2-year period since the conference is every other year and advances for expenditures come from one year's budget and are paid back after the conference the following year.
4. In the third quarter of each year, compiles the budget figures for the reserve metric (see Section XIV(C)(7)) and with the Budget Committee, determines if we are fiscally sound.
5. Coordinates with USAIN's contracted business manager on the collection and deposit of funds for the Network as required and authorized by the President or Council and draws all checks written against Network funds, maintaining the appropriate account information and supporting documentation.
6. Serves as the liaison to the business manager.
7. As Chair of the Budget Committee, investigates investment options with the business manager or designee for available Network funds and recommends investment policies and guidelines; and is responsible for ensuring that an annual internal audit/self-check review is performed by the Budget Committee or an external audit is performed by a qualified financial management resource recommended by the business manager.
8. Develops and implements procedures and forms for use by officers and committee chairs in requesting funds and reporting expenditures. Coordinates with the business manager to maintain accurate and detailed financial records of the Network and of the Council, including appropriate receipts for all monies expended, and furnishing such financial statements as may be required by the Council.
9. Receives and checks the monthly statements supplied by the business manager.
10. Ensure that current officers' names are correctly recorded on all USAIN financial documents and ensure that transition and necessary paperwork occurs when new officers are elected.
11. With the President, signs all contracts and other legal documents.

12. Sends an email to the Council during the conference registration period in conference years reminding members of the availability and amount of funds, and soliciting requests for travel assistance.

13. Files USAIN's 990-N tax form each year prior to May 15 using the IRS's e-Postcard filing system (<https://sa.www4.irs.gov/epostcard/secure/home/>).

VIII. PAST-PRESIDENT

A. Function:

The immediate Past-President serves as a member of the Council to provide that body with the benefits of knowledge gained as the Network's chief executive officer.

B. Qualifications:

The Past-President is an individual who has just completed a term as President or a member with comparable experience who has been appointed to fill the remaining term of a Past-President.

C. Duties:

The duties of the Past-President are:

1. To advise the President on Network matters requiring a historical perspective.
2. To Chair the Nominations and Elections and Bylaws Committees, and to serve on the Budget Committee.
3. To collect suggestions for revisions to the Procedures and Rules for review by the Bylaws Committee and consideration by the Council.
4. To serve the President or Council in other capacities as called upon.

IX. DIRECTORS

A. Function:

The six Directors serve as members of the Council.

B. Duties:

1. Each Director is assigned Committee and Interest Group liaison responsibilities as determined by the President. In this role they will:
 - a) Provide two-way communication and dissemination of information between the Council and the Committees or Interest Groups.
 - b) Provide a voice for concerns, questions, or suggestions to and from the Committees and Interest Groups to the Council.
 - c) Attend meetings and have access to communications of the Committee or Interest Group, as needed, but the Director is not part of the decision making process for the Committee or Interest Group.
2. A Director may also be appointed by the Council to fill a vacancy in the office of President-Elect or Past-President created by succession to the office of President.
3. Directors are also expected to perform such other assignments as the President or the Council may direct.

X. ARCHIVIST

A. Function:

The purpose of the Archives is to collect, preserve, and make available for research and reference use those official Network records and those related records of the agricultural information community of sufficient historical, legal, fiscal and/or administrative value to warrant permanent preservation. "Official Network records" include any and all documentation in any form produced or received by any member of the Network's Council or the Network's standing or special projects committees while engaged in the conduct of official Network business. "Agricultural information community" includes individual members of the Network as well as other individuals and organizations whose activities have relevance for the Network.

B. Appointments and Composition:

The President appoints the Archivist for a two-year term, in the odd (or even) year with unlimited successive terms.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Archivist is responsible for preserving and maintaining, in an organized manner, a viable and accurate record of the Network's history including membership rosters; copies of all publications, relevant correspondence, and reports; proceedings; and memorabilia of the Network. These records should be available for use when needed.
2. Notify all incoming officers and/or members of the types of materials to be saved for deposit in the archive.
3. Maintain a record of costs required for the storage of materials in the Network archive.
4. Maintain a quick reference file on the history of the Network, Network officers, key events, etc.
5. Periodically review and update this information. Annually review the contents of the archives and weed materials in accordance with the Guidelines.
6. Report annually to the Network and membership and as appropriate.
7. Maintain a procedure notebook that contains a quick guide to the contents of the archives along with the retention schedule. This notebook is to be passed onto each incoming Archivist.
8. Although the Archivist is not a member of the Council, they shall have access to the Council's shared documents.

XI. WEB SITE (SPECIAL PROJECTS) COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Web Site (Special Projects) Committee updates the information on the USAIN web in a timely fashion, as requested by members of the Council or the Communications Committee, or other members as the situation warrants.

B. Membership:

The Web Site (Special Projects) Committee consists of the President-Elect, the Treasurer, and chairs/members of the Communications and Membership Committees.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. With input from the Communications Committee and the Council, the Web Site (Special Projects) Committee will keep the information up to date on the website.
2. Monitors and maintains the USAIN Website Best Practices document.
3. The Web Site (Special Projects) Committee, together with the Chair of Communications and President, will periodically re-evaluate the web hosting agreement to determine if it is still satisfactory for all. This shall be done by June 1st every three years: 2019, 2022, 2025.

XII. COMMITTEES

A. Identification, Establishment, and Delegation of Powers:

1. Standing Committees are Awards and Honors, Budget, Bylaws, Communications, Conference, Legislative and Government Relations, Membership, Nominations and Elections and Preservation and Digital Library.
2. The Council may establish additional Standing and Special Project Committees.
3. Additional Standing Committees are established when the Council decides there is a long-term continuous need for a committee to function in an area not already covered by one of the Standing Committees identified in the Bylaws or these Procedures and Rules. These additional committees are subsequently identified and described in the Procedures and Rules according to the charges given to them by the Council.
4. Special Project Committees are appointed to fulfill specific objectives of the Network. They may be of short or long-term duration, according to the parameters of the project; their activities are subject to annual review by the Council and they continue to function as USAIN committees only so long as the Network continues to support the objectives they were established to fulfill.
5. All Committees are responsible to the Council, which delegates such powers and functions to them, as the Council finds desirable for the conduct of business and achievement of objectives.

B. Composition and Organization:

1. The Chairs and members of all Standing and Special Project Committees must be Individual Members of the Network or the designated representatives of Institutional Members.
2. The Chairs of all Standing and Special Project Committees should be actively involved in USAIN activities and should have served previously on committees they are appointed to Chair (if at all possible).
3. The Chairs of all Standing Committees except the Awards, Budget, Bylaws, and Nominations Committees are appointed by the President and serve for one year. They may be re-appointed, but no member may chair any one Committee for more than four consecutive years.
4. Members of all Standing Committees may be appointed either by the President or by the Committee Chair; appointments are for two years, and members may be re-appointed, but may not serve continuously on any one committee for more than four years.
5. A Chair or two co-chairs and the members of each Special Project Committee are

appointed by the President; appointments to long-term Special Project Committees shall be made to provide continuity of membership; the President may solicit a recommendation from current or past members of a Special Project Committee when making appointments.

6. The President shall either serve, *ex officio*, on all Special Project Committees or designate another member of the Council to serve.

7. Each Director is assigned Standing and/or Special Project Committee Liaison responsibilities as determined by the President.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. All committees report annually to the Council on activities, expenditures, and future plans; they also provide additional reports at the request of the Council or the President.

2. All committee chairs:

a) Maintain and publish on the USAIN web site an up-to-date list of the committee's members, including their years of service and any subcommittee assignments.

b) Prepare an annual estimate of committee expenses, to be included in the budget developed by the Budget Committee.

c) Review the appropriate sections of the Procedures and Rules at the conclusion of their terms and submit proposed corrections and revisions as needed for inclusion in the next edition.

d) Arrange for the transfer of committee files to their successors or to the Network archives.

D. Expenses:

The Network provides the following financial support to each Committee:

1. Funding for such expenses as postage and telephone calls, when not covered by the Committee members' organizations.

2. Other expenses as authorized by the Council.

XIII. AWARDS AND HONORS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Awards and Honors Committee administers all special recognition programs developed by the Network, including Honorary Membership, establishing subcommittees as needed to administer specific awards and honors.

B. Chair and Preferred Membership:

1. The President-Elect will Chair this Committee.

2. Every effort should be made to appoint past award winners to the Committee. In all other respects, membership in this Committee complies with Procedures & Rules Article XII. Part B. Composition and Organization of Committees.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. In biennial conference years, to solicit nominations for Honorary Membership in the Network and for a Service to the Profession Award. In addition, in biennial

conference years, to develop criteria and advertise the availability of three Conference scholarships: two New to the Profession Conference Scholarship and a Student Conference Scholarship, publicize the availability of the awards/scholarships, receive written nominations and supporting documentation for proposed candidates, and to recommend individuals to the Council for this honor.

2. The Chair will be responsible for preparing certificates for the scholarship winners, and for requesting checks from the Treasurer. Awards and plaques will be presented at the Conference Banquet. The chair orders the plaques and makes sure they are available at the banquet.

3. To judge applications and select winners, either as the full Committee or through appropriate subcommittees, according to criteria established for specific awards, following these guidelines:

a) Prepare announcement(s) for distribution on USAIN-L, the USAIN web site, Conference programs, and other appropriate outlets. Announcements for awards and honors should include purpose, eligibility requirements, deadline date, name and address of the appropriate Chair, and other pertinent information.

b) Process entries to ensure equitable treatment of all candidates for award(s).

(1) Chair codes entries to permit blind judging when appropriate. In these cases, committee members receive copies of coded essays only.

(2) Each committee member rates all applications on the basis of quality and adherence to award guidelines and provides ratings to the Chair.

4. To notify the President and the Treasurer when awards will not be made because there are no suitable entries.

5. Chair prepares a report to the President on committee activities to include, but not limited to: how awards were publicized, number of submissions received, any disqualifications, names of awardees, and future plans/goals/suggestions from the Committee or subcommittees.

D. Procedures for Awards:

1. Conference Scholarships, including the Conference Scholarship for Students.

a) The Awards Committee will prepare a Scholarship Award Announcement to appear on USAIN-L, the USAIN Web site, the conference pre-announcement, and in other sources. This announcement should be made two months in advance of the submission deadline (e.g., October 1 in advance of December 1 deadline).

b) The submission deadline in the announcement will be approximately four and a half months prior to the conference.

c) The Committee will make its selection and notify the Council of their choice prior to notifying the recipients by approximately three and a half months prior to the conference.

d) The Chair of the Awards Committee will notify the scholarship recipients approximately two and a half months prior to the conference. The Chair also notifies those not selected.

e) The Committee will announce the scholarship recipients on USAIN-L leading up to the conference.

- f) The Awards Committee will work with the Conference Program Committee on arrangements for a formal presentation of the scholarship(s).
2. Service to the Profession Award.
- a) Criteria:
 Individuals nominated must meet one or more of the following criteria:
- (1) demonstrated leadership in advancing the field of agricultural information.
 - (2) established new directions or visions for the field of agricultural information.
 - (3) contributed to the development, application or utilization of new or improved methods or techniques in the organization or delivery of agricultural information.
 - (4) conducted significant studies/research in agricultural information.
- b) Procedures:
- (1) Prepare a draft of the Call for Nominations approximately 8 months preceding the conference and submit the draft to the Council for review/approval.
 - (2) Post the approved Call for Nominations to USAIN-I, the USAIN website, and other professional publications, etc. approximately seven months prior to the conference. Notices of the award nomination should also appear in the conference pre-program.
 - (3) Deadline for submission of applications in the Call for Nominations will be approximately five months prior to the conference.
 - (4) The Awards Committee is to make its recommendation to the Council approximately three and a half months prior to the conference.
 - (5) The Council will vote on the award nomination.
 - (6) Approximately two and a half months prior to the conference, the President will contact the award winner(s) and obtain their agreement to appear at the conference.
 - (7) Chair of the Awards Committee will work with the Conference Program Committee on arrangements for a formal presentation of the award(s). This may be at a separate ceremony, a banquet, luncheon, or some other function at the conference that will be attended by the majority of attendees. In case the honoree cannot attend the ceremony, the award may be sent to them.
3. Honorary Membership Award.
- a) Criteria:
 An Honorary Member shall be an individual who is not a member of the Network, but who has been either an outstanding individual in the field of agricultural information or who has provided outstanding service or support to the Network. Honorary Member award recipients will be given a life membership in the Network, but are unable to hold offices in USAIN unless they maintain a paid membership. Awards may be given to persons outside the field of agricultural information. Criteria for nominees might include:
- (1) leadership in advancing the field of agricultural information from outside the profession.
 - (2) outstanding support of Network activities and directions.
- b) Procedures:

- (1) Prepare a draft of the Call for Nominations for distribution approximately seven months prior to the conference.
- (2) Post the approved Call for Nominations to USAIN-I, the USAIN Web site, and other professional publications as appropriate, six months prior to the conference.
- (3) Call for nominations will be six months prior to the conference.
- (4) The Awards Committee will present applications received to the Council for consideration four and a half months prior to the conference. If more than one application is received, the Awards Committee will make a recommendation to the Council.
- (5) The combined Council and Awards Committee will vote on each nomination. If selected, the honoree will be contacted by the President four months prior to the conference and the award made.
- (6) The Awards Committee will work with the Conference Program Committee on arrangements for a formal presentation of the award(s) at the next conference.
- (7) The Awards Committee will prepare a press release about the honoree, which the President will announce. Afterward, the Awards Committee distributes the press release widely.
- (8) The Awards Committee will work with the Membership Committee to have Honorary Member(s) added to the USAIN membership roster.

E. Files to be passed along to the next Chair:

1. Awards Emails: text used for the four award emails.
2. Award Plaques: text used for the plaques.
3. Award Certificates: text and layout for the conference scholarships.
4. Library Schools: emails to all the appropriate library schools.
5. Awards Report: copy of the Annual Report of the Awards Committee.
6. Letters informing of award, for the grad student & new the profession awards.

XIV. BUDGET COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Budget Committee prepares the Network budget for Council approval with input from officers and committee chairs. At the request of the Treasurer, assists in monitoring income and expenditures against the budget, reviewing and recommending investment options for Network funds, and providing guidance on expenditures for unbudgeted items.

B. Composition:

The Committee consists of the Treasurer as Chair, the Past-President, the President, the President-Elect, and one other member of the Network who is not a member of the Council, but who has knowledge of the activities of the Network and who is well-informed in financial matters.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

Subject to the approval of the Council, the Committee:

1. By December 1, prepares a budget for the Network covering the next calendar year, based on input gathered from the officers and committee chairs and on previous years' financial experience.
2. Monitors income and expenditures against the approved budget and provides guidance on expenditures for unbudgeted items to ensure that all Network funds are spent in the best interests of the organization and its members.
3. Investigates investment options with the business manager or designee for available Network funds and recommends investment policies and guidelines.
4. Is responsible for working with the business manager to perform an annual internal self-check review;
 - a) To ensure that all cash transactions are being recorded and reported monthly and that the cash balance at the end of the year is correct, request that the business manager supply a copy of a bank statement and copies of cancelled checks for all transactions in a selected quarter period to the USAIN EC, via the USAIN Treasurer. The selected quarter should be changed from year to year. The business manager should also supply a brief report on sources of income, such as memberships and membership levels.
 - b) To determine if all expenditures are properly authorized, double check any big expenditures and match to USAIN EC minutes or memo authorizing the expenditure.
 - c) To determine whether all deposits and expenditures being classified into appropriate accounts, carefully check selected monthly financial reports. Either the non-EC member of the Budget Committee, another non-EC member of USAIN, or a librarian peer from outside of USAIN should review the overall figures of income and expenditures.
5. Is responsible for ensuring that an external audit review is performed as needed either by a qualified non-Council member or financial management resource.
6. Once approved by the Council shares the budget with the membership and the business manager.
7. Recommendations of a Budget Reserve Task Force (2009):
 - a) USAIN should continue the Reserve Metric of an organizational contingency fund. The task force recommends this metric be at the very minimum 1.5 to 2 times the five-year average of expenses as a dollar amount to have as a reserve. The reserve can be in the form of a money market account and/or CDs and is not required to be in its own separate banking account.
 - b) USAIN should document the history of the contingency fund decision and more clearly include documentation in the Budget Committee Procedures to insure the committee incorporates the budget reserve metric when formulating and reviewing the budget each year.
 - c) The strategic planning process should actively incorporate budgeting and the need for a substantial contingency fund when evaluating proposed projects or activities by the organization.

XV. BYLAWS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Bylaws Committee, which may be a committee of one, serves the Network by

drafting proposed Bylaws revisions, reviewing revisions proposed by the Council or members of the Network, and does the same for the Procedures and Rules to ensure that they do not conflict with the Bylaws.

B. Preferred Qualifications:

The Chair is the Past-President who appoints others as needed.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Continuously reviews the Bylaws of the Network to ensure that they reflect current practice of the organization and drafts proposed revisions as appropriate.
2. Reviews all Bylaws amendments proposed by the Council or written petition of fifteen voting members to determine if they reflect current practice and are acceptable parliamentary practice according to Robert's Rules of Order.
3. Prepares proposed Bylaws amendments approved by a two-thirds vote of the Council.
4. Coordinates with the Secretary on sending out information about proposed Bylaws changes to the membership at least 30 days before a general business meeting. During a conference year, March 1st would be a reasonable deadline.
5. Reviews and revises the Procedures and Rules to ensure that their provisions are in accord with the applicable Bylaws sections.

XVI. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

To provide information and further discussions between members and potential members, the Communications Committee is responsible for development and maintenance of such means of communication as the USAIN web site and USAIN-L.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Maintains active communication channels with USAIN President and Council to gather accurate information for updating and expanding the web site.
2. Periodically evaluates and updates the USAIN Web site; announces major changes on USAIN-L.
3. The Chair, together with the President and Web Site (Special Projects) Committee, will periodically re-evaluate the web hosting agreement to determine if it is still satisfactory for all. This shall be done by June 1st every three years: 2019, 2022, 2025.
4. Identifies information that could be made accessible via the web site or USAIN- L that would be useful to members and potential members.

C. List Manager

1. The current USAIN-L list manager is an *ex-officio* member of the communications committee.

XVII. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Conference Committee is responsible for all phases of planning and

implementation for a biennial program conference of the Network, following the selection of the conference site and approval of any co-sponsorship agreement, in accordance with policies and guidelines developed by the Council (usain.org/Conferences/confcriteria.html).

B. Preferred Qualifications and Appointment:

1. The Chair should have prior conference planning experience.
2. The Committee is appointed at least 24 months before the Conference dates and serves until all post-Conference reports have been completed.
3. Every effort should be made to include a representative from a previous Network Conference Committee.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

Subject to the approval of the Council, the Committee:

1. Chooses a conference theme, determines the content and speakers for the general sessions, and plans other appropriate conference-wide events.
2. Prepares for Council approval a budget containing estimates of Conference income and expenses.
 - a) Estimates of income should include registration fees, exhibit rentals, and other sponsor support.
 - b) Estimates of expenses should include:
 - (1) preparation and distribution of conference announcement.
 - (2) complimentary registrations, meals, honoraria and other speaker costs.
 - (3) identification badges and ribbons.
 - (4) registration packets.
 - (5) postage, telephone, copying and other office expenses not covered by the Committee members' organizations.
 - (6) travel costs for the Chair or designee to make required reports at Council meetings.
 - c) Costs of meals to be included in announced Conference registration fees should be budgeted to ensure that registration fees and charges for accompanying persons are set high enough to recover all outlays.
3. Appoints subcommittees as needed to assume responsibility for specific segments of Conference planning activities. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Conference program
 - b) Contributed papers
 - c) Equipment needs and trouble-shooting
 - d) Exhibits and vendor support
 - e) Hospitality
 - f) Local arrangements
 - g) Meals and catering
 - h) Printed program
 - i) Publication of proceedings
 - j) Registration
 - k) Session monitoring and evaluation

l) Social events

m) Speaker introductions

4. Prepares a final report to the EC documenting conference attendance, program, committees, and budget; also comments on problems and recommendations to assist future conference planning.

5. Deposits electronic files related to conference with archivist and shares with next conference chair.

D. USAIN Contributed Papers and Posters Guidelines:

1. Contributed papers and poster proposals will undergo a blind review process. To allow blinded review, author names, institutional affiliations, and address information must be listed in the author section of the electronic submission system ONLY, NOT in the body of the abstract. The paper/poster review committee chair reserves the right to edit abstracts containing any author, institutional, location, or company names for the purpose of eliminating this identifying information before sending the abstract to reviewers. Authors are urged to blind their abstracts themselves because USAIN cannot guarantee the resulting quality if changes must be made after submission.

2. Interest groups, standing committees or conference committees overseeing a selection process in their conference event (papers, posters, presentations, lightning rounds, etc.) must work with the Chair from the Contributed Papers and Posters Committee and follow the required blind review process. Committee Chairs and Conveners/Co-Conveners may submit proposals to their own event but must recuse themselves from evaluating their own submission and ensure there are four or more evaluators involved in the overall review.

3. USAIN recommends that the committee employ existing online systems/tools that can facilitate the papers and posters review process, such as openconf.com, goeshow.com, or EasyChair. Conference organizers may be reimbursed for the cost of one of these systems.

4. The committee chair has the flexibility and responsibility to ensure a diversity of perspectives and representation from different institutions, and may use strategies that will provide for a diverse and balanced program. For example, the chair may hold a number of contributed paper slots until after the review process and allocate them in order to achieve program diversity and balance.

6. The committee chair will be a non-voting member of the committee who will coordinate and ensure a blind review process. The committee should include at least five members with an odd number of voting members. If there is an even number of votes on a proposal (due to recusals), the chair may cast a tie-breaking vote.

6. The committee chair will be ineligible to submit paper proposals or have a paper proposal considered for inclusion in the program. Committee members are eligible to submit and have proposals accepted in the program. Committee members will recuse themselves from voting on any proposal on which they are an author. The chair and planning committee reserve the right to set a limit for the number accepted proposals an individual can have.

7. At least one author of a contributed paper or poster should be a current USAIN

member, and at least one author for each accepted contributed paper or poster must register and attend the conference.

8. Proposals, posters and presentations must be in English.

9. The committee, in consultation with the conference and program chairs, has the ability to set expectations for authors related to selecting paper tracks and/or keywords used to group papers. The guiding principle should be to ensure a diverse and high-quality program.

10. The committee may include a check box for authors to indicate whether or not they would like to have their proposal considered as a poster if not accepted in a contributed papers track.

11. Electronic versions of contributed paper and poster presentation materials are expected to be deposited in the USAIN conference repository at Cornell.

12. A contributed paper or poster that has been previously presented may be submitted to USAIN as long as it has since been revised based on feedback or new results. As long as a contributed paper or poster has been developed or adapted for a specific meeting audience, it may be submitted to more than one meeting.

XVIII. LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Legislative and Government Relations Committee monitors issues associated with information activities relating to agriculture, as defined in the Bylaws, which are of special interest to the membership, serving as a focal point for coordination of Network government relations activities.

B. Qualifications:

The Chair should have an interest in and knowledge of legislation and policies, which affect agricultural information.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Committee Chair or designee:

a) Acts as a point of contact and distribution of information on government affairs between the Network and other organizations with an interest in agricultural information, especially the National Agricultural Library (NAL).

b) Serves as the Network contact when important items of legislation or regulation are under consideration, alerting members to help government officials better understand the issues before them and the impact of their actions upon the agricultural information community.

c) Identifies experts in the Network who might prepare a statement or provide information on government policies or proposed legislation.

d) Works with the President and representatives of NAL to determine the most appropriate methods and timing for providing support for programs and services of the NAL.

e) Works with Chairs of other Legislative or Government Relations Committees (ALA, SLA, etc.) to coordinate appropriate activities; networks with these groups to enhance the exchange of information regarding issues relevant to agricultural information.

f) Prepares and distributes on USAIN-L and the USAIN web site a regular update of legislative and government relations issues for the USAIN membership as

appropriate.

2. The Committee Members:

- a) Monitor various government activities, regulations, and legislation affecting agricultural information.
- b) Notify the Chair and other members of current issues the Committee may want to investigate or act upon.

XIX. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Membership Committee serves the Network by maintaining accurate and timely records of Network membership and by developing and implementing effective membership recruitment and retention activities.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The official Network membership database is coordinated by the Membership Committee.
2. Membership lists are maintained on the website by the Membership Committee.
3. The Chair of the Membership Committee writes timely letters of "welcome to USAIN" (and copies the President) when new membership applications are received. Reminders that a membership directory is on the website as well as information about meetings and committees.
4. The Membership Committee Chair informs all other appropriate individuals of new members, within two weeks of their membership, so that any other appropriate materials may be sent to new members.
5. All monies generated by memberships are handled by the Treasurer.
6. The Chair responds promptly to requests for membership information from non-members and makes information about USAIN available at meetings and conferences of other organizations when requested to do so.
7. The Committee does follow-ups on non-renewals. The Committee will follow-up with non-renewing members once a year, but since renewals happen year-round, the Committee will check at least quarterly for non-renewals during that quarter and will send up to two personal messages, in addition to the system's automatic reminders.
8. The Committee strategizes ways to increase membership and retention of existing members.
9. The Committee contributes questions to the annual membership survey.

XX. NOMINATIONS and ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Nominations and Elections Committee secures candidates for all Network offices and conducts the annual election, in accordance with provisions of the Bylaws.

B. Appointment and Composition:

1. The Committee consists of three voting members; chair is current Past-President. Other members serve two-year terms on a rotating basis, so experience handling the election is available through current committee members.
2. The members of the Committee are appointed by the President, Chair, or Council

no later than September 1 of each year.

3. The Nominations and Elections Committee must include individuals who are familiar with the operation of the Council and the Network and must be representative of the membership of the Network.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Each year the Committee presents two candidates for President-Elect and two candidates for each open Director position, in accordance with the provisions of Bylaws Article III, Section 2.
2. In alternating years, the Committee also presents two candidates for Secretary (e.g., 2018, 2020, 2022) and Treasurer (e.g., 2019, 2021, 2023).
3. In developing a list of candidates for each election, the Committee:
 - a) Aggressively solicits the names of suggested candidates from the membership and presents a slate of nominees that is representative of the composition of the membership.
 - b) Obtains the written (email) acceptance of each nominee prior to submission of its report to the Council.
 - c) Requests biographical data from all nominees in a standard format to include current position, education, previous positions, other professional participation, and specific USAIN interests, so that the information can be compiled for the election ballot with minimum modification; a photo should also be requested.
 - d) The proposed slate should be submitted to the Council by February 1st.
 - e) Submits a written annual report of activities to the Council.
 - f) Sends the next Nominations and Elections Chair the following files, at a minimum:
 - (1) The election information (instructions, biographical information for the candidates, and ballot).
 - (2) Notes on which potential candidates were contacted, and whether they indicated a willingness to serve at some other time.
 - (3) Notes on electronic voting tool usage.
4. Conducts the annual election, using electronic balloting, making every effort to ensure fairness and confidentiality, which includes performing or overseeing the following activities:
 - a) Preparing the ballot, including biographical information for each candidate. Preceding the ballot mailing the Committee should send a message to members via USAIN-L containing information about the offices being contested, biographical information for each candidate and details/instructions about voting and the election opening and closing dates.
 - b) Using all available means to publicize the election.
 - c) Tallying returned ballots, with candidates receiving the largest number of votes for each office being declared elected.
 - d) In case of a tie vote, determining the successful candidate by lot conducted by the Chair.
 - e) Reporting the results to the President, who notifies all the candidates before announcing the election results to the general membership.
 - f) Destroying/deleting ballots one month after results are announced.

5. The following procedural suggestions are provided for guidance.
 - a) A space for write-in candidates should be provided.
 - b) An electronic voting tool, such as Survey Monkey, will be used for electronic balloting.
 - c) Each member is allowed one vote based upon email address.
 - d) The electronic voting will be completed by April 15th.

XXI. PRESERVATION AND DIGITAL LIBRARY COMMITTEE

A. Function:

The Preservation and Digital Library Committee coordinates information about activities relating to the preservation of agricultural information and serves as a focal point for coordination of Network preservation and digitization activities. The Committee continues to promote and direct the preservation work initially conducted by the USAIN National Preservation Special Project Committee.
(<http://www.usain.org/Preservation/preservinitiative.html>)

B. Chair and Preferred Membership and Qualifications:

1. The Chair should have an interest in and some knowledge of preservation or digitization of historical documents.
2. The Committee members:
 - a) The committee consists of no less than 10 members. These members are appointed by the chair of the USAIN Preservation and Digital Library Committee, in consultation with the president of USAIN, and serve two-year terms, renewable once. Timing of member appointments will be such that no more than one-third of the members will be newly appointed at any one time, except for the initial slate of members.
 - b) There will be one non-voting ex-officio member of the committee: One representative of the National Agricultural Library (NAL), who serves as a source of communication with the committee and provides logistical support when possible.
 - c) Additional non-voting ex-officio committee members may be appointed as needed to provide background or support for the committee's activities.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The Committee Chair or designee:
 - a) Acts as a point of contact and distributes information on preservation or digitization projects between the Network and other organizations with an interest in agricultural information, especially the National Agricultural Library (NAL), AgNIC, and CRL.
 - b) Serves as the Network contact when important preservation or digitization projects are under consideration and alerts the committee and USAIN members to potential projects and their impact upon agricultural information.
 - c) Acts as the point of contact with other involved organizations.
 - d) Prepares and distributes regular updates on preservation or digitization projects undertaken by the committee to USAIN-L and the USAIN web site.

2. The Committee members:
 - a) Monitor preservation and digitization projects and funding opportunities for agricultural information.
 - b) Notify the Chair and other members of current issues the Committee may want to investigate or act upon.
 - c) Ex-officio members may be able to contribute information or expertise to the committee as requested. However, the primary role in formulating policy or reaching other decisions must rest with the members of the committee.

XXII. INTEREST GROUPS

A. Function:

Interest Groups are expected to sponsor programs and discussion sessions at the USAIN biennial conference. Other activities may include advising the Council on matters pertaining to the Group's area of interest and collecting and disseminating information related to the Group's interest.

B. Composition and Organization:

1. All members may participate in the activities of all Interest Groups whose concerns they share.
2. Members with common concerns may form a new Interest group by petition of 15 members and approval of Council.
3. Each Interest Group should develop a statement of purpose or scope which represents the consensus of the Group on the common interest or concern to be addressed by the Group's activities.
4. A Convener for each Interest Group is appointed by the President or chosen from among the membership of the Group, with the approval of Council. Further organizational structure is optional and requires Council approval.
5. Inactive Interest Groups may be dissolved by the Council.

C. Activities, Duties and Responsibilities:

All Interest Groups:

1. Must prepare an annual estimate of any anticipated expenses, to be included in the budget developed by the Budget Committee.
2. Are urged to sponsor programs and/or discussion sessions at USAIN biennial conferences and following up with reports to the membership on USAIN-L and the USAIN web site.
3. May engage in additional Council-approved activities which do not require face-to-face meetings, including the collection and dissemination of information related to their area of interest.
4. Must report annually to the Council on their activities, expenditures and future plans, and provide other reports as requested by the Council or President.
5. Must prepare and submit an annual Statement of Purpose, which will be posted on the web site and used to foster discussion among the Group.

XXIII. NETWORK AFFILIATES AND LIAISONS

A. Principles for Relationships with Other Organizations:

1. To help USAIN achieve its mission to promote and improve agricultural library and information services.
2. To fulfill a specific need related to current USAIN goals and objectives or to contribute in a significant way to the cooperating organization while using USAIN's name and its resources effectively.
3. To benefit as much as possible from a reciprocal relationship in the form of finances, expertise, experience, public relations, or other advantages.

B. Composition and Organization:

1. Affiliate Representatives and Liaisons will be appointed by the President on a biennial basis.
2. They must be active members and directly involved in USAIN activities.

C. Duties and Responsibilities of Affiliate Representatives:

1. Acts as official USAIN contact to the outside organization.
2. Ensures the timely exchange of information between organizations.
3. Serves as *ex officio* member on outside organization's governing body if appropriate.
4. Provides reciprocal access to listserv and/or homepages.
5. Develops reciprocal conference and other programming as appropriate.
6. Announces meetings and other activities of mutual interest to members of both organizations.
7. Submits proposals to the Council regarding special services such as reduced conference fees for the outside organization's members.
8. Assists in fundraising activities particularly related to sponsoring attendance at each organization's conference and in joint proposals.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of Liaison Officers:

1. Provides two-way communication and information dissemination between the Network and the outside organization.
2. Ensures the timely exchange of information between organizations.

XXIV. Business Management Company

A. The USAIN Management Company is Long and Associates.

1. Current personnel working with USAIN includes: Roe Long-Wagner (managing director) and Sheila Sharp (financials).
2. USAIN officers working closely with Long and Associates include President (for conducting yearly communication meeting and three-year review), the Treasurer (for providing updated officer names and communicating regarding financial information).