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**SATW OPERATIONS MANUAL**

**SECTION 1 – MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS**

**I. General Information**

The Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) is the pre-eminent professional organization of travel communicators whose purpose is to promote responsible journalism, provide professional support and development for its members, and to encourage the conservation and preservation of travel resources worldwide.

This not-for-profit association is composed of writers, photographers, editors, electronic media and broadcast/video journalists (called Active members), public relations representatives (called Associate members), and members who have retired from their profession (as listed above) but meet the criteria for continued membership as Emeritus.

The Society was founded in 1956. The majority of members must be Actives.

The Society is governed by a President, a President-Elect, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Board of seven (7) directors.

To facilitate involvement in the Society, all members are also organized into four regional chapters:

* Canadian
* Central States
* Eastern
* Western

and three professional councils:

* Editors
* Freelance
* Associates

Photographers Sub-council and Independent Publishers Sub-council; as well as any other sub-council as decided by the Board. Frequency of meetings in these regional chapters and councils varies from monthly to annually. The annual Society convention is typically held during the fall.

**II: Membership Guidelines**

**A: Active**

The following summarizes the application procedures for Active membership:

· Active members of the Society belong to either the Freelance Council or the Editors Council. Applicants for Editors Council are judged by the travel content and circulation of their publications. Applicants for Freelance Council are judged by the point system criteria below and must have 21 points to qualify.

· A travel article, image, video, broadcast, blog entry, or website contribution must be editorial content that shows, describes, evaluates, discusses and/or facilitates travel. Content creation can be used for one third (7) of the points for membership**.** Work published without payment—either of a traditional monetary fee or, in the case of new media, a proven revenue (see Travel Website Owner for details)—will not be considered.

· Advertorial or promotional copy will not count toward membership. Advertorial content is paid for by an advertiser or sponsor and printed only after advertiser/sponsor approval. Sponsored editorial content is allowed when viewpoint and specific content are not dictated by the client.

· Custom publications publishing editorial content, such as in-flight magazines, are allowed. Exceptions are made for some photography, as detailed in the image point chart.

· In the case of broadcast (TV, radio, or online), any unpaid appearances, whether promotional or editorial, do not count.

· Any combination of travel books (or chapters), articles (print or online), images, videos or broadcasts will be considered. The work need not be bylined or captioned if the editor or publisher of the publication is willing to attest to its authorship.

· In the case of dual bylines, the production of the team must meet the requirements for TWO memberships. A single applicant earns half points for a co-bylined article.

· The maximum number of points that may be attributed to a single project, regardless of word count or photo contributions, is eight (8) points.

· Additional details on types of applicants eligible for Active membership, on the application process and the points chart for freelancers are outlined in the Active Application.

Points toward membership will be awarded to those travel journalists recognized by the annual SATW Lowell Thomas Foundation. Grand Award winners in the gold, silver and bronze categories will be awarded the maximum points required for membership. In all other categories, individual recipients will be awarded 50 percent of the points required for membership; co-winners will split the 50 percent of points. Lowell Thomas winners must apply for membership in SATW within 12 months of receiving the award. Winners must pay appropriate dues and application fee and follow all other membership application procedures. If the award recipient is already an SATW member points awarded may be claimed for the next re-qualification period. Banking of points is not allowed.

**B: Associate**

The following summarizes the application procedures for Associate membership:

· Associate membership in SATW is limited to those persons professionally engaged in public relations within the travel industry and working regularly with the media. Each new applicant must submit proof that his/her professional qualifications meet or exceed current membership criteria adopted by the Society. By decree of the organization bylaws, the number of Associate members in the Society must always be less than the number of Active members. Thus, there could conceivably be a time when Associate Membership will not be available to new member.

· Contact information for 12 travel media contacts (writers, photographers, editors, broadcasters) with whom the applicant has worked within the past 12 months, and results of that interaction – inclusive of name, phone, e-mail and website, if applicable.

· Twelve clips (print-broadcast-online with circulation/traffic stats) of media coverage received over the past 12 months for your travel destination(s) and/or client(s) and describe how this resulted from the applicant’s public relations efforts. No more than two clips may be submitted from one release/press trip and only one clip per person per release/press trip. Online copies of articles published in print outlets are acceptable, provided they indicate when the article appeared in print. (Note: For vacation time-share/fractional or other real estate-type lodging, the clips must reference/emphasize the destination and the property, not the real estate portion.)

· A summary of all public relations activities performed in the past year on behalf of the client(s), such as media functions/visits organized, press trips hosted and press materials created and distributed.

· Associate membership in SATW is given to an individual, not an organization. If an Associate SATW member leaves his/her position, the membership stays with the member, not the employer. The Associate's successor must apply for SATW membership. If that application is made within twelve months of the former member’s departure, the application fee and new member fee will be waived but dues are required. Associate members, who are on an extended leave from his or her job (eg. for maternity, paternity, or medical leave), is allowed to designate a replacement (who works in public relations for the same firm) to assume their SATW membership duties and responsibilities for up to one year. This would include attending meetings and conventions, and participating in marketplaces.

· If the applicant is employed at a U.S. state or Canadian province tourism office and oversees the public relations strategy and team for that tourism office, a portfolio of clips, contacts and other materials for the application is not required. An official communication stating their position and the name/contact information of their supervisor is sufficient. The application fee is also waived. After review and acceptance of that information by the membership committee, the applicant must simply pay the new member fee. This privilege is extended only to actual employees of state or provincial offices. If media responsibilities are contracted to a private agency, individuals from that agency must apply for SATW Associate membership independently.

Additional details on types of applicants eligible for Associate membership and on the application process are outlined in the Associate Application.

**C: Emeritus Status**

Long-time Active and Associate members of the Society who may not qualify for continued membership in their category have an option of remaining in the Society as Emeritus Members. Emeritus designation reflects a member’s years of service and the fact that the applicant may have retired from travel communications/marketing or switched careers.

This status may be bestowed, upon request from the individual, on any member who:

· Has no less than 12 years of SATW membership, which can be waived at the recommendation of the Chapter Chair and the approval of the Executive Committee.

· Is unable to requalify as an Active or Associate member.

· Emeritus members remain members of their own chapter and council and shall abide by the rules set out by those entities.

· Emeritus members are urged to apply for and rejoin as an Active or Associate member when they believe they meet the minimum criteria.

· Emeritus members have no voting privileges.

· Emeritus members are expected to volunteer at least once per year if asked by the chapter or council in which they belong, or the chairs of the SATW annual convention.

· Emeritus members may attend the annual SATW convention.

· Pre/post tours at SATW annual conventions are offered to Emeritus members on a seat-available basis after other council members have been assigned their choices and if agreed to by the hosting entity.

· Emeritus members are still able to enjoy SATW benefits offered by outside vendors when meeting vendor’s criteria.

· Dues will be collected for SATW membership

· Convention and tour rates for Emeritus members and their spouses will be no lower than the rate assigned to all spouses.

Emeritus members are listed in the SATW Directory with their Council. Next to (or under) their name they are identified as “Emeritus Active” (or Editor or Associate), along with the appropriate contact information and listing of current outlets if applicable. As a member of a Council and Chapter, Emeritus are eligible to hold any office other than the Chair or First Vice Chair. Each Council and Chapter may have an Emeritus Representative appointed by the Council or Chapter Chair.

**D: Appeals**

An individual whose application is denied by the membership committee may appeal that decision to the Society's Membership Appeals Committee within 60 days. If the Society's Membership Appeals Committee still denies the application, the applicant has an additional 30 days to appeal the decision to the Society’s Executive Committee, whose decision is final.

**E. Fees and Dues**

The Society’s annual dues are US$175 for Actives, $US340 for Associates, and US$255 for Emeritus. Chapters and Councils may not charge additional dues but may charge meeting registration and pre- or post-trip fees when appropriate.

Any dues changes must be approved by the membership as a bylaw.

The membership year is January 1-December 31. The due date for annual dues is December 15. The membership renewal fee increases by $25 if payment is made after December 15. The Executive Committee reserves the right to waive the increase.

Members will be notified on the renewal form that the consequence of not paying their dues by December 31 is to be considered a lapsed member, with the loss of all privileges of membership. This can be remedied by the payment of all past-due fees, including the late fee, by December 31 of the following year.

Marco Polo designees and Past Presidents are SATW members for their lifetimes, provided there are no Ethics & Conduct violations that would cause their removal, and are exempt from paying dues. They are not required to provide additional qualifications in the bi-annual membership re-qualification review.

Newly accepted members must pay their dues within 90 days of notification of acceptance. Initial dues paid by Members who join SATW in November or December will cover those months and the next fiscal year.

A 60-day grace period after the PRSA/SATW Convention allows new members who were conference attendees to join without the application fee.

**III. Code of Ethics & Conduct and Professional Responsibility**

**Preamble**

Members of the Society of American Travel Writers are expected to maintain the highest professional standards. All members agree to adhere to the principles and rules set forth in this code to maintain their membership. Our mission is to provide the public with accurate, fair and honest travel reporting. When joining SATW and upon the act of annual renewal, members pledge to abide by the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct.

The Procedures set forth the process by which violators of the rules will be investigated and disciplined. Disciplinary action, which may be imposed by the Ethics & Conduct Committee or the Executive Committee of SATW, may range from a reprimand to expulsion from membership in the Society.

**Principle I**

SATW members shall maintain the highest professional standards.

1. No member shall misrepresent his or her SATW membership category or status.

2. No member shall falsely represent his or her credentials or work output as part of any SATW membership review or listing.

3. No member shall use the SATW name or insignia except to designate his or her membership, and no member may use official SATW stationery except for the conduct of official business of the Society as approved by the board and/or president.

4. No member shall engage in conduct that embarrasses the Society or that will otherwise harm its reputation or professionalism.

**Principle II**

SATW members shall conduct business in a professional manner.

1. No member shall engage in plagiarism or infringement of the rights of others, including copyright violations.

2. No member shall disseminate information about a destination without doing comprehensive research and fact-checking.

3. No member shall knowingly sell rights that he or she does not own.

4. No member shall permit his or her byline to appear as sole author on work not produced by him or her, nor shall a member be listed as co-author of a work to which he or she has not contributed.

5. A member shall advise the publication when others have furnished photographs or editorial materials.

6. Content providers shall be open with editors/publishers about their own subsidized travel for an assignment.

7. Associate members shall not pay money for acquiring new accounts, except for proposal fees or finder’s fees.

8. No member shall offer or accept cash or any other form of payment in exchange for positive editorial coverage.

**Principle III**

SATW members shall maintain the highest standards of professionalism on press trips and sponsored activities.

1. No member shall deliberately misrepresent the status of an assignment in order to secure participation in a press trip.

2. All assistants accompanying a member on a press trip shall be fully qualified assistants; all others accompanying a member must be identified as guests. The participation of guests on press trips is subject to the restrictions of the host and at no time shall a guest attend in place of a member.

3. A member shall personally pay for all services required by that member that are personal, or over and above the services voluntarily provided by the host.

4. Members shall not engage in conduct that embarrasses the host.

5. Members shall not violate or ignore local regulations, customs and personal wishes of potential subjects in order to take images.

**Principle IV**

SATW members shall avoid all real or perceived conflicts of interest.

1. All members shall adhere to the highest standards of journalistic integrity in their respective disciplines.

2. Content providers shall be open with editors/publishers about their own activity that could compromise or might appear to compromise their integrity on a given assignment, including non-editorial writing, researching or consulting, political involvement, holding office or serving in organizations dealing with the same or a similar subject matter, and/or association with a travel destination, service firm or supplier.

3. Members shall avoid accepting or giving gifts and promotional items of more than $150. This does not count towards expense reimbursement that may occur in conjunction with media trips.

**Procedures**

As provided in the Procedures section below, the Society shall discipline members found guilty of violations of the SATW Ethics Code, as well as for conduct detrimental to the Society’s best interests.

**Ethics Complaint Process**

1. Complaints of suspected violations of any rule of the SATW Code of Ethics must be made in writing, signed by the complainant(s), and sent to the Society’s Executive Director at the Society’s headquarters office by mail or email.

2. The Executive Director will immediately forward copies of the complaint to the members of the Society’s Ethics & Conduct Committee and the President.

3. The Ethics & Conduct Committee will promptly investigate all complaints forwarded to it and within 60 days shall determine if the complaint shall be dismissed, investigated further, or set for a hearing.

4. If the complaint is dismissed, the Ethics & Conduct Committee will notify the complainant(s) and the President of the committee's decision, which shall be final.

5. If the Ethics & Conduct Committee determines that the complaint should be investigated further, the committee shall notify the member of the complaint and advise him or her of the right to present evidence relating to the complaint. The Ethics & Conduct Committee may interview by telephone, by mail or email, or in person, either members or others who have information relevant to the complaint.

a. If the Ethics & Conduct Committee determines after further investigation that a violation has occurred for which a reprimand is appropriate, the committee shall prepare a written report detailing its finding of the facts, the nature of the misconduct so established, and the form of the reprimand imposed (see Reprimand Process); a copy of the report will be sent to the charged party, the complainant(s), and the President. The decision of the Ethics & Conduct Committee shall be final unless appealed by the charged party to the Executive Committee within 60 days of the decision; the request for an appeal must be made within that time frame by certified mail to the President at the Society’s headquarters office.

**Reprimand Process**

6. If the Ethics & Conduct Committee determines after further investigation that a violation has occurred for which suspension or expulsion from membership may be appropriate, the Ethics & Conduct Committee shall hold a hearing by telephone conference call or at a location mutually convenient to all parties. Notice shall be given to the charged party, the complainant(s), and the President at least 30 days prior to the date set for the hearing. The charged party may appear with counsel at his or her own expense. The Chairman of the Ethics & Conduct Committee shall preside over the hearing, which shall be conducted in an informal manner, with or without the presence of SATW’s legal counsel. At the option of the charged party, a hearing may be waived and the complaint resolved by documents submitted in response by both the charged party and the complainant(s). After the conclusion of the hearing, the full committee shall decide by four-fifths vote to suspend or expel the charged member. The decision of the Ethics & Conduct Committee shall be final unless appealed by the charged party to the Executive Committee within 60 days of notice of the decision; the request for an appeal must be made within that time frame by certified mail to the President at the Society’s headquarters office.

7. Upon any appeal filed by a charged party subject to reprimand, suspension or expulsion, the Executive Committee shall hold a hearing at the earliest suitable time by telephone conference call or at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The charged party may appear at the appeal hearing with counsel at his or her own expense. The President shall preside over the appeal hearing, which shall be conducted in an informal manner, with or without the presence of SATW’s legal counsel. At the option of the charged party, an appeal hearing may be waived and the appeal resolved by documents submitted in response by both the charged party and the complainant. After the conclusion of the hearing, the full committee shall decide by four-fifths vote (with the President not voting) whether to reverse the decision of the Ethics & Conduct Committee.

8. All proceedings of the Ethics & Conduct Committee and all appeal proceedings of the Executive Committee shall be held in closed sessions, unless open sessions are requested by the charged party. All evidence submitted to either committee shall be maintained in the strictest of confidence.

9. A suspension may be imposed for any defined period of time. At the conclusion of the suspension period, no formal action is required for reinstatement of membership. A member who is expelled cannot be reinstated or reapply for membership.

**IV. Code of Conduct**

Each new member of the Society will sign the following pledge as part of the application process and will renew that pledge upon the annual renewal of their membership.

**Pledge**

As a member of SATW, I pledge to adhere to the Code of Conduct in its entirety. This includes, but is not limited to, my participation in SATW meeting functions, programs, events and meals and any SATW online forum or social media account. I understand that failure to conduct myself in a professional manner can be considered a violation of the Code and is subject to review, with possible penalties, as outlined in the Code.

**1. Program Participation**

Members, their spouses or spouse-equivalents as well as invited guests, sponsors and speakers -hereafter collectively called “delegates” - attending SATW meetings and associated programs, tours, trips and events are expected to participate in all activities for which they registered. If a delegate must cancel, he/she shall be expected to notify the host as soon as possible.

Any delegate missing two or more scheduled activities for which they are registered without giving prior notification to the host may be liable for Code of Conduct violations. No refunds will be considered for any “no-show.”

Any delegate having a concern that would require changes to the schedule of events should direct this matter, as early as possible, to SATW officials and not to the hosts. This would include any changes desired in order to gather information or images for stories.

Delegates, including Annual Convention sponsors are prohibited from offering hospitality and/or scheduling any additional activities during periods when official convention program events/activities are planned.

**2. Itinerary or Program Changes**

It is the responsibility of all delegates to be on time for scheduled tours, trips, events and programs, and to be ready to accept unforeseen changes in itineraries or programs. Delegates who have comments or special needs should address them to the SATW Convention Chair or to the member assigned to lead or chair the affected tour, trip, event or program.

**3. Respecting Local Customs**

Delegates shall not violate or ignore local regulations, customs and personal wishes of potential subjects in order to take images or gather material for stories.

**4. Communication and Face-to-Face Conduct**

SATW members agree to apply civility and common sense to any situation in which they are communicating on behalf of SATW or in their role as an SATW member. This rule applies to all forms of communications and interactions including telephone calls, written communications, interpersonal interactions, and comments posted on any SATW sanctioned online community, such as the SATW Discussion Board and/or social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.

SATW’s communication and conduct standards prevent the use of personal attacks, libelous commentary, abusive language, harassment, threats, profanity, etc. Invoking the SATW name to claim special privileges and/or demand preferential treatment is forbidden.

Following a violation by a member, the Ethics & Conduct Committee will be notified and provided with the reports. The committee can decide an appropriate sanction, if any, including but not limited to a ban from SATW forums and social media channels, and with the most severe being dismissal from the Society.

Any violation must be reported to the Ethics & Conduct Committee with all accompanying supporting documentation for further action.

**5. Alcoholic Beverages**

At SATW events where alcohol is offered, hosts and/or SATW officials have the right to deny such beverages to any person. Delegates are expected to drink responsibly and to adhere to all applicable laws and/or restrictions related to the consumption of alcohol. Delegates shall not indulge in alcohol to the point that they become disruptive, disorderly, unreasonably loud or offensive, or unable to maintain motor skills. At some functions, delegates may be required to pay for alcoholic beverages.

**6. Claims and/or Complaints**

SATW is not responsible for changes made by hosts/suppliers, but it will attempt to work out the best solution if comments or complaints are brought to the attention of the SATW convention chair or SATW liaison in a timely and professional manner. Such matters that cannot be resolved at the time of or immediately following a complaint must be submitted in writing to SATW.

**7. Penalties for Violations to the SATW Code of Conduct**

If a delegate’s failure to follow these guidelines occurs at any SATW function and is reported to one of the following:

Meeting/Convention chair

Chapter or Council chair

Society President

Tour Captain

said official can question the delegate about this incident. If the Society official is satisfied that a violation of the guidelines has taken place, the official is empowered to prohibit the delegate from taking part in any further activity during that event. The official shall then file a reasonably detailed, written report with the Society’s executive director.

In extraordinary circumstances, such as suspected illegal activities, gross violations of the SATW Code of Ethics & Conduct, or for reasonable cause, the host or SATW Liaison shall have the power to immediately terminate a delegate’s participation in the activity or event and the matter shall be referred to the Ethics & Conduct Committee. That participant will be responsible for all expenses incurred for the event or trip as well as his/her transportation home.

If a suspected Code of Conduct violation is reported to the Executive Director after the function has concluded, the matter shall be reported to the Ethics & Code of Conduct Committee along with all supporting for investigation, determination and possible penalties.

Non-member delegates to SATW meetings or other functions reported to have violated the Code of Conduct may be barred from attending future SATW meetings or functions, at the discretion of Executive Committee. SATW reserves the right to deny convention registration to any non-member for any reason.

The Society’s legal counsel may be consulted on perceived violations.

**V. Membership Requalification**

Mandatory biennial requalification is designed to enforce SATW’s requirement that its members be actively working in the travel media industry.

The deadline for all members to complete requalification paperwork is June 30. Requalification is staggered with last names starting with “A”-“L” done on odd years and the last name starting with “M”-“Z” on even years. Members will be notified by headquarters when they are required to requalify.

New members accepted in the 12 months leading up to their June 30 requalification deadline are exempt from that year’s requalification. Marco Polo designees and Past Presidents are considered members for life and are therefore exempt from the requalification process.

Members scheduled to submit requalification documentation but fail to do so by the deadline will be assumed to be resigning from SATW and membership will terminate on December 31 of that year.

Alternately, members may apply for Emeritus Status, if qualified.

**Requalification Procedure for Freelancers**

Freelance members must submit clips of their work from the 12 months prior to June 30 and equal one-third (7 points) of the points required for joining SATW. Alternately, members experiencing temporarily reduced output may elect to submit two-thirds (14 points) of the points required for joining from the 24 months prior to June 30. Standards for joining SATW described in the current Membership Guidelines will prevail.

Members may use any combination of the types of accepted outlets—print, online, guidebooks, photos, etc.—for tallying points. Clips may be uploaded online or submitted as live links.

Salaried travel writers can opt to submit the three most recent articles from their publication that show name and title, or a letter from an editor verifying that the articles are their work. No points are necessary.

**Requalification Procedure for Editors**

Editors must submit one of the following:

1. A copy of a recent issue of the newspaper or magazine masthead showing his/her name and title.

2. An article from a recent issue of the newspaper or magazine showing his/her name and title.

3. A live link to a website’s online masthead or “about” page showing his/her name and title. The website must meet SATW’s current standards for qualification.

4. A statement on letterhead from his/her employer verifying position and editorial responsibilities.

**Requalification Procedure for Associates**

Associate members must submit all of the following:

1. Proof of current employment at a Destination Management Organization, PR firm, or travel-related company. A letter on organization letterhead from senior management or owner is the suggested proof.

2. Contact information on three members of the media the Associate dealt with in the year leading up to requalification, and the results of that interaction.

3. Three clips (print/broadcast/online) of media coverage published in the year leading up to requalification, for the member’s travel destination(s) and/or client(s).

4. Those who are an employee or owner of a PR firm (only) must also enclose a letter from a current travel client confirming representation.

**Members in transition**

If the current membership directory lists a member in one Council but they have applied for a change of status to another Council, the member can select an “in transition” option in the paperwork. The member will have 12 months from the date his/her status changed to meet the requirements of the new council, which includes the approval of the chair of the present council, the council they seek to transfer to and the current SATW President-Elect.

Editors and Associates on inactive status (between jobs) shall be exempt from requalification for up to 12 months. They will be required to show proof of employment in the industry prior to returning to active status. Dues are still required.

**Lapsed members**

Members not paying by January 1 are considered to be lapsed members and lose their membership and all associated privileges. This can be remedied by the payment of all past due fees and late fees. If the issue was with requalifying, they will also be required to do so prior to reinstatement. The returning member does not need to go through the new membership approval process again. If their period of being lapse is more than one year, they don't have to pay the new member fee but must pay the application fee and meet any new membership guidelines.

**Appeals**

Members who fail requalification will be provided a notice containing the basis of the rejection and instructions for appealing.

In order to appeal, the member must provide written notice of appeal (mail or email) to SATW Headquarters within four weeks of the date of the letter of the initial decision along with any responsive or relevant material which may include a statement or explanation from the member or other person(s), additional clips or other material. The burden is on the member to provide evidence of sufficient clarity, relevancy and weight to overcome the initial rejection.

Appeals shall be reviewed by the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee shall decide the appeal by a majority vote affirming or reversing the initial decision and may include an explanation of the basis for their decision.

If the initial denial is affirmed, the member may serve a notice of their desire to appeal to the Executive Committee by contacting SATW Headquarters by mail or email within 14 days of receipt of the decision of the Requalification Appeal Board. The member is not entitled to submit new materials in support of the appeal to the Society’s Executive Committee but the Executive Committee has the option of requesting new materials. The decision of Executive Committee is final.

Active and Associate Members who fail requalification and appeal(s) have the option to apply for Emeritus status (if qualified) within 14 days of the date of the decision of the appeal.

**SECTION 2 – ELECTIONS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, FISCAL**

**VI. Annual Election Calendar and Procedures**

**Nomination Committee Procedures**

At the Pre-Convention Board Meeting held during the Society’s annual conference, a five-member Nominating Committee is selected. The committee is comprised of one member from each of the four Chapters. To determine the committee’s makeup, sitting or incoming chapter chairs bring the name of both an Active and an Associate volunteer from within his/her chapter. The Board votes on the four Active nominees; the two with the most votes are appointed to the Committee. The two chapters not represented by the chosen Actives are represented by their Associate candidates. The fifth member of the committee is the Immediate Past President, who serves as Chair of the committee.

**Establishing an Elections Calendar**

Working with the Board of Directors at the pre-conference Board meeting, the Society’s Executive Director shall set specific dates for completion of each step of a coming election year. The following calendar is to be considered a strong guideline, adjusted as needed to take into account dates that fall on a Saturday or Sunday. The calendar must be posted promptly on the Society website.

February 1: Slate of Society officer nominees is completed and submitted to the Board of Directors for approval by majority vote. Chapters and Councils Nominating Committees now begin solicitation of candidates for their chairmen and other offices.

March 1: Slates of Chapter and Council nominees are completed and presented to the Nominating Committee, SATW Board and the Executive Director. The complete slate of nominated officers is reported to the membership as soon as possible, published in the next edition of the SATW E-News newsletter and on satw.org. An email is sent from the Executive Director to all candidates for Society office, requesting candidate profiles (cv), candidate statements and head shots. Candidate statements for all offices should be 400 words or less; profiles for President-Elect should be 1000 words or less. To be published in the June 1 SATW E-News.

March 1: Notice is made to members by inclusion in SATW E-News that nomination by petition is now open and petitions must be submitted to the Executive Director no later than May 1. Petition requirements will be included in the notice.

April 15: Candidate profiles (cv), candidate statements and head shots for those running for Society office are due at headquarters. The Executive Director forwards to the SATW E-News editor, who edits for length.

May 1: Petitions must be returned by receipted delivery to headquarters. Petition signatures are reviewed to remove duplicates and ensure that enough signatures have been obtained for a nomination. A letter is sent from the Executive Director to all candidates for office nominated by petition, requesting biographical information and photos for publication in the June issue of the SATW E-News.

May 15: Candidate profiles (cv), candidate statements and head shots from petition candidates are due at headquarters. The Executive Director forwards to the SATW E-News editor, who edits for length.

May 15: Because Chapters and Councils may only adopt Bylaws consistent with the Society’s Bylaws, all Bylaws changes must be presented to the Parliamentarian for review and/or correction before going to the Society’s Board for final review. Once found to be in compliance they are placed on the ballot.

May 15: Candidate profiles (cv), candidate statements and head shots are displayed on satw.org.

May 25: Executive Director delivers final roster of candidates, broken down by Society, Chapter and Council, identifying which member categories are eligible to vote for each candidate. Final review for Society, Chapter or Council Bylaws changes must be approved by the Society Board by this date.

June 1: All candidates are profiled in the SATW E-News.

June 15: Election opens at 11AM Eastern Standard Time.

July 15: At 11:59 p.m., Hawaii Standard Time, the election closes.

July 16: The Incoming President contacts all winners as soon as the returns have been verified; the President contacts those who were not elected. Once all candidates have been contacted, the results are posted at satw.org and published in the SATW E-News. The SATW E-News editor requests an article, statement or interview from the new President-Elect.

**Nominations by Petition**

See Bylaws, Article VII, Section A-3.

Society headquarters will retain signed petition forms for one year, and they will be available for inspection by any member on request. The number of petition signatures required to add a candidate to the ballot (equal or exceed 10% of the Active membership).

**Limitations on Number of Offices to Be Held**

A member may hold only one elective office at a time within the Society.

**Campaign Period**

All Chapter and Council chairs will invite candidates for SATW President-Elect to attend, at the candidates’ expense, Chapter or Council meetings and be given the opportunity to make a short presentation in support of their candidacy.

**Endorsements**

Board members may not endorse any candidate for elected SATW office.

**Tie votes**

In the event two candidates tie for a majority vote on a Society ballot—including the offices of President-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary. Balloting will be repeated for that office as many times as necessary to obtain a majority vote for a single candidate. The same procedure will apply in the event of any measure being voted on by the Society members, such as a Bylaws change, that has resulted in a tie. The Executive Committee will be responsible for setting the timeframe for the new vote.

In the absence of a Chapter or Council election procedure, the Society procedures will apply to a tie vote for a Chapter or Council office or Bylaws revision.

**Term limits**

Society Presidents may not serve consecutive terms but may run for President Elect again. Chapter and Council chairs may serve a second consecutive term; they may stand for election again to that office after a one-term break from that office.

**President-Elect Transition Period**

To facilitate a smooth transition, the incoming President-Elect will have access to all board discussions immediately after their election is confirmed. They shall also assist the sitting President-Elect on membership issues prior to taking office.

**VII. Parliamentarian**

A Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the SATW President and shall serve at the President’s consent and pleasure. The Parliamentarian shall advise the President and President-Elect on constitutional and procedural matters.

The Parliamentarian shall interpret and enforce Robert’s Rules of Order at all meetings of the Board of Directors and at all business meetings of the Society. He or she shall enforce decorum and proper conduct during meetings of the Society and the Board of Directors.

When requested by the President, members of the Board of Directors, or Chapter and Council Chairs, the Parliamentarian shall interpret the Bylaws and Operations Manual of the Society.

The Parliamentarian shall be assigned additional duties, as required, by the President. Questions pertaining to parliamentary issues at Chapter and Council level should be handled by Chapter and Council chairs. The chairs may consult with the Society’s Parliamentarian as necessary.

For insurance and liability purposes, the Parliamentarian is considered an agent of the Board of Directors.

**VIII. Electronic Procedures**

Electronic voting: The Board of Directors, Executive Committee, standing committees and any other SATW committees are authorized to meet by telephone conference or through other electronic communications media so long as all potential participants have access.

Motions: it is recommended that motions first be submitted to the Parliamentarian for scheduling. The Parliamentarian will review the motion to verify that it complies with Robert's Rules of Order and does not conflict with existing Bylaws or Operations Manual text, and may suggest ways to clarify a motion. The Parliamentarian will make no changes without the approval of the person making the motion. The Parliamentarian or the member making the motion posts the motion. The Parliamentarian notifies the board as to the start and end of discussion and voting. Discussion generally lasts one week during which votes are not cast (unless required due to time factors and determined by the Parliamentarian). The posting will include who submitted the motion, the rationale for the motion submission and the timeline for processing the motion. Voting will only be conducted during the voting period.

**IX. Confidentiality Agreements**

**The Board of Directors are required to adhere to the following responsibilities**:

For Board of Directors, Executive Director, management company representatives, Parliamentarian and newly elected board members attending a board meeting and/or performing duties at the request of the Board and/or SATW President:

1. I understand the responsibilities of my position and agree to be bound by them.

2. I will make every attempt to attend all meetings.

3. I understand that unless told otherwise by the SATW President, all conversations, discussions, motions and votes by the SATW Board, whether in person, by telephone or by email, are to remain confidential to the board.

4. I understand that I do not speak on behalf of SATW or its Board of Directors without the approval of the SATW President.

**The Committees are required to adhere to the following responsibilities**:

For Committee Chairs and committee members attending a meeting or performing tasks at the behest of the Board and/or SATW President:

1. I understand that SATW Committees do not have the authority to speak for SATW nor for the Board of Directors unless so authorized by the President.

2. I further understand that Committees may not publicly distribute policy positions or statements without the approval of the Board of Directors.

3. I will not distribute, loan or give to anyone not on the Committee, unless permission has been granted by the President, privileged information received as a member of an SATW Committee.

4. It is my responsibility to educate the members of my Committee on the provisions of this contract.

5. I understand the responsibilities of my position and agree to be bound by them.

**A confidentiality clause will be attached to all contracts including those with database access.**

**X. Financial Policy and Guidelines**

SATW has established this policy and set of guidelines to aid the administration of the Society’s funds and those of the Chapters and Councils.

The Society’s management company will act as the agent to implement the Board’s decisions.

Expenses for the incoming and outgoing treasurers to meet with the management company will be paid from the “Board Travel for SATW Business” line in the Society budget. That meeting is not mandatory.

The Society’s treasurer is listed at the agent of record on all accounts. Following election of a new treasurer, the outgoing treasurer will help coordinate the transfer of all financial documents.

The Board has a corporate resolution to update signatures on investment and bank accounts when officeholders change. The required signatories are the president, the treasurer and the executive director.

If there is a legal reason a president or treasurer cannot be signatories (example: The Patriot Act forbids Canadians from holding U.S. bank accounts), that responsibility will go to other officers. If the president is ineligible, the signatory responsibility goes to the president-elect. If the treasurer is ineligible, the signatory responsibility goes to the secretary.

Society budgets will be posted to SATW.org within 30 days of approval by the board. If a budget is amended during a fiscal year, the amended budget will be posted within 30 days of approval.

Any check or transfer of funds in excess of $2,500 that is not part of an SATW contract requires approval by two signatories.

**Statement of Investment Policy/Guidelines**

1. The Society seeks preservation of capital with a consistent positive return on investment funds.

2. As a guiding principle, the Society’s financial reserves always should equal or exceed two years of non-convention operating expenses. The finances of Chapters and Councils are not included in this calculation.

3. The Society should not maintain a checking account balance in excess of $100,000 for more than 30 days and should not maintain more than an additional $250,000 in short-term, interest-bearing accounts (90 days or less).

4. Any remaining funds are available for investment in acceptable securities. Such securities are those offering the highest possible returns within each investment category, with safety of capital as the primary consideration. Total investment shall be balanced.

5. The treasurer will review investments and report to the Executive Committee quarterly.

**The Opportunity Budget**

The Board maintains an Opportunity Budget for the Chapters and Councils, up to a maximum of $21,000 per year, not to exceed $3,000 per individual Chapter or Council. The Board will determine each year’s amount.

Councils and Chapters can apply for funding for projects that will benefit their members. Projects include, but are not limited to, member recruitment, professional development, special one-time purchases, and travel and/or registration costs to attend other professional journalism groups’ meetings.

Opportunity Budget monies must be requested before being spent. The monies cannot be used to balance a Chapter or Council’s annual budgets. Application is made to the SATW Executive Committee for approval. Application forms are available from The Society’s treasurer and executive director.

**Travel expenses for President and President-Elect**

The Society will budget funds to cover travel expenses incurred by the president and president-elect.

Guidelines:

· Funds for the president-elect are designed to assist in recruiting members at chapter and council meetings to serve on Society committees during the president-elect’s term and to gather input from the membership.

· Funds can be used for travel associated with chapter and council meetings, but not for pre- and post-tours.

· Expenses for air and hotel upgrades are not covered.

**Donations**

For IRS and other reasons, the Society cannot donate funds to relief agencies (one nonprofit cannot donate to another) or to political organizations. SATW must follow IRS guidelines relating to its 501(c)6 status. SATW bylaws require that financial outlays are to be for the benefit of members. The same interpretation applies to Chapters and Councils. The Society must be careful donating to third-party organizations whose purposes are not consistent with the Society’s. However, the Society and Chapters and Councils can contribute to the SATW Foundation, whose purpose is so closely linked to SATW that there is no risk to the Society’s tax-exempt status.

**Author’s Coalition of America**

The Society and other writers’ organizations receive income from the Author’s Coalition of America (ACA). SATW uses this income in the annual budget for efforts that benefit the membership. Examples include professional development at the Society’s annual meeting, educational opportunities open to all SATW members, communication to members that benefits professional growth, and the SATW website (including online professional development and webinars).

**Convention**

When a president or president-elect selects a convention chair, a convention treasurer should be named immediately. The convention treasurer will create budgets, manage contracts and help oversee all convention financial activity. The convention treasurer will coordinate with the Society treasurer in addition to the convention chair and the executive director.

All convention registration expenses are to be paid by convention delegates excepting the air allowance.

**XI. Chapter and Council Operations**

Chapters and councils should have standard operating procedure manuals written and posted to their areas of SATW.org.

**Fiscal Operations**

SATW’s fiscal year follows the calendar year.

A portion of the Society’s annual member dues may be rebated to each member’s chapter and council, subject to each year’s Society budget situation and with Board approval. Recommended amounts are $6.50 for each member of a chapter and $4.50 for each member of a council. The rebates go to the general fund of each chapter and council to be used according to chapter and council bylaws.

If a chapter or council maintains an investment or savings account, it must report balances of those accounts to the executive director every quarter.

The executive director will provide monthly financial activity reports and balances to council and chapter treasurers.

**XII. Reimbursement of Expenses**

**Policy for board members**

Reasonable and expected travel and related expenses will be reimbursed to Board members during their service to SATW upon submission of a reimbursement form and appropriate documentation.

Allowable expenses for attendance at pre-convention and mid-year board meetings as well as any special meetings or events directly related to SATW board business: Airfare to the meeting (convention has a cap on the airfare), ground transfers to/from a board member’s gateway and airport parking, gratuities, internet access, and meals in transit are covered. Mileage reimbursement is allowed (at the current U.S. government rate) if driving to a meeting is less expensive than airfare. Board members who attend conventions as “joiners” can request the difference between the joiner rate and the air-inclusive rate. Board members are expected to use good judgement when it comes to expenses.

The parliamentarian and board meeting manager (if the management company is not handling this role) are subject to the same reimbursement policy as the board.

Not-allowable expenses: Expenses of a purely personal nature are excluded. Examples include, but are not limited to, snacks, gifts, personal entertainment, health club fees and in-flight services.

Incoming board members who attend a pre-convention board meeting pay their own expenses except where the host is willing to cover their costs as they do for sitting Board members.

Exceptions: The president and treasurer can make exceptions to the policy when faced with extraordinary circumstances. Board members’ service to SATW should not be a financial hardship due to events beyond their control. Requests for exceptions to the policy should be made to the president and treasurer before an expense is incurred, if possible.

Method: Reimbursement claims should be submitted within 30 days of completion of travel. Requests after 90 days will not be considered. Reimbursement claims require copies of receipts for all expenses.

**XIII. Request for Proposals (RFP) and Contract Renewals**

New Contracts and Agreements in excess of $10,000 must be put out to bid using the RFP process.

Request for Proposals (henceforth referred to as an RFP) may be developed for existing needs or for needs brought forth by a SATW Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. RFPs are to be developed by a committee selected by the President, or by the Executive Director if it is determined a committee is unnecessary. The RFP must list all requirements and criteria necessary for the service requested, and include an appropriate calendar listing specific deadlines for application, review, and final recommendation. RFPs are to be reviewed by the Board’s Executive Committee before publication.

The resulting RFP is published in all communications outlets of the Society and, when called for, sent to appropriate professional associations for publication in their media outlets and on their bulletin boards as well as other prospective service providers.

The Committee or Executive Director reviews all proposals submitted for consideration and forwards a recommendation to the Board of Directors, providing background materials used to arrive at the recommendation.

The Board then makes the final selection.

**Contracts and Agreements:**

Contracts and Agreements up for renewal and in place for no more than five years may be put out to bid using the RFP process or renewed, at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Contracts and Agreements up for renewal and in place for more than five years must be put out to bid using the RFP process. An exception to this requirement may be made if the Board of Directors determines, with a majority vote, that it is in the best interests of the Society to renew an existing contract or agreement. This exception may only be enacted once during the lifespan of an existing contract.

Note: Board Members or Executive Director must recuse themselves from involvement with any RFP that may be construed as a conflict of interest.

Renewals of any and all contracts that are deemed satisfactory and consistent with agreed upon performance must be approved by the Board’s Executive Committee, except in the case of contracts that exceed $35,000 per annum which require approval by the entire Board of Directors.

Contract extensions of no greater than a period of one year may be offered and approved by the Board’s Executive Committee. These extensions should only be undertaken when an issue of timeliness of a renewal or RFP bid may affect the ability of the Society to run its programs and/or operations without interruption or when there is a need to align the dates of renewal with the needs of the Society.

A copy of all signed contracts should be maintained by both SATW headquarters.

**XIV. Policy on Accepting Gifts**

SATW officers, the Board of Directors, and other members representing the Society in any official capacity are prohibited from accepting gifts in excess of $150 from any source involved with the Society. Hosts and other entities doing business with the Society will be apprised of this rule in the official convention and meeting guidelines. Should such a gift still be offered in a circumstance where the SATW recipient is unable to refuse the gift without embarrassment to the donor, such a gift is to be accepted on behalf of the Society and then turned over to SATW headquarters for appropriate utilization or polite return.

**XV. Policy on Advertising**

**PROPOSED**

There will be a limit of four ads in each e-mail newsletter—the first to be inserted between the first and second major sections and the next one between the second and third major sections and others at the bottom. E-mail newsletter text is limited to 100 words and can include one e-mail and/or web links. Graphics and ads with images are recommended.

Website ads will be placed on a rotating basis each time the home page or interior page is refreshed.

Costs:

· Newsletter

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ad Type** | **2-4 Editions** | **6-8 Editions** | **9-11 Editions** | **12 + Editions** |
| Premium Placement | $500 per edition | $450 per edition | $425 per edition | $375 per edition |
| Secondary Placement | $400 per mo. | $325 per mo. | $300 per mo. | $275 per mo. |

· Website

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ad Type** | **1-3 Months** | **4-6 Months** | **7-9 Months** | **10-12 Months** |
| Homepage banner | $600 per mo. | $575 per mo. | $550 per mo. | $475 per mo. |
| Right banner – interior pages | $450 per mo. | $425 per mo. | $400 per mo. | $350 per mo. |

Any Active, Associate or travel-related company can advertise. Advertising in the newsletter or on the website doesn’t provide membership or regular receipt of the newsletter.

All material is provided by advertiser and subject to prior approval by SATW. SATW reserves the right to alter or reject any copy which it feels is not in keeping with publication standards. Advertiser assumes the responsibility for any and all claims arising from its advertisement which are made against SATW, and agree to hold SATW harmless.

**XVI. Communications**

The Board will approve meeting minutes electronically and the minutes will then be posted in the members-only area of the website. Members will be notified that they have been posted.

**XVII. Use of the SATW Name and Logo**

Because the Board of Directors believes that the use of the SATW name by members may sometimes be beneficial to the Society, the following has been established by resolution:

No member or members may use the name or logo of SATW with any form of advertising or commercial endorsement without the written permission of the Executive Committee. Those interested in doing so must contact the Executive Director who will then present details of the proposed advertisement or endorsement to the Executive Committee for consideration and timely decision.

All awards or marketing materials, currently or in the future, carrying the SATW name or logo must first be approved by the Board of Directors and be subject to oversight by the Board or its designated committee. The process for all awards will be subject to the bylaws, rules and generally accepted accounting practices adopted by SATW.

**XVIII. SATW Historian and Archives**

SATW collects and conserves Society history in an official SATW Archives held at an appropriate site and overseen by a Society Historian appointed by the President. The Historian works with a committee to ensure that the preservation of the Society’s history is completed annually. To achieve this, the Historian:

1. Works with the Board, Chapters, Councils and related groups to preserve Society records and other appropriate materials for Society use and for transfer to the SATW Archives.

2. Creates instructions for this process.

3. Works on behalf of the Society with the Archivist at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

4. Works as appropriate with history-related projects on SATW websites.

5. Immediate Past Presidents are required to a written overview of their year as President for inclusion in the SATW Archives.

SATW Headquarters will ensure that Board materials, including Board reports, Minutes and other materials prepared for the Board, are transferred to the SATW Archives through the Historian, where they will be accessible according to standards set by the Board.

Chapter and Council history liaisons, appointed by their chairs, will collect their minutes, newsletters, meeting materials and other appropriate material for their own Chapter and Council use and will transfer copies of these materials to the SATW Archives.

**SECTION 3 – ANNUAL CONVENTION AND MEETINGS, AWARDS AND HONOREES**

**XIX. Terms and Conditions for Participating in SATW Annual Convention and other Meetings**

Any SATW member, spouse, guest, or employee who attends any SATW-sponsored trip or activity agrees to the terms and conditions that follows by virtue of his/her participation.

**Who May Attend**

Any member in good standing may register for the Annual Convention as well as appropriate Chapter and Council meetings. Some Council meetings may be subject to attendance caps; check for participation specifics.

Members may bring one (1) adult guest (at least 18 years of age) to participate in the Annual Society Convention, so long as the guest is appropriately registered. These guests must share the hotel room of the SATW member. Guests may not attend the Annual Convention or a Chapter meeting without the member, nor can they participate alone on a pre- or post-trip.

Members are allowed to bring children, who must share the member’s room, but may not attend convention meals, functions or meetings. If under the age of 18, children must have an adult child-care provider. Any additional fees (e.g., lodging, child care, transportation, etc.) incurred as a result of bringing children are the responsibility of the registered member. Children are not permitted to participate in any SATW Convention activities including pre- and post-tours unless the specific approved tour allows for children.

Adult child-care providers are permitted to attend SATW Convention activities (where allowed) if they are registered as convention guests and if other child-care arrangements have been made for the attending children.

Non-members who are not affiliated with any member and are therefore not considered a guest are allowed to attend the Annual Convention under the following conditions:

· The addition of this category of registrant to the Annual Convention must be approved by the board for each convention;

· They must be employed in the travel industry as either a journalist or in public relations;

· The registration fee can be no lower than the fee charged to an adult guest;

· The non-member is allowed to participate in all aspects of the convention, including pre- and/or post-tours (paying no less than the guest rate), excepting those functions that are deemed to be SATW only such as chapter and council meetings and the SATW business meeting;

· A per diem charge may also be offered to local journalists but should be no less than the per diem costs of an adult guest (full convention fee divided by the number of nights).

Chapter and Council meetings have their own guidelines; check for specifics of each meeting.

Provide funding for a minimum of two (international conventions) or four (North American conventions) college journalism, public relations and/or communications students to attend the Annual Convention and/or pre- and post-trips as interns, with the intention of mentoring the students and advising them on travel-writing research, writing and editing.

**Deposit/Payment Terms**

Hosts and/or SATW generally require payment with explicit deadlines. Any failure to comply with timely remittance may result in forfeiture of one’s place on a “first come, first-served” list. Denial of participation may result if final payment is not received by the deadline. Late payment penalties and/or administrative fees may be imposed by SATW.

**Travel Documents**

It is the responsibility of the host and/or SATW to provide timely delivery of appropriate travel tickets and documents. Participants are required to carry these documents and have them readily available. Failure to do so may result in reissue penalties payable by the participant.

**Cancellation Policy**

Members cancelling their convention registration up to a refund deadline, set by the convention contract (usually 45 to 60 days prior to convention start date), will be refunded their full payment minus penalty. The amount of the penalty is to be decided on by the convention chair(s) and SATW President. Members cancelling their convention registration after the refund deadline will not receive a refund.

The following refund exception will be made: members cancelling after the refund deadline and who are faced with a personal medical issue, or a member of their immediate family is faced with a medical issue or dies, may cancel and will receive a full refund minus penalty. A note from their physician is required stating they are unable to travel due to medical reasons.

The approval of the refund exception must be made by SATW’s President, or in his/her absence, SATW’s President-Elect. A member denied a refund of their registration fee can appeal the decision. The appeal will be reviewed by the Executive Board and a final decision will be issued within 60 days.

**Tips and Gratuities**

Hosts and/or SATW will provide information on appropriate tipping. Attendees should not assume that gratuities are included unless this is specified, and they should be prepared to comply with tipping recommendations. Any complaints or comments about tipping while on SATW-sponsored trips are to be directed to the Program Committee or the convention’s Tours Chair.

**Liability**

As a courtesy for its members, speakers and guests, SATW acts in the capacity of liaison for the airline, hotel, car rental company or tour operator named in the itinerary of any program. SATW is not responsible for their acts or omissions, change of flight times, delays, losses, injuries, inconveniences, cessation of operations, bankruptcies, acts of God and other events beyond their control. SATW does not own, manage, control or operate any transportation vehicle, hotel, restaurant, cruise ship or other supplier of services. Independent third parties provide transportation, accommodations, sightseeing, meetings and other services.

All arrangements with such independent contractors are made solely for the convenience of SATW members, guests, and employees and are undertaken at the risk of the SATW participant. All SATW participants release SATW and its operators from any claims for loss or damage to baggage or property, or for personal injuries or death, or for any loss from delay arising out of the errors, acts, omissions or other actions of any independent contractors, including but not limited to air carriers, hotels, excursion providers, restaurateurs, transportation providers or medical providers.

Each SATW participant agrees to indemnify SATW and the operators for all penalties, charges, losses or expenses incurred by virtue of any act, omission or violation or law by the participant. Participant will also indemnify SATW for any reasonable attorneys’ fees and expenses that SATW may incur by reason thereof.

SATW does not assume and expressly disclaims responsibility for any claim, action, cause of action, injuries, losses or damages arising from the actions of third-party contractors supplying services.

**Personal Property**

SATW is not responsible for any theft, loss, pilferage, and/or damage to any participant’s personal property. Suppliers such as hotels and airlines print and/or post the limit of their respective liability to passengers/guests.

**Errors**

Every effort is made to ensure that the program for SATW events is accurate. However, SATW is not responsible for typographical errors or omissions. Each communication sent by SATW/host regarding a trip supersedes any information which precedes it. It is the responsibility of the participant to rely upon latest information provided via regular mail, e-mail, fax, or phone.

**Denied Travel Privileges**

Under extraordinary circumstances, such as illegal activities or gross violations of the SATW Code of Ethics & Conduct, a host or the Society’s representative may decide to terminate the travel privileges of a participant without refund at any time during the trip. That participant is then fully responsible for all expenses incurred, including, but not limited to: lodging, meals, return transportation, and other related expenses.

**Other convention policies**

The SATW Board, and by extension the SATW Board President, may not enter into contract or binding agreement solely with a DMC (Destination Marketing Company).

Actives and Associates may attend Chapter meetings other than their own on a space-available basis with the approval of the host Chapter Chair.

It is desirable for SATW to meet in North America at least once every four years.

SATW members, conference sponsors, invited guest speakers or anyone affiliated with the Society’s Annual Convention are prohibited from offering hospitality and/or scheduling any activities during official Convention program events. SATW members who violate this policy may be liable for SATW Ethics & Conduct violations. Official Convention programming is any activity that is printed in the official schedule of events.

Registration materials and guidelines for any Society, Chapter or Council meetings will bear a notice that “SATW will not meet in a facility which discriminates against any individual or group on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or marital classification.”

The blackout period for Councils and Chapters to hold their own meetings is 30 days on either side of the core dates of an SATW Annual convention. This applies to out-of-town meetings, not luncheons or single-party events.

All Chapters and Councils planning a meeting must communicate with the Sites Committee on potential meeting hosts as well as before signing a contract. All reasonable efforts will be made to avoid meeting in the same location within the same year.

**To avoid serious conflicts between meetings of various SATW groups, all functions of Chapters and Councils must be registered with SATW headquarters. SATW’s calendar coordinator will post a meeting only when notified by a Council or Chapter meeting planner that a signed contract is in hand. Council and Chapter meeting chairs will provide a copy of the signed contract to SATW headquarters. In case an official group has already been scheduled for a date being considered, the later group is to select another date for its meeting.**

Emeritus members may be invited to Council meetings by the Council Chair when there is room and the meeting host approves.

Emeritus members are allowed to participate in Media Marketplace under the following criteria:

· **Emeritus Associates:** Must have an ongoing P.R. contract with a tourism client. Project clients taken on simply for promotion at Marketplace are not allowed.

· **Emeritus Actives:** Must have at least one viable media outlet to which they plan to contribute stories.

SATW members may be paid an honorarium for presenting professional development sessions at a convention, subject to convention budget. Convention registration and travel will not be paid to members.

The registration fee for the convention Chair is covered by the host under the standard convention contract. The registration fee for the convention Co-Chair will be paid by SATW.

Convention chair or co-chairs is appointed by the President-Elect. The rest of the convention committee, including a vice chair if one is desired, will be appointed by the convention chair and/or the President-Elect.

It is the responsibility of the participant to be on time for scheduled tours, events and programs. SATW participants are respectfully reminded that sometimes circumstances require itinerary or program changes. Participants who have comments or needs should address them to the appointed SATW trip liaison. SATW is not responsible for changes made by suppliers, but will attempt to work out the best solution if comments or complaints are brought to the attention of the SATW trip liaison in a timely and professional manner.

SATW will create and implement a late-registration policy when applicable and agreed upon by the hosts and the Convention Chair(s) and the President.

SATW will create and implement a mini-meeting policy and schedule with the meeting host when appropriate.

SATW will continue the Bring-A-Book program as appropriate.

SATW’s Board of Directors has the option to accept more than one convention site bid at a time.

The convention clip book is produced two years following each convention with an addendum produced for the host three and four years following a convention.

Airfare is not a mandatory component of the convention bidding process. SATW does not have an obligation to provide airfare as part of the basic convention package from every potential North American gateway.

In lieu of a host destination not providing complimentary airfare or convention registration, the Board recommends that Chapters and Councils consider offering reimbursement to Chapter/Council chairs and meeting chairs for their meeting expenses.

**XX. Alcoholic Beverages and Social Host Guidelines**

All venues, hosts and destinations hosting SATW events must agree to adhere to SATW policies relating to alcohol use and social host responsibility.

SATW firmly supports all laws relating to alcohol and seeks to maintain a responsible atmosphere for alcohol consumption and use. In accordance with these stipulations, hosts are allowed to serve alcohol at approved functions. However, the hosts and/or SATW reserve the right to deny alcoholic beverages to any person(s). An event sponsor/host who wishes to have alcohol served at an SATW event must have the approval of the appropriate SATW Event Liaison and must agree to follow the following Social Host Guidelines.

· Alcohol may only be served to individuals of legal drinking age or older. Hosts also have the option of not serving alcoholic drinks at all.

· In all cases where alcohol is available at social events, the hosts of these events must ensure that all alcohol use is legal and responsible.

· It is essential that hosts have adequate insurance coverage.

· The host may limit alcohol served to beer and wine. The host may limit drinks served to a maximum of three per person.

· In cases where alcohol is being served, hosts must employ bartenders/servers who have completed alcohol awareness training applicable to the laws and regulations of the locality in which the event will take place and/or who are licensed by the locality’s liquor control board.

· Guests must not be allowed to pour their own drinks or serve themselves.

· Event hosts are discouraged from drinking alcohol at the event. Hosts need to monitor how much alcohol guests are consuming and be capable of dealing with problems in a clear-headed manner.

· Hosts must not continue to serve alcohol to anyone who appears inebriated.

· At events where alcohol is served, hosts must also serve food.

· At the Annual Convention and/or meeting events where alcohol is served, transportation must be provided for attendees to/from the event site.

· Event planners/hosts should include the Society’s alcohol policy statement in all meeting registration/event materials.

**XXI. Information Regarding Board Meetings**

Under SATW’s Bylaws, members are entitled to attend any business meeting appropriate to their membership status. Joiners attending any other portion of a meeting, including professional development sessions, may, at the option of the Chapter or Council Chair, be offered a per-day rate. The cost and restrictions of same will be set by that Chair in consultation with the meeting site hosts.

**Pre-Convention Board Meeting**

The President and Board Meeting Manager are to work with the Chair of the Annual Convention on details and arrangements for the pre-convention Board Meeting.

Board Members must be registered for the Annual Convention in order to attend a Board pre-trip preceding the pre-convention Board Meeting. Spouses/guests who are not registered for the Annual Convention may attend the pre-convention Board Meeting for a fee. The fee will be waived for spouses/guests registered for the Annual Convention.

**Midyear Board Meetings**

SATW’s maximum contribution to the host of a Midyear Board meeting is $25,000. The actual amount is to be negotiated at the discretion of the incoming President.

The President or President-elect, depending on whose meeting it will be, and Board Meeting Manager are allowed to negotiate with the host to provide certain elements and amenities for the Midyear board meeting.

As long as the President or President-Elect stays within the allocated budget, he/she may authorize the Board Meeting Manager to negotiate in good faith on behalf of SATW with final approval of the President or President-Elect.

Member guests are invited to the Board meeting, as is the custom for most SATW events. They are expected to pay their expenses, the amount to be determined for each meeting. Potential hosts should be advised that guest fees are intended only to help offset their meals and other incidental expenses.

**Attendance**

An ex officio board position has been created for the Chair of the Sites Committee who will be expected to attend every Board meeting.

It is strongly recommended that the Convention Chair of the upcoming convention be present at all Board meetings at the discretion of the President.

**XXII. Awards and Honorees**

**The Marco Polo Award**

Established in 1971 by the SATW board, the Marco Polo award is one of the two highest honors the Society can bestow upon an Active, Associate or Emeritus member who must have rendered extraordinary service to the Society and made major contributions to its development. The Past Presidency of SATW, an office that can be held only by Actives, is the Society’s highest honor for an Active, making Past Presidents ineligible for MP status.

**Marco Polo Selection Criteria**

There is a profound difference resonating from a body of work performed by Marco Polo candidates that separates them from other Society volunteers. Although many members may volunteer their services in various capacities at the Chapter, Council and Society levels, they may not create compelling legacies to mark their years of service, a necessary requirement for the Marco Polo award.

A member eligible for Marco Polo status should have produced an exceptional body of service that helps shape the Society and allows it to embark on new or better pathways that result in greater Society productivity and growth. Some examples of building a legacy could be in the form of operations manuals and guidelines, marketing or professional development strategies. Essentially, a Marco Polo candidate builds a body of work that provides a platform for new volunteers to build upon.

Marco Polo candidates must have had at least 10 years of exemplary, diverse and impactful service in SATW prior to being considered for a Marco Polo nomination.

Because this is such a high honor, unless the Board of Directors and Marco Polo Selection Committee believes extraordinary circumstances exist, it is recommended that only one Marco Polo be given each year. In some years, there may be none.

**Marco Polo Nomination Process**

· Nominations may be made by Actives or Associates who have been members of SATW for at least five years. Emeritus members may also nominate candidates. Announcements that the Marco Polo nomination process is open will be made every February 1 on satw.org and communicated through the SATW e-News and private SATW Facebook page.

· Each Marco Polo sponsor should develop a two- to three-page letter or email including such fundamental information as: the Marco Polo candidate’s name and date of joining; a detailed record of the person’s exceptional service, keynoting highlights; documentation of this service; along with any supporting evidence.

· A Marco Polo sponsor should not request third-party letters or emails of support on behalf of a candidate. The Marco Polo candidate’s record should stand on its own. The Marco Polo candidate should not be contacted or be aware that he/she is under consideration.

· All letters of nomination (with supporting materials) should be sent to the Marco Polo/Past President Selection Committee chair by April 1.

· Any Marco Polo candidate failing to be awarded a Marco Polo designation may be reconsidered in future years.

**Marco Polo Selection Process**

1. By January 15, the SATW President will designate a Marco Polo Advisory Committee of three Marco Polos and four Past Presidents and one Board liaison (who can be neither a Past President or Marco Polo), appointing one of the Past Presidents as the Committee chair. This committee will review and research the nominations.

2. In strict privacy, the committee will send the Marco Polo nominations to all Past Presidents and Marco Polos for comment. A candidate must receive a simple majority of those voting for his/her candidacy to be considered by the Marco Polo Selection Committee.

3. The seven Marco Polo Selection Committee members will then vote on all nominees by submitting their votes via email or phone to the SATW Executive Director**,** who will then inform the Marco Polo Selection Committee Chair of the vote outcome. A candidate must receive a two-thirds majority (five or more votes) from the Marco Polo Selection Committee for his/her candidacy to be forwarded to the Board of Directors. The Marco Polo Selection Committee may choose to present more than one name to the Board of Directors.

4. Based on the forwarded documentation and committee recommendations, the Board of Directors will vote to confirm the member or members. Or, it may decide to select none. A candidate must receive a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors vote to gain Marco Polo status. If a two-thirds majority is not attained, the member is not confirmed.

5. The newly named Marco Polo will not be informed of the award until a public announcement is made at the annual conference or other Society function. However, the member’s spouse may be informed so he/she can decide whether to attend the awards ceremony.

Marco Polo designees and Past Presidents are considered SATW members for their lifetimes, provided there are no Ethics & Conduct violations that would cause their removal. Their collective institutional memory and their continued service to the Society make them valued and respected. They are not required to provide additional qualifications in the biennial membership requalification review, and they may list clients and media outlets up to the timing limits imposed in the directory.

**Phoenix Awards**

“Because tourism leaves permanent ‘footprints,’ some harmful to the environment, some destroying the reasons for traveling, the Society of American Travel Writers in 1969 created an award to recognize conservation and preservation efforts of individuals and organizations,” SATW President Len Barnes said in 1988. Since then, SATW has recognized conservation, preservation, beautification and anti-pollution accomplishments as they relate to travel.

SATW members are invited to nominate individuals, communities, or organizations that have contributed to a quality travel experience through conservation, preservation, beautification or environmental efforts. Nominations, describing the evolution of worthy projects, are considered by the SATW Phoenix Committee and submitted with recommendations to the Board of Directors for final approval.

The President shall appoint a Chair of the Phoenix Award Committee, who shall appoint two other members to review nominations for the Award and recommend finalists to the Board of Directors.

**Phoenix Award Nomination Requirements**

· Only SATW members may nominate candidates for a Phoenix Award.

· SATW Board Members may make Phoenix nominations but if selected by the Phoenix Committee**,** that Board member must abstain from the final vote.

· Phoenix Committee members are not allowed to nominate candidates for Phoenix Awards.

· Nominators must have personally visited the nominated destination/facility.

· Nominators must use a nomination form with the current year printed at the top.

· Nominators must have no vested, business or financial interest in the candidate (e.g.**,** an Associate member who works for a convention & visitors bureau cannot nominate a person or organization that he/she is paid to promote).

· Worldwide commercial and non-commercial nominees are acceptable.

· Previous Phoenix Award winners may be re-nominated for an additional Phoenix Award, so long as the nomination is for a different good work.

· Late Phoenix Award submissions (postmarked after the announced deadline) will be eliminated.

· No more than six (6) Phoenix Awards may be awarded in a given year.

· Nominees must receive the endorsement of at least 60% of the Phoenix Award Committee to be submitted to the Board of Directors for final approval.

**SATW Muster Photo Competition**

There is a $25 entry fee for submitting a portfolio and no fee for individual photos.

The Photographers sub-council will choose the chair of the Muster Photo Competition Committee.

**President’s Award**

The President’s Award for Actives and Associates consists of an engraved bowl.

**SATW Board of Director’s Cup**

The SATW Board of Directors' Cup is awarded to new members (five or less years as members) who make significant contributions to SATW. Nominees are put forth by the Chapter Chairs no later than August 1 to the SATW board. The nominations should be accompanied by a short explanation of why this member should be honored and should include the list of contributions. The Board would review and vote. It is recommended that no more than three of these be awarded in any single year. The award will be presented at the convention when the President presents other awards.

*Revised on January 23, 2018*