

## Electoral Commission of the E.MAlumni Board (2014 Elections)

Meeting time: 18/06/2014 11 PM CET

Meeting place: Skype

Attendees and Commission members:

Alba Marcellan

Anes Makul (GCA Representative/ACIPS)

Cristiano Gianolla

Krisztina Damjanovich

Laura Pasquero

Chair: Cristiano Gianolla

Minutes taker: Cristiano Gianolla

### Minutes

#### 1. Establishing the Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission has been established to administer and observe the E.MAlumni Board election processes in a way that ensures a fair process and timely deals with any critical issues arising during the elections.

It was initially considered to establish both an Electoral Commission and a separate monitoring body that would observe the Electoral Commission's work and the election processes, however this option has been discarded due to the scarcity of time available in this occasion.

Therefore only the Electoral Commission is established with both roles: administer and control the elections.

The members of the Electoral Commission created for the 2014 E.MAlumni Board elections includes:

- Three appointed Board members currently not running for elections: Alba Marcellan (E.MAlumni Board Member), Cristiano Gianolla (E.MAlumni President) and Krisztina Damjanovich (E.MAlumni Treasurer);
- Laura Pasquero (E.MAlumni & GCA Executive Officer);
- Anes Makul (Representative of the Global Campus Alumni and of ACIPS - Alumni Association of the South-Eastern Europe).

The possibility of including volunteer E.MAlumni Active members in the Electoral Commission through a call for expression of interest has been discarded due to lack of time in the current circumstances. However, this idea will remain in the recommendation for managing future Board election processes.

## **2. Consideration of the acceptance of one Candidature despite late submission by candidate (after 23h59m59s PM CET on 15/06/2014)**

Due to a technical malfunction in the E.MAlumni website Campaign forum used to receive candidacies (i.e. bug in the timestamp of the post), one candidate was able to post his campaign text / candidacy post half an hour after the set deadline (15 June 23h59m59s). Besides this candidate, other E.MAlumni members have emailed other outgoing Board Members and the Executive Officer expressing their personal regret for not having been able to post their candidature before the deadline.

The Electoral Commission discussed different possible options previously considered and discussed also by the Board 2.0:

- A. Exclude from the list of candidates the person who managed to post in the Forum although after the deadline, as well as any other potential applicants who did not post their candidature in the Forum before the set deadline;
- B. Re-open the campaign period for a few more days in order to allow late candidates to apply.

From the discussion emerged unanimity about the decision to opt for option a), i.e. exclude from the list of candidates the person who managed to post in the Forum although after the deadline, as well as any other potential applicants who did not post their candidature in the Forum before the set deadline.

The reasons for this decision are the following:

- The Board verified with the help of the Website developer that technically the member who posted late had clicked on the “send” button after the agreed deadline;
- The Electoral Commission made contact with the member who managed to post in the Forum after the deadline to gather further information, and the member confirmed that he had posted after the deadline and that this was not due to any strong impediment;
- The deadline for candidates to post in the Election Forum was clearly communicated well in advance and a reminder was sent to the entire E.MAlumni members;
- Many current candidates managed to put forward their candidature despite being located remotely and having limited and unstable internet connections;
- Reopening the candidature for additional days post would not be fair to those candidates who had posted their candidature by the deadline.

The Electoral Commission will be in contact with those E.MAlumni members who did not post their candidature before the deadline.

The Electoral Commission expresses appreciation for the met understanding with all candidates and late applicants and for their good will to accept the decision of the Commission regardless of what the outcome would be. This is also a confirmation of the trust that E.MAlumni membership has in the decision making ability of the E.MAlumni Board 2.0.

### **3. Consideration of the members running for elections while still in the process of becoming Active Members**

As per the Statute, only E.MAlumni Active members can run for Board position at an election. Active Membership is achieved by being active in the association and by paying the annual membership fee contribution. A few candidates of the current election have not yet paid their membership fee contributions at the time of putting forward their candidature. Some of them made the payment and became active members in the meantime (in the last few days). Two candidates were not able to do so due to unsurmountable technical obstacles beyond their control, expressing however their strong will to make the payment as soon as possible.

In the light of the circumstances, the Electoral Commission decided to allow these two candidates to remain among candidates for Board position in the election if:

- The Association receives the membership fee contribution payment by a third person of the candidate in their name until 21 June; or
- Accept a Scholarship membership contribution by the Board.

The Electoral Commission reached this decision by also acknowledging that the E.MAlumni Association does not yet allow other methods of payment than bank transfer, which is a limitation.

Some members of the Electoral Commission expressed the hope that if there are members running for Board position in the election, thanks to a membership scholarship, they would compensate this by offering a scholarship next year; because Board members (or candidate to the Board) are considered as those who should give good example in participating in the Association's activities including paying the Membership Contribution (on time).

Anes proposed that for those who cannot pay the membership fee contribution with money they could volunteer for the Association by working for one or two days and then be exempted from the Membership fee contribution. However, the Commission underlined that all Board members are volunteers and exempting Board members from paying the membership fee contribution - on the bases that they are volunteering - would not set a good practice. For this reason, this option has been discarded.

### **4. Duration of the vote**

The Commission decided that the polls will be open for a period of 15 days as it was first communicated to members, regardless of the fact that it will be open late with respect to the date initially scheduled (16-30 June). The vote will be open as soon as the active membership of the two pending candidates will be regularised. Voting period is aimed at 21 of June - 5 July (23:59:59 CET).

## **5. Lesson learned**

The Electoral Commission praised the attentive and cooperative communication with all people involved in this matter including the candidates. An open, correct and truly explanatory communication and debate has helped to create the conditions for a satisfactory decision which the Commission considers just and open to contextual reasonability - as opposed to bureaucratic and mechanical application of prescribed rules.

As highlighted by one candidate applying from outside Europe, the use of GMT time zone - as opposed to CET time zone - is preferable because all time zones reference to GMT. The Electoral Commission acknowledged this point and suggested to the Board 2.0 to add it to the Standing Orders and to the next Board to apply it. In order to avoid confusion during current elections, the CET time zone will be kept as it is the custom use in the E.MAlumni Association but for the future the Electoral Commission suggest the adoption of GMT.

The Electoral Commission affirmed that the lessons learnt through the creation and functioning of the Commission shall be part of the testimony passed from Board 2.0 to the next E.MAlumni Board. For this reason, the Board members present in the Electoral Commission committed to drafting a special section of the Standing Order dedicated to Board Election Procedure.