

COMMENT

Advancing chemistry and the society: Service on ACS committees matters

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The mission of the ACS Committee on Committees (ConC)—yes, there is a Committee on Committees—is to facilitate the effective functioning of the 29 ACS committees focused on activities related to technical divisions and local sections as well as education, international activities, and publications. In accordance with ACS by-laws, ConC ensures that all committees achieve their specific charters; recommends qualified individuals to serve, including committee chairs, members, associates, and consultants; and helps resolve any personnel or procedural issues that may arise within a committee. This is a substantial effort with over 400 positions to fill each year.

ConC's vision is that all ACS committees are appropriately populated from across the society with the expertise to fulfill their particular mission; that participants feel engaged and supported; that leadership continues throughout the years; and that the relationships between the committees and other entities of ACS governance, including ACS staff, are professional and effective.

When assembling recommendations for appointments by the ACS president and/or chair of the ACS Board for ACS Council-related committees, ConC seeks to identify and involve individuals from across the society. Including members with a range of experiences and perspectives helps ensure that ACS remains relevant, innovative, and effective. ConC's Subcommittee on Diversity has a charge "to monitor the diversity of the ACS committee structure, identify problems, and make recommendations to solve them; to cooperate with diversity committees or subcommittees of other groups within ACS; and to offer the assistance of ConC in their efforts." By reaching out to various ACS groups, ConC hopes to widely encourage participation in ACS governance

and to foster a greater understanding of the appointment process.

In 2016, ConC will be conducting a demographic survey of ACS committee chairs, members, associates, and consultants. The purpose of the survey is twofold: First, it is an educational tool to broaden ACS member awareness of the variety of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and employment sectors represented among our membership; second, it is



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a method for ConC to get a snapshot of where the committee diversity picture stands now as we look toward future recruitment efforts. The survey will be

confidential and voluntary. ConC will use the aggregated data to learn about the demographics and experiences of our committee volunteers and to guide our future diversity efforts.

Many committee members have indicated their involvement in ACS governance has provided relevant professional skills in the area of communication and leadership. It also offers tremendous opportunities to interact with colleagues working at all levels in industry, academia, and government. Current and aspiring committee members can also take advantage of the ACS Leadership Development System (www.acs.org/leadershipdevelopment).

We welcome your input and want to share the opportunity to participate in the governance of your society.

It is time to begin the process of making appointments to council-related committees for 2017. If you are interested in serving on an ACS committee, the online committee preference form for committee assignments will be open from March 28 to June 10 at www.yellowbook.acs.org. Here are some highlights to remember:

► ConC only makes the recommendations

for committee appointment and reappointments. The ACS president and/or board chair approve the final appointments.

- Regular attendance and participation at committee and subcommittee meetings (often held at national meetings) are required.
- Most initial appointments are for non-voting associate positions. Associates are appointed for one-year terms and must complete a form to seek reappointment on the committee in which they serve.
- Those who are finishing a term or have

reached the statutory limit on a committee will need to complete the online form to reaffirm their interest in service.

- We ask that you provide details about your qualifications and four preferences. If you are currently serving on a committee, your current committee should be listed, along with the term expiration date.
- You can also use this system to update your Yellow Book contact and biographical information throughout the year. Contact the ACS secretary's office at secretary@acs.org if you don't receive information about the online preference form.

► Both the council and board call upon committees to study and make recommendations on matters of importance to the society. ACS committees also serve as clearinghouses for comments and proposals regarding the conduct of present and future programs of the society.

Although not everyone can be appointed to a committee, we can assure you that you will receive thorough consideration for an assignment. ACS volunteers are the cornerstone of our society. The hard work and tangible outcomes of our ACS committees are the result of the judgment, commitment, and camaraderie of volunteers like you.

Thank you for your participation in the society!

Views expressed on this page are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACS.