

# ACADEMY

OF CLINICAL RESEARCH PROFESSIONALS



## BOARD NOMINEE HANDBOOK

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in applying to serve on The Academy Board of Trustees (BoT). In reading this handbook you are embarking on a new journey in leadership with an organization dedicated to certification in clinical research and the development of its professionals. While the challenges are numerous; so too are the opportunities to advance the practice, the profession, and the Academy. One of the values of your certification earned by The Academy is the opportunity to lead the organization as a board member.

The Academy is classified as a 501(c)6 non-profit corporation. Its affairs are governed by a Board of Trustees elected by individuals holding current certification. The Academy Bylaws provide for a minimum of nine (9) and a maximum of eleven (11) voting members, including a Chair, Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, and Public Member. The Board also includes one non-voting Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP) Board of Trustees Liaison. The appointed Board Treasurer/Secretary is either a voting Trustee or a non-voting staff member.

As outlined in the Academy Bylaws, it is the Academy Board's duty to carry out its objectives and purposes which include (i) advancing and promoting the professional interests of clinical research professionals by defining, promoting, and maintaining the highest standards and best practices in the field of clinical research worldwide, (ii) enhancing the protection of human subjects that participate in clinical research, wherever such research occurs: (a) by developing and promoting such standards and best practices as well as measures to assess the knowledge, skills, and professionalism of the clinical research team, (b) by establishing and maintaining certification and recertification or maintenance of certification programs for clinical research professionals, and (c) by developing and providing information, guidance, comments, and proposals concerning clinical research to applicable branches, agencies, bureaus, commissions, committees, departments, and other governmental instrumentalities or competent authorities.

This handbook will give you a better understanding of the opportunities for serving on the board, the roles, the responsibilities and commitments of leadership positions, and the process associated with the selection of candidates and the election. It is intended as a guide to help you determine how your knowledge, skills and expertise may contribute to the fulfillment and advancement of The Academy's mission and the degree to which serving as a Trustee would align with your plans, professional goals, and desired experiences. While most organizations value your leadership contribution in a professional association, it is recommended that you discuss your plans with your employer prior to applying for a position.

If, after review of this handbook, you have additional questions, or would like to learn more about serving on the Board, please contact Director of Governance and Operations Christy Herz, [Christy.herz@acrpn.org](mailto:Christy.herz@acrpn.org).

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## BOARD NOMINATIONS PROCESS

Each year the Academy Nominating Committee, as charged by the Academy Board, coordinates an open nominations process of certificants and compiles a slate of candidates in consideration for open seats on the Academy Board. The number of candidates selected directly correlates with the number of vacant Board seats for the upcoming year and the needs of the Board. A thorough evaluation process of each nominee is conducted by the Committee for its initial ranking of potential candidates, and nominees are assessed on a combination of professional accomplishments, governance competencies, necessary expertise, as well as leadership skills. Final candidates may be interviewed by the Nominating Committee by telephone. The Academy slate must be approved by the current Board of Trustees, and once approved, will be put forth to the certificants of the Academy for election.

### *Nominations Timeline*

- Interested members must complete an [online application](#) during the nominations period between May 1 and June 30.
- The Academy Nominating Committee reviews all applications in July and August.
- A slate of candidates is presented to the Academy Board in August for vote. Nominees are contacted about their nomination status.
- The Board approved slate is put forth to certificants for a vote in October.
- Once the vote is finalized in November, the new Trustees are contacted and welcomed to the Board with their term commencing January 1.

## ELIGIBILITY OF NOMINEES: GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Those seeking election to the Academy BoT should have prior leadership and volunteer experience, as well as an understanding of nonprofit/association governance. Leadership attributes such as strategic thinking, ability to delegate, active listening, facilitation skills, and the ability to develop consensus are essential to the success of any governing body.

The Academy Bylaws list the following general requirements of Trustees:

1. Seated trustees, with the exception of the public member, must be active certificants in good standing—active certificants are defined as anyone holding a certification from the Academy (i.e. CCRA, CCRC and/or CPI).
2. One member must be a public member.
3. Must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
4. Trustees elected by the certificants of the Academy shall not be eligible to serve on the ACRP Board of Trustees during their term of service on the Academy Board of Trustees.
5. No Trustee shall serve on the ACRP Content Committee, and no Trustee shall work for ACRP developing professional development curriculum, whether paid or as a volunteer, during their term as a Trustee and for two (2) years after the expiration of his or her term.
6. No Trustee shall develop or provide training designed to prepare candidates for an ACRP Certification exam during their term(s) of service and for two (2) years after the expiration of his or her term.

## SERVING ON THE ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### *Term of Office*

The term of office for a Trustee is three (3) years and a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms may be served. Trustees seeking re-election for a consecutive three-year term must re-apply, be selected for the slate and be re-elected by certificants as part of the candidate slate. Trustees shall assume office at the commencement of the fiscal year immediately following their election and shall hold office for the term for which he or she is elected. Typically, terms of office begin January 1.

### *Meetings*

The Academy covers the cost of board meeting travel related expenses.

The Academy Board of Trustees (Academy BoT) typically meets four (4) times per year, including one face-to-face meeting in conjunction with ACRP's annual conference. The three teleconference meetings typically take place during the work week and last up to two (2) hours.

Outside of Board meetings, the time commitment of Trustees varies by assignment but will be less than five hours per month. Trustees must be willing to assume additional duties/responsibilities, if necessary, and be able to independently follow through on tasks.

The Academy Board reports out to certificants during the ACRP's annual membership meeting held virtually, usually in October. The Academy also may offer certification-specific activities during ACRP's Conference. It is expected that all Academy Board members attend and participate in the Conference. A complimentary registration is available for all Academy Board members to enable them to come to Conference. Travel expenses are covered for trustee attendance at the Conference.

Academy Board members may also be asked to serve on committees, task forces, or working groups of the Board that require an additional time commitment.

### *Responsibilities*

The affairs of the Academy are managed by its Board and it is the Board's duty to carry out the objectives and purposes of the organization. The Academy serves as an independent and autonomous body with respect to the development, maintenance, and oversight of all certification program policies and procedures. It is solely responsible for all important aspects of the certification program.

The Academy Board has the responsibility to support its mission and vision, serve as strategic decision-makers, and hold the legal authority of its organization. The Board must balance its role as an oversight body with its role as a force supporting the organization and has adopted three overarching principles of governance:

1. **Establish Strategic Direction** - developing and maintaining a focus on the organization's mission and vision and referencing them often during decision-making. Part of establishing strategic direction also includes ensuring effective planning through a philosophical and long-term approach.
2. **Ensure Necessary Resources** – ensuring adequate financial resources so that the organization remains financially viable; providing capable leadership at the board level through a board development plan as well as selecting, supporting and evaluating the executive director; and finally, enhancing the organization's public standing by promoting a positive public image.
3. **Provide Oversight** - monitoring and strengthening programs and services through thoughtful planning,

monitoring, and evaluation. Financially, the board is also responsible for protecting the organization's assets through financial risk management oversight. Legally and ethically, the board must oversee the integrity of the organization and accept its fiduciary responsibilities of the Duty of Care, Duty of Loyalty and Duty of Obedience.

The leadership section provides a general overview of the core values and expectations of conduct for Academy Trustees as well as the duties and responsibilities for each elected position. Key governance policies are also included for your reference, along with the Academy Strategic Plan.

## **BOARD NOMINATION APPLICATION**

All individuals interested in applying for board service must complete the [online application](#). The deadline to submit a nominations application is June 30. Applications start being accepted on May 1. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

## **LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES DESCRIPTIONS OF TRUSTEES**

The following Leadership Responsibilities Descriptions provide detailed information regarding the collective role of the Board of Trustees, each individual member of the Board, and each of the officer Trustees. Please click on the document titles below to view the responsibilities:

- [Board of Trustees Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Individual Trustee Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Chair Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Vice Chair Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Immediate Past Chair Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Treasurer Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Secretary Responsibilities Description](#)
- [Public Member Responsibilities Description](#)

## **ACADEMY GOVERNANCE**

The Academy has a focus toward excelling in best governance practices for nonprofit organizations and Trustees are expected to support the governance policies established by the Board to support such practices.

**The Principles of Good Governance Policy** was created to assist Trustees by enhancing their decision making, increasing their accountability, and enabling them to provide strong leadership. The intent of this policy is to provide balance to the Board in its role as an oversight body with its role as a force supporting the Academy. This policy is as follows:

The Academy Board functions at its most effective level of governance when it creates new opportunities that add significant value to the organization; engages in high level strategy by challenging and supporting efforts to advance the mission of the Academy; draws from each Trustees unique talents while fostering high levels of performance; and forges a dynamic relationship with the ACRP Executive Director; Director, Certification; and Certification staff. To achieve exceptional governance, the Academy Board will:

1. Govern in constructive partnership with the ACRP Executive Director; Director, Certification; and Certification staff, recognizing that the effectiveness of the board and director are interdependent. This

partnership will be built through trust, candor, mutual respect, and honest communication.

2. Shape and uphold the mission, articulate a compelling vision, and ensure the congruence between decisions and core values. The Academy Board will treat questions of mission, vision, and core values as statements of crucial importance to be folded into deliberations.
3. Continuously engage in strategic thinking to hone the direction of the Academy. The Academy Board will align organizational goals with strategic priorities and use them for driving meeting agendas and shaping board recruitment.
4. Institutionalize a culture of inquiry, respect, and constructive debate that leads to sound and shared decision making based on analysis.
5. Apply rigorous conflict-of-interest procedures and place the interests of the organization above themselves when making decisions. The Academy Board will not allow their votes to be unduly influenced by loyalty to any one person or by seniority, position, or reputation of fellow board members or staff.
6. Promote an ethos of transparency by ensuring that stakeholders and interested members of the public have access to appropriate and accurate information regarding finances, operations, and results. The Academy Board will also extend transparency internally, ensuring that every board member has equal access to relevant materials when making decisions.
7. Promote strong ethical values and disciplined compliance by establishing appropriate mechanisms for active oversight including an independent audit to ensure accountability and sufficient controls; to deepen their understanding of the organization; and to reduce the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse.
8. Link bold visions and ambitious plans to financial support, expertise, and networks of influence. The Academy Board will link the annual business plan and budget to strategic planning and approve activities that can be realistically financed with existing or attainable resources, while ensuring that the organization has the infrastructure and internal capacity it needs.
9. Measure the organization's progress towards its mission and evaluate the performance of its certification program. The Academy Board will gauge efficiency, effectiveness, and impact, while simultaneously assessing the quality of service delivery, integrating benchmarks against peers, and calculating return on investment.
10. Purposefully structure the Board to fulfill essential governance duties that support organizational priorities and invest in practices that can be thoughtfully adapted to changing circumstances.
11. Evaluate their individual and collective performance of the Board and assess the value that is added to the organization. The Academy Board will embed learning opportunities into routine governance work and in activities outside of board meetings.
12. Utilize the correlation between mission, strategy, and board composition to energize itself through planned turnover, thoughtful recruitment, and inclusiveness of diversity, experience, and fresh perspectives.

**The Fiduciary Responsibility Statement** states that all members of the Academy Board of Trustees have the responsibility to act prudently in their handling of the organization's resources. As a fiduciary of the Academy, Trustees must maintain financial accountability of the organization and exercise due diligence to oversee that the organization is well-managed.

Fiduciary responsibility of the Academy requires each board member to stay objective, responsible, honest,

trustworthy, and, as stewards of public trust, always act for the good of the association rather than for the benefit of themselves. Trustees should exercise reasonable care in all decision making, without placing the organization under unnecessary risk.

The legal standards by which all actions taken by non-profit board leaders are judged – both as individual members and as a collective board – are defined as the duty of care, duty of loyalty, and duty of obedience. The Academy, through its purchase of Directors and Officers Insurance, may be able to hold its Trustees harmless from lawsuits as long as they operate within the legal bounds of their fiduciary responsibilities.

### **The Duty of Care**

Duty of care requires board members to be reasonably informed about the Academy's activities, participate in decisions, and do so in good faith and with the care of an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position. Academy Trustees may exercise the duty of care by reading relevant documents; preparing in advance for board meetings; obtaining information, before voting, to make sound decisions; exercising independent judgment; reviewing the association's finances and financial policies; and ensuring compliance with state and federal filing requirements.

### **The Duty of Loyalty**

Duty of loyalty requires board members, when acting on behalf of their organization, to give undivided allegiance to the organization, without regard to personal interest, business interest, or the interest of any other region or organization. In practice, Academy Trustees may exercise the duty of loyalty by adhering to the ACRP Conflict of Interest policy and signing the Annual Disclosure Form; avoiding the use of corporate opportunities for personal gain or benefit; and maintaining the confidentiality of information about the Academy.

### **The Duty of Obedience**

Duty of obedience requires that board members act within the scope of legal authority of federal, state and local laws, as well as adhere to the organization's articles of incorporation, bylaws and mission. Academy Trustees may exercise their duty of obedience by ensuring compliance with all regulatory and reporting requirements, examining all documents that govern the Academy and its operations, and making decisions that fall within the scope of the mission and governing documents of the Academy.

**Trustee Compensation** - Academy Trustees do not receive compensation or honoraria of any kind for their volunteer service on the Board or on behalf of the Academy; however, expenses related to attending board meetings are reimbursed. The Academy follows the guidelines set by ACRP in accordance with their [Corporate Travel Policy](#).

**Conflict of Interest Policy** - Finally, the Academy asks all its volunteers and board members to adhere to and sign the ACRP volunteer forms for disclosure of conflicts of interest. For more information, please read the [Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy](#).

# Academy 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan Vision, Mission, Goals

## Vision

Clinical research is performed responsibly, ethically, and professionally worldwide.

## Mission

Promote and maintain high standards and best practices of clinical research by recognizing those professionals who demonstrate a well-defined competency through valid and reliable credentialing programs.

## Organizational Values

- *Professional Excellence*  
We exemplify a commitment to ethical practice by conducting our activities in a transparent, professional and responsible manner that promotes workforce excellence.
- *Integrity*  
We ensure fairness, accuracy, validity and reliability in the development and administration of the certification program to ensure it meets the highest standards as defined by experts in the field.
- *Service*  
We expect excellence, innovation, continual organizational review and improvement in delivering our programs to meet and exceed expectations.
- *Community and Collaboration*  
We work together with those whom we lead, serve, and partner with to promote competence and enhance the clinical research community.

## Strategic Goals

The Academy will focus on maintaining the high standards of credentialing programs, enrich awareness of those programs, enhance competency for credentialed professionals in clinical research and sustain the organization's viability.

- Goal 1.** Continue to develop, maintain, and administer valid and reliable credentialing programs. **[focus on maintaining high standards]**
- Goal 2.** Promote greater recognition of the value of professionals credentialed by valid and reliable programs **[focus on enriching awareness]** to increase the reach of current certification offerings and expand the scope of credentialing programs for clinical research professionals **[focus on enhancing competency]**.