

# Membership

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The Council is a national membership organization with members divided almost equally among New York, Washington, D.C., and the rest of the country, plus those living overseas. The Council relies on its members for their active engagement, substantive contributions, and support and counts on its members to identify and propose qualified prospects for membership. Membership development efforts are focused on identifying potential Council members from various professions, geographic areas, and racial and ethnic groups. This year marked the revival of the Women’s Membership Development Group, under the leadership of co-chairs Anne-Marie Slaughter and Jewelle Bickford. The group succeeded in doubling the percentage of women in the pool of candidates for the spring selection meeting.

## Profile of the Membership

	Number of Members	Percentage of Membership
<b>Location</b>		
New York Area	1,304	32
Washington, D.C., Area	1,316	32
National (including overseas)	1,455	36
Total	4,075	100
<b>Profession</b>		
Business	1,265	31
Professors, Fellows, and Researchers	752	18
Nonprofit	620	15
Government Officials	516	13
Lawyers	313	8
University and College Administrators	292	7
Journalists, Correspondents, and Editors	244	6
Other	73	2
Total	4,075	100

## Membership Selection Procedure

### Membership Selection

New members are named twice a year by the Board of Directors, which invites selected men and women to join based on recommendations by the Membership Committee. The Committee also meets twice a year and is composed of five members of the Board and such other members as the committee chair deems appropriate. To be considered by the Membership Committee, candidates must be proposed for membership by Council members. The roster of members is listed in the annual report.

At every meeting, the Membership Committee considers significantly more candidates than those elected. Thus, it is inevitable that the names of some candidates will appear before the Committee on several occasions. Given the high level of the competition generally, some candidates may never be elected even though they may be thought by some to have the individual qualifications outlined below.

### Term Membership

In an effort to reach out to the next generation of leaders, the Board has also established a separate Term Membership Committee. This committee meets annually in the spring to evaluate candidates between the ages of 28 and 34 for consideration as five-year term members of the Council. The selection process for term membership is nearly identical to, although separate from, that for regular members. Initiated nearly 30 years ago, the program has grown to the point where the Board has gradually raised the yearly limit on the number of term members who may be elected. At present, the limit is 110 and no more than 35 of these are permitted to be age 30 or under.

### Becoming a Member

Current procedure requires that every candidate for regular membership be formally nominated in writing by one member and seconded by a minimum of two other

individuals, at least one of whom is a Council member. To be considered for term membership, candidates must be nominated by one member and seconded by a minimum of one other Council member. It is recommended that at least one letter from a current or former professional colleague be included. An additional letter or two from Council members reflecting different perspectives are welcome but not required. Currently, an average candidacy includes four to five letters of support. All candidates must complete a nominee information form that can be obtained from the membership office or from the Council website ([www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org)). The candidate must provide the following information: curriculum vitae or chronological resume, which must include the candidate's date of birth and, if foreign-born, a statement that he or she has been naturalized or is a permanent resident who has made formal application for citizenship. Additionally, the nominator or candidate should submit a list of the names of up to ten Council members by whom the candidate is well known.

### Rules and Regulations

A candidate's nominator bears the chief responsibility for seeing to it that filing deadlines for a candidacy are met and that all required documents are submitted to the Council's membership affairs office in a timely manner. Candidates and/or their nominators are responsible for securing Council members to write seconding letters within the content guidelines prescribed below. Council members are advised to commit themselves to supporting a candidacy only when they can fairly meet the requirements of the process and the expectations of the candidates who depend on them for assistance. Please also note:

- Council membership is restricted to citizens of the United States or permanent residents of the United States who have made application to become citizens.
- Members of the Council's Board of Directors and Membership Committee are precluded from nominating, seconding, and writing supporting letters on any candidate's behalf.
- A member who is a spouse, close relative (such as parent, brother or sister, cousin, etc.), or near in-law of a candidate may not formally propose or second that candidate for membership in the Council. Members should also refrain from writing on behalf of clients. Members should write only in support of candidates whom they know well.

### Nominating Letters

Letters nominating a candidate for consideration by the Membership Committee should address the following criteria that have always been basic to the Committee's consideration of membership candidates:

- Intellectual attainment and expertise;
- Degree of experience, interest, and current involvement in international affairs or in other areas affecting international affairs;
- Promise of future achievement and service in foreign relations;
- Potential contributions to the Council's work;
- Desire and ability to participate in Council activities;
- Standing among his or her peers.

### Seconding Letters

Seconding letters need not be so comprehensive but should amplify why, in the opinion of the writer, a given candidate should be considered for Council membership. Thoughtful, candid, and succinct comments are far more important in seconding and proposing letters than formal endorsements of candidates. In seconding letters particularly, writers should express why a given candidate should be considered for Council membership for reasons beyond the basic criteria above.

While only two seconding letters are required to assure that a candidate's name will be forwarded to the Membership Committee, one or two additional letters are frequently submitted at the initiative of either the nominator or the candidate. Such letters are particularly helpful to the Membership Committee when they add information or insights about a candidate not already contained in a previous letter. All membership proposing, seconding, and supporting letters should be mailed to the address indicated at the end of this section.

### Deadlines

Strict observance of deadlines is essential to staff support of the Membership Committee's work, and we request your continuing cooperation. The preparation of individual membership files for submission to the Membership Committee is a continuing process. Candidates whose files are not completed in time for any given meeting of the Committee have their files carried forward, without prejudice, to the subsequent meeting, but are considered only if completed.

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## Membership

**REGULAR MEMBERSHIP**—For prospective regular members, the deadlines for receipt of all materials for the two yearly meetings of the Committee to consider regular membership candidates are March 1 and September 15.

**TERM MEMBERSHIP**—For prospective term members, the deadline for receipt of all materials for the annual meeting of the Committee to consider term membership candidates is January 31.

### Notification of Candidates

Candidates recommended by the Membership Committee and elected by the Board are so notified, as are their nominators and seconders. Candidates remain eligible for consideration at subsequent meetings of the Commit-

tee, and may continue to submit new materials and secure additional letters of support. The process is entirely one of affirmative selection, i.e., from the large and evolving pool of nominees, the Committee and the Board choose a number of members without prejudice to the candidacies of those remaining in the pool.

### Contact for All Membership Matters and Correspondence:

Elise Carlson Lewis, Vice President of Membership and Fellowship Affairs, Council on Foreign Relations, 58 East 68th Street, New York, New York 10021; Telephone: (212) 434-9400; Fax: (212) 434-9801; E-mail: [membership@cfr.org](mailto:membership@cfr.org). Visit our website at [www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org).



*President Peter G. Peterson and Speaker Al Gore, former Vice President of the United States, at the February 12, 2002, Meeting, "A Commentary on the War Against Terror: Our Larger Tasks."*