

Membership

MEMBERSHIP

The Council on Foreign Relations is first and foremost a membership organization. With more than 4,300 members, CFR's ranks include top government officials, renowned scholars, business leaders, acclaimed journalists, prominent lawyers, and a host of distinguished nonprofit professionals. The current membership is divided almost equally among New York, Washington, and those across the country and abroad.

Unmatched in accomplishment and diversity in the field of international affairs, members participate in meetings, panel discussions, interviews, lectures, book clubs, and film screenings to discuss and debate the major foreign policy issues of our time. Members have unparalleled access to world leaders, senior government officials, members of Congress, and prominent thinkers.

STEPHEN M. KELLEN TERM MEMBER PROGRAM

In 1970, a term membership program was established to cultivate the next generation of foreign policy leaders. The Stephen M. Kellen Term Member Program encourages promising young leaders from diverse backgrounds to engage in a sustained conversation on international affairs and U.S. foreign policy. Each year, individuals between the ages of thirty and thirty-six are elected to serve five-year terms. The Term Member Program has grown considerably since it was established almost forty years ago, with the number of term members now indexed at up to 15 percent of the total CFR membership.

For more information on term membership, please visit www.cfr.org/about/term_member_program.

APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP

Quality, diversity, and balance are the main objectives sought by CFR in the composition of its membership. New members are named twice a year by the Board of Directors, which invites selected men and women to join based on the recommendations of the Membership Committee. The committee, which meets twice a year, is composed of five members of the Board and other non-Board members the committee chair appoints.

Candidates for membership must be nominated in writing by a current CFR member and seconded by three other individuals (maximum of four). To be considered for term membership, candidates must be nominated by a current CFR member and seconded by two other individuals (maximum of three). The roster of members is listed at the end of this annual report. It is not required that seconding letters come from CFR members, but it is strongly encouraged, and it is recommended that at least one letter is from a current or former professional colleague.

All candidates must complete an online application, which can be accessed only by contacting Membership Affairs at applications@cfr.org or 212.434.9484. All materials, including sponsor letters, should be submitted using the online application.

Membership is restricted to citizens of the United States or permanent residents who have made formal application to become a citizen. If foreign born, the candidate must submit a written statement that he or she has met this requirement.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Letter of nomination from a CFR member;
- Three seconding letters for membership (maximum of four) or two seconding letters for term membership (maximum of three); and
- Completion of secure online application.

SPONSORING A CANDIDATE FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Council on Foreign Relations relies on its members for their engagement, substantive contributions, and support, and counts on members to identify and propose qualified prospects for membership. Membership development efforts are focused on identifying and attracting diverse leaders in international affairs across all sectors. 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.

The first paragraph of a sponsor letter must include a clear and comprehensive statement about the nature of the relationship between the candidate and the letter writer.

NOMINATING LETTERS

Candidates must be nominated by a CFR member. Thoughtful, candid, and succinct comments are far more important than formal endorsements of candidates. Letters nominating a candidate for consideration by the Membership Committee should be no more than five hundred words, and should address the following criteria:

- 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 work of CFR;
- desire and ability to participate in CFR activities; and
- standing among his or her peers.

SECONDDING LETTERS

Seconding letters need not be as comprehensive (and should be no more than three hundred words) but should amplify why, in the opinion of the writer, a given candidate should be considered for CFR membership. In seconding letters particularly, writers should express why a given candidate should be considered for CFR membership for reasons beyond the basic criteria cited.

ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS TO CONSIDER

Candidates or their nominators are responsible for ensuring that all required application materials are submitted by the filing deadlines. Please also note the following:

- Officers of CFR as well as members of the Board of Directors and the Membership Committee are precluded from nominating or writing seconding letters on any candidate's behalf.
- A member who is a spouse, close relative (a parent, sibling, cousin, or the like), or near in-law of a candidate may not formally propose or second that candidate for membership in CFR. Members should also refrain from writing on behalf of clients.
- Members should write only in support of candidates whom they know well. Additionally, members are encouraged to make comparative judgments about candidates where appropriate. The committee also advises members to write no more than two letters per round (either one nominating and one seconding letter or two seconding letters).
- CFR visiting fellows are prohibited from applying for membership until they have completed their fellowship tenure.

DEADLINES, CANDIDATE NOTIFICATION, AND REAPPLICATION

Strict observance of deadlines is essential to staff support of the Membership Committee's work. Applications not completed prior to the deadline for any given committee meeting will not be considered at that time, but they will remain on file and can be submitted for a future meeting once completed. All membership candidates and their nominators will receive notification of the committee's decisions according to the schedule below.

	<i>APPLICATION DEADLINE</i>	<i>NOTIFICATION</i>
Membership	March 1 October 1	June February
Term Membership	November 1	June

At every meeting, the Membership Committee considers significantly more candidates than there are vacancies. Thus, it is inevitable that some nominations will appear before the committee on several occasions. Given the high level of the competition, some candidates may never be elected, though they may embody many of the individual qualifications outlined in the membership criteria.

Candidates who are unsuccessful at any given meeting may remain eligible for consideration at subsequent meetings of the committee if the criteria are met. An application may be reactivated by submitting an updated CV and nominee information using the online application along with a minimum of one and maximum of three additional letters of support. Candidates may submit new letters from previous letter writers only when new content is included.

If a candidate is not elected after two consecutive meetings, the application will be placed on hold for a period of three years for membership candidates and one year for term membership candidates. After the hold period, the candidate may reactivate the file for consideration. For term membership applicants, the hold period does not apply if a candidate would be ineligible to reapply because of age.

The process is entirely one of affirmative selection from the large and evolving pool of nominees.

PROFILE OF THE MEMBERSHIP

	<i>NUMBER OF MEMBERS</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERSHIP</i>
<i>Location</i>		
New York Area	1,428	33
Washington, DC, Area	1,356	31
National/International	1,593	36
Total	4,377	100
<i>Profession</i>		
Business	1,198	27
Professors, Fellows, and Researchers	793	18
Nonprofit	648	15
Government	379	9
Journalists and Correspondents	362	8
Law	258	6
University and College Administrators	256	6
Other	483	11
Total	4,377	100

For more information on nominating a candidate or to learn more about applying for membership, please contact L. Camille Massey, vice president of membership, fellowship, and corporate affairs, at 212.434.9797 or applications@cfr.org.