

## Memorandum

To: NASCO Members and Affiliates  
From: Farheen Hakeem, Director of Membership and Communication  
Date: February 10, 2014  
Re: **NASCO Board nomination**

NASCO is pleased to announce the beginning of a nomination process for seats on our Board of Directors. Elections are conducted annually by the NASCO Board of Directors for one third of its twelve threeyear seats in 2014. We are excited to be seating four new Directors through the election process this spring.

As a NASCO member coop, you have the opportunity to consider nominating someone to fill one of the open seats on the Board of Directors. Enclosed in this mailing are: NASCO's electionspecific Bylaws, a Nomination Form, and a Candidate Packet.

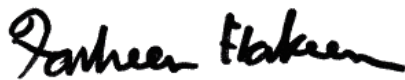
The following is the process for nominating someone to run for the NASCO Board:

- Select a candidate and nominate.
- You send the completed Nomination Form to NASCO by **Monday March 24, 2014**.
- The nominee sends the completed Candidate Statement to NASCO by **Monday March 24, 2014**.
- The rest of the process will be in accordance with the enclosed timeline.

If you have any questions, please contact Farheen Hakeem at [farheen@nasco.coop](mailto:farheen@nasco.coop) or 630-890-3165.

The NASCO Board of Directors has primary responsibility for setting the organization's policies and directions while acting as trustee of the entire organization. As such, Board members do not represent individual co-ops. By nominating a candidate for the Board your co-op helps to set the direction of the larger NASCO community - we need a strong Board to keep NASCO responsive to the needs of the cooperative movement.

Sincerely,



Farheen Hakeem  
Director of Membership and Communication  
North American Students of Cooperation

## Nominations Open for NASCO Board Elections

Are you excited about the cooperative movement and eager to gain new leadership skills in the amazing world of cooperatives beyond your member coop?

Have you ever attended NASCO Institute and wondered about the organization behind all of the inspiring workshops and events?

Do you want to be part of a bi-national organization that develops new cooperatives, manages common equity houses, and reaches thousands of cooperators in the U.S. and Canada with cooperative education?

**If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you should consider running for the NASCO Board of Directors!**

Nominations are now officially open for 4 three-year terms seats on the Board.

Your co-op is invited to nominate someone to fill one of the open seats on the NASCO Board of Directors.

Please read the enclosed packet carefully, and look at the board description job description on our website: [www.nasco.coop](http://www.nasco.coop).

## Timeline

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We have designed the timeline to give member co-ops sufficient time both during nominations and balloting to utilize whatever process they desire for these decisions. In order to ensure that this purpose is achieved, we will be strict on our deadlines.

Monday February 10, 2014	Send out board nomination packets
Monday March 24, 2014	All nomination forms must be signed and returned; must be received by 11:59PM CST
Friday March 28, 2014	Ballot with candidate statements are sent out
Monday April 28, 2014	Ballots are due; must be received by 11:59PM CST
Wednesday April 30, 2014	Results announced

## Job Description: NASCO Board Member

### *Selection Process & composition:*

Twelve of the board members are elected for three-year terms on a staggered basis. Generally, four board members are elected in the spring each year according to the NASCO Election Procedures.

The board also includes an Active Member Representative, elected at NASCO Institute each year, one director selected by the NASCO Properties Board, one appointed representative from the People of Color Caucus, and two appointed caucus chairs.

Our board of directors comprises of NASCO members, NASCO alumni, members of non- NASCO housing and worker cooperatives, and people who are no longer living in cooperatives but are still active in the cooperative movement.

*Term:* Three years for elected Board Members, one year for the Active Member Representative, two years for People of Color Caucus chair and Diversity Congress chair, one year for the other caucus appointee. In the event that a director does not finish their term, a candidate serving for the remainder of the departing director's term will replace them.

*Accountable to:* The Membership of NASCO.

### GENERAL ACCOUNTABILITY:

A director of the NASCO Board has four general responsibilities:

1. **Planning and Stewardship:** Individually and collectively, Directors on the NASCO Board develop with staff and members NASCO long and mid-range plans. This process includes development, approval and periodic review of NASCO's business plans, budgets, and annual and semi-annual objectives.
2. **Guidance and Oversight:** Individually and collectively, NASCO Directors provide continuous evaluation and feedback on NASCO's programs and services. NASCO Directors are responsible for evaluating staff performance, providing feedback on staff proposals for services and program changes, and initiating proposal on NASCO's services, programs and organization.
3. **Program Support and Representation:** Directors on NASCO Board from time to time will be requested to supplement NASCO staff in providing services to members and in representing NASCO to members and the broader cooperative communities of Canada and the United States.
4. **Financial Assistance:** Directors will seek to contribute their time and energy to projects and activities which will assist NASCO financially.

### NASCO BOARD TRAVEL POLICY:

NASCO shall reimburse Directors for all travel expenses exceeding \$200 in a given year, \$150 for individuals who do not have institutional support in funding their deductible. If the \$150 deductible will cause financial hardship, the deductible can be waived. Board members are directed to travel using low-cost excursion fares. Staff is directed to notify Board members five weeks in advance of a meeting to make travel

arrangements and to schedule meetings to minimize travel expenses. A summary of travel expenses shall be distributed at each meeting.

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Directors will attend NASCO Board meetings and, if an officer of the Board, NASCO Executive Committee meetings. Two unexcused absences in a year will result in dismissal from the Board
2. Directors will make every effort to attend the NASCO Institute and the various governance- related functions held at that time. (Most Institute expenses are deferred for directors. Directors pay only food and travel expenses.)
3. Directors will keep abreast of NASCO issues and activities by reading and, when appropriate, responding to monthly reports and other Board materials.
4. Directors, when possible, will seek to support NASCO programs and service activities by assisting in NASCO's training and representational activities. (In most cases, NASCO will pay for all expenses associated with these activities.) For example, directors may assist in trainings, fundraising, recruitment, visits to Active Member co-ops, representation of NASCO at associating meetings, etc.
5. Directors of NASCO will, where appropriate, make themselves available to NASCO members and represent NASCO member opinions and concerns on the NASCO Board.

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **1. Who are the Board of Directors?**

Our board of directors comprises of NASCO members, NASCO alumni, members of non-NASCO housing and worker cooperatives, and people no longer living in cooperatives but remain active in the cooperative movement.

NASCO's Board consists of twelve individuals elected for three-year terms on a staggered basis, one Active Member Representative, elected by the Active Members at the NASCO Institute each year, one member selected by the NASCO Properties Board, one appointed representative from the People of Color Caucus, and two appointed caucus chairs: one chosen by the Diversity Congress at Institute and one chosen by the Board, based upon the changing needs and composition of the Board of Directors. The Diversity Congress and the People of Color Caucus have staggered two-year terms.

### **2. What does the board do?**

NASCO's Board of Directors, as in most cooperative organizations, sets the organization's policies and direction. By nominating a candidate for the board, your co-op helps to set that direction; our board members help keep us responsive to the needs of the co-op movement. So, if you've got ideas of where NASCO could be headed and want to help us get there, or if you know someone who does, this is your way to get involved.

### **3. What are the responsibilities of a board member?**

Board members are required to attend all board meetings: two annual in-person meetings and one conference call. The date and location of the next meeting will be announced shortly after the election results.

Board members are expected to attend and help run the annual Cooperative Educational and Training Institute in November. We also have an informal in-person board meeting the day after Institute. Board members are expected to put in time between meetings. Some activities our board members perform are: remaining active and engaged in committees, reporting to co-ops in their region, performing member visits, recruiting new members, teaching courses at the yearly NASCO Institute, and fundraising.

Please see the board member job description on our website [www.nasco.coop](http://www.nasco.coop) for more information

### **4. How do we nominate someone?**

Nominations can be made in three ways, as laid out in this section of the NASCO Bylaws:

#### **Nomination procedures:**

6.2 Nomination to the Board may be made in any one of three ways:

- 1) A petition signed by five (5) Individual Members, provided that no individual signs more than one (1) petition in each election.
- 2) Nomination by an Active Member, provided that no Active Member may nominate more than one (1) person by this method.
- 3) Nomination by two (2) Associate Members, provided that no Associate Member may participate in more than (1) such joint nomination each election.

Once someone is nominated, they must submit a candidate statement of their background and interests so that members may cast educated votes.

**5. Will I be responsible for my travel costs to and from board meetings?**

Your coop could choose to sponsor your Nominee should they be elected; this would mean helping pay for their travel costs to come to Board meetings three times per year. However, you are not required to do so.

This is the text of NASCO's board the travel policy:

NASCO shall reimburse Directors for all travel expenses exceeding \$200 in a given year, \$150 for individuals who do not have institutional support in funding their deductible. If the \$150 deductible will cause financial hardship, the deductible can be waived. Board members are directed to travel using low-cost excursion fares. Staff is directed to notify Board members five weeks in advance of a meeting to make travel arrangements and to schedule meetings to minimize travel expenses. A summary of travel expenses shall be distributed at each meeting.

## **NASCO Board Candidate Statements**

### ***2013 Elections***

To allow NASCO members to make informed decisions while casting their votes during elections, candidates are asked to submit a statement. These statements are often the only information available about the candidates to NASCO's members when voting, so it is important to convey a good sense of who you are and what you would like to accomplish as a NASCO Board member.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself with NASCO's governance, programs, and the full board member job description before submitting your candidate statement. You can those materials on our website: <http://www.nasco.coop>.

Candidate statements are due **no later than March 24, 2014**.

Statements may be submitted by mail or email (in word document format):

NASCO  
Attn: Elections  
330 S. Wells St. #618F  
Chicago, IL 60606

*Farheen@nasco.coop*.

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*Please stay within word limits as over limit responses will have to be edited.*

#### **Part I: Personal Data & Statement** (Limit 200 Words.)

Please provide a brief description of your relevant experience and qualifications. Include your involvement with co-ops and a statement on why you are running for the Board.

#### **Part II: Questions** (Limit 600 Words total.)

Your answers to these questions will be re-printed with the candidate statements that are mailed out to our members. You may choose to answer them separately or collectively.

- 1) Why are you involved in co-ops?
- 2) What is your vision of NASCO within the cooperative movement? What is important for NASCO's long-term success in cooperative education?
- 3) Of the items listed in the *Requirements of NASCO Directors*, in what areas do you think you can best aid NASCO in its mission? What skills will you bring to the board?
- 4) How are you able to contribute to the organization outside Board meetings? How will your other commitments allow you to give time and energy to the Board over the next three years?
- 5) Are there specific issues you would like to work on as a board member?

## Nomination Form

\_\_\_\_\_ (co-op name) nominates \_\_\_\_\_ to run for the NASCO Board in the 2014 elections.

This decision has been approved by the board/membership and the candidate is aware of the March 20 deadline for candidate statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-op Liaison Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-op liaison phone number

Signature - Co-op Liaison\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*If submitted electronically, a follow-up phone call by co-op liaison to verify receipt of nomination will take the place of a signature.

NASCO Election Contact  
Farheen Hakeem  
Director of Membership and Communication  
Farheen@nasco.coop  
630.890.3165