How Committee Appointments Work

SOFT's annual committee application process connects members with opportunities to contribute their knowledge, experience, and ideas. The overview below explains how openings are identified, applications are reviewed, and appointments are coordinated.

Committee Openings

Each year, SOFT staff and committee leadership review current appointments, expiring terms, eligible reappointments, and committee needs to determine available positions.

Members generally serve three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms, although some committees have different requirements. Before reappointing an eligible member for a second term, committee leadership reviews their contributions and interest in continuing. An expiring term therefore does not always result in an opening for a new applicant.

Applying

Members may apply to up to three committees during the annual application period. Eligibility requirements vary by committee.

Members whose existing committee appointments continue into the following year should not apply for another position. Committee service is generally limited to one committee at a time, with exceptions specified in SOFT policy.

Application Review

After applications close, the SOFT Office provides each committee with its submitted applications. Each committee reviews its applicants and returns a ranked list in order of preference.

The review method is determined by the individual committee. Some committees use a blinded process, with applicant names removed. Others require participation in committee activities or meetings before appointment, so their review includes knowledge of applicants' involvement. Rankings may be developed by the Chair and Vice Chair or through discussion with the entire committee.

Committees consider their eligibility requirements, current needs, and the experience, interests, and potential contributions reflected in the applications.

Coordinating Appointments

The SOFT Office brings the committees' ranked lists together for SOFT leadership to coordinate assignments. Each committee receives its highest-ranked available applicants.

When an applicant is a top choice for more than one committee, leadership determines the assignment by considering the committees' rankings, the number of openings and applicants, and overlapping selections elsewhere. This coordination allows positions to be filled while honoring committee preferences as closely as possible.

Leadership's role in this step is administrative. The applicant evaluations and rankings remain with the individual committees. A committee's top-ranked applicant is assigned elsewhere only when that person is also a top choice for another committee.

Notification

Once assignments are finalized, committee leadership receives its list of new members and sends welcome messages. The SOFT Office separately notifies applicants who were not selected for a committee. Notification dates are included in the annual application schedule.

Available positions and committee needs change each year. Members who are not selected are encouraged to apply again in a future cycle.

Committee Leadership

Most committees follow a Chair and Vice Chair succession system. Each role generally carries a two-year term, with the Vice Chair moving into the Chair position at the end of their term. Current committee leadership recommends candidates for incoming leadership positions, with appointments made by the SOFT President. Some committees have different leadership structures established by SOFT's governing documents.

For questions about committee eligibility or the application and appointment process, please contact the SOFT Office.