



# International Board of Directors Elections

## Applicant Information Pack

February 2025



# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying for the Sweet Adelines International Board of Directors (IBOD).

This information pack was developed by the Board Resource Advisory Committee (BRAC) to ensure continuous improvement in Board governance. The Board's aim is to support and grow the number of members from across the world who are interested in applying for nomination in the annual Board elections. This pack brings together important information and answers the most commonly asked questions about what is involved as a Board member. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with it as you consider and complete your application.

Throughout the pack there are links to various existing resources such as fact sheets, guides, policies and the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles for further reading.

Board members have added thoughts from their own experience to bring to life the opportunity to serve the international organization in this way.

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# About You



*Sweet Adelines*  
INTERNATIONAL

# About You



Click on the icon to learn more about applying for the Board in Section XI, pages 1-3 of The Chapter Guide in the Chapter Resources section of our Forms and Document Center via [www.sweetadelines.com](http://www.sweetadelines.com).

A benefit of Sweet Adelines International membership is to be educated, inspired and encouraged by many talented people. *Personal Empowerment & Leadership* is one of our Guiding Principles!

There's no single pathway to becoming a Board member. Successful Board members have strong leadership backgrounds at the chapter, regional or international level of Sweet Adelines International or in their professional life. You should have knowledge of the organization's policies and sufficient membership longevity to be able to appreciate the scope of the international organization. You'll also abide by the Sweet Adelines International Member Code of Conduct, which you'll find on page 7.

Much of the work of the Board is accomplished by email, discussion portal, and video conferences. You should have the ability to devote a substantial amount of time to your role as a Board member. Liaising directly with assigned regions after each Board meeting and participation in international committees and task forces is also expected.

You must be available to travel to International Board meetings up to three times a year. See the *Board Meetings* page in this pack for information.

If you're a current member of a Regional Management Team (RMT) and are elected or appointed to the Board, you will need to resign from the RMT position within 30 days.

GREAT LEADERS  
DON'T SET OUT TO BE LEADERS.  
.....  
THEY SET OUT TO  
make a difference.

# About You



Click on the icon to read the document *What Is Expected of Someone Running for the Board – Are You Ready?*

Below are the characteristics and experience of an 'ideal' Board member.

## Characteristics

- Thorough understanding of and commitment to the mission and vision of Sweet Adelines International to define and pursue goals and to carry out the aims of the international organization
- The ability to effectively express thoughts and the reasons for them, via both verbal and written communication
- The ability to encourage, coach and mentor others to foster leadership development within Sweet Adelines
- The ability to adapt to changing circumstances and needs
- The ability to interact respectfully with a variety of personality types and ideologies
- The ability to work well with others as a member of a collaborative group with decision-making authority
- Experience in Sweet Adelines International as a chapter officer, regional or international officer or participation on a committee/task force as chair or member would be considered an asset.

## Experience and requirements

- Basic knowledge of Sweet Adelines bylaws, policies, governance practices, mission and vision of Sweet Adelines International
- Experience in Sweet Adelines International as a chapter officer, and regional or International officer, committee/task force chair or member
- An understanding of the fiduciary duties of loyalty, care and obedience to the mission and policies of Sweet Adelines International
- Computer skills, with ability to communicate electronically
- Vision and long-range planning experience would be considered an asset
- Availability to travel and attend meetings of the International Board of Directors
- Will support and nurture the culture of philanthropy in Sweet Adelines International

## Additional interview/reference items

- Possession of earned respect of other key stakeholder group members (for example, International Board of Directors, Regional Leaders, Chorus Leaders, committee/task force chairs, etc.)
- Demonstrates an understanding of governance vs. management
- Earned reputation for emotional maturity, personal integrity, confidentiality and honesty



# Sweet Adelines International Member Code of Conduct

The Sweet Adelines International Member Code of Conduct is intended to promote a positive, uplifting culture within our regions, choruses or quartets, and throughout the organization. As representatives of Sweet Adelines International, members should exemplify conduct which accords respect and dignity to fellow members and everyone with whom they come into contact.

Members of Sweet Adelines International commit to:

1. Uphold and live by the Sweet Adelines Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Guiding Principles.
2. Act with integrity and conduct themselves in a professional manner while representing their region, chorus, quartet, and/or Sweet Adelines International.
3. Communicate in a manner that reflects the respect and harmony promoted in the Organization's Guiding Principles.
4. Treat fellow singers, guests, and those in the community with care, dignity, and respect.
5. Be courteous and considerate of the opinions of other members, representatives, and staff.
6. Resolve issues with fairness through listening and healthy communication in an atmosphere of respect, positivity, and possibility.
7. Adhere to the rules and guidelines of Sweet Adelines International, including those defined in the Organization's Policies, Bylaws, Handbooks, Regional Handbooks and Chapter Guide.

*Adopted October 2020*



# Your Application



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# Five Tips for Your Application

You may have a casual curiosity about applying for the Board in the future, or you may feel ready and raring to step into this rewarding leadership role.

Either way, when the time is right, we want you to feel informed and empowered to make your application the best it can be. Here are some top tips!

1

## **Complete the Board Readiness Quiz**

*By answering Yes, No or Maybe to the quiz questions at the end of this Information Pack, you'll see if Board service is the right fit for your skills and talents at this time.*

2

## **Shine a light on your best qualities and credentials**

*Don't be humble. The application requires brief responses, so make an instant impact by putting your most relevant experience and qualifications front and center.*

3

## **Talk to potential referees**

*Your best referees are people who have seen you in action in several settings and roles within Sweet Adelines. Ask their opinion about which strengths to spotlight in your application.*

4

## **Develop a global, all-organization mindset**

*Read The Pitch Pipe and resources on the Sweet Adelines website referenced in this pack. Visit websites of other regions. It's interesting to see the similarities and differences across the world.*

5

## **Consider your point of view on the application questions**

*The questions are designed to be thought provoking and strategic, so leave enough time to review your initial responses and refine them as new ideas come to you.*



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# The Application Form

In addition to providing your biographical and professional experience, you are asked for 50-word answers to the following questions.

- How do you feel you can contribute to Sweet Adelines International as a member of the International Board of Directors?
- What specific skills, ideas and talents etc., would you bring to the International Board?
- What is your vision for the International organization?
- What should be the priorities for the international organization over the next five to 10 years?
- Describe what you think Sweet Adelines International will be like 25 years from now.



You will also provide the name and contacts for five non-family Sweet Adeline member references as well as a recent photograph.

Finally, two of your Chapter officers will need to sign and date a Good Standing Statement as part of your application.

Remember, your fully completed application must be received at International Headquarters by April 23, 2025.

# The Four Steps



## 1. Applying for Nomination

Each February, Chapter leaders are sent information on choosing potential nominees for the International Board of Directors. A Call for Applications with the application form and awareness of the closing date is also emailed to all members in February, with regular reminders.

## 2. Selecting the Slate of Nominees

A new Nominating Subcommittee is appointed by the Executive Committee in March each year. They are responsible for reviewing applications and references as well as conducting a video interview with each applicant before selecting the Slate of Nominees by June. The International President calls each applicant to inform them of whether or not they are included in the slate.

## 3. Election

In August, the names and biographical information of the Slate of Nominees is sent to Chapter leaders and is published on both the international website and in the October edition of *The Pitch Pipe*. In October, ballots containing the names of nominees are sent to chapters so that each chapter and our Chapter-at-Large and Member-at-Large communities can schedule their election meetings in October or early November. They need to return their completed ballots to International Headquarters. Official ballots are cast by the first Wednesday of December.

## 4. Results

The results of the election and appointment are finalized and communicated to all members in December.

# Hear from Our Leaders

Click on the audio icon to listen to Sweet Adelines International leaders sharing thoughts on their experience as both a nominee for and member of the International Board of Directors.



Patty Cobb Baker, International President 2018-2020 talks about the goals of the Board Mentorship Program and how it supports incoming Board members.



Thérèse Antonini, International President 2022-2024 talks about aligning your application responses to the Sweet Adelines Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles. She offers tips for what the Nominating Subcommittee looks for when selecting candidates for the slate.



Sharon Cartwright, IBOD member shares how broadening her view of Sweet Adelines from the region to the whole organization made a difference to the quality of her application.



Jeanne d'Arc (JD) Crowe, IBOD member tells how her potential for leadership was encouraged by other leaders, motivating her to learn more about the organization and opportunities available.



# About the Board



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# Purpose of the Board



Click on the icon to go to the Sweet Adelines International Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles section.

The International Board of Directors functions as the governing and decision-making body of the organization and has the authority to spearhead all actions necessary to fulfill its purpose.

- The main purpose of the Board is governance. Non-profit governance has a dual focus: achieving the organization's Mission and ensuring the organization is viable.
- The Board in conjunction with the CEO and executive staff develops and maintains the Strategic Plan. The Board sets the policies which aid in fulfilling the strategic plan.
- Committees and staff work together to fulfill the assignments of the Strategic Plan and report their progress to the Board. Board members may be appointed to a committee/task force in addition to their service on the Board.
- Each member of the Board is elected to represent the entire membership of Sweet Adelines and not have a bias toward their home region or chapter.



# Legal Duties of the Board



Click on the icon to learn more about the Board in Section VI of the Policy Book, found in the Chapter Resources section of our Forms and Document Center via [www.sweetadelines.com](http://www.sweetadelines.com).

A non-profit organization is a legal entity, which is controlled by its Board of Directors. The organization must operate within the framework of laws, which authorize its existence. The Board of Directors is legally responsible for making certain that it does. The Board has three primary legal duties:



## Duty of Care

Each Board member has a legal responsibility to participate actively in making decisions on behalf of the organization and to exercise their best judgment while doing so.



## Duty of Loyalty

Each Board member must put the interests of the organization before their personal and professional interests when acting on behalf of the organization in a decision-making capacity. The organization's needs come first.



## Duty of Obedience

Board members bear the legal responsibility of ensuring that the organization complies with the applicable federal, state, and local laws and adheres to its Mission.

# Board Structure

## Composition and terms

There are twelve voting Directors including the Officers. Three Directors are elected by the membership every year for three-year terms, and the remaining Director(s) are appointed by the Board for one-year terms. The term of office shall begin on May 1 each year following selection.

## Term limits

Elected directors shall serve a term of three years. No member may be elected to more than three (3) consecutive three year terms. No Board member will serve more than nine years, except to complete an elected term or to complete the presidential cycle. A three-year layout is required after the term-limit is reached (a three-year layout resets a Board term to zero). A one-year or two-year layout does not set the Board term to zero and the Board appointed/elected term continues even if service is not consecutive.

## The Executive Committee

The Officers of Sweet Adelines International are President, President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Immediate Past-President. They are elected by the incoming Board of Directors during the Annual meeting in March. These Officers form the Executive Committee which has the mandate to manage Board issues requiring immediate attention and make decisions as necessary between regular IBOD meetings, subject to ratification by the Board.





# The Role of a Board Member

Board members have an important role in running the organization. Typical duties include:

- Contributes ideas and expertise to actively promote the Mission of Sweet Adelines International.
- Keeps up-to-date on developments in the organization's field.
- Remains informed about the organization's Mission, services, policies, and programs; informs others about the organization, and works to enhance the organization's public image.
- Participates in the development of a Strategic Plan to accomplish the Mission; oversees its implementation and evaluates its success.
- Approves the annual budget and material business decisions; is informed and meets all legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
- Attends in person or electronic Board meetings.
- Prepares for all meetings by reviewing agendas and supporting materials and conscientiously participating in all meetings.
- Serves on committees or task forces and periodically takes on special assignments.
- Assesses the Board's performance.
- Contributes to an annual performance evaluation of the CEO.
- Supports a culture of philanthropy and makes annual gifts commensurate with their capacity.
- Follows conflict-of-interest and confidentiality policies.



# Development as a Board Member

Each Board member has demonstrated leadership skills and experience that earned them their seat at the boardroom table. The following activities for new Board members help them integrate quickly and contribute confidently to the Board.

## Board Orientation

Board elections and appointments are made in December each year. Soon after, new Board members receive a welcome letter with a link to a portal containing a range of documents relating to their duties. These are to be read prior to their first Board meeting in March, where they participate in the meeting as a non-voting member. An Orientation for New Board Members is conducted via video conference, prior to this meeting. Additional reading material on Board governance is loaned to new Board members.

## Board Mentorship Program

The Sweet Adelines International Board of Directors mentorship program enables a new Board member to integrate quickly and effectively. The program is a semi-structured, one-on-one mentoring partnership between a new and a more experienced Board member and incorporates an evaluation to allow tracking of measurable outcomes.

## Board Education sessions

The Board Resource Advisory Committee develops topics for short education sessions presented by fellow Board Members and/or staff at IBOD meetings. These enhance Board member skills and prepare them for upcoming agenda items and decisions.



# Board Meetings

A comprehensive meeting and expectations document forms part of the New Board Member Orientation. Here is an overview of important points when deciding if Board service is right for you.

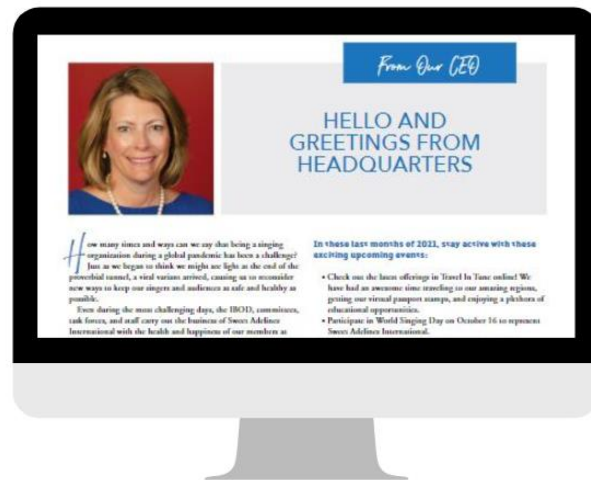
- Attendance is required for IBOD meetings:
  - *March Annual – 1<sup>st</sup> weekend (2 days) Friday-Saturday*
  - *June Summer – 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend (2 days) Friday-Saturday*
  - *Midyear – Saturday-Sunday preceding International Convention. Board members are expected to stay on to attend the International Convention.*
- Meetings are held in USA. The Annual meeting is typically at Headquarters in Tulsa, Oklahoma and the Midyear at the International Convention location. Board members need to plan for travel time either side. The Summer meeting is typically conducted via videoconference.
- Travel expenses including portal-to-portal transportation (airfare/mileage), required ground transport/parking, per diems and tips are covered by Sweet Adelines International. A standard hotel room is provided for each night you are needed during the meeting weekend.
- Board members must reserve time in advance of the IBOD meeting to review the agenda and read all Board reports and supporting materials.
- When a Board member is absent, regardless of cause, from two consecutive in-person IBOD meetings, they are expected to tender their resignation from the Board.
- Special videoconference meetings of the IBOD are sometimes called by the president to discuss and vote on urgent matters.



# The Relationship between the Board and Headquarters

Organizational leadership is a partnership between Board and Staff. There are some jobs that are typically the responsibility of either the Board, Headquarters staff or shared. It's therefore important that Board members know “when to have their noses in, but their fingers out.” This represents a significant change from the roles of Regional Management Team and Regional Resource Teams which involve both strategy and implementation. A detailed explanation of the roles and responsibilities of both the Board and Headquarters staff forms part of the Board Orientation.

- The Executive Department has the most direct involvement and partnership with the Board. Led by Tammy Talbot, our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), they work with the Board of Directors to implement the strategic plan and ensure smooth business operations of Sweet Adelines International. The CEO and Corporate Secretary attend every Board meeting.
- The Executive Department oversees all operations and business activities to ensure they produce the desired results and are consistent with the Strategic Plan and Mission. In addition, it maintains Board and Committee agendas and minutes, policies, bylaws, standing rules, election procedures and the Regional Management Team structure.
- The Directors of key operational departments play the critical role of Staff Liaisons in International Committees and Task Forces.
- The Chief Executive Officer hosts a column in each edition of *The Pitch Pipe*. This is recommended reading to better understand the scope, priorities, skills and accomplishments of our professional Headquarters staff.



# Additional Resources

The Sweet Adelines International Website is an important resource to gain a deeper understanding of the organization, our members and the Strategic Plan to inform your application for the International Board of Directors. We encourage you to explore what is available. This list is a good start.

## [International Update](#)

The International Update is published after each Board meeting. It provides an overview of the most recent Board accomplishments and items for communication to the overall membership. Editions dating from 2015 can be accessed from this page.

## [75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Commemorative Album](#)

Enjoy reminiscing through 75 years of Sweet Adelines history and the joy of belonging to such a wonderful community of singers.

## [Corporate Bylaws](#)

The Corporate Bylaws, is a legal document setting forth key rules and regulations governing the corporation's day-to-day operations.

## [Policy Book](#)

All policies that guide the operation and governance of Sweet Adelines International.

## [Financials](#)

The Sweet Adelines International Yearly Audit Reports.

## [2023 State of the Organization Address](#)

The International President's overview of the organization, traditionally delivered at the International Convention.

## [Members-Only Communications](#)

This is an archive of each all-member communication sent in the recent year.

## [Philanthropy](#)

Information on how our giving programs support our Mission and provide the funding needed to bring important scholarships and innovative new programs to fruition.

## [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)

Comprehensive resources to inform and educate our members about decisions and programs that support our Guiding Principles of Diversity & Inclusion and Culture of Belonging.

## [Travel in Tune](#)

Learn more about the people and achievements from our 24 regions around the world.



# The Sweet Adelines International Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles



# Our Roadmap to the Future

In 2019, the Board adopted a new Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which you'll find on the following pages.

They are the result of a three-day Visioning Retreat held in Tulsa, OK. U.S.A., which included the International Board of Directors, staff leadership, and a diverse group of members and regional leaders who were selected based on various demographics, specific strengths and expertise. Strategic planning is the roadmap to our future, grounded in the things we value most to do. It is a 'living' thing, not meant to be placed on a shelf to be dusted off only occasionally.

In 2019 we didn't know a global pandemic would change the world as we knew it, however with our 'living' Strategic Plan in place we were able to look for ways to deliver on our Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles. It enabled us to focus on the *possible* rather than be daunted by the *impossible*. Every Board member is familiar with these statements, and use them in their participation on the Board.

To operationalize the Strategic Plan, the CEO and staff are responsible for the creation and implementation of the Strategic Action Plan and accompanying budget, which is reviewed by the Board annually.



# Mission and Vision

## Mission Statement

*Elevating women singers worldwide through education, performance, and competition in barbershop harmony and a cappella music.*

## Vision Statement

*Inspiring and empowering voices to joyfully harmonize the world.*



# Guiding Principles

It's important that the Sweet Adelines Mission and Vision align with our Guiding Principles, or core values. This kind of alignment provides clarity of purpose, action and outcome for the Strategic Plan, to ensure our precious resources are expended effectively. From these, our Goals & Objectives/Initiatives put the plan in action.

**Musical Excellence:** We honor and embrace artistry, education and innovation in the performance of a cappella music while championing the women's barbershop style.

**Culture of Belonging:** We create harmony where every voice matters. We foster a culture that provides a joyful place to share our uniqueness within a global community united in song.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** We celebrate our differences as essential to the rich harmony that unites us. We recognize barbershop's African American origins and learn from our exclusionary past toward Black women. We reject discrimination and unwaveringly strive toward greater awareness, openness and understanding of each other.

**Personal Empowerment & Leadership:** We encourage and empower everyone to lead from where they are. We foster individual skills, nurture personal growth, and provide education and mentoring to develop strong effective leaders on and off the stage.

**Outreach:** We build strong connections by sharing our love of barbershop harmony throughout our communities, countries and the world.

*Revised Oct. 26, 2024*



# Board Readiness Quiz



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# Take the Quiz

While Board service is a rewarding experience that greatly impacts the success of our organization, you need to consider if it's the right fit for you. To help you determine whether Board service is right for you at this time in your life and prepare for future applications, answer the questions in this quiz.

If you would like to discuss your results with a member of the Board Resource Advisory Committee, please send an email to [exec@sweetadelines.com](mailto:exec@sweetadelines.com).

Give each 'Yes' response 3 points, 'No'= 1 point and 'Maybe' = 2 points.

## Scoring

**32-36 points** - you sound ready and able to apply for Board service.

**25-31 points** - additional understanding of and experience in a Sweet Adelines International committee or regional leadership role will enhance your application for Board service.

**20-24 points** - your willingness to serve Sweet Adelines may be better suited to a task force or regional resource role while you develop the skills and qualities needed for Board service.

**12-19 points** - now isn't the right time to apply for Board service. Look for opportunities at the chorus level to start your leadership journey.

Q#	Question	Yes	No	Maybe
1	I am interested in advancing the Sweet Adelines International Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles.			
2	I am willing to perform the role and governance responsibilities of being a Board member.			
3	I am optimistic and curious to learn about issues facing the organization and our members, around the world.			
4	I am interested in different perspectives, opinions and experiences to my own.			
5	I bring a positive and objective attitude to team discussions and my written communication.			
6	I can adapt easily to changing circumstances and needs.			
7	I have experience in the visioning and long-range strategic planning process.			
8	I work well on my own as well as collaboratively in a group.			
9	I am comfortable making a personal financial contribution to the organization.			
10	I am comfortable asking others to contribute their time to initiatives in the Sweet Adelines International strategic plan.			
11	I have enough autonomy in my schedule to accommodate Board and committee meetings.			
12	I can commit the time necessary to be an exceptional Board member.			
Your column totals				

Grand total of all columns