



VTSCA Procedure Manual  
Working Draft  
Updated:

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This handbook is designed to aid a person accepting a Director position or a committee chair position in the Vermont School Counselor Association (VTSCA). This handbook is a continuing cooperative project involving past and present officers/directors, committee chairpersons, and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). It is organized to answer questions such as:

- What are my responsibilities now that I have accepted a position?
- What are the duties of this position?
- Who can I contact to assist me in fulfilling my responsibilities?
- What are the lines of communication within this organization?
- What are the goals of the Vermont School Counselor Association?

**Procedure Title:** Agenda Planning

**Policies/Bylaws Addressed:** GP-3.B.9. | GP-4.C.4. | GP-6.A.1 | GP-9.B. | GP-9.D. | GP-11.

**Procedure:**

### **Board Annual Agenda Planning**

- The annual agenda will identify important dates, deadlines, and milestones to facilitate progress throughout the year. This shall also include allocation of budget resources to ensure adequate funding for outlined items. It will identify parties responsible such as the full board, standing operational committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, Chair, etc.
  - Any cost of governance items shall be submitted to the Finance Committee by February to be included in the creation of the annual budget.
- All committee chairs will complete a draft of their annual work plan prior to the first board meeting of the fiscal year.
  - The goals listed should be broken into smaller, manageable tasks or action steps with responsibilities and deadlines assigned for each task.
- To begin each fiscal year, the Board Chair will solidify appointments for committee chairs, to be confirmed at the first board meeting.
  - Should there be an anticipated transition in committee chairs, the outgoing and incoming committee chairs may work collaboratively to draft a work plan.
  - A work plan draft shall be completed prior to the outgoing committee chair's term ending to help facilitate the creation of the annual agenda.
- Regular monitoring and adjustments to the annual agenda may be made prior to each board meeting.
- An annual collaborative review shall take place at the last board meeting of the fiscal year to identify successes and gaps, and inform agenda planning for the upcoming fiscal year
  - Board directors shall be responsible for indication on the annual agenda when items are completed.
  - The Board Chair shall be responsible for reviewing the annual agenda information prior to the annual collaborative review.
- The Executive Director may work in consultation with the board in its annual agenda planning.

### **Board Meeting Agenda Planning**

- Agendas will be set a month in advance and Board Directors work collaboratively with the Board Chair to set the agendas.

- One week prior to an upcoming board meeting, all items necessary to inform board work during the meeting shall be submitted so that all board directors are fully prepared for the meeting. This includes committee reports.

**Procedure Title:** Board Director Vacancy Appointment

**Policies/Bylaws Addressed:** GP-8.A.

**Procedure:**

**Application**

Should there be a Board Director vacancy where the next ranking candidate is unable to be appointed, the following procedures shall be utilized to obtain a desirable candidate. Before the application period is to be opened, the Nominations and Elections Committee will create the application based on current needs as determined by the board of directors. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall house examples of past applications, interview questions, and promotional material.

**Timeline**

- Upon receipt of a resignation identifying an anticipated vacancy, the Nominations & Elections committee will create an application to be sent out to all members for a 10 day period and promoted through multiple modalities (eg: social media and email blast). Each means of communication should be utilized at least 2 times in 10 days and staggered. In addition, more specific means of communication, targeted to the membership in that region, shall also be sent out.
- Following the application period, the Nominations and Elections Chair shall contact the selected applicants to schedule interviews with the committee and the Board Chair.
- Upon completion of interviews, the Board Chair shall recommend a candidate for appointment to be voted on by the board when a quorum is called by the chair.
- All applicants will be contacted via email by the Nominations and Elections Chair of the results within one month of the first date of the opening.

Sample Timeline

Within 1 week of notification of vacancy Nominations & Elections meeting held and application/posting sent to operations	
10 day period	2 social media posts  2 email blasts staggered
1 week after posting ends N&E committee reviews applications	
Within 1 week Schedule interviews	
Within 1 week of interviews Candidate recommended to the BoD	

All applicants notified by email

Within 1 week

Appointment Board Director's supervisor(s)  
notified by email

## **Nomination & Selection**

- The Nomination & Elections committee chair, with assistance from the Communications consultant, shall be responsible for posting the application and information outlined by the Nomination & Elections committee to membership.
- The Nomination and Election Committee, in collaboration with the Chair and Executive Director, shall be responsible for reviewing applications, interviewing applicants, and presenting a viable candidate to the board for appointment.
  - Applicants with 3 years of professional membership will be preferred.
- A nominee shall be approved for appointment by a majority vote of the board.
- An email will be sent to the appointed Director's employment supervisor notifying them of their leadership position within VTSCA.
- Should no candidate emerge from this process, a previously elected director may be recommended by the Chair for appointment to fill the vacancy until the term expires or until another candidate emerges.

## **Term of Office**

- The appointed director will be finishing out the remainder of the previous director's term.
- An appointment does not count towards any years of a future elected term.

## **Duties**

- The Board Appointed Director will complete the following commitment statements at the beginning of the term:
  - Attendance
  - Ethical Standards
  - VTSCA Membership
  - Disclosure Statement
- All roles and responsibilities to be fulfilled are stated in the GP3 Board Policy & Procedure

**Procedure Title:** Executive Session

**Policies/Bylaws Addressed:** GP-3.A.3

### **Procedure:**

#### **Executive Session**

- For an executive session to take place, a formal motion, second, and approval by the board must take place.
- To reconvene the board meeting, a formal motion, second, and approval by the board must take place. The parties who have been excused may then be invited back in, if necessary.
- The Board Chair may report any actions taken, or make a statement for inclusion in the minutes.
- Board directors and persons invited by the board shall attend an executive session.
- When applicable, an executive session may be included on the board meeting agenda.

**Procedure Title:** Nomination & Election

**Policies/Bylaws Addressed:** GP-4.A. | GP-5. | GP-6.B. | GP-6.B.2. | Bylaws Article IV.1 b,c,f. | Article IV.2 | Article VI.3.a

**Procedure:**

To maintain a healthy professional environment, campaigning of any kind shall not be permitted by any Board Director.

All documents and materials are stored in the VTSCA shared drive labeled Nominations & Elections Committee. 1. The election process for a Board Director shall be as follows:

- a. Issue a call for nominations through VTSCA website, social media and email blast to membership. This call will include Board openings, deadlines, link to the application form and these election procedures.
  - i. The application form shall include the following components:
    1. Personal Information
    2. Educational Background
    3. Employment Information
    4. Professional Leadership Experience
    5. Nominee Statement
    6. Employment Supervisor Contact Info
    7. Attendance Commitment Statement
    8. Election Procedures Agreement
    9. Ethical Standards Agreement
    10. Membership Statement Agreement
- b. Receive and compile the submitted information on each nominee for the ballot. The committee will actively seek to draw underrepresented and underserved populations, working to ensure at least 2 candidates are on each ballot.
- c. Verify that each candidate meets the membership eligibility requirement.
- d. Prepare a ballot for statewide election and distribute ballots to the membership of each region.
- e. Review the voting results.
- f. Submit election/selection results to the Chair and Executive Director.
- g. Communicate election results to candidates as soon as possible in the event of a tie requiring a runoff election.
  - i. In the event of a runoff election, the following steps shall be taken:
    1. Create a new ballot with the tied candidates and the information from the original ballot, indicating there was a tie requiring a runoff election.
    2. Send the ballot to the region's voting membership.
    3. Review the voting results.
    4. Submit election/selection results to the Chair and Executive Director.
- h. Send an email to the winners' employment supervisor(s) informing them of the election/selection results.
- i. Report any violations of election procedures to the Board of Directors.
- j. Review and address any challenges to the election procedures:

- i. A challenge of election results may be requested only by the candidate involved in the election and may be sent via email to the VTSCA Nominations and Elections Chair no later than (5) calendar days after the candidate is notified of the election results.
- ii. The Nominations and Elections chair will notify the Executive Director and Board Chair no later than (5) calendar days after receipt of the challenge.
- iii. A virtual meeting may be held where the challenger and other candidates from the ballot are invited to review the election results and process. The Chair of the Board and the Nominations and Elections Chair or their designee shall represent VTSCA for the review. The outcome of the review shall be final. The Executive Director will be the neutral official in charge of the review.
- k. Share final election results to membership via email and social media.

2. The recommended election timeline will be as follows (based on a November conference date):

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
August/Early September	Reach Out to Potential Candidates
End of September	Call for Nominations
2nd Week of October	Midnight - Deadline for Submitting Packet
2 Weeks Prior to Voting (Mid October)	Announcement to Membership of Voting Period (per Nominations & Elections policies - must be announced 2 weeks prior to the date voting begins)
Mid October	Prepare Candidate Information for Ballots
Mid October	Set Up Electronic Ballot Software
First Day of Conference	12:01 a.m. Release Ballots
1 Week From Release of Ballots	Midnight - Close Balloting
Mid November	Announce Election Results to 1) Committee, 2) Candidates, 3) Board Members, 4) Membership

3. The Ballot Procedures will be as follows:

- a. Elections shall be held by electronic ballot or other means appropriate and approved by the Nominations and Elections Committee.
- b. The order of the nominees' names for all positions on the ballot shall be randomly listed per the election system utilized. A write-in option will be available on each ballot per VTSCA bylaws.
- c. Voting members of the Association shall receive the dates of the election two weeks prior to the onset of the voting period.
- d. To be eligible to vote, one must be a current professional, retired or lifetime VTSCA Member at the time of the election.
- e. Board Directors are elected by simple majority. Voting will be done by Australian ballot.
- f. The Nominations and Elections Committee will annually set the voting period to coincide with the

Annual conference. In the event that the conference occurs after January, the committee will ensure Directors are elected by the end of January.

- g. Once the voting period is completed, the election results will first be shared with the Nominations and Elections Committee, then the candidates, then the Board Directors, followed by an announcement to the membership.

**Procedure Title:** Secretary

**Policies/Bylaws Addressed:** GP-3.B.8. | GP-4. | GP.4.F. | GP.5.E. | GP.6.B.2.a. | GP.8.D.

**Procedure:**

### **Application**

Before the application period is to be opened, a task force will create the application based on current needs as determined by the board of directors. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall house examples of past applications, interview questions, and promotional material.

### **Timeline**

- At the December meeting, both the board and secretary will determine if there is a mutual interest in extending the secretary's term.
- In the event that the secretary's term is not extended, the secretary position will be posted/advertised for 14 days (via social media, email, and any other necessary means).
- Following the application period, the Nominations and Elections Chair shall contact the selected applicants to schedule interviews with the committee and the Board Chair.
- Upon completion of interviews, the Board Chair shall recommend a candidate for appointment to be voted on by the board when a quorum is called by the chair.
- All applicants will be contacted via email by the Nominations and Elections Chair of the results within one month of the first date of the opening.

### **Nomination & Selection**

- The Executive Director, with the Communications consultant. shall be responsible for posting the application and information outlined by the Nomination & Elections committee to membership.
- The Nomination and Election Committee shall be responsible for reviewing applications, interviewing applicants, and presenting a viable candidate to the board for approval.
- A nominee shall be approved by a majority vote of the board.

### **Emergency Succession**

If the secretary is no longer able to fulfill their duties, the Chair shall fill that vacancy by appointment with board approval to complete the remaining term. If the appointee wishes to serve a full term, they must submit an application when that time arises.

### **Term of Office**

- The secretary of the organization shall serve a one year term beginning with the final board meeting of the fiscal year (typically held in May) and ending with the final board meeting of the following fiscal year.
  - Where possible, an overlap of one meeting shall occur to facilitate successful transfer. In this meeting, the incoming secretary's role is to serve as an observer to the outgoing secretary.
- A task force may be created to review secretary evaluation and propose extension of term.

- The secretary's term may be extended by board vote.

## **Duties**

The secretary of the association shall:

- Attend all official board meetings, electronic/virtual quorum meetings, as needed, events as agreed upon by the board, and meetings of committees to which they are appointed.
  - Should the secretary be unable to attend a meeting, they should notify the chair as much in advance as possible.
- Keep comprehensive meeting minutes and communicate them to the board.
  - Official board meeting minutes shall be sent to the board within two weeks (barring any technical difficulties). Edits may be suggested and made up to three weeks before the next board meeting where the minutes will be officially voted on.
- Secretary will post meeting minutes to website within 2 weeks of board meeting

## **Evaluation**

The secretary evaluation is based on successful accomplishment of approved minutes and notes as outlined in the policy and procedures manuals. In the event that the secretary is not meeting the above expectations, they may be terminated by board vote.

## **Fiscal Procedures**

1. Procedure for Reimbursement
  - a. All persons requesting reimbursement for VTSCA expenses must submit a reimbursement form and itemized receipts, statements, etc. All forms need to be submitted within 90 days of incurred expenses. No reimbursement will be made without completed forms.
  - b. Itemized receipts shall be defined as written acknowledgment from vendor(s) that money has been received for goods or services.
2. Travel - During official VTSCA business travel, individuals will be allotted the line item budget figure. Any cost incurred beyond the figure is the responsibility of the individual.
  - a. Transportation – All travel (coach fare) by air, train, and bus must be accompanied by dated receipts. Feasible and economical local transportation for business purposes is reimbursed.
  - b. Ground Transportation – Cab fare to and from airport and other business – related activities are reimbursed with receipt.
  - c. Travel by Private Auto – Travel by private auto for official business only will be reimbursed at the federal reimbursement rate up to a maximum amount as approved by the Executive Board per event.
3. Accommodations - During official VTSCA business (e.g. Annual Conference, LDI, Delegate Assembly) room reservations shall be for double occupancy whenever appropriate. If an individual chooses a single, they must pay the difference of the cost.
  - a. VTSCA will cover the cost of accommodations for one night prior and the night after the conclusion of the conference/event.
4. Meals – A maximum rate of \$75.00 per diem food allowance shall be allowed for meals not provided.
  - a. VTSCA will not cover or reimburse alcohol purchases.



5. ASCA Leadership Development Institute, Delegate Assembly and Annual Conference
  - a. VTSCA will reimburse airfare, transportation costs, accommodations and meals for the Chair and Chair elect to attend ASCA LDI, Delegate Assembly and Annual Conference.
  
6. Bookkeeping and Check writing procedures – VTSCA contracts with SCL via ASCA to do bookkeeping using Quick Books (QB).
  - a. The treasurer will have access to QuickBooks Online, Financial files are on Google Drive.
  - b. All funds for deposits are either:
    1. Picked up via our UPS store mailbox in South Burlington.
    2. Checks are entered by the Treasurer into a deposit spreadsheet which is shared with SCL and deposited either electronically or in person at Citizens Bank.
    3. ASCA payments are recorded in Wild Apricot once ASCA sends the list and funds are deposited into our account.
  - c. Historically a record of all checks were sent to the bookkeeper via email and then the bookkeeper entered all checks and assigned the appropriate chart of accounts for budgeting purposes. Currently the treasurer is responsible for entering checks and assigning them the appropriate chart of accounts for budgeting purposes. A monthly meeting with SCL occurs to go over accounts and make sure correct accounts are applied. A yearly review of accounts occurs when the budget is drafted to ensure appropriate accounts are used. SCL works with the treasurer to develop a budget to present to the board.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAIRPERSONS AND STANDING OPERATIONAL COMMITTEES**

### **Committee Chairs**

Committee Chairs will be appointed annually by the Board.

#### **All Committee Chairs duties shall include:**

- Attending all Board meetings
- Establishing a committee.
- Prepare a committee report and provide an update at each scheduled Board meeting.
- Prepare an annual plan of action and budget request to be submitted to the Finance Committee and Executive Board prior to the May meeting as needed.
- Provide training to the incoming Committee Chair.
- Maintain a record of activities to be passed on to the next Committee Chairperson.
- Perform any other duty that may be appropriate to the committee's charge.
- Assume other responsibilities as agreed upon by the full Board.

### **Standing Operational Committees**

#### ***Advocacy & Public Policy***

#### **Committee Chair duties shall include:**

- Identifying political issues influencing professional school counseling and VTSCA
- Reviewing annually public policy updates to VTSCA Governing Board
- Writing articles as appropriate

- Organizing and coordinating official recognition and acknowledgment from state legislators during National School Counselor Week
- Promoting the presence and voice of school counselors in the Agency of Education.
- Coordinating school counselor Agency of Education representatives.

### *Finance Committee*

#### **Finance Committee Chair duties shall include:**

- Developing an initial operating budget for consideration, revision, and adoption by the Governing Board on an annual basis
- Implementing the operation of the budget by monitoring income and expenses
- Suggesting financial policies or changes and make fiscal recommendations to the Board
- Reporting quarterly financial statements to the Board

### *Professional Development Committee*

#### **Professional Development Committee Chair duties shall include:**

- Collaborating with Conference consultant on Fall Conference
- Reviewing conference and workshop evaluation forms to inform PD development
- Identifying presentations that will impact the needs of Vermont school counselors
- Submitting a plan for relevant professional development
- Submitting a plan by July 1 to Executive Board as part of the Strategic Plan

#### **Annual Conference Committee Chair duties shall include:**

- Manage approved budget and account for all expenses related to conference planning.
- Negotiate site and facility arrangements on behalf of the Governing Board and in accordance with budget recommendations and timelines.
- Select a topic or theme for the conference in consultation with the Professional Development Committee
- Select a format for the conference
- Delegate and oversee persons to carry out additional duties
  - Exhibits chair
- Establish a plan for publicizing the event
- Provide a method of evaluation for the conference

#### **Annual Conference Sub Committee: Exhibits Chair duties shall include:**

- Coordinate planning among conference facility representatives and exhibitors.
- Keep Conference Committee Chair apprised of issues related to the exhibitors.
- Point of contact for sponsors and exhibitors.
- Provide follow-up information to the conference committee by compiling exhibitor evaluations.
- Keep records of all income and expenses related to this position.
- Ensure that all bills for printing, etc. are forwarded to the Treasurer.

#### **Awards and Professional Recognition Committee Chair duties shall include:**

- Soliciting nominations for the Counselor of the Year, New Counselor of the Year, and Lifetime Achievement Award (e.g., from membership, school counselors outside of membership, the VPA, etc.)
- Recruiting Professional Recognition Committee members from previous award winners
- Coordinating the annual awards ceremony at the Annual Day on the Hill event.
- Setting nomination deadlines, coordinate and organize dates for the Selection Committee to meet to select winners, and share selection/nomination criteria with the Selection Committee in advance for their review
- Facilitate the Selection Committee meeting on the agreed upon date to select the award recipients
- Ordering the appropriate certificates or plaques and present them at the annual conference
- Submitting names and pertinent data of award recipients for publication in the next issue of the VTSCA Newsletter/Blast! In addition, posting or coordinating with those in charge of social media and the website to make the respective posts with award winners
- Assisting in the submission of credentials of award recipients to the ASCA for possible national recognition

**Bylaws & Ethics Committee Chair (as needed) duties shall include:**

- Serve as contributor to VTSCA with regard to bylaws questions and revisions.
- Review VTSCA Bylaws annually or as requested by the Board.
- Answer inquiries to ethical issues.
- Coordinate with IT contractor to disseminate information, including current ASCA code of ethics, to the general membership

**Communications Committee Chair duties shall include:**

- Oversee and collaborate with the Communications consultant to
  - Newsletters & blasts
  - Ensure a professional VTSCA website
  - Social Media presence
- Soliciting newsletter articles from Board members and members at large
- Supervising the layout of each newsletter edition and deciding the format, style and content.
- Proofreading and editing all copy received from contributors and final copy
- Soliciting advertising for the newsletter
- Ensuring all bills are paid involved with publication of newsletter and posting of the website.

**CONTRACTED WORKS**

**Executive Director:**

- Collaborate with the Board of Directors, Committee Chairs, Contracted employees to ensure that VTSCA stays true to its mission, vision, Bylaws, policies, procedures etc.

**Membership:**

- Maintain and manage the VTSCA membership database (currently Wild Apricot)
- Manage membership and other financial transactions
- Sending out follow up notifications of lapsed memberships

- Attend VTSCA conference(s) to take new/renewing memberships
- Check Association's email ([vtscamembership@gmail.com](mailto:vtscamembership@gmail.com)) regularly to provide communication/membership relations with members
- Communicate with treasurer and/or bookkeeper as needed to maintain accurate financial records
- Follow policies for the dissemination of membership contact information
- Update membership application as necessary

### **IT/Website/Public Relations**

- Support the Communications Chair to update the VTSCA website on a regular basis.
- Research and implement available technology to support the needs of the organization.
- Maintain the VTSCA domain name via web host provider.
- Oversee social media accounts
- Disseminate information about VTSCA's goals, projects and upcoming events to audiences.

### **Ad-Hoc Committees**

The Chair shall have the ability to appoint a special ad hoc committee to serve a specific purpose or function on behalf of the board. This committee is not considered a standing committee for the association. The committee serves until, in the opinion of the Board, its appointed purpose has been completed and should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Board to decide if the committee needs to continue or change. The chair shall be appointed by the Chair with the approval of the Board. The majority of committee members must be VTSCA members. Committee members can only be part of one additional VTSCA committee at a time. Two Executive Board members must be part of the committee. The board member's representation on the committee is to ensure VTSCA's mission and purpose is clear and the guiding lens for the committee's work.

### **Ad-Hoc Committee Chairs duties include:**

- Understand VTSCA's mission, goals, and policies.
- Attend all Board meetings.
- Prepare a committee report and provide an update at each scheduled Board meeting.
- Communicate any large effort to move forward along with sharing any pertinent documents with the Board.
- Seeking Board approval of final resources, documents, or publications that are to be external facing prior to any external movement.
- Assume other responsibilities as agreed upon by the Board.

### **Finances**

1. Banking – VTSCA has a business checking account and a money market account (currently at Citizens Bank).
  - a. Three members of the Board are listed on these accounts at all times. One member must be the current treasurer and the other two must be current board members.
    1. The account member list should be reviewed yearly to ensure the list includes current Board members.
  - b. The treasurer is the only person on the account to have access to the Association debit card for the checking account.
  - c. This account is not to be used as a cash account and therefore cash will not be obtained through the use of the debit card.

- d. When using the debit card to make purchases, a debit card expenditure form must be completed with receipts attached.
  - e. All purchases made with the debit card are recorded and shared with SCL via Expenses spreadsheet.
  - f. Bank statements are available monthly online. The Treasurer will keep an electronic copy of the bank statement on the VTSCA Google Drive and will provide access to SCL for monthly reconciliation purposes.
2. Audits – Every three years, beginning with the 2012-2013 fiscal year, VTSCA shall complete an internal audit of its financial records.
    - a. The Treasurer and Finance Committee shall coordinate this process.
  3. Resources- Officers and committee chairs who are provided with laptops, phones, credit cards or other Association property shall turn them over to the Association at the expiration of their term of office.
  4. Annual Tax Filing- SCL coordinates this with the Treasurer
    - a. Bi-annual report to the Secretary of State
    - b. File annual federal income tax to maintain 501c3 status

## **Conference Procedures**

### **Annual Meeting:**

The annual VTSCA business meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual conference and presided over by the Chair. The annual meeting shall include:

- The Election of Board Directors
- Annual Treasurer's Report
- Presentation and voting on Bylaw changes for the organization

### **Conference Presenters:**

- All conference presenters must submit program proposals through the Conference Chairperson or designated Conference Committee member.
- Presentations are selected according to the timeliness of the topic, anticipated interest, innovative content, collaborative components, well-defined objectives and practical application of material.
- Presenters encouraging the solicitation of materials or services will not be accepted. Presenters who wish to sell materials must purchase exhibit space and confine promotional efforts to the exhibit area.
- VTSCA reserves the right to NOT accept a program to any company it deems inappropriate or at cross purposes to the association's mission. Additionally, VTSCA reserves the right to interrupt any session in progress that is deemed objectionable and/or inappropriate.

### **Exhibitors:**

- All exhibitors/sponsors must submit an application to exhibit through the Exhibitor Chairperson.
- Exhibitors must register for the conference if they wish to attend workshops or presentations.
- Exhibitors will NOT be given names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, or any other personal information of VTSCA members or conference attendees.

- VTSCA reserves the right to NOT accept an exhibitor/sponsor of any company it deems inappropriate or at cross purposes to the association's mission. Additionally, VTSCA reserves the right to terminate any exhibit that is deemed objectionable and/or inappropriate.

**Cancellation Policy:** For all VTSCA professional learning events, VTSCA must be notified of any cancellations no later than 10 days prior to the event. Cancellation notifications received after the 10 day deadline will be subject to a fee of 50% of the total cost of registration.