

Procedures for Selecting Principal Figures For Volumes in the Library of Living Philosophers

I. Eligibility:

Philosophers will be treated as “eligible” for nomination to a volume in the LLP in accordance with the “Principles of a Long-range Plan” (see Appendix).

II. Nomination:

Nominations may be entered only by Advisory Board Members (hereafter, “Members”), but all Members serve as public receivers of potential nominations (we may call these “suggestions”). If anyone (beyond or within the profession of philosophy) suggests a name, and the named person plausibly falls under the heading of “eligible,” (and here Members should use their own judgment), the Member decides whether to place the name in nomination, if, in the judgment of the Member, the suggested figure has a chance of being elected by a majority of the Advisory Board. If the Member believes there is a chance, he/she/they place the name in nomination by notifying the Editor. This notification may be done by phone call, by e-mail, or by regular mail. Only enough information needs to be provided for LLP to find the person named. A person who has been nominated by a Member will appear on the next ballot (see Voting, below).

III. Confidentiality

The names suggested, or held in current or past nomination are to be regarded as wholly and completely confidential. It is crucial in avoiding conflict, manipulation of the process, embarrassment to Members and nominees, to deter self-promotion or lobbying, and to maintain the high level of professional esteem we have always enjoyed, that nominees not be discussed (as nominees) except among Members.

IV. Information:

Once a name has been placed in nomination, the LLP staff will locate websites containing the CVs and basic biographical information for nominees. These websites will be sent as links to all Members about two weeks before the ballots go out for Voting (see below). Members are welcome to discuss names with one another as need and inclination suggest. There is no requirement or expectation that the Editor of the series will be included in such discussions. The Editor may be included or not at the discretion of those who wish to discuss the nominees. The whole LLP staff, including the Editor, should be willing to facilitate discussions, as desired by Members, by any available means, including calling face-to-face and/or remote meetings of the Board at divisional meetings of the APA prior to voting.

V. Voting

Voting will take place as needed, usually annually in mid-April. Once a name has been placed in nomination, it will be voted on in the first year after nomination, assuming the name has been given to the LLP staff at least two weeks prior to the date on which ballots will be set out (around the 15th). If the name does not receive a majority (five) of yes votes, it becomes “Inactive” (see Inactive Nominations below). Ballots will be sent out and returned by regular mail. All that is requested is that Members exercise their best

independent judgment at the time, based on their best understanding of our mission (see Appendix), and on the quality of the contribution to those ends made by each philosopher whose name is on the ballot. Members will simply mark “yes” or “no” next to each name on the ballot, and return the ballot in timely fashion to the LLP office.

VI. Inactive Nominations

Once a nominated philosopher has failed to receive a majority of “yes” votes, that name becomes officially “Inactive.” A list of inactive nominees will be sent electronically to each Member four weeks before annual voting. Members may respond by “activating” nominees. If three or more Members respond to the list of Inactive nominees with the same name, that name is reinstated as Nominated. That philosopher’s website links will be updated and sent along with new nominees, and the name will appear on the next ballot. (The effect of this policy is to give Members a great deal of initiative to introduce entirely new names for a single vote, but to make it more difficult to reinstate a name that has been voted down. It is not fair to ask one’s fellow Members to vote down the same names repeatedly. It is difficult enough to say “no” once.)

VII. Results

The results of voting will be tabulated by the LLP office and communicated to each Member as quickly as possible. Only the numerical totals will be reported, not who voted how. The ballots will be held for a reasonable time in the event of a dispute, but will be disposed of eventually. The numerical results are to be held in the strictest confidence. Under no circumstances is an e-mail or other communication containing results to be forwarded or read by non-Members, and results are not to be discussed except among Members and LLP staff. This confidence excludes even the LLP Executive Board (whose functions are administrative, not editorial). Where any philosopher has received at least five “yes” votes, that person becomes thereafter, and until death, a “Candidate” for a volume.

VIII. Candidacy

The LLP operating papers state that the Editor will announce no new volume without the approval of a majority of the Advisory Board. It does not say that a positive vote by the Advisory Board requires that a volume will be done. A “yes” vote on a nominee does not guarantee a volume, so even a positive decision by the Board is to be held in the strictest confidence. This is a necessary stage of intervention in the process for several reasons. First, the Editor may not be able to secure the agreement of the philosopher to do a volume. In this case both the LLP and the chosen philosopher must be protected from unwelcome judgment by the public or the profession. Second, the philosopher may withdraw his/her/their participation. It has happened before. Third, the philosopher may die before the volume is sufficiently complete to warrant publishing, which has happened several times. Fourth, the Editor may have to sever the relationship due to an inability to work with the principal philosopher. Only such authority ensures the editorial independence of the volume. Fifth, there are more deserving philosophers than LLP can accommodate with its resources. Sixth, it is important that the Editor be given some discretion as to how to direct the limited resources of the LLP so as to fulfill its mission and promote its prestige. Therefore, the Candidacy of a nominee is a required step, but is

not the assurance of an LLP volume. Thus, there may be a pool of Candidates who never have volumes, for any of a number of reasons.

IX. Announcement

The Editor will treat all Candidates with the utmost seriousness, as representing, in the independent judgment of at least five Members, a philosopher deserving of an LLP volume. But again, successful advancement to Candidacy does not imply Announcement. The Editor must secure the consent and be assured of the full cooperation of the Candidate, and this requires some legal papers. Announcement of a volume will be communicated first to the Advisory Board and the publisher, and then, after a respectable interval, to the public by means of a press release. It is hoped that all Members will express unified support of philosophers whose volumes have been announced, regardless of how they have voted.