The Governance Modernization Project was launched in April 2020. At that time, several challenging or awkward aspects of governance were catalysts for this effort. Among them were:

- Inability of a large governing body like the AAAS Council to move nimbly to respond to the fast pace of decision-making required in the modern era
- Obsolescence of some of the regional governing structures that were more valuable before the era of instant and cost-effective communication
- The lack of continuity in critical elected leadership roles that has hampered the Board’s execution of its fiduciary responsibilities
- Unrealized potential for partnership between the Board and senior staff
- Siloed scientific section jurisdictions in conflict with the reality of modern multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary science
- Opaque nominations process hampering the election of leaders with diverse scientific, business, government, geographic, and career stage background

The purpose of the project has been to answer the following guiding question:

*What governance culture, processes, structures, and documents will provide the best framework for successful achievement of the AAAS mission in the coming years and match the reality of the way in which the modern organization is run?*

This meant ensuring a governance system in keeping with best association governance practices that:

- Supports effective decision-making and oversight functions of the Board of Directors
- Aligns the work of the entire organization toward achieving mission, including the Board, Council, Sections, Divisions, and Committees
- Enables appropriate community connections

A 26-person Working Group was created by the Board of Directors to serve as the core strategic and operational body for this project. This group includes members drawn from a broad range of governing perspectives such as current and former representatives from across the AAAS governance structure, including the Board, Council, Sections, Divisions, staff, and others. Informed by the input from dozens of other stakeholders, the Working Group deliberated and crafted proposals for the next iteration of AAAS governance.
Executive Summary of Key Recommendations

Foundational Recommendations

1. Design AAAS governance to be nimble, accessible, easily understood, and connected. All parts should be focused on mission advancement and prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in all areas.

2. Structure AAAS governance to better leverage its unique multidisciplinary strength in ways that increase societal impact for the benefit of all people. This could mean, for example, developing a unique role as a collaborative home for multidisciplinary, multi-sectoral discovery, innovation, knowledge, and connection.

3. Shift AAAS’ foundational governance premise from “Representative for” to “Representative OF.”
   a. If Board or Council members believe they are “representative for,” then they see themselves as the elected representatives of a particular constituency, voice the self-interests and opinions of that constituency and vote only on behalf of that constituency's interests.
   b. Board or Council members who view their role as ensuring that the views, beliefs, values, and self-interests of the constituencies they know the best are on the table as part of the conversation, are “representative of.” They ensure that others are informed of the views of the constituencies they understand the best. They participate in a collective dialogue and deliberation based on what is in the best interests of the organization itself.

AAAS Board/Officer Position & Selection Recommendations

4. Restructure Board and Officer positions to:
   a. Sunset the current practice of the elected AAAS President and President-Elect filling the roles of Council Chair and CCA Chair.
   b. Create a seat for the AAAS Council-CCA Chair on the AAAS Board of Directors, thereby creating greater connection between the Board and the Council.
   c. Remove the role of the Board Chair from Presidential line progression. This means the Presidential line will be President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President, each with a one-year term.
   d. Members will continue to elect the President-Elect.
   e. The Board of Directors will select its own Chair.
f. Allow individuals best suited to “leading a board” versus filling “presidential duties” to be selected for each role. In the division of duties:

i. The President’s role is more focused on science and serving as an external face and voice of the organization.

ii. The Chair is a partner with staff to oversee the business of the Board and its responsibilities to the organization.

g. The role of the Treasurer, as currently stated in the by-laws, will be updated to reflect the normative practice of their role as a partner to staff and a liaison to the Board with any key financial matters, but that the responsibility for collective oversight falls to the Board of the whole and the work of financial tracking and documentation is fulfilled by expert staff resources.

5. Repurpose and reconstitute the Board Nominations Process, currently carried out by the Committee on Nominations, to a Board Nominations and Leadership Development Committee that will serve year-round, seek and shepherd next generations of AAAS leadership, and at the same time, oversee a modernized, transparent and inclusive process of leadership selection that includes needs assessment, candidate recruitment, vetted selection and election focused on matching candidates with the strategic competencies and diverse representation needed by AAAS each election cycle.

6. Present candidates for election by using methods that focus on matching candidates with the strategic competencies and diverse representation needed in each election cycle, while minimizing the potential of election losses among visible candidates. The membership will continue to vote or newly vote on:

a. Nomination Committee members -- using a single slate of more candidates than needed, for example, present 8 candidates and elect the top 4. By electing the Nominations Committee members are selected through a more rigorous and credible process and accountable team to carry out the important work of selecting AAAS future leaders.

b. Elected Board members using a single slate of more candidates than needed, i.e., four candidates for two positions

c. President-Elect using a dual slate (two candidates for one position)

d. The Board of Directors will select its own Chair.

Embedded in this recommendation is the assumption of a more robust process for electing the members of the Nominating Committee (to be the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee). This is intended to ensure diverse perspectives and strategic insight in the committee’s leadership vetting and slating work.
AAAS Council Recommendations

7. Repurpose the AAAS Council to include oversight of key multidisciplinary, ad hoc work groups – called Intersections - that advance key topics of scientific and organizational import, thereby providing meaningful work, while maintaining current Council responsibilities, including overseeing Fellows.

8. Reconstitute a smaller AAAS Council to align to the composition design below. At the time of this recommendation, Council would have 30 members, which will allow for a more nimble and active leadership group assigned to be broadly “representative of” the association. The composition includes:
   a. One member per Section
   b. Four at-large or seats reserved for perspectives such as early career, non-academic, or a particularly needed expertise for an election cycle. These are intended to ensure diversity of perspectives.
   c. A representative of AAAS presidential line
   d. AAAS CEO (ex-officio¹)

While this recommendation does not, at this time, set a maximum number of councilors, there is an intention to keep the Council smaller in number as the work designed will require more frequent meetings and lift.

The Working Group believes Sections need to be responsive to the ever-changing nature of science, which will likely mean fluidly dissolving, merging, or forming new sections. It is anticipated that a maximum # of Council members will remain at between 30-35 members going forward.

As an additional note – this model shifts the design of Council to one member per Section. It does not impact the proportion of Fellows allocation, which will remain unchanged.

9. The current Committee on Council Affairs (CCA) will be reconstituted as the Council Executive Committee (CEC) with a single leader elected from Council to Chair both the Council and the CEC.

¹ Note that ex-officio indicates that the person will serve as a voting member, but serves by virtue of their position, not because of election to the specific body where they have a slot. Any position that is ex-officio and also non-voting, if any, will be indicated as such.
10. Expand the scope and interconnected structure of Sections to facilitate:
   a. Increased participation in mission focused, collaborative multidisciplinary initiatives:
   b. Interconnected work groups or committees focused on possible areas, such as DEI, leadership development, membership and so forth; and
   c. Retention of current key responsibilities of Fellows nomination/review and Annual Meeting symposia contribution.

11. Create a new system of Nomination & Leadership Development for Sections that continues to have Sections conduct this function, but replaces the current, cumbersome ENC system.

12. Restructure the Section Steering Groups, giving clarity of purpose to leaders that work to advance their Sections and the AAAS mission.
   a. Every position will have a unique task and skillset they bring to the group.
   b. The Section’s Council member will be part of the Steering Group.
   c. The Steering Group will work together as a whole on all projects.
   d. Each of the following projects will have its own chair to lead it, with the participation of the rest of the Steering Group:
      i. Fellows nomination/review
      ii. Annual Meeting symposia
      iii. Nominations/Leadership development
      iv. Section membership engagement

Draft Recommendations & Reasonings

Though the more operational structure and shifts that accompany the broad recommendations above will be finalized as the modernized governance system is officially documented, the Governance Modernization Working Group has considered and drafted several paths forward that can guide this process.
Board & Executive Committee Position Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Council/Council Executive Committee (CEC) Chair on AAAS Board of Directors

An ex-officio Board seat should be created for the Chair of Council/CEC

Reasoning: To create a greater connection between the Board and the Council, a Board seat is reserved for the Chair of the Council/CEC. Sunsetting the current practice of the elected President/President-Elect filling these roles is addressed in a later recommendation concerning a reconstituted Council.

Recommendation 2: Board Chair & President

The role of Board Chair will be removed out of the Presidential line progression. The Presidential line will be President-Elect, President, Immediate Past President each in a one-year term.

The Chair of the Board will be selected by the Board while the President will be elected through the election process outlined below. The Chair may be selected from any Board member not serving in an ex-officio capacity. The Chair will serve a two-year term and will have the option to renew for an additional third year if approved by the Board.

Reasoning: This recommendation would allow the board to select its own Chair and allow for individuals best suited to “leading a board” versus filling “presidential duties” to be selected for each role. In the division of duties, the President’s role is more focused on science and serving as an external face and voice of the organization. Their election continues to make sense for these responsibilities. The Chair is a partner with staff to oversee the business of the Board and its responsibilities to the organization.

*Board Chair can be any person from the Board

Recommendation 3: Treasurer’s Role

The role of the Treasurer, as currently stated in the by-laws, will be updated to reflect the normative practice of their role as a partner to staff and a liaison to the Board with any key financial matters, but that the responsibility for collective oversight falls to the Board of the whole and the work of financial tracking and documentation is fulfilled by expert staff resources.

Reasoning: This shift is structural to align with nonprofit best practice and mitigate risk to the organization.
Nominations & Leadership Development Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Roles & Responsibilities:

The current Committee on Nominations should be replaced by a Nomination & Leadership Development Committee that would have year-round, expanded responsibilities to include:

- Working with AAAS current leadership and staff to assess the qualities, skills, and diversity needed in board leadership in each election cycle,
- Solicit and identify top-tier candidates,
- Engage in a fair and transparent process of vetting those candidates to put forward a qualified and strong slate,
- Oversee the process of leader selection/election,
- As needed, be available for input into the orientation and onboarding of each cycle of board leadership.

Reasoning: Successfully electing the right leaders for AAAS board service is of the highest priority for mission success, as well as incredibly nuanced as how the organization advances its mission in a rapidly changing environment continues to shift. As such, the overseeing leadership body that is responsible for board leadership identification and selection has a job that is more than just nominating candidates. The mandate to regularly align and communicate the strategic and diversity qualities needed in each board iteration, oversee a fair, easy to understand, non-partisan process of board leader vetting and elevation, and then work to make sure those leaders are chosen through a final election/selection process that is run with integrity & right-level transparency alongside the cultural elements of showing respect and appreciation for every candidate, no matter the outcome of elections, is a greater scope of work. It is imperative to note that within this recommendation, staff continue to play a key role. Volunteers have incredibly important day jobs - and staff will continue to partner with them as the primary drivers and year-over-year knowledge experts of this process. Moving to this new model will require the volunteers who are serving to commit to a greater scope of work than the current Nominations Committee.

Recommendation 2: Committee Selection:

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee will be populated by elected leaders who go through a process of member election of a single slate with more candidates offered than positions available in that cycle.

Reasoning: This will still include key member input in the leadership selection/election process while ensuring that the depth of knowledge and insight needed to discover and design the strategic competencies and diverse representation needed each election cycle and then conduct a more robust
vetting process to ensure the incoming leaders are well aligned to those needed is tasked to a focused group that can dedicate year-round time and effort to the task at hand.

**Recommendation 3: Chair of the Committee:**

The AAAS Immediate Past President shall be Chair this committee.

**Reasoning:** The Immediate Past President has significant first-hand knowledge of what board service means and requires. Finally, their time as President should have built specific organizational trust and respect such that leaders and members alike will trust they are acting in the best interest of the organization.

**Recommendation 4: Committee Constitution**

The Nominations & Leadership Development Committee will be constituted by:

- Eight elected members
  - Through the single slate with more candidates than needed election process described above, those put forward to serve should represent a diverse mix of demographics, expertise, background, and AAAS leadership experience - but all should have been involved enough with the organization so that there is a solid foundation of knowledge of the strategy and governance of the organization.
- AAAS Immediate Past President, ex-officio, serving as Chair of the Committee
- CEO, ex-officio
- AAAS President & President-Elect, non-voting ex-officio who will be invited to participate in key steps in the process in an observational capacity so they can better understand that work of the committee before taking over as its Chair.

**Reasoning:** Diversity of thought, perspective, and experience is key to the success of this committee. That diversity needs a balance of experience so that there is easy and clear understanding for what role board members ideally play in the AAAS governance system.

**Recommendation 5: Terms**

All elected members of the committee will serve for two years with ½ of the committee rotating off each year.

All ex-officio member will serve concurrent with the aligned AAAS position.

**Reasoning:** This cycle of leadership will give a balance of new perspectives and experience in the process each year.
**Recommendation 6: Diversity Training**

Annually, the Nomination & Leadership Development Committee should receive an update on the sciences of diversity, inclusion and representation and hold a discussion of the implications of these sciences for the Committee's activities. Evidence-based training on bias and anti-racism will be included as part of this, as relevant for debiasing decision making and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Reasoning:** Whether it is their first time serving, or they are returning for service, a refresh in this area each year should aid leaders in their diversity awareness and fluency during their work.

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**Recommendation 7: Governance Training**

Annually, new members of the committee will be required to attend an AAAS governance orientation, and returning members will be given the option, prior to the start of their work.

**Reasoning:** For this committee to succeed, its members need to be fluent in the current system of governance that guides the organization. This orientation should provide resources and training into the architecture of the system, the current AAAS strategy and areas of focus, the role of the board, and any primary examples of board service from over the previous year that would help illustrate their work.

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**Recommendation 8: Committee Evaluation**

An annual committee effectiveness evaluation should be developed and completed regularly.

**Reasoning:** Regularly scheduled review of governance performance is a sign of a healthy governance system. As this is a shift in the scope of responsibilities from the previous Committee on Nominations, an annual review process that is established from the beginning will allow for continued evaluation and evolution as a natural part of the committee routine.

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**Recommendation 9: Committee Charge Authorship**

A charge should be authored for the new Nomination & Leadership Development Committee incorporating appropriate content from these recommendations.

**Reasoning:** A charge provides a direct correlation between the work of a governance group to the mission of an organization. The charge provides distinct clarity for the roles and responsibility of a governance group as well as can serve as a mechanism to set and measure success measures.

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**Board Nominations Process**

In preparation for their work, the Board Nomination and Elections Subgroup referred to **Recruit the Right Board: Proven Processes for Selecting Critical Competencies** – a recently authored authoritative
source in the association space. A critical approach outlined in the book that guided the subgroup’s work was this comprehensive four stage process:

1. Determining Need
2. Candidate Recruitment
3. Selection
4. Election

For each stage, a process has been outlined for review, modification, and approval.

1. Determining Need

   • An analysis is conducted of current Board members to confirm what perspectives are continuing and which are rotating off?
   
   • The CEO and staff discuss with the Board what topics are likely to be on the agenda for the next 3-5 years and the implications for the perspectives, skills, experience, and competences needed for the future Board. That input, along with the initial analysis of what perspectives are remaining/rolling off, are given to the Nominations & Leadership Development Committee.

   • The Nominations & Leadership Development Committee sets key criteria needed and expected within those nominated to run for the Board. These criteria may fall into diversity categories or may be specific criteria determined by the upcoming strategic priorities. While the skills, experience, and background sought in board members will shift each cycle as AAAS’ own strategic focus and needs evolve, agreed upon qualities of leadership should be ongoing tenets of the type of leader that is sought for the board. These qualities can be used to establish before nomination a better picture of the leaders sought after, as well as be used during the vetting process as a place of self-reflection in the candidates. It is important to note that the set of leadership traits is intended to be represented in the board as a whole entity – singular candidates are not expected to fulfill every trait.

2. Candidate Recruitment

   a. In partnership with the staff, the Nominations & Leadership Development Committee will open a call for nominations for the positions of President-Elect and elected Board members, soliciting nominations from current and past board members, Council, section and division leaders, staff, affiliates, and partners. An option for self-nomination will be available in the process as well.

   i. Nomination will be a simple form of basic candidate information as well as an accompanying statement of knowledge of a candidate’s high character and standards for nominated candidates.

   b. Invitation to apply
1. The leadership/governance committee will review the pool of nominees and determine who should be invited to apply.

2. Those invited to apply receive an email with an invitation to fill out a full application for a board position and receive important information such as position description.

3. Selection
   a. Committee determines who will advance to an interview using an interview protocol
   b. The full committee participates in interviews, which are recorded
   c. Once a pool of candidates is selected, the important work of slating begins
   d. The slate is announced to the membership. Depending on the election process in the next step, the membership may receive up to 30 days to nominate an additional candidate by petition.

4. Elections
   a. The recommendation is that leadership will be presented for election by the following methods.
      The membership will vote on:
      i. Nomination Committee members (single slate of more candidates than needed)
      ii. Elected Board members (single slate of more candidates than needed, i.e., two candidates for every one position)
      iii. President-Elect (dual slate - two candidates for every one position)
      iv. The Board of Directors will select its own Chair

Reasoning: This approach considers how few members vote, how difficult it is to bring the general membership up to speed on the strategic needs of the organization and how candidates align with those needs.

The new Nominations process recommended above significantly increases the rigor of the candidate vetting process and moves election of the Nominations & Leadership Development Committee to the membership.

Finally, an already existing petition process enables members to petition for election if the final slate falls far outside of the member’s vision for what AAAS needs.
## COUNCIL Recommendations

### Area 1: Purpose of Council

**Recommendation 1: The responsibility of Council will be three-fold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 1</th>
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</table>
| The governing documents of AAAS outline the role of Council as:  
The Council’s responsibilities include election of Fellows, adoption of resolutions and statements on matters affecting the Association, election of affiliates, and approving amendments to the Bylaws. | Council work is expected to be a robust and active governance process proceeding year-round. Carried out in partnership with staff, the responsibilities of Council will be three-fold:  
1. **An organizing body of Ad Hoc Intersection groups**  
   a. Identify and convene priority multi-disciplinary/multi-perspective work groups  
2. **A communication or connectivity body to:**  
   a. Connect the parts of the organization, including members, to the AAAS mission  
   b. Raise awareness of and receive feedback from sections.  
   c. Facilitate information exchange  
3. **An oversight body for organizational policy and process:**  
   a. Election of Fellows,  
   b. Section organization and function, and  
   c. Additional organizational issues as proposed by the Council and approved by the Board. |

Council responsibilities will no longer be tied to the Annual Meeting.

**Reasoning:** The bylaws no longer reflect the role and duties of the Council. As a governance body composed of broadly representative leadership, the Council is poised to serve AAAS as multidisciplinary experts and provide scientific perspectives when there is a priority need to explore a cross-cutting topic of organizational or scientific importance. Ad Hoc Intersection Groups are frequently used in modern governance to:

- Allow flexibility and nimbleness in an uncertain and rapidly changing world.
- Enable the construction of multidisciplinary or multi-perspective advisory/thought groups.
- Provide efficient and effective ways of accomplishing a single project or task.
- Offer volunteers meaningful work in task-specific and time-limited ways.
Additional Notes: About Intersection Groups:

- Multidisciplinary work groups will be organized on an ad hoc basis to address topics of scientific, educational, societal, or organizational importance.
- Section members, external subject matter experts, internal or external stakeholders directly impacted by possible decisions may be selected to serve.

Area 2: Resolutions and Statements on Matters Affecting the Association & Approving Amendments to the Bylaws

Recommendation 2: Responsibility for the AAAS Enterprise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The bylaws state the Council responsibilities include the adoption of resolutions and statements on matters affecting the Association, election of affiliates, and approving amendments to the Bylaws.</td>
<td>Responsibility for the overall AAAS enterprise will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors. This will include approving resolutions and statements affecting the Association and amendments to the Bylaws. Statements pursuant to internal affairs of AAAS which currently fall within Council responsibilities, such as Fellows, will remain with the Council.</td>
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</table>

Reasoning: The adoption of statements on matters affecting the association are often time sensitive in nature. The Board has more frequent conversations concerning the overarching AAAS strategy impacting consideration of position statements, many of which are made by the CEO under authority delegated to him/her by the Board. It also could convene rapidly to endorse these statements. For similar reasons, and as a democratically selected body which holds fiduciary responsibility for the organization, the Board of Directors will act on proposed amendments to the bylaws.

Note: The final draft of this recommendation should consider how statements are made rapidly and responsibly in the system as it exists today and incorporated into the final language.
Area 3: The Composition of Council

Recommendation 3: Reduce the size of Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 3</th>
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| As currently constituted, the Council comprises the board of directors, section retiring chairs, at least one delegate from each electorate*, two delegates from the National Association of Academies of Sciences, and one delegate from each Regional Division. The president serves as the chair, and the executive officer as the secretary. There are generally 80 members of Council. *Current formula allows one delegate per 2,999 primary section members; the largest section currently has eight delegates. | Reduce the size of Council to correspond to the following composition:  
- One (1) Councilor per section, nominated by the section steering group and selected by the section membership. The Councilor can be any member of a section who is determined to have the 1) desired qualities of leadership, 2) willingness and ability to fulfill the duties of the office, and 3) personal qualities to be successful in shared decision making.  
- Up to (4) four at-large or reserved seats, which will not be more than one additional Councilor from any one section. These are intended to ensure diversity of participation.  
- A representative of AAAS presidential line  
- AAAS CEO (ex-officio)  
Once chosen or elected, any Councilor shall also serve on the section steering group for their section in an ex-officio capacity, ensuring a closer connection between section and Council leadership. |

Reasoning: The trend in modern governance is to create governing bodies of a smaller size to be nimbler and facilitate strategic dialogue. This approach is more effective than traditional “either/or” debate. This change also ensures volunteer work is meaningful, rather than perfunctory or “rubber stamping.” The AAAS Council’s revised responsibilities will result in an increased workload and demand greater complexity of dialogue and frequency of meetings. A Council of smaller size will be better suited to these needs.

To prioritize the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, the additional ‘at-large’ or reserved seats for election or appointment can provide a mechanism for increasing diversity.
Area 4: Terms and Rotation of Council

Recommendation 4: Councilors will serve a four-year term with ¼ rotation each year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Retiring Section chairs are Council members. They are voting members and serve one-year terms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There are elected Section Council delegates. They are voting members and serve three-year terms. They are eligible to serve two consecutive terms (if elected a second time).</td>
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<td>• Two NAAS representatives are Council members. They are voting members and there is no followed protocol addressing their length of service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Division heads are Council members. They are voting members. Some divisions (e.g., Pacific and Arctic) do not have term limits, so they are Council members if they serve in their division head capacity, whereas others (e.g., the Caribbean) rotate membership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• AAAS Board members are voting &lt;em&gt;ex officio&lt;/em&gt; Council members for the duration of their terms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Councilors will serve a four-year term</td>
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<td>• Approximately ¼ of Council positions will rotate each year.</td>
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<td>• Councilors will be able to serve a maximum of two terms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• All Councilors, whether serving for the first or second term, will be chosen using the same selection process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Serving a second term is not automatic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• &lt;em&gt;Ex-officio&lt;/em&gt; positions are exempt from this rotation since their role on Council will follow the term of their designated role.</td>
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Reasoning: Developing a system of rotation will allow new perspectives and leadership to infuse the Council while ensuring continuity of knowledge and expertise. In addition, term limits will ensure there are new perspectives brought to the fore on a regular basis. With four-year terms, any Councilors serving on the CEC will have a year of service on the Council to better prepare for their time on the CEC.
Council Executive Committee (CEC) Recommendations (Formerly CCA)

Area 5: Purpose of the CEC

**Recommendation 5:** The CEC will function for the Council in a similar capacity as the Executive Committee functions for the Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
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</table>
| Serving as the Executive Committee of Council, the CCA:  
- Reviews and decides what to put on the Council agenda  
- Serves as the deciding body for Fellows revocation and Fellows appeals | The Council Executive Committee will function for the Council in a similar capacity as the Executive Committee functions for the Board – i.e., as a segment of the leadership body able to conduct business as needed between full Council meetings.  
The CEC will ensure the Council fulfills its strategic responsibilities through an effective and transparent process.  
To meet emerging needs, the role of the CEC will be to:  
- Review and decide what to put on the Council agenda  
- Serve as the deciding body for Fellows revocation and Fellows appeals  
- Working with staff, conduct first round review of working group proposals prior to their being presented for consideration to Council |

**Reasoning:** Continuing to have a Council Executive Committee (formerly CCA) will ensure the Council can engage in the best discussions, considerations, and decision-making processes at the most effective moments for continued progress. The CEC will champion the process of adhocracy as the Council increases the flexibility and adaptability of their culture.
Area 6: Connecting the AAAS Board and Council Leadership

**Recommendation 6:** The Council Will Have an Elected Chair – No Longer the AAAS President

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The AAAS President serves as the Chair of the Council and the AAAS President-Elect serves as the Chair of the CCA.</td>
<td>The AAAS President will no longer serve as Chair of the Council. The Council will have an elected Chair with responsibility for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Running full Council meetings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Chairing the CEC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Serving as a member of the AAAS Board of Directors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Council Chair will serve a two-year term.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The position will serve in the best interests of AAAS on the AAAS Board rather than advocate for the Council specifically and will be able to share insights from the work of the CEC and Council to increase the depth of understanding and perspective of the Board.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reasoning:** There is a need to have a strong connection between the focus and work of the Council, particularly as it takes on a new role with forming meaningful ad hoc work groups for key topic areas. Having the President and President-Elect of the AAAS Board leading the Council and CCA respectively, while expected to fulfill their fiduciary duties to the organization, does not allow for this focus in a way that is beneficial to the Council and CCA. This newly created chair position will enable the level of focus and leadership needed for the Council and CEC to achieve their new responsibilities.

Area 7: Composition of the CEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are 11 members of the CCA including:</td>
<td>The CEC will comprise:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• AAAS President-Elect (Chair)</td>
<td>• Chair of the Council/CEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• AAAS President</td>
<td>• CEO (ex officio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• AAAS CEO</td>
<td>• Representative of AAAS Presidential line (ex officio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 8 Councilors, elected by their peers</td>
<td>• Four (4) additional at-large representatives elected from the Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current Recommendation 7

Reasoning: The revised composition of the CEC ensures a proportional leadership group that can both represent the interests of Council, while advancing the more frequent input and tasks that will be required between Council meetings.

Area 8: CEC Terms

Recommendation 8: CEC Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCA members serve for two years with four members rotating each year. This rotation excludes the President-Elect and President whose terms on CCA follow the term of their designated role.</td>
<td>CEC positions will be held for three-year terms, with a regular rotation each year of new and continuing leaders to ensure continuity and new perspective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasoning: This approach to rotation will allow new perspectives and leadership to infuse the CEC while ensuring there is continuity of knowledge and expertise. Term limits will ensure there are new perspectives brought to the fore on a regular basis. Ex officio positions are exempt from this rotation since their role on Council will follow the term of their designated role. Additionally, the terms will allow for a year of experience serving on Council before service on the CEC, providing a stronger on ramp for CEC leadership.

Area 9: Election/Selection of the Council Chair

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The AAAS President serves as Chair of the Council and the AAAS President-Elect serves as Chair of the CCA in ex officio positions.</td>
<td>There will be a single Chair of the Council/CEC. While the final design of this process of election/selection was not finalized, it should account for the strategic competencies needed by the organization and Council in any cycle alongside the need for diverse representation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasoning: As the Chair of the Council/CEC shift to a position from within the Council, a new means of leadership selection is needed. Echoing the selection criteria and with consideration for applicable parts of the process from within the Board nominations process, the Chair position should be selected in each term from among the Council based on leadership attributes best fit to fill the strategic competency needs of the coming AAAS strategy cycles. Diversity of representation must also be considered in selecting these leaders.
Council Working Group Recommendations

Area 10: Formation of Council Intersection Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a new area of focus for Council.</td>
<td>Upon determination of a topic of significance where the strength of a multidisciplinary perspective could provide unique and meaningful insights, the Council, in partnership with staff, will organize multidisciplinary Intersection working groups. Those serving on a Council Intersection Group may come from section members, external subject matter experts, internal or external stakeholders directly impacted by possible decisions, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These Intersection Groups will be focused in one of two areas:
- Scientific, educational, or societal impact: Topics of scientific importance, educational import, or societal impact where the multidisciplinary expertise of AAAS can be leveraged to provide key knowledge, perspectives, advice, or innovations that can have societal impact.
- Organizational: Organization-wide topics (e.g., early-career scientists, international participation, DE&I, etc.) where a multi-disciplinary group can provide insights to AAAS as it defines its strategy, priorities, and resource investments.

**Reasoning:** A key strength of AAAS is its multidisciplinary nature. The Council, with its close affiliation with AAAS Sections, is positioned to identify emerging issues which would benefit from key insights of multidisciplinary Intersection working groups. The insights could be provided to the Board and larger organization.

Intersection working groups are frequently used in modern governance because they:
- Allow the flexibility and nimbleness in an uncertain and rapidly changing world,
- Enable the construction of multidisciplinary or multi-perspective work groups.
- Provide efficient and effective ways of accomplishing a single project or task.
- Offer volunteers meaningful work in task-specific and time-limited ways.
**Note:** While the operational and structural design will be drafted by staff after the approval of this recommendation, the GMWG articulated several key factors for consideration in the structure. These can be found in Appendix A.

**Area 11: Council Working Groups Pilot**

**Recommendation 11:** Conduct an 18 to 24-month pilot of Council Intersectional Working Groups to verify the efficacy of the new model. Lessons learned in the pilot could further refine the role that Sections play in contributing to the achievement of the AAAS mission.

- A newly constituted Council can launch, pilot, conclude, and evaluate:
  - 1-2 scientific-focused Intersection(s)
  - 1 organizational-focused Intersection
- Where the selected multidisciplinary scientific topics overlap with section discipline expertise, Council may ask for specific Section participation in those groups.
- The organizational-focused working group could address the new structure of Section leadership. If the topic selected corresponds to one of the areas of focus for Section leadership positions, the leaders from each Section currently fulfilling the position(s) could serve as a strong base for the working group membership.
- As the Council establishes each pilot working group, leaders not currently involved in Sections or Section Leadership could also be included.
- At the conclusion of the pilot, the Council Intersection Groups will be evaluated for impact and lessons learned.
- A ‘pilot Council and CEC’ will be chosen to serve for the pilot period without rotation. At the end of the pilot, Councilors will be able to provide key insights and feedback on the process and where refinement is needed.

**Reasoning:** Piloting the working groups and the functions of the new Council and CEC will provide invaluable learning lessons and result in refinements and improvements. Implementing the changes as a pilot will also signal to constituents that the changes are a work in progress and AAAS remains open to input and feedback.

**Note About Transition Plan:** If this recommendation is approved, a transition plan is being created and will be shared and discussed.
Section Recommendations

Area 12: Roles and Responsibilities of Sections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sections and Section leadership:</td>
<td>The roles and responsibilities of Sections remain as currently scoped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nominate and review Fellows.</td>
<td>At the conclusion of the 18 to 24-month pilot of the Council Intersection Working Groups, the role of Sections in relationship to these multi-disciplinary bodies will be evaluated with an eye towards structural changes to enhance their ability to contribute to the multidisciplinary strength of AAAS. In addition, at the conclusion of the pilot, AAAS’s new strategic vision and plan can inform any shifts needed to better align Sections to the new strategic direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Propose symposia for the AAAS Annual Meeting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Serve as a means of connection for members to network when participating in the AAAS Annual Meeting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide expertise on issues of importance within the scientific community.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Reasoning:** Engaging Sections in the new model without disrupting current roles and responsibilities will enable a more objective analysis of the success of the pilot and minimize the likelihood of change fatigue among constituents.

Area 13: Composition and Terms of Section Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Recommendation 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently, Sections are led by:</td>
<td>Each Section Steering Group comprise of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chair-elect</td>
<td>• Section Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chair</td>
<td>• Section Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Retiring Chair</td>
<td>• Council Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Secretary</td>
<td>• Leadership Development/Nominations Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Members at Large (4)</td>
<td>• Membership Engagement Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leadership succession is one year for each position (Chair-elect, Chair, Retiring Chair) for a term of three-years. The Secretary and the Members-At-Large serve four-year terms.</td>
<td>• Early Career Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Non-Academic Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Two At-Large Representatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reasoning: Volunteer time is limited and precious to an organization. In creating or optimizing the role of volunteer leaders, AAAS wants to ensure:

- There are clear responsibilities & important raison d’etre for each position aligned to mission.
- Roles have opportunities for meaningful engagement.
- The purpose and structure of the leadership is easy to understand.
- The leadership structure will foster inclusivity (among many axes) and provide a space for more diverse opinions and voices at the table.

Proposed Role Descriptions

- **Section Secretary**
  - Liaison to the Executive Office.
  - Lead the Fellows nominations and review process for the Section.
  - Serve a four-year term, with the responsibility to pass along institutional memory.
  - Section budget oversight

- **Section Chair**
  - Oversee the Annual Meeting Symposia process for the Section.
  - Organize and set the agenda for the section’s annual business meeting
  - Organize Annual Meeting section receptions
Serve as a liaison when subject matter expertise from within a Section is required for AAAS efforts.

Help lead or find someone to lead collaboration with other Sections.

Serve a four-year term, replacing the current three individuals serving in the roles of Chair-Elect/Chair/Retiring Chair.

- As the Chair finishes their term, they can serve as an informal mentor to the next Chair without formally committing to the Section for an additional year.

The Secretary and Chair roles will be offset so one is elected every second year, so they will not both start new terms at the same time. This way, they can provide mutual mentorship and support for one another.

- **Council Member(s)**
  - Serve as a means of connection and communication between the Council/CEC and the originating Section.
  - Any Section member who serves on the Council will also be an *ex officio* of their Section Steering Group.

- **Leadership Development/Nominations Chair**
  - Proactively seek disciplinary talent (with an eye toward all aspects of inclusion) throughout the year, building the talent pool for future Section leadership as well as a strong list of subject matter experts for any Council Working Group needs.
  - Lead the Section Steering Group in compiling a slate of nominations for Section roles.
  - Share information with the Executive Office regarding potential leadership in the Section who should be part of the larger AAAS leadership pool.

- **Membership Engagement Chair**
  - Engage in reciprocal dialogue with Section members, to keep members apprised of AAAS and section activities throughout the year and listen to members’ concerns, questions, and thoughts and relaying these back to the steering Committee.
  - Work with the Leadership Development/Nominations Chair to spearhead outreach to promising prospective members to get them to join AAAS.
    - Working in partnership with the Leadership Development/Nominations Chair, incorporate the diversity priorities of AAAS to identify those who would be excellent Fellow nominees or governance leaders.

- **Early Career Representative**
  - Provide an early career voice to the Section Steering Group on matters of Fellow nominations, Annual Meeting symposia, and other initiatives.

- **Non-Academic Representative**
  - Provide a non-academic voice to the Section Steering Group on matters of Fellow nominations, Annual Meeting symposia, and other initiatives.
• **At-Large Representatives**
  o These two additional seats on the Section Steering Group will be reserved for additional leadership. The selection of these leaders can incorporate similar leadership competency criteria, as applicable, as used for the Board selection process. These at-large seats can also integrate additional definitions of diversity including, but not limited to, geography, sub-field, etc.
  o Provide further insights from the Section in key work and considerations of the Section Steering Group.

**Area 14: Section Steering Group Term Limits**

**Current:** There is no term limit for Section Secretaries. Members-at-large may run for any office except chair-elect at the conclusion of their four-year term. There are no bylaws addressing term limits for those in the chair-line.

**Recommendation 14:**
All positions other than Council Representative(s) can serve up to two terms.

Once a volunteer has finished their term of service in any one position, they would observe a minimum one year ‘sabbatical’ before they may be nominated for another position on the same Section Steering Group.

**Reasoning:** A regular rotation will allow new perspectives and leadership to infuse the Section while ensuring continuity of knowledge and expertise in addition, term limits will ensure there are new perspectives brought to the fore on a regular basis.

**Area 15: Selection/Election of Section Steering Group Leadership**

**Current:** The creation of the slate is currently run by an Electorate Nominating Committee (ENC) in each Section. The ENC includes the Retiring Chair as an ex officio member and has six members who are elected by the membership. They consider names for the Chair-Elect, the Members-at-Large, the Council Delegate, and the ENC members. The ENC ranks names suggested by self-nominations, Section Leaders, and their own members. The ENC Chair then has a conversation with nominees, asking them to stand for election. Section membership is then invited to elect their leaders.

**Recommendation 15:** The process of nominating and selecting Section Steering Group leadership will be led by the Leadership Development/Nominations Chair for each Section. The rest of the Section Steering Group will serve in the ‘Nominating Committee’ capacity.

Council Member Selection. Council members serve on the Council for four years. Sections will elect their next Council member in the year BEFORE the start of their term of service. In this way, the Council Member-Elect can sit on the Section Steering Group in a non-voting *ex officio* capacity, gaining insight into how leadership at the Section level works prior to the start of their term.
With similar learnings from the Board Nominations approach to nominees and elections, the priority of finding the right fit candidate for the strategic priorities of the organization in any cycle alongside the diverse representation that will best lead the Section suggest the following approach to Sections.

**Reasoning:** The ENC process adds an unnecessary layer of logistical burden to the governance system. Under the leadership of the Leadership Development/Nominations Chair, the Section Steering Group itself can serve in the nominating committee capacity with any individuals running for a second term recusing themselves from the proceedings. This has the benefit of improving the volunteer experience of at large positions on the Section Steering Group. It will also provide former ENC volunteers with the time/opportunity to make different, meaningful contributions to their Section or elsewhere in AAAS.

**Note:** Who will be elected versus appointed will be considered at a future point.

**Area 16: Opportunities for Cross-Section Leadership and Learning**

**Current:** N/A

Recommendation 16: The following is offered not as a formal recommendation, but as an opportunity for exploration during and/or after the corresponding pilot time of the new Council.

AAAS will gather leaders of similar responsibilities from all Sections to share experience, approaches, and relationship building. These gatherings can be in-person, virtual, or digital (i.e., via a discussion forum). The participant experience during these gatherings will be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure the investment of time and resources is additive rather obligatory.

Such gatherings, known as working groups, may take place for:
- Section Secretary Working Group
- Section Chair Working Group
- Section Leadership Development/Nominating Working Group
- Section Membership Engagement Working Group

While those serving on a Section Steering Group as an Early Career Representative or Non-Academic Representative may be organized into groups, they are likely to be invited to serve on one of the new Council Working Groups if the voice of the Section and or member category they represent is needed.

**Reasoning:** While avoiding over-burdening volunteers, there may be opportunities for leaders in similar roles across Sections to connect and learn from one another.
Appendix A: Council Intersections: Structural Considerations

While the operational and structural design of Recommendation 10 would be drafted by staff, the working group discussed several key factors.

1. Intersections are intended to leverage the multidisciplinary strength, advisory perspectives, and knowledge of experts.

2. An Intersection should not duplicate efforts more appropriate to an individual scientific society.

3. Intersections are not tasked with creating programs. They are formed in an advisory capacity to provide perspective and knowledge to better inform the direction of the organization and science.

4. When considering forming an Intersection, a few key factors should be incorporated:
   - Depth vs. breadth. Many working groups could be created on innumerable topics. Intersections should be limited to and focused on the highest priority topics to make best use of organizational resources.
   - Impact. Creation of an Intersection should include intentional consideration of potential impact. Specifically,
     - What is the expected resource consumption (volunteer time, staff, operations, etc.)?
     - What is the outcome or impact expected of the group’s work?
       - White paper
       - Article/thought piece
       - Proposal for organizational resolution or statement
       - Pilot collaboration
     - How will the impact be measured?
     - What is the return on investment of the resources committed to the work?
   - Consistency. Like an RFP process, there should be standardized information requested of the proposer(s) to ensure parity as proposals are considered.

5. While the structure for proposing working groups will be drafted as part of the operational and structural design, some key factors for consideration when deciding to form a working group include:
   - What is the purpose of the working group?
   - Are there external political factors needing to be considered?
   - Why is AAAS the organization that should do the work?
     - How is the subject critical to the AAAS mission?
• Is the subject linked to AAAS’ strategy/strategic plan?
• Is anyone else already doing this?
• How do we define success and metrics of progress?
• Are the outcomes clear and measurable?
• Do the outcomes have the potential for significant impact?
• What is the timeline on which the working group to demonstrate outcomes?
• What are staff perspectives on the resources needed/available?
• What is the expected timeline for the working group?

6. The request to form an Intersection can come from many sources:
• Board
• Council
• Section
• CEO/staff
• Member/groups of members
  • Via a Section recommendation
  • Submit a proposal independently