

NIRSA USES A REGIONAL STRUCTURE TO FACILITATE engagement among members and potential members at a more local, or geographically concentrated level.

Throughout NIRSA's history, the regional structures have been an important and successful structure for member recruitment, retention and engagement, as well as delivery of professional development, networking, leadership development and other programs and services.

From time to time, the Association finds it prudent to change the regional composition to continue to achieve the goals for the regional structure and/or expand NIRSA's effectiveness in a particular geographic area.

The existence of the regional structure is included in the NIRSA Bylaws. The composition of regions and the process to change that composition is outlined in Board approved policy. A variety of stakeholders are engaged in the process and the NIRSA Board makes the final decision on regional composition.

Regional Composition Requirements

A region within NIRSA has two requirements:

1. A minimum of five (5) U.S. states or Canadian provinces/territories which are contiguous* with a clearly defined regional border.
** with the exception of Hawaii and Alaska*
2. A minimum of 150 professional members and 10 institutional members.

All states, provinces, and countries will be assigned to a region.

A new region that does not meet the stated requirements may be approved by the Board, subject to a timeline to meet the requirements and/or in a provisional status with certain regional privileges restricted until such requirements are met.

Regions within the United States shall be numbered. Regions outside of the United States shall be named according to common global geographic terminology (e.g. Africa, Central America, Mexico).

Realignment of states, provinces, or countries within current regional structure

Initiation

The process for realignment of a state, province or country can be initiated through one of the following methods:

- (1) The Board may initiate a review for realignment should an established region fall below the minimum requirements outlined in the Regional Composition Requirements.
- (2) A state, province, or country may individually or collectively request realignment into a different region through the Regional Realignment Proposal Process.

Regional Realignment Proposal Process

If a state, province, country or area (“requestor”) seeks to realign to a different, existing region, the following process will occur:

- I. The State/Provincial/Country Director shall make a written proposal to the Member Network. For consideration within the current leadership year and implementation at start of the subsequent leadership year, a finalized proposal must be submitted by September 15. The proposal shall be submitted to the requestor’s current Member Network Regional Representative and include:
 - (a) Rationale for changing regions including consideration of:
 - Financial, leadership, and member engagement implications for the state/province/country/area.
 - Financial, leadership, and member engagement implications for the region in which the requestor is departing and for the region in which the requestor is entering.
 - Governance implications as noted in section (c).
 - (b) Formal input from the Member Network Representatives of the requestor’s current region and its proposed region including:
 - A consideration of any unique factors related to the Representative’s region.
 - (c) Acknowledgement of defined parameters for regional realignment including:
 - The region from which the requestor is departing shall maintain sufficient states, provinces, and/or countries to meet the Region Composition Requirements. Documentation shall be required.
 - The region from which the requestor is departing shall maintain sufficient professional membership and institutional membership numbers to meet the Region Composition Requirements. Documentation shall be required.
 - The requestor shall abandon its right to any funds previously deposited and any access to the contingency fund of its current region.

- The requestor shall abandon its right to any funds previously deposited into endowment accounts associated with its current region.
 - The requestor's proposal shall identify Association-wide leaders that are elected or appointed on the basis of the requestor's region and reside in the requestor's area and make recommendations for appropriate leadership transition.
- (d) Demonstrated member engagement through a petition of support for this proposal, via signature or electronic communication (signature or email) from greater than 50% of the NIRSA professional members from the requesting state, province, or area. Professional Membership is verified based on the date the petition is submitted.
- II. Member Network shall review the proposal in accordance with the Association's adopted Regional Composition Requirements and the impacts to the Association's strategic plan, business operations, relationships, and member engagement.
- If the Member Network endorses the proposal, the proposal rationale and Member Network commentary shall be posted on NIRSA's website for member review and input.
 - If the Member Network declines the proposal, it shall inform the requestor of the rationale for the decision. The requestor may resubmit a proposal for future consideration in the subsequent leadership year.
- III. For endorsed proposals, the Member Network shall solicit public comments from the NIRSA membership for a minimum period of 30 days.
- Member comments shall be collected, at a minimum, electronically via the Association web site but may also include recorded minutes from discussion periods at recognized NIRSA events and other written communications to the Member Network.
 - At the conclusion of the comment period, the Member Network shall submit the proposal, Member Network commentary, and member feedback collectively to the Board for consideration.
- IV. The Board shall consider the proposal, Member Network commentary and member feedback and approve or decline the proposal.
- If the Board approves the proposal, realignment shall occur on the first day of the subsequent leadership year (May 1).
 - If the Board declines the proposal, the requestor must wait 18 months from the date of the original submission for its next opportunity to submit another proposal.

Establishing a new region consisting of a country or countries outside of the United States

Initiation

The process for establishing a new region outside of the United States can be initiated through one of the following methods:

- (1) Based on goals in the strategic plan, the Board may initiate the Establishment of a New Region Process.
- (2) NIRSA Members outside the U.S. may individually or collectively request consideration of a new region to the Board of Directors using the Establishment of a New Region Process.

If the Board of Directors determines it is in the best interest of NIRSA to consider a new region, a task force will be appointed to execute the Establishment of a New Region Process.

Establishment of a New Region Process

A task force will be appointed by the NIRSA Board to consider the options, alternatives and impacts of establishing a new region outside the United States. The task force will provide an evaluation of the following:

- I. Rationale for establishing a new region, including consideration of:
 - Financial, leadership, and member engagement implications for the country/area.
 - Financial, leadership, and member engagement implications for the region(s) in which the requestor is departing.
 - Governance implications as noted in section (c).
- II. Formal input from the Member Network about the opportunities and impacts to current regions and regional leadership roles (within region, Member Network, Nominations & Appointments Committee); consideration of any unique factors related to the Representative's region. At the Boards' discretion, feedback from additional stakeholder groups may be sought.
- III. Acknowledgement of defined parameters for establishing a new region including:
 - The region from which the requestor is departing shall maintain sufficient states or provinces/territories to meet the Region Composition Requirements. Documentation shall be required.

- The region from which the requestor is departing shall maintain sufficient professional membership and institutional membership numbers to meet the Region Composition Requirements. Documentation shall be required.
 - The requestor shall abandon its right to any funds previously deposited and any access to the contingency fund of its current region.
 - The requestor shall abandon its right to any funds previously deposited into endowment accounts associated with its current region.
 - The requestor's proposal shall identify Association-wide leaders that are elected or appointed on the basis of the requestor's region and reside in the requestor's area and make recommendations for appropriate leadership transition.
- IV. Demonstrated member engagement through a petition of support for the proposal, via signature or electronic communication (signature or email) from greater than 50% of the NIRSA professional members from the requesting state, province, country or area. Professional Membership is verified based on the date the petition is submitted.
- V. A proposed timeline for implementation, including impact on leadership positions and awards with regional consideration.
- (a) Upon the NIRSA Board of Director's approval of the establishment of a new Region, the new region may propose a temporary leadership election process that is different from the current policy. This proposal must be approved by the NIRSA Board of Directors through the process of an exhibit to the Board. All approved documentation as it occurs for the new region should remain with the original approved proposal for a new region.

Board of Directors' Action on Proposed Region

The NIRSA Board of Directors shall review the proposal in accordance with the Association's adopted Regional Composition Requirements and impacts to Association strategic goals, business operations, relationships, and member engagement.

If the Board of Directors endorses the proposal, appropriate resources will be provided for the implementation plan.

If the Board of Directors declines the proposal, it shall inform the requestor of the rationale for the decision. The requestor may resubmit a proposal for future consideration in the subsequent leadership year.