Leader Resource Guide

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July 2023

Dear PRSA Leaders:

Congratulations on being selected to lead one of PRSA's communities.

As a leader of a chapter, district, or section, you are vital to the success of this association and the public relations profession. Through your leadership, we can fulfill PRSA's mission to help our members be smarter, better prepared, and more connected through all stages of their career.

To help you succeed in your role, we've developed this handbook with valuable information about PRSA's governance, communities, and services. It also contains professional development resources, financial management best practices, accreditation information and more. All the topics in this guide were chosen by past leaders based on their experience and feedback from members. Please take time to review these materials to better prepare you for your upcoming role.

We know that you have many responsibilities as a leader, and we want you to have a great experience serving our members and growing the organization. We hope this handbook provides you with a foundation to achieve success in your PRSA community. Also, remember that you are connected to more than 100 other leaders ready and willing to help you in your role. Reach out to them, staff or your regional representatives for additional resources and assistance.

Best wishes for a successful year ahead. I look forward to working with you to advance PRSA, PRSSA, and our profession.

Sincerely,

Joseph Abreu, APR
2023 PRSA Chair-Elect

PRSA Overview

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is the leading professional organization serving the communications community through a network of more than 400 professional and student chapters in the U.S., Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Puerto Rico. Guided by its Code of Ethics, PRSA empowers its members to succeed at every stage of their careers through a wide breadth of premium professional development programs, exclusive networking events and leadership opportunities. Signature events include the Anvil Awards and ICON, the premier annual gathering for communications professionals and students. For more information, please visit prsa.org.

History

PRSA was founded in 1947 and was incorporated in 1948. It came about by combining the American Council on Public Relations and the National Association of Public Relations Councils. That year it had its first annual conference and award ceremony. In the 1950s and 1960s, the society created its code of conduct, accreditation program and a student society called the Public Relations Student Society of America.

PRSA Mission

To make communications professionals smarter, better prepared and more connected through all stages of their career.

PRSA Vision

PRSA provides an exceptional member experience that educates, inspires, guides and galvanizes a diverse community of ethical, strategic communications professionals.

National Board

PRSA is powered by dedicated members who share their professional expertise and passion. The national Board is comprised of officers which include the Chair, Chair-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, and Immediate Past Chair. There are also Board member representatives from each PRSA District. Also part of the Board, are two At-Large members who do not have to meet the APR requirement for board service, as well as two Senior Counsel members, appointed by the Chair. For the current national volunteer leadership of PRSA, visit: prsa.org/about/national-leadership.

PRSA Staff

Led by the Chief Executive Officer, PRSA has a paid staff of approximately 40 persons who operate out of the organization's headquarters in New York. Visit www.prsa.org for senior staff listings.

Regional Representatives

There are four regional representatives. They are paid consultants who work directly with the volunteer boards of PRSA's Chapters and Districts.

PRSSA Overview

Since its founding, PRSSA has served hundreds of thousands of student members, offering educational programs, resources, scholarships, and mentorship opportunities that prepare students for a successful career in communications. Chapters are located on university and college campuses across the U.S. and in Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Puerto Rico. We are headquartered in New York City, and led by a National Committee of PRSSA.

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Membership Benefits

PRSSA help students gain the experience and practical knowledge employers are seeking. We offer internship listings, competitions, scholarships, awards, and leadership opportunities. In addition, PRSSA provides publications, news, and social media to keep you updated on industry trends.

Networking

PRSSA helps students get connected to a network of peers and professionals who will become lifelong friends and mentors. PRSSA facilitates the development of valuable relationships with future colleagues through PRSSA National and regional events, PRSSA Chapters and social media. PRSSA also provides opportunities to meet current professionals through PRSA Chapter sponsorships, the Champions for PRSSA or by searching the PRSA member directory.

Career Support

As a PRSSA member, students can use the PRSA Job Center and PRSSA Internship Center to find public relations/communications employment opportunities all over the world. Students also may join PRSA for just $67 a year as an Associate Member when they graduate from college.

PRSSA is a critically important link to PRSA. For more information, visit: prssa.prsa.org.

Chapters

PRSA's Chapters bring the Society's vast resources to your neighborhood and the local level. Chapters are truly the "lifeblood" of the organization.

Chapters within PRSA

This link provides means to search for a Chapter near you anywhere in the U.S.: prsa.org/home/get-involved/chapters-districts/chapter-list. Chapters are organized by the following categories:

- Small (Up to 100 members)
- Medium (101 to 400 members)
- Large (more than 400 members)

Organizational Structure of the Chapter Board

The general structure of each PRSA Chapter Board is below. The structures may be modified or adjusted based on the needs of the Chapter.

1. **Executive Board**
   - President
   - Immediate Past President
   - President-Elect
   - Secretary
   - Treasurer

2. **Chapter Committees**
   - Membership
   - Diversity & Inclusion
   - Communications (newsletter, web, social)
   - Accreditation
   - Ethics
   - Professional Development
   - Awards

3. **Ex-Officio Board Members**
   - PRSSA Faculty Advisor
   - PRSSA Professional Advisor
   - PRSSA Student Liaison/Member
   - Assembly Delegate(s)

Chapters

Role of the Chapter President

President serves as chief executive officer of the Chapter and presides over all meetings of the Chapter, the board of directors and the Chapter executive committee. The president ensures that all orders and resolutions of the Chapter board of directors and members are carried out. The Chapter president also is responsible for ensuring that the board of directors is in alignment with PRSA Chapter strategic imperatives, and is actively developing/implementing an ongoing strategic plan for the Chapter. Below are key goals and objectives for Chapter presidents.

- Support the vision and key strategic initiatives and ensures alignment with the overall PRSA mission, vision, and strategic plan(s).
- Motivate, engage, and empower board members and committee chairs.
- Work with the secretary to ensure the Chapter is compliant with bylaws and policies.
- Work with the treasurer to ensure the Chapter is compliant with PRSA financial guidelines/policies.
- Preside at all board and executive board meetings.
- Appoint committees and advise chairs; advise members about Chapter activities.
- Direct overall Chapter operations, including professional development, membership recruitment and retention, DE&I initiatives, and member communications.
- Oversee fundraising and sponsorship engagement.
- Ensures review of Chapter bylaws at minimum biannually.
- May serve as an Assembly Delegate.
- Ensure Chapter representation at District meetings, either by attending or designating another Board member. May represent the Chapter members views and opinions during meetings/events/calls, etc.
- May attend District calls or meetings.
- Actively promotes the PRSA Code of Ethics.

Districts

The purpose in creating Districts (or regions) is to facilitate the organization and grouping of Chapters within the regions. The goal is that these Chapters, within the same general geographic region can more efficiently and effectively provide helpful support, shared resources, and leadership cultivation to one another for the next generation of professionals to head the association and be voices for the PR industry. Districts are a vital link between local Chapters and PRSA. They offer members additional avenues to advance their career, expand their network and develop leadership skills.

Organizational Structure of the District Board

The general structure of each PRSA District is below. The structures may be modified or adjusted based on the needs of the District.

- **Executive Board**
  - Chair
  - Chair-Elect
  - Immediate Past Chair
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
- **District Committees**
  - Communications
  - Programming
- **Chapter Representatives**
  - A single, Chapter-appointed representative from each of the Chapters within the District serves on the District Board

Finally, there also is a District Council made up of the current Chairs and Chair-Elects of the 10 Districts. The Council meets virtually several times a year to facilitate best practice sharing to improve district-level leadership; be an advocate and voice for district leadership to the national board; strengthen district governance and planning; and create an environment that encourages a leadership continuum.

Districts within PRSA

Below are the ten (10) named Districts within PRSA. To view each Chapter within the respective Districts within PRSA, visit: www.prsa.org/home/get-involved/chapters-districts.

- East Central
- Mid-Atlantic
- Midwest
- North Pacific
- Northeast
- Southeast
- Southwest
- Sunshine
- Tri-State
- Western

Districts

Role of the District Chair

It is the responsibility of the District Chair to:

- Organize Regular Conference Calls – for the District board, typically Chapter presidents or their designees, to discuss District business, receive information from and provide feedback to PRSA, and share Chapter updates.
- Coordinate Affinity Calls – for Chapter officers and committee chairs to share ideas, ask questions and network.
- Know and have a good working relationship with the PRSA Regional Representative

Generally, these duties can involve and include the below areas of District activity:

- Quick Start:
  - This is an annual leadership development program for Chapter officers and board members, covering topics such as strategic planning, programming, volunteer recruitment and retention, mentoring and working with student Chapters.
- APR Boot Camp
  - This is a four-day intensive course for candidates to prepare and advance through the Readiness Review™ and take the computer-based Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) or Accreditation in Public Relations + Military Communication (APR+M). This course is designed to provide a setting that will meet the needs of busy professionals.
- District Conference
  - This is an annual professional development opportunity for members and non-members within the District. Though primarily for the members within the District's geographic area, many Districts often see attendance (both members and non-members) from all over the region or country depending on location and speaker lineup.

Sections

PRSA's Professional Interest Sections are communities focused on specific areas of expertise and interest. Specialized content and networking opportunities provide such membership benefits as an exclusive online community of professionals, newsletters, training, and annual events. PRSA members can add a Professional Interest Section membership to their existing PRSA membership for a nominal fee.

Organizational Structure of the Section Executive Committee

The general structure of each PRSA Section is below. The structures may be modified or adjusted based on the Section's needs.

- **Executive Committee**
  - Chair
  - Chair-Elect
  - Immediate Past Chair
  - Secretary/Historian
- **Section Sub-Committees**
  - Communications
  - Programming
  - Membership and Recruitment
  - Sponsorship
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - Section Conference
- **Member-at-Large Representatives**
  - The Section's Executive Committee is rounded out by several (number varies) members chosen at-large for service on the Committee. At-Large members are chosen from among the Section membership through a nomination process.
- **Section Council**
  - Finally, to build engagement among the Sections, each Section Chair sits on the Section Council. The Section Council is led by Co-Chairs, appointed at the initial meeting of the sections.

Sections within PRSA

Below are the Sections within PRSA. Each is hyperlinked to the respective Section so you may follow to learn more about each. Additionally, more section information can be found by visiting prsa.org/home/get-involved/professional-interest-sections.

1. Association/Nonprofit
2. Banking & Finance
3. Corporate Communications
4. Counselors Academy
5. Counselors to Higher Education
6. Educators Academy
7. Employee Communications
8. Entertainment and Sports
9. Health Academy
10. Independent Practitioners Alliance
11. New Professionals
12. Public Affairs and Government
13. Technology
14. Travel and Tourism

Accreditation

Knowledge, skills, and abilities of public relations professionals are tested through the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations (APR). Earning APR involves two steps: (1) completing a Panel Presentation and (2) passing an Examination.

Panel Presentation

The Panel Presentation evaluates your knowledge, skills, and abilities in 12 specific areas that cannot be effectively judged in the Examination. A panel of three Accredited practitioners assesses your competence in creative conceptualization/creativity, initiative, interpersonal skills, management skills, multitasking, flexibility, time management, uses of multiple delivery mechanisms, communication skills/speaking, communication skills/writing and editing, communication skills/listening and presentation skills.

Examination

The Examination tests six groupings of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). The list below indicates the percentage of the Examination devoted to each category. Detailed descriptions of each KSA grouping are given in the following Chapters.

- Researching, Planning, Implementing and Evaluating Programs 30%
- Leading the Public Relations Function 20%
- Managing Relationships 15%
- Applying Ethics and Law 15%
- Managing Issues and Crisis Communications 15%
- Understanding Communication Models, Theories and History of the Profession 5%

Important Links

- Candidate's Process for Accreditation in Public Relations
- What's on the Examination?
- Demo of Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations
- Panel Presentation Instructions for Candidates and Panel Presentation Questionnaire
- APR Online Study Course

Coaching sessions, mentoring, study groups, APR Learning Opportunity webinars/workshops, and The Online Study Course are recommended. If you need more information, you'll find answers to frequently asked questions on the Universal Accreditation Board website at praccreditation.org.

Contact Kathy Mulvihill at kathy.mulvihill@prsa.org.

Advocacy

The PRSA Advocacy Committee exists to create and present a consistent voice, based on PRSA's Code of Ethics, relative to public policy and advocacy issues that strengthen the operating environment for our members and the profession. The Committee works to ensure that PRSA has a seat at the table on critical industry issues. The Committee members are charged with identifying emerging issues that could require PRSA advocacy and recommending an effective strategy to the board.

The PRSA Board of Directors or staff (consistent with public policy positions approved by the board and with the Media and Social Media Policies) may take any legal, regulatory, or advocacy-related action deemed appropriate within applicable laws and IRS rules. Language contained in this policy is not intended to restrict legislative activity to topics listed, but rather serves to highlight PRSA's advocacy mission. The PRSA Advocacy Committee does not engage in or promote partisan or campaign-related activity.

Voices4Everyone

The committee's effort supports a national conversation building mutual understanding, trust, and civic engagement through more inclusive civil discourse. A website has been launched to provide members with helpful resources and tools for key topics, including diversity & inclusion, disinformation, civil dialogue, and civic engagement.

voices4everyone.prsa.org

Awards

PRSA awards honor outstanding contributions to the public relations profession. Consider entering your best work for the chance to earn recognition, raise your industry profile, enhance your brand recognition, celebrate your team's accomplishments, grow your business, and become part of public relations history.

Silver Anvil Awards

The icon of the profession, the Silver Anvil Awards celebrate the best public relations programs of the year and the highest standards of performance in public relations.

Bronze Anvil Awards

The Bronze Anvil Awards recognize outstanding public relations tactics — such as the use of social media, video, blogs, podcasts, annual reports, digital newsletters, websites and more — that contribute to the success of overall programs or campaigns.

Individual Awards

The Individual Awards recognize those who have positively impacted the public relations profession through the course of their careers are honored for their dedication, passion, and outstanding contributions in five specific categories. Those categories are:

- **Gold Anvil Award:** The Gold Anvil is the Society's highest individual Award. It is considered the PRSA lifetime achievement award and is presented to a public relations practitioner who is a PRSA member in good standing with a minimum of 20 years of experience and whose accomplishments have made a major contribution to the profession.
- **Outstanding Educator Award:** This award recognizes a PRSA member in good standing with a minimum of 20 years of experience in public relations who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of public relations education through college or university teaching.
- **The Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA:** This award recognizes an experienced PRSA member in good standing who has significantly advanced PRSA by working to support Chapters, Districts and/or National, and inspiring fellow practitioners, professionally and personally.
- **Paul M. Lund Public Service Award:** The Paul M. Lund Public Service Award is given to a PRSA member whose participation as a volunteer in important public activities has increased the common good and reflected credit on the Society.
- **Atlas Award for Lifetime Achievement in International Public Relations:** This award recognizes a public relations practitioner who has made extraordinary contributions to the practice and profession of public relations in an international environment over the span of his or her career. The recipient need not be a member of PRSA.

Awards

- **D. Parke Gibson Award:** This award is presented to a public relations professional that has contributed to the increased awareness of public relations within multicultural communities and participated in the promotion of issues that meet the special informational and educational needs of these diverse communities.
- **Public Relations Professional of the Year Award:** This award honors an individual or group who, in the previous year, represented the best in public relations as an outstanding communicator(s) or influencer(s), establishing or reinforcing the mutually beneficial relationship between an organization and the public or otherwise impacting the communications landscape.

Section Awards

The Section Awards recognize practitioners not only for their outstanding contributions to the public relations profession, but also for the expertise they provide to the specific industries in which they work. This is a unique opportunity for you to be honored within your industry and stand out among your peers.

- **Counselors to Higher Education - Advocate for Higher Education Award:** CHE's Advocate for Higher Education Award recognizes a leader who has effectively used strategic communication and public relations to advance the mission of higher education. The awardee's work embodies the values that we espouse as professional communicators serving higher education.
- **David Ferguson Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Relations Education by a Practitioner:** This award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of public relations education.
- **Betsy Plank Graduate Research Competition and PRSA Top Faculty Paper Awards:** These awards recognize educators, public relations graduate students and public relations professionals for written work that either tests, refines or expands public relations practice, research, or theory; or critically reviews issues relevant to public relations theory or research.
- **Lloyd B. Dennis Distinguished Leadership Award:** This award recognizes individuals who have used their public affairs skills to promote truth, demonstrated high standards of integrity and honesty in business dealings and helped affect positive change within an organization.
- **Technology PR Professional of the Year Award:** This recognizes one outstanding Section member who has demonstrated notable or outstanding service and/or contributions to the PRSA Technology Section, their employer or organization and to the practice of technology public relations communications.

Visit for more information PRSA awards: prsa.org/awards.

Governance Basics for PRSA Chapters and Districts

PRSA is incorporated as a nonprofit professional trade association in the State of New York. As a result, PRSA and its affiliates – Chapters and Districts – are generally governed by New York nonprofit law, regardless of the state(s) where they operate.

For PRSA, its Chapters and Districts, the hierarchy of governing documents looks like this:

1. **New York State Nonprofit Law**
2. **PRSA Articles of Incorporation**
3. **PRSA Bylaws**
4. **PRSA Policies & Procedures**
5. **Chapter Bylaws**
6. **Chapter Policies & Procedures**

Nonprofit Tax Status

While PRSA is a not-for-profit corporation, we are not tax exempt. Trade associations fall under the 501c6 category, along with business leagues and chambers of commerce. We are responsible for payment of applicable local, state, and federal taxes.

Chapters and Districts must also file an annual report (IRS 990) with the Internal Revenue Service (usually online or by postcard) and, if required, with their state. Failing to do so may risk a Chapter or District's not-for-profit status or ability to conduct business within the state. The IRS 990 must be filed each year, no later than May 15, with a copy of the form or confirmation provided to PRSA.

State Registration Requirements

Some states require business entities operating in the state, including component units (affiliates) of nonprofit associations, to register with the state and comply with reporting requirements. Your Regional Representative may be able to assist in determining if your Chapter or District is required to register.

Bylaws

Bylaws are the basic set of rules that govern an organization. PRSA bylaws describe the Society's purpose; outline membership criteria and eligibility; provide for officers, committees, and meetings; and set forth processes for other governance matters. The bylaws of PRSA can be found on the Members Resources page at prsa.org/members-only/member-resources. Operational processes are typically not included in bylaws and can be found in the Society's policies and procedures.

Chapters and Districts also have bylaws that serve similar purposes. When PRSA bylaws are amended, any amendments that could impact Chapter or District bylaws will be communicated, so they can take appropriate action.

Governance Basics for PRSA Chapters and Districts

Occasionally, Chapters or Districts may desire or be required to make changes or updates to their bylaws. Your regional representative can help you determine whether these changes are necessary or can be handled in another way. They will also communicate with the PRSA Governance Committee for assistance. Any changes to a Chapter or District's bylaws must be approved by the PRSA Board of Directors before becoming effective.

In the absence of language in Chapter or District bylaws, or if these bylaws conflict with the PRSA bylaws, the PRSA bylaws would apply. The hierarchy of governance documents listed above means that each document supersedes the ones below.

This is the process for amending Chapter or District bylaws:

1. **Determine desired change(s) and contact your Regional Representative.**
2. **Regional Representative will forward summary and amendment language to PRSA Governance Committee for review at next monthly meeting.**
3. **Governance Committee will review, approve, or provide changes. (approx. 2 - 6 weeks)**
4. **Bylaws amendment is then voted on by membership, according to current Chapter or District bylaws. (Timeline and process determined by current bylaws.)**
5. **If membership approves the amendment, it is submitted to the PRSA Board for approval at next available meeting. (approx. 2 – 6 weeks)**
6. **Following Board approval, the amendment becomes part of Chapter or District bylaws. Chapter or District leaders are responsible for providing a complete updated copy of the bylaws to the Regional Representative to be filed with PRSA Staff.**

Because the Governance Committee and PRSA Board of Directors meet monthly, there may be some variation in the length of time required for review and approval. The timeline will ultimately be determined by the Chapter or District bylaws and the process outlined within those bylaws. (e.g., membership must vote at the annual meeting in December.)

Policies & Procedures

Many Chapters and Districts adopt policies and procedures (P&Ps) for routine operations, such as budget development and approval, contracts, and financial controls, use and security of member information, travel to PRSA events, and social media policies. PRSA also has detailed P&Ps for its many committees, task forces, and sections and other operations of the Society.

Chapters and Districts should never rely on "institutional memory" for these kinds of operational issues. P&Ps should be codified by the Chapter or District board and reviewed annually. Unlike bylaws that need to be approved by the membership and the PRSA board, P&Ps can be updated by the Chapter or District board as needed to keep operations running smoothly and efficiently.

Governance Basics for PRSA Chapters and Districts

Your Regional Representative can help you determine whether the bylaws or P&Ps are the most appropriate vehicle to address your Chapter or District governance issues. As a general rule, operational procedures should not be included in bylaws.

Minutes

Minutes are the official record of a meeting of a board or committee. Minutes typically include attendance and establishment of a quorum, financial and membership reports, and the record of any actions taken by the board. Minutes are not transcripts of the meeting, but should include issues voted upon by the board and key deliberations leading to any decision. Minutes should be approved at the next business meeting and stored or posted for future reference.

Document Storage and Retention

Some Chapters and Districts post meeting minutes on their websites. Cloud-based services, DocShare, and the Chapter or District's library on MyPRSA are convenient places for securely storing and retrieving important documents, as well as bylaws, P&Ps, meeting minutes, tax documents, financial reports, membership rolls, and other records.

PRSA recommends including all important documents in the DocShare system. Keeping cyber security in mind, it is important to maintain a backup copy of important documents stored in cloud-based services. If you have questions on which records should be stored and for how long, the Regional Representatives can assist your board with developing a record retention policy.

Help with Governance Questions

Chapter and District leaders should contact their Regional Representative with questions.
The Regional Representative will then refer your inquiry to the Governance Committee chair(s).
Every effort will be made to ensure a timely response and clear direction for next steps.

Visit the Grievance Policy & Procedures.

Code of Ethics

The PRSA Code of Ethics applies to PRSA members. The Code is designed to be a useful guide for PRSA members as they carry out their ethical responsibilities. This document is designed to anticipate and accommodate, by precedent, ethical challenges that may arise. The scenarios outlined in the Code provisions are actual examples of misconduct. More will be added as experience with the Code occurs.

PRSA is committed to ethical practices. The level of public trust PRSA members seek, as we serve the public good, means we have taken on a special obligation to operate ethically.

The value of member reputation depends upon the ethical conduct of everyone affiliated with PRSA. Each of us sets an example for each other – as well as other professionals – by our pursuit of excellence with powerful standards of performance, professionalism, and ethical conduct.

Emphasis on enforcement of the Code has been eliminated. The PRSA Board of Directors retains the right to bar from membership or expel from the Society any individual who has been or is sanctioned by a government agency or convicted in a court of law of an action that fails to comply with the Code. Ethical practice is the most important obligation of a PRSA member. We view the Member Code of Ethics as a model for other professions, organizations, and professionals.

PRSA Member Statement of Professional Values

This statement presents the core values of PRSA members and, more broadly, of the public relations profession. These values provide the foundation for the Code of Ethics and set the industry standard for the professional practice of public relations. These values are the fundamental beliefs that guide our behaviors and decision-making process. We believe our professional values are vital to the integrity of the profession a whole.

- **Advocacy:** We serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those we represent. We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.
- **Honesty:** We adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public.
- **Expertise:** We acquire and responsibly use specialized knowledge and experience. We advance the profession through continued professional development, research, and education. We build mutual understanding, credibility, and relationships among a wide array of institutions and audiences.
- **Independence:** We provide objective counsel to those we represent. We are accountable for our actions.
- **Loyalty:** We are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the public interest.
- **Fairness:** We deal fairly with clients, employers, competitors, peers, vendors, the media, and the general public. We respect all opinions and support the right of free expression.

For examples of proper Code utilization and improper utilization, visit: prsa.org/about/ethics/prsa-code-of-ethics.

College of Fellows

The College of Fellows is the gold standard of public relations professionals. College of Fellows is an active organization comprised of more than 350 leading practitioners and educators, each of whom has left a significant footprint on the public relations profession. A rigorous peer review process has singled out these professionals to be among the ‘best of the best.’ Election to the College is considered the pride of one’s professional career.

Visit https: prsa.org/home/get-involved/college-of-fellows for the most up-to-date information on the College of Fellows.

National Task Forces, Committees, and Boards

The purpose of each committee varies, and the committee structures and role are routinely evaluated. Therefore, from one administration to the next, the committees at the national level may change. For 2023, the below committees are in existence.

1. Accreditation Marketing Committee
2. Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)
3. Advocacy Committee
4. Audit Committee
5. Board of Ethics and Professional Standards
6. Champions for PRSSA
7. College of Fellows
8. Communications Committee
9. District Council
10. Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee
11. Educational Affairs Committee
12. Finance Committee
13. Governance Committee
14. Grievance Committee
15. Honors and Awards Committee
16. International Conference (ICON)
17. Investment Committee
18. Membership Committee
19. Military Task Force
20. Nominating Committee
21. Professional Development Committee
22. Professional Interest Section Council
23. PRSA Past Presidents/Chairs
24. PRSSA
25. Strategic Planning Committee
26. Technology Committee
27. Universal Accreditation Board
28. Voices4Everyone Task Force

Diversity Equity & Inclusion

While the practice of public relations in the United States has undergone dramatic changes, a lack of diversity in the communications profession persists. Many studies indicate that the industry still struggles to attract young black, Asian, and Hispanic professionals to pursue public relations as their career of choice. The Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee is devoted to building consciousness by increasing visibility of DE&I standards, resources and best practices for racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation and gender differences, as well as diverse skill sets, mindsets, and cultures at all levels of the organization.

Statement

In lieu of a definition of diversity and inclusion, the DE&I Committee is focused on providing a contextual overview of these areas. Further, the DE&I Committee believes that diversity in the context of PRSA may serve to “exclude” areas, communities, interests, etc. Recognizing that members and Chapter DE&I liaisons will require information to frame efforts, the diversity and inclusion statement below was developed and approved for use:

> Diversity, equity and inclusion are integral to the evolution and growth of PRSA and the public relations industry. The most obvious contexts of diversity include race, ethnicity, religion, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, country of origin, culture, and diversity of thought.
>
> However, in a rapidly changing society, diversity continues to evolve and can include class, socioeconomic status, life experiences, learning and working styles, personality types and intellectual traditions and perspectives, in addition to cultural, political, religious, and other beliefs. These defining attributes impact how we approach our work, connect with others, and move through the world. Inclusion, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), is defined as “the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organization’s success.” Inclusion is not just about having that “seat at the table” but is about ensuring everyone’s voice is heard and fully considered.
>
> Diversity, equity and inclusion are proactive behaviors. Respecting, embracing, celebrating, and validating those behaviors are integral to PRSA’s DNA. Diversity and inclusion are vital to the success of our profession, our members, and the communities in which we live and work. It is essential and is our responsibility as members of the Society to carry this forward.

Visit prsa.org/about/diversity-inclusion for the most up-to-date information on PRSA’s Diversity Equity & Inclusion efforts and the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Toolkit.

Financial Management Best Practices

Anti-trust Compliance

- **Financial Policies**
  - Should be formally adopted by Chapter board to provide guidance.
  - Chapters should coordinate with PRSA to ensure policies are consistent with policies for dues, tax filings, etc.
  - Consider procedures for receiving revenue, incurring expenses, bill payments/cash outlays, authorized check signers, monthly bank reconciliation, etc.
  - Reserve policy – best practice is to maintain a minimum of 50 percent of annual operating expenses.
  - Be flexible – Allow for exceptions and update/amend the process as appropriate.

- **Continuity**
  - Compile and share tips from predecessors before the program year begin.
  - Review the previous two (or more) years' records of revenues and expenses.
  - Recruit an assistant or co-treasurer for smooth succession planning.
  - Before the program year begins, update signature cards with the bank for all accounts.

- **Budgeting**
  - Consider the history of revenue sources and budget accordingly.
  - Finalize program fees for members and nonmembers.
  - Consider non-dues and non-meeting revenue sources such as sponsorships, awards, networking events, etc. Be careful to ensure sponsorships are not taxable.
  - Don't be afraid to bill no-shows or offer special deals — just be clear and consistent.
  - Get board approval prior to the beginning of the program year.

- **Paying Bills**
  - No fewer than two people should sign each check.
  - Write a copy of the check number and payment date on the invoice copy.
  - Code your copy of each invoice for the proper expense category.
  - File paid invoices in alphabetical order.
  - Maintain a file for invoices to be paid in due-date order.

- **Reporting**
  - Expect to receive monthly dues payments from PRSA either via check or ACH. Keep a ledger of all funds received and deposited.
  - Deposit all cash and checks ASAP.
  - Reconcile bank statements within two to three days of receipt.
  - Create a monthly treasurer's report for distribution to the board and attach a copy of the reconciled bank statement.

Financial Management Best Practices

- **Pitfalls**
  - Incurring expenses not in anticipation of goals.
  - Insufficient cash balances to meet needs.
  - Bad recordkeeping — difficult to maintain control over budget and tax filings.
  - Worst case — missing funds or malfeasance.

- **Best Practices**
  - Distribute information to more than one person.
  - Don’t hesitate to seek help.

W-9 Form Usage

Chapters and Districts occasionally need to provide a W-9 form.

Please make sure to include your Chapter/District name, address and tax identification number where noted (do not use the information for the National Headquarters). The Chapter president or treasurer must sign and date the form every time it is used.

How to File Your Annual IRS 990

Each Chapter and District must file their own Form 990. The deadline for filing is May 15, 2023. Failure to do so may cause your tax status to be revoked, which is an expensive and time-consuming effort to get reinstated.

If your revenue is more than $50,000 but less than $200,000 and your net assets are less than $500,000, please file Form 990-EZ. If your revenue is $200,000 or more or your net assets are at least $500,000, please file Form 990. If you do not meet any of these criteria, you will file the electronic Form 990-N.

For information about fling a Form 990-N for the Chapter or District, go to: Annual Filing and Forms | Internal Revenue Service (irs.gov)

Whichever tax return you file, you must upload a copy of your return/receipt into your District’s “Tax Forms” folder in DocShare and send a confirmation email to Chapters@prsa.org.

Continued

Financial Management Best Practices

Sponsorships

Sponsorships are an important part of a Chapter's success, but all too often it is an area that is overlooked or sometimes even completely ignored. A sponsorship is an opportunity for a company or organization to advertise their business' products or services to your Chapter members in exchange for either money or an in-kind donation. Examples of in-kind donations include photography services, printing, graphic design services, catering, and lodging/transportation services. Chapters have numerous sponsorship opportunities to offer. But there are also sponsorship opportunities available on Chapter websites and through Chapter e-newsletters in the form of advertising. Some sponsorships can be a one-time thing such as a luncheon sponsor, while others can be yearlong such as a Chapter-level sponsorship. Every way that Chapters touch or communicate to their members provides another sponsorship opportunity.

Leadership Assembly

The Leadership Assembly is PRSA's annual business meeting traditionally held each fall on the Saturday before the International Conference.

The Assembly is tasked with conducting official business of the Society, including amending the Bylaws, and electing officers, directors, and delegates-at-large. In addition, the Assembly advises the Board of Directors and the profession regarding issues of concern to the profession.

A professional parliamentarian and legal counsel shall be present during the Assembly. Delegate materials include a fact sheet on Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. The agenda includes time for delegate discussion. Registration shall be automated, with no need for a roll call.

The Society shall maintain records and statistics of each Assembly, including the minutes; names of delegates and the entity represented; the number of delegates as counted at various points during the meeting; the number of total possible delegates; and the entities entitled to representation.

Leadership Assembly Delegates are responsible for identifying, discussing, and addressing issues of concern to the public relations profession, and for serving as a liaison between the PRSA Board and its Chapters, Districts, Sections, and membership.

Each PRSA Chapter sends delegates to PRSA's Leadership Assembly. Delegates are apportioned based on Chapter membership — currently one delegate per 100 members.

Other entities within PRSA also have voting strength and the ability to send delegates for voting purposes to the annual Leadership Assembly. The chapter delegate count is established 90 days prior to Assembly.

At Leadership Assembly, leaders have the latitude to determine the process for appointing/electing Assembly Delegates. As opposed to a single year engagement opportunity, PRSA holds meetings with Leadership Assembly representatives to ensure that communications are fluid and ongoing.

The staff point of contact for Leadership Assembly is Michael Molaro who can be reached via:

Michael Molaro
Manager, Member Services
212-460-1490
Michael.Molaro@prsa.org

Membership Types

Following are the categories currently in place with the annual dues noted:

- **Member**
  More than three years of experience: Join as a Member ($267 annual dues and $65 initiation fee).

- **Industry Partner**
  PRSA has a new membership program to help you meet potential customers for your products and services. Industry Partners is a comprehensive low-cost opportunity to partner with PRSA. ($995 membership)

- **Associate Member 1**
  Less than one year of experience: Join as an Associate Member 1 ($122 annual dues).

- **Associate Member 2**
  One-to-two years of experience: Join as an Associate Member 2 ($162 annual dues).

- **Associate Member 3**
  Two-to-three years of experience: Join as an Associate Member 3 ($207 annual dues).

- **Associate Member, PRSSA Graduate**
  Former PRSSA member who graduated within the past two years: Join as an Associate Member, PRSSA Graduate ($67 annual dues).

- **Associate Member, Graduate Student**
  Full-time graduate student pursuing an advanced degree: Join as an Associate Member, Graduate Student ($67 annual dues).

- **Retired**
  If you have been a member in good standing for at least five years, you may qualify for Retirement Status ($57 annual dues). Retired Membership is open to any General Member in good standing who (i) has been a member of the Society for at least five years; and (ii) has retired from the full-time practice of public relations or communication and is employed less than 50 percent of the time. Contact us at membership@prsa.org for more information.

- **Group Membership**
  Group Membership is a great way to demonstrate the value of professional development within your organization. Teams of five or more members never pay an initiation fee and receive access to some of PRSA's offerings at a reduced rate. Please contact groupmembership@prsa.org for more information.

Membership

PRSA members receive exclusive benefits including publications, professional development, and networking opportunities. Through PRSA membership, members can:

- Take advantage of discounts on various educational programs and events
- Connect locally at Chapter and District events
- Attend Professional Interest Section conferences for training and networking dedicated to your PR/Communications specialty

Through networking opportunities, members can:

- Attend the International Conference to engage with public relations and communication professionals and students
- Access contact info for colleagues in our searchable database exclusively for PRSA members
- Ask questions, exchange ideas, and share useful resources with fellow PRSA members in our private online community

Through its partnerships, members can save money through the below opportunities

- Enjoy exclusive discounts at Office Depot, ADP, Hotels & more
- A 20% discount on one single-user subscription to AP Stylebook Online each year.
- Access the business insurance discount program from Gallagher Affinity
- Receive car rental discounts on Zipcar, Budget, and Avis
- Qualify for business discounts through UPS®
- Take advantage of personal and corporate relocation service discounts

If you're a member, login to your MyPRSA account to access these member discounts.

Mentor Support

PRSA supports professionals and students by connecting them with experienced specialists who will coach, lead, and advise them through Mentor Connect. Anyone can benefit from having a mentor, no matter your career stage, as long as you have the commitment to grow and desire to connect. Visit: prsa.org/career/mentor-connect.

Job Center

PRSA offers career guidance to help get members on the right path to your next job. PRSA career resources are available at every stage of career, whether you are beginning your job hunt or preparing for the final interview. Visit: jobs.prsa.org/jobs or prsa.org/career/career-resources for more information.

For more in-depth information on membership benefits, visit: prsa.org/membership/member-benefits.

Member Communication Channels

PRSA utilizes several resources to keep members informed of its programs, activities, programming, and messages from leadership. See the many options with hyperlinks below.

Publications

- Strategies & Tactics: PRSA's award-winning newspaper published 10 times a year (available in print and online)
- Issues & Trends: daily email with industry headlines and PRSA news

Websites

- prsa.org
- PRSA Newsroom

Social Media

- Facebook: facebook.com/PRSANational
- Twitter: twitter.com/PRSA
- LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/prsa
- Instagram: instagram.com/prsanational

Blog

- **PRsay:** This resource provides professional development opportunities and thought leadership from leadership and members

MyPRSA Communities

- connect.prsa.org

PRSA Insider

- To ensure alignment with PRSA's practices, see PRSA Brand Guidelines: prsa.org/docs/default-source/about/prsa-brand-guidelines.pdf?sfvrsn=633813a6_20

Professional Development

PRSA's extensive professional development programs offer communications professionals a wide variety of learning opportunities. Regardless of your career stage or whether you prefer to learn through in-person sessions or online courses, PRSA provides solutions to meet your needs.

Certificate Programs

Certificate courses are online certificate-of-completion programs designed to equip management-level communicators with solid perspectives on best practices and resources to meet the changing demands in our converging industry.

Free On-Demand Webinars/Workshops

PRSA members have access to a wide collection of online instructional videos, to further their skillsets in the public relations and communications communities.

To review all the PD opportunities, visit prsa.org/pd.

Appendix

Form **W-9**
(Rev. October 2018)
Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

► Go to *www.irs.gov/FormW9* for instructions and the latest information.

Give Form to the requester. Do not send to the IRS.

Print or type. See **Specific Instructions** on page 3.

1 Name (as shown on your income tax return). Name is required on this line; do not leave this line blank.

2 Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from above

3 Check appropriate box for federal tax classification of the person whose name is entered on line 1. Check only **one** of the following seven boxes.

☐ Individual/sole proprietor or single-member LLC ☐ C Corporation ☐ S Corporation ☐ Partnership ☐ Trust/estate

☐ Limited liability company. Enter the tax classification (C=C corporation, S=S corporation, P=Partnership) ► ________

Note: Check the appropriate box in the line above for the tax classification of the single-member owner. Do not check LLC if the LLC is classified as a single-member LLC that is disregarded from the owner unless the owner of the LLC is another LLC that is **not** disregarded from the owner for U.S. federal tax purposes. Otherwise, a single-member LLC that is disregarded from the owner should check the appropriate box for the tax classification of its owner.

☐ Other (see instructions) ►

4 Exemptions (codes apply only to certain entities, not individuals; see instructions on page 3):

Exempt payee code (if any) ________

Exemption from FATCA reporting code (if any) ________

(Applies to accounts maintained outside the U.S.)

5 Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.) See instructions.

Requester's name and address (optional)

6 City, state, and ZIP code

7 List account number(s) here (optional)

Part I Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

Enter your TIN in the appropriate box. The TIN provided must match the name given on line 1 to avoid backup withholding. For individuals, this is generally your social security number (SSN). However, for a resident alien, sole proprietor, or disregarded entity, see the instructions for Part I, later. For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). If you do not have a number, see *How to get a TIN,* later.

Note: If the account is in more than one name, see the instructions for line 1. Also see *What Name and Number To Give the Requester* for guidelines on whose number to enter.

Social security number

☐☐☐ – ☐☐ – ☐☐☐☐

or

Employer identification number

☐☐ – ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Part II Certification

Under penalties of perjury, I certify that:

1. The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number (or I am waiting for a number to be issued to me); and
2. I am not subject to backup withholding because: (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding; and
3. I am a U.S. citizen or other U.S. person (defined below); and
4. The FATCA code(s) entered on this form (if any) indicating that I am exempt from FATCA reporting is correct.

Certification instructions. You must cross out item 2 above if you have been notified by the IRS that you are currently subject to backup withholding because you have failed to report all interest and dividends on your tax return. For real estate transactions, item 2 does not apply. For mortgage interest paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, contributions to an individual retirement arrangement (IRA), and generally, payments other than interest and dividends, you are not required to sign the certification, but you must provide your correct TIN. See the instructions for Part II, later.

Sign Here **Signature of U.S. person** ► **Date** ►

General Instructions

Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted.

Future developments. For the latest information about developments related to Form W-9 and its instructions, such as legislation enacted after they were published, go to *www.irs.gov/FormW9.*

Purpose of Form

An individual or entity (Form W-9 requester) who is required to file an information return with the IRS must obtain your correct taxpayer identification number (TIN) which may be your social security number (SSN), individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), adoption taxpayer identification number (ATIN), or employer identification number (EIN), to report on an information return the amount paid to you, or other amount reportable on an information return. Examples of information returns include, but are not limited to, the following.

• Form 1099-INT (interest earned or paid)

• Form 1099-DIV (dividends, including those from stocks or mutual funds)

• Form 1099-MISC (various types of income, prizes, awards, or gross proceeds)

• Form 1099-B (stock or mutual fund sales and certain other transactions by brokers)

• Form 1099-S (proceeds from real estate transactions)

• Form 1099-K (merchant card and third party network transactions)

• Form 1098 (home mortgage interest), 1098-E (student loan interest), 1098-T (tuition)

• Form 1099-C (canceled debt)

• Form 1099-A (acquisition or abandonment of secured property)

Use Form W-9 only if you are a U.S. person (including a resident alien), to provide your correct TIN.

If you do not return Form W-9 to the requester with a TIN, you might be subject to backup withholding. See What is backup withholding, *later.*

IRS Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

OGDEN UT 84201-0038

In reply refer to: 0441981549
June 25, 2010 LTR 4167C E0
13-1582190 000000 00
00036331
BODC: TE

PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF AMERICA
INC
GROUP CENTRAL
% CFO
33 MAIDEN LN 11 FL
NEW YORK NY 10038

07917

Employer Identification Number: 13-1582190
Group Exemption Number: 1255
Person to Contact: Mr. Ludlow
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your June 16, 2010, request for information about your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were issued a determination letter in May 1954, and that you are currently exempt under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Based on the information supplied, we recognized the subordinates named on the list you submitted as exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(6) of the Code.

Because your subordinate organizations are not an organization described in section 170(c) of the Code, donors may not deduct contributions made to them. They should advise their contributors to that effect.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Rita A. Leete

Rita A. Leete
Accounts Management II