

rs21 democracy

The following motions were agreed at the February 2020 rs21 national members' meeting

rs21 roles and positions

1. The Steering Group will have eleven positions, which are elected by the National Meeting (NM) for a period of two NM intervals.
2. Of those positions, at least one should be a member from Scotland. If none is elected at the NM, the Steering Group will have a vacant position and will approach comrades in Scotland for a volunteer.
3. Five positions on the Steering Group are reserved for members who are not men. These will remain vacant if not taken up.
4. Should more than 50%+1 of the Steering Group be elected at a National Meeting, enough of them will be randomly chosen to have a term of office of one NM interval instead of two, in order to restore electing half the SG each time at future meetings.
5. The Website Editor and the Assistant Website Editor are each elected for a period of one year (to the nearest NM).
6. The Organiser is elected for a period of one year (to the nearest NM). The Organiser role may be shared between two people.
7. The Website Editor will be an additional member of the Steering Group.
8. The Organiser will not be a member of the Steering Group but will attend its meetings and have a tie-breaking vote.
9. If the Steering Group decides to pay members (other than the elected Organiser) to work for rs21, it will clearly define which democratically elected person or group they are accountable to and make arrangements for fair selection and appointment after inviting all members to express an interest.
10. Other members doing ongoing paid work for rs21 will not be members of the Steering Group but will be expected to regularly attend its meetings.
11. Other rs21 members may take part in Steering Group meetings as appropriate, but will not have a vote.
12. The Complaints Panel has twelve positions, which are elected by the NM for a year (to the nearest NM). Steering Group members and the Organiser cannot be on the Complaints Panel.
13. Members can stand for re-election to any position.
14. The Treasurer is appointed by the Steering Group.

Voting process

This motion aims to formalise our democratic process and introduce some small changes to make elections more meaningful. We aim to enshrine three principles:

- We should do secret ballots in order to give members the chance to register opposition or dissent without risking social or interpersonal knock-on effects.
- It should be possible for a position to remain vacant even if there are candidates for it if the candidates do not have members' confidence.
- Candidates should be voted on individually, rather than collectively (except in cases where candidates are proposing to divide a role between them).

This motion proposes:

1. A secret ballot system will be adopted for all future internal elections.
2. Election rules will be clearly explained at every National Meeting before a vote takes place.
3. The planners of National Meetings will leave adequate time for election sessions in view of the amount of debate and discussion which seems likely given the amount of electoral contestation.
4. For uncontested votes to the Steering Group or Complaints Panel, ballot papers will list each candidate with a 'Yes' and a 'No' option (abstentions can be done by leaving a ballot blank). Candidates with the widest positive absolute margin between 'Yes' and 'No' votes will be elected, factoring in the rules about reserved positions for women and non-binary members. Any candidate who receives more 'No' votes than 'Yes' votes will not be elected even if this results in a place being vacant. (Intuitively, it would be as if each member can give each candidate -1, 0 or +1. The candidates with the most points would be elected, and any candidate with a negative score would not be elected.)
5. For votes for individual positions such as the Website Editor or the Organiser, the candidates will be listed on a ballot paper along with Re-Open Nominations and each member will have one vote. Unless RON wins more votes than any candidate, then the candidate with the largest number of votes will be elected. If RON wins more votes than any other option, then no one will be elected. In a case where two or more people are running for a position collectively, they will be listed as a single option on the ballot.
6. If circumstances arise that make any of this impossible, then the Steering Group will work out an alternative system while bearing in mind the three principles above.