

Report on the 2019 Elections

By Arja van Veldhuizen, Head of Elections

23 07 19

Election team

The 2019 Election working team consisted of:

- Anne-Marie Émond (check procedures and texts)
- Ani Avagyan (membership lists and communication/website)
- Jorge Albuja (social media)
- Arja van Veldhuizen (head of elections)

Mila, as president, was kept informed by cc's of messages. Later in the process Jenni Fuchs was involved for the electronic voting.

Also the two **observers** on behalf of the membership were included in email communication. They were appointed after a call in the CECA General Assembly in Tbilisi:

- Christine Brehm – Germany
- Paul Cuiça – Portugal

Margarita Lariagnée and Marie-Clarté O'Neill took care of most of the translations of the required texts on the website, they did a wonderful job!

Time table

12. December 2018	The distribution of the draft version of the 2019-Elections procedures among the Board members is the start of the 2019 elections. The decisions taken in Tbilisi were implemented in this version.
01. February 2019	Nomination form available on the CECA website, start call for nominations on the website and through social media. Regional coordinators are asked to spread the news and ask their national correspondents to do the same.
10. March 2019	Closing date for nominations, start checking the validity of the candidates and their membership status (the latter by Ani Avagyan). One candidate is rejected due to the rules, one other candidate has to make sure that her membership status is ok.
25. March 2019	The head of Elections confidently communicates the results of the elections among the Election working team and the Board: unfortunately there will be NO elections, since the number of candidates is not accessing the number of positions. There is one candidate for the one position of president and ten for the twelve positions of regular Board member. Jenny Fuchs is informed that her help with electronic voting is not needed this time. Preparations for the publication on the website is started. Quite a few candidates managed to offer the nomination form in several languages. Still several translations into Spanish and some into French are needed.
9. April 2019	All texts and pictures are ready to be published on the CECA website.
4. May 2019	All the information is published on the website, so the results of the 2019 elections can be communicated to the membership, also through the social media.

Outcomes 2019 Elections

President 2019-2022:

- Marie-Clarté O'Neill (France)

Regular Board members 2019-2022:

- Abboud, Nelly (Lebanon)
- Alias, Asmah (Singapore)
- Émond, Anne-Marie (Canada)
- Hervás Avilés, Rosa María (Spain)
- Jelavić, Željka (Croatia)
- Lovay, Silvana (Argentina)
- Maderbacher, Wencke (Austria)
- Manders, Angela (Netherlands)
- Pollard, Jeanine (United States of America)
- Wintzerith, Stéphanie (Germany)

How did it go?

In general the process went really well, although it was a pity that we did not have enough candidates to start voting in April/May. Some reflections and recommendations for the future:

Membership lists

We were expecting big problems with the membership lists, since Ani Avagyan reported in our 2018 Tbilisi-meetings about the severe difficulties she experienced in working with the IRIS-database. This makes it very hard to know who is CECA member or not, let alone whether members are in good standing or not. And we definitely needed to know this in order to organise the electronic voting. So it was a blessing in disguise that we could not have elections after all.

Recommendation:

Pressure is needed towards the ICOM administration in Paris to solve the problems with the membership database, so we will be prepared to control who are CECA members in good status for the next elections in 2022 and how to reach them.

For the 2019 election procedure two updates were made in the Election procedure:

1. 13 Board members to be elected instead of 8

In Tbilisi we decided to enlarge the number of Board members, since we always have about 12-14 functions in the Board. Thirteen was chosen because it is an uneven number, which is practical in case voting is needed.

Reason: until now the Board was consisting of eight elected members and in addition several 'co-opted' members were appointed, but their mandate was not clear. In practice they served pretty much like the elected Board members, but could stay for many terms in theory. This raised questions among the membership about the democratic character of our elections. In addition the ICOM International Working Group on International Committees criticised the co-opted Board membership in CECA due to lack of transparency.

Thus for the 2019-2022 Board thirteen Board members were to be elected in order to enlarge the democratic foundation for the next CECA Board: one position for president and twelve regular members. But we only got one candidate for president and ten for regular Board member, which implied that everyone automatically was selected for the Board!

So in the end the intention to raise the democratic foundation for the next Board was not realised. As head of Elections with some experience from the past, I consider this as a risk, because in the past it happened that persons wanted to run for a Board membership who were not yet involved in CECA at all. Luckily this was not the case now, but if the number of candidates is lower than the number of positions, every candidate will automatically be included next time too.

Recommendation:

I suggest to discuss the number of positions for the next elections, to raise the probability that elections can take place, but at the same time to have as many as possible candidates in the Board with a clear mandate (= elected, not co-opted).

1 president + 10 regular Board members = 11 might be a good balance?

2. Observers

In 2016 we noticed that the old system of two neutral CECA-members controlling the counting process of the votes did not make sense anymore. In the electronic voting there simply was nothing to count, because the system itself is generating the outcomes.

So we started a new system with two neutral CECA-members being 'observers' of the entire election process. Neutral CECA-members do not have direct connections to the CECA-board nor to any of the candidates.

They were added in the cc. of the communication of the Election working team from the very beginning of the Election process. They also sent their comments whenever they felt this was appropriate.

The two observers will report to the CECA Board (written report) and to the General Assembly (written + short oral report) about their observations and if they want, they can add recommendations too.

Recommendation:

From my experience I think it worked well this way, so I recommend to continue with the two observers and to invite new observers in the 2021 General Assembly for the 2022 Elections.

We can also consider:

. To add a third observer, since it may be vulnerable with only two in case someone does not have enough time to take part intensively.

. To ask one of the 'old' observers to serve a second time and invite one or two new ones for the 2022 elections. By doing so, experience is used again and passed on to a new observer, who also can stay for a second time and share experience with the next newcomer among the observers in 2025.

Supporting members

Finally I want to report about some confusion I noticed about the members supporting the candidacy of CECA members running for the Board. According to the CECA-rules every candidate needs support of two CECA voting members.

The idea behind this is to make sure that candidates for the Board represent a network among the membership, so the whole new Board can count on a wide support of as many members as possible. This prevents the danger of small groups of members cooperating to support each other to achieve Board positions.

I noticed that this basic idea behind the supporter-function was not clear enough. Some candidates tried mainly to collect signatures of CECA Board members, because they seemed to think this was necessary. Other candidates were supporting each other. Some Board members were asked to support several candidates. I noticed therefore that our procedure needs more clarification on this point in order to prevent confusion and to make sure we go back to the reason why we have supporting members.

Recommendation:

This could be the new text:

Every member who wants to run for the Board needs support of two CECA voting members.

These two are NOT running for a position themselves and not appointed as observers.

Each person can only support ONE candidate.

Finally I want to thank all members of the Election working team and the two supporters for their work. And Margarita and Marie-Clarté in particular for quick and effective translation work, wonderful!

Arja

Attachments:

- CECA elections procedure 2019, 13 01 19