

Dear fellow MINT members,

The members of the MINT Nominating Committee – Cristiana Fortini (NC Chair), Christina Nasholm (NC member), Rik Bes (NC member) and Karin Nylind (MINT Inc. Board), – in cooperation with MINT's Board of Directors, would like to share our thoughts about the current process of elections for new members of the Board.

In the recent posting to the membership about this year's elections, you will have seen that two of the current Board members will rotate off (Judith Carpenter and Karin Nylind) by the end of 2013, so elections will be held for two new members of MINT's Board.

Elections held over the past years have shown that there is a need for transparency about the procedure and the 'why & how' of the committee. Also the large number of those who joined MINT over the past few years would be served well by information about this important part (elections and its processes) within our organization.

### **The management of MINT before incorporation**

A democratic and transparent way of electing new people in the organization's management was absent. Members of the Steering Committee were grandfathered in and, using the system of co-optation, new members were appointed.

### **Transition after MINT incorporation**

The first period was lacking a Nominating Committee, but democratic elections were put into place. In this period the absence of a nominating committee was felt. Members who decided to, or were thinking of, standing for election were probably not given appropriate support and guidance to help them become suitable candidates.

The usefulness of installing a Nominating Committee became noticeable in these times and circumstances, mainly to guide potential candidates from sometimes opposite backgrounds regarding self-nominations and being nominated by others, towards a transparent, balanced and for the membership comparable group of candidates.

### **The current Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee was installed via co-optation, which in this case means that the members were asked by the Board to join the committee. During the previous two elections, this committee developed guidelines for

self-nominations and nominations of others. It also developed an internal working process and working alliance with the Board. The NC is a 'standing committee', which implies a continuous mission to be sensitive and responsive towards MINT members about those who might be interested in volunteering their time to MINT, to support them and be of assistance in preparation for a (self-) nomination and for the subsequent period of serving on the Board. The Nominating Committee aims at – through its functioning – acting as some sort of a safety-valve for candidates who prepare for self-nomination to receive equal opportunities to present themselves before the elections to the membership.

### **Nominating others and self-nominations**

The NC feels that it is important to elaborate a little about having a procedure for both self-nominations and for nominating others, which are both supported and coached by the Nominating Committee.

After all, the MINT membership originates from a wide range of cultural, socio-economic and political backgrounds. This results in a potentially wide range of cultural views on self nomination and nomination by others.

In some cultures self-nomination is seen as the most natural way to stand for an election, while communicating a candidate's self-described strengths. In other cultures self-nomination is seen as self-promotion and taken far less seriously because of the inherent personal bias. On the contrary, in these cultures being recommended and nominated by others is seen as a sign of professional modesty, honor, respect and trustworthiness.

There might very well be mixed, or even fundamentally other, perspectives on the contrast between nominating others versus self-nomination. The NC strives to accommodate for culturally different perspectives and thereby to support potential candidates in the process of nomination and standing for election for a position within the MINT Board.

### **The future of the Nominating committee**

MINT is still an organization 'in transition'. The process of continuous improvement will likely be ongoing for as long as the organization will exist. Below we would like to present a few of our current thoughts about improvements, on which further discussion and decision making could take place in the (near) future.

#### *Electing members of the Nominating Committee*

In our opinion, procedures around the election of members of the Nominating Committee and its relation towards the Board need to be refined.

Members of [the](#) Nominating Committee should be elected by the membership. After all, the Nominating Committee can have a very strong influence on (preparing candidates for) leadership of our organization, and should therefore be able to base the legitimacy of its work on the support of the membership of that organization.

Regarding the composition of a future Nominating Committee, it is probably important to secure an equal representation of the countries/continents/cultures where the membership lives.

### *Relationship NC - Board*

The Nominating Committee should be in a position of autonomy towards the Board.

The current bylaws state that one member of the Nominating Committee has to be a member of the Board. In order to establish autonomy, this may have to be revised and altered in the bylaws.

### *Selecting nominees for Board elections*

In order to fulfill its mission, the Nominating Committee needs to have clear guidance - based upon MINT's bylaws - regarding the characteristics of eligible candidates, such as desired cultural diversity, necessity of having at least one Board member from the country where MINT is registered, etc. These guidelines might require amending the current bylaws, seeking legal advice, etc. Apart from the legal restrictions MINT needs to respect, the membership's views on these points are crucial.

Of course the outcome(s) of any (foreseen) revision of the bylaws should be clearly and timely published, since this will be a clear directive of the legal framework within which the Nominating Committee will be obliged to do its work.

### **Next steps**

The above introduced potential revisions of the work around nominating candidates in the future will probably take quite some time. It is important that all perspectives are being heard and weighed. The current Nominating Committee will not be able to reach a result before the upcoming elections, so for this year's election we will continue as we have done in the previous two years.

This leads us to another question, namely what qualifications a member of the future Nominating Committee should have. This question, and also the above introduced thoughts and proposals around an even more transparent, independent and democratic way of electing new members for both the NC and the Board of MINT, needs to be thoroughly discussed and one or more policy documents need to be drafted.

Having said (written) all of the above, the preparations for the upcoming elections for two new members of MINT's Board of Directors are meanwhile in progress.

We do hope that all of you will actively contribute by either nominating yourself or a colleague MINT member for the elections, and surely to cast your vote when the actual elections will be held by the end of this year.

Thank you for considering our thoughts and for getting back to us with your feedback and guidance.

Best,

Cristiana Fortini (chair)

Christina Näsholm

Rik Bes

Karin Ny Lind (MINT Board of Directors)