

**Nau mai, haere mai!**

**Are you interested in – or know someone who wants to be part of – leading Volunteer Service Abroad Te Tūao Tāwāhi (VSA)?**

##### **Together with our experienced Council members, you have the opportunity to build on over 60 years of volunteer history to guide Aotearoa’s leading international development volunteer agency into the future. Join us as we continue our long history of connecting people and transforming lives across the wider Pacific region.**

This Nomination Pack outlines what our Council does, who we are looking for, and how to nominate yourself or someone else for Council.

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## **What will you do on the VSA Council?**

Our Council is a group of people who come together to consult, deliberate, and make strategic decisions.

In July 2025, VSA will be launching our new strategy for 2025 to 2030 – Te Matau ā-Māui (the hook of Maui). New Council members will have a key role in overseeing the launch and implementation of this strategy.

VSA continues to grow and will see 150 people volunteer this year and nearly 5000 since VSA started in 1962. We continue to have strong partnerships across Aotearoa New Zealand and in our programme countries. Looking ahead we are focused on some big shifts, including increasing the diversity of volunteers and achieving even greater development impact through our programme.

Council holds a significant role in guiding VSA as this work continues, ensuring that we maintain and increase our impact throughout the wider Pacific.

## **Who are we looking for?**

We want Council members from all backgrounds with the energy and drive to make a difference – change makers to build on the achievements of this amazing organisation. You’ll be motivated to achieve VSA’s vision and live our values with the time, passion and integrity to take on all parts of the role.

We value independent thinkers, who like working as a team and are happy to accept collective responsibility – people who have direct experience or are interested in learning about governance and who, ultimately, want to help set and oversee VSA’s strategy, ensuring we remain on course.

As our governing body, the Council aims to reflect the strong diversity and ngā tāngata of Aotearoa. We seek to have Council members with experience and relationships in the Pacific countries within which we work. We encourage all New Zealanders who are keen to be part of a values-based and progressive organisation, to consider being involved.

In line with the above, candidates should have **at least one of each of the following core values and background/experience:**

**Core Values**

* Are experienced and/or interested in public diplomacy and international development
* Have experience or are interested in being part of strategy development and oversight
* Have the time, passion and integrity to take on all parts of the role (the work commitment includes being a member one or both of the Council’s committees)
* Are independent thinkers, who like working as part of a team and who are happy to accept collective responsibility
* Are able to commit to being on Council for a four-year term as a volunteer

**Background/Experience**

* Connections with Māori and/or Pacific communities and organisations
* International development, particularly practical experience (e.g. all previous VSA volunteers meet this criterion)
* Governance or financial management
* Stakeholder engagement including digital marketing or online communications, and fundraising

## **Time and money**

Council members, just like our overseas volunteers, give their skills and time voluntarily.

* Council meets in person or online four or five times per year; usually in March, June, September and November. Meetings are at VSA’s office in Wellington or online.
* Each member of Council will join one of the Council Sub-committees which meet four times a year online.
* Council members are volunteers and are unpaid, but travel and accommodation costs are met; a small per diem payment is provided for incidental costs.

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## **Clipboard with solid fill2025 election process**

Information on candidates will go out to members who will have a month to vote, commencing at the end of August and closing on 26 September 2025. Election results will be announced in early October in advance of the November AGM.

**How do you stand for Council, or nominate someone else?**

Read about [*the VSA Council.*](https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/our-people/vsa-council/)  We also encourage you to have a conversation with a current Council member if you have questions. Contact us at *election@vsa.org.nz* and we can put you in touch with them.

1 [VSA Council | Volunteer Service Abroad/Te Tūao Tāwāhi](https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/our-people/vsa-council/)

If you want to be a candidate, or would like to nominate a candidate, please complete the two forms at the end of this document or you can download the forms from our [website](https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/annual-general-meeting?stage=Stage).

2

The person being nominated for Council (the candidate) fills out the *Nomination Form for VSA Council* and *Candidate Form for VSA Council*. Each candidate will also need two nominators to sign the Nomination Form.

3 [VSA Council | Volunteer Service Abroad/Te Tūao Tāwāhi](https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/our-people/vsa-council/)

Scan and email forms, along with a recent photo and CV to VSA at *election@vsa.org.nz* to arrive by 5pm 28 April 2025.

4 [VSA Council | Volunteer Service Abroad/Te Tūao Tāwāhi](https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/our-people/vsa-council/)

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## **Frequently Asked Questions for VSA’s 2025 Council election**

### **What is the VSA Council?**

VSA’s Council is our governance body – it is responsible for the strategic direction for the organisation. Council members provide the governance of VSA through their expertise and commitment to the organisation’s objectives. Council’s roles include, among other things, the setting and overview of strategic direction, financial oversight, legal compliance, appointing and monitoring of the Te Tumu Whakarae / CEO, risk management and accounting to members.

The Council comprises elected, appointed, co-opted and ex officio Voting Members, as follows:

* four elected Council members, or their co-opted replacements
* up to three Council members appointed as additional Council members, or their co-opted replacements
* the Kaumātua or Kaitakawaenga.

Our constitution sets out a ‘rolling’ election cycle. The elected term is four years, and we have an election every two years. This means that, in any election process, half of the four elected members remain and half have completed their term, creating a minimum of two vacancies at a time. All VSA financial members are invited to participate in the election process.

Candidates elected in this year’s election complete their term in 2029. A Council member may be elected for a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms. Council members who have stood down after being elected for two consecutive four-year terms may, if eligible, be nominated for election as a member of the Council following an interval of at least four years.

Council members, just like our overseas volunteers, give their skills and time and have some of their costs covered. The Council meet in person four or five times per year and in addition to this the Council sub-committees meet for 2-hour sessions online prior to each Council meeting. Full Council meetings are held at VSA’s office in Wellington or online.

### **Who can be a Council member?**

VSA is an Incorporated Society and we have a Constitution which outlines rules about how we are governed. Our Constitution requires Council members to be over 18 years old and resident in New Zealand.

Candidates need to be current VSA financial members. VSA has different types of membership, all of whom must be New Zealand residents. Financial members are people who support VSA through an annual subscription, either an Individual membership or a Family membership. Non-financial members are our Life members and Honorary members (those who are currently on a VSA assignment or have recently returned). Our Constitution specifically states that actively serving volunteers are ineligible to serve on the Council. As noted in the residency requirement, you may stand, but if you were successfully elected, you would need to return from your overseas assignment.

### **What is the nomination process?**

Each nomination will require two forms to be filled out, the Nomination Form and the Candidate Form, and a CV and recent photo of the candidate. If you are wanting to nominate yourself, you will need to fill out both the Nomination and Candidate forms, with the Nomination Form also being signed by two other financial members (a nominator and seconder).

If you are wanting to nominate someone else, you will need that person to fill out the Nomination Form, which will then be signed by yourself and separate seconder. They will then also have to fill in the Candidate Form and provide the CV and photo.

Whether a candidate is nominating themselves or being nominated by someone else, the Nomination Form will always need three signatures from financial members. Both the Nomination and Candidate Forms can be found on the [website](https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/annual-general-meeting?stage=Stage) or at the end of this pack.

Complete nominations containing the following are sent to *election@vsa.org.nz:*

* Nomination Form (with three signatures from VSA financial members)
* Candidate Form
* CV
* Recent photo

### **Who is the Returning Officer?**

Our Constitution states that the Returning Officer for elections is the Te Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive Officer – so Kate Wareham is the current Returning Officer.

### **I’ve sent in my nomination – what’s next?**

You will receive an acknowledgement once your nomination has been received. If you have not received this acknowledgement in 1-2 business days, please get in touch to check, as it may mean your nomination hasn’t been received. The Nomination Form and Candidate Form will be checked to ensure all the nominators are members, and that the candidate is eligible for election.

The Appointments Panel will then determine pre-qualification of candidates for election, based on advertised selection criteria for the positions. If the candidate is a previous volunteer, staff member or Council member, the views of those within VSA who worked with the candidate will be sought by the Appointments Panel. If determined to be eligible and qualified by the Appointments Panel, the Panel may make recommendations regarding the content of your proposed candidate profile. The information you provide on the Candidate Form will be included in the voting packs.

Nominations close on 28 April 2025. Voting packs are sent to all members no later than 31 August. Voting closes on 26 September, with votes counted in the first week of October. The highest polling candidates will be elected.

**A group of people posing for a photo

Description automatically generated**Once the results are known, we contact each nominee to advise them whether they were elected or not. Results are announced in October. The newly elected Council takes up office at the Annual General Meeting on 1 November 2025.

### **I still have questions – where can I find answers?**

If you still have a question, please send an email to *election@vsa.org.nz.* We will endeavour to reply within 1-2 business days.

(*left to right)* Former VSA Chair Hone McGregor, VSA CEO Kate Wareham, former VSA Chair Dr Simon Mark, current Chair Dana MacDiarmid

## **Nomination Form for VSA Council**

**This form requires three people to complete it:**

1. the person nominated - **fills in form**
2. the person nominating a candidate to stand in the VSA Council election – **signs the form**
3. the person seconding a candidate to stand in the VSA Council election – **signs the form**

Please note: the person nominated, and the two people nominating and seconding the nomination respectively, must all be current financial members of VSA (see clause 13.1 of the Constitution).

Members can only be nominated if they are 18 years of age or over, are a New Zealand resident and not actively serving as a VSA volunteer.

All completed nomination documents must be emailed to [*election@vsa.org.nz*](mailto:election@vsa.org.nz)by 28 April 2025.

**Nomination**

Person being nominated:………………………………...…………………………………………………….

*(name as it will appear on the ballot paper)*

Residential address:……………………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Phone:………………………………........………….…Email: …………….……..………….…………….…...

Postal address (if different):….…….…………………………………………………………………………..

**Nominee**: *By consenting to this nomination, I confirm my understanding of the required attributes of VSA Council and my commitment to serve VSA to the best of my abilities. I consent to VSA seeking the views of those within VSA who worked with me, if relevant, and I consent to the information on this form and my accompanying profile being made available to VSA members for communications about the election.*

Signed…………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Date………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**Nominator's name**:……………………………………………………………………………………………. Signature……………………….…………………………………………………………………………………

I have read the nomination information and confirm that the candidate is eligible for nomination.

**Seconder’s name**:……………………………………..……………………………………………………….. Signature………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

I have read the nomination information and confirm that the candidate is eligible for nomination.

**Office use:** Eligibility of candidate verified:Y / N Comments:………………………………………………………………………………….

Financial membership status verified for Nominator: Y / N. For Seconder: Y / N

Signature of Chief Returning Officer:……………………………………………………

Date:……………………………………………………………………………………….…

**Candidate Profile Form for VSA Council**

* This form is to be filled out by the person nominated to stand for VSA’s Council (the candidate).
* The profile you provide will be included in the information which goes to all members before voting takes place. It is your one opportunity to present your strengths to members.
* Your Personal Statement (see next page) should discuss where you have experience Council is looking for and what you can offer VSA.
* **You must also include a recent photo and a CV; these will be included in the election information for members.**
* All completed nomination documents and accompanying information must be emailed to [*election@vsa.org.nz*](mailto:election@vsa.org.nz)by 28 April 2025.

**I wish to stand for election as a member of VSA's Council:**

Full Name:……………………………………………………………………………………………...

Ethnicity/ies:……………………….……………….…………………………………………………..

My occupation is (or was if retired) …………………………………………………………………

I confirm that I am a current financial member of VSA and eligible for the VSA Council.

**I have the following VSA experience *(tick all that apply)*:**

Previous VSA volunteer (dates):.…………………………………………………………. ……………………………………………………………………………………………….. ………………………………………………………………………………………………...

Other involvement in VSA (specify):……………………………………………………... ……………………………………………………………………………………………….. ………………………………………………………………………………………………...

I have other practical experience in international development (specify): ………... ……………………………………………………………………………………………….. ………………………………………………………………………………………………...

I have other relevant experience desired by the VSA Council:……………………… ……………………………………………………………………………………………….. ………………………………………………………………………………………………...

Council members should have at least one of the below. Tick as appropriate, and provide more detail in your personal statement:

International development experience

Governance or financial management

Connections with Māori and/or Pacific communities

Stakeholder engagement, fundraising, digital marketing, communications

**Candidate’s Personal Statement (250 words maximum)**

We suggest using 100 words to discuss your relevant experience and 150 words to cover what you can offer VSA. You can use this form or a separate word document. Statements over the maximum 250-word count will be returned to the candidate for editing.