



# **Policy Manual**

**Updated  
September 2016**



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## SECTION I: MEMBERSHIP

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### Categories

1. **Regular Members:** An individual actively or constructively engaged in professional horticultural communication and closely allied fields. Dues are \$95.
2. **Student Members:** A post-secondary student enrolled in a program leading toward a degree or certificate and who is genuinely interested in a full- or part-time career in horticultural communications. Dues are \$25.
3. **Allied Trade Membership:** A company or organization in an allied industry whose business practices are in harmony with the objectives of GWA. Benefits and dues are set at the following levels:
  - a. **Level I, Annual dues \$295**
    - i. 1 company representative to receive membership services
    - ii. 1 individual listing in the GWA membership directory
    - iii. 1 subscription to *On the QT* newsletter
    - iv. 1 company listing in the GWA organizational directory
  - b. **Level II, Annual dues \$500**
    - i. 2 company representatives to receive membership services
    - ii. 2 individual listing in the GWA membership directory
    - iii. 2 subscriptions to the *On the QT* Newsletter
    - iv. 1 set of membership mailing labels
    - v. 10% discount on Annual Expo exhibit booth
    - vi. 2 eighth-page advertisement in the *On the QT* Newsletter
    - vii. 1 company listing in the GWA organizational directory
  - c. **Level III, Annual dues \$1,000**
    - i. 3 company representatives to receive membership services
    - ii. 3 listings in the GWA membership directory
    - iii. 3 subscriptions to the *On the QT* newsletter
    - iv. 2 sets of membership mailing labels
    - v. 15% discount on Annual Expo exhibit booth
    - vi. 2 quarter-page advertisement in the *On the QT* newsletter
    - vii. 1 company listing in the GWA organizational directory
  - d. **Level IV, Annual dues \$2,500**
    - i. 4 company representatives to receive membership services
    - ii. 4 listings in the GWA membership directory
    - iii. 4 subscriptions to the *On the QT* newsletter



- iv. 3 sets of membership mailing labels
- v. 20% discount on Annual Expo exhibit booth
- vi. 2 half-page advertisement in the *On the QT* newsletter
- vii. 1 company listing in the GWA organizational directory
- e. Level V, Annual dues \$5,000**
  - i. 4 company representatives to receive membership services
  - ii. 4 listings in the GWA membership directory
  - iii. 4 subscriptions to the *On the QT* newsletter
  - iv. 3 sets of membership mailing labels
  - v. 1 complimentary Annual Expo exhibit booth
  - vi. 4 half-page advertisements in the *On the QT* Newsletter
  - vii. 1 company listing in the GWA organizational directory
- 4. Institutional Membership:** A botanic garden, arboretum, plant society, educational institution or others that qualify. Dues are same as allied members, with corresponding benefits.

**Membership Recruitment Incentive:** [ADD LANGUAGE]



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## SECTION II: Annual Conference & Expo

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### Planning Committees

1. The Annual Conference & Expo Program Committee shall be chaired by the Vice President who shall be overall program chair and responsible for development of all educational programming.
2. The Annual Conference & Expo Local Arrangements Committee shall be appointed to develop tour events and recommend local speakers in support of the national program topics.
3. The Annual Conference & Expo Program and Local Arrangements Committees are responsible for submitting features highlighting the Conference in each issue of *On the QT* newsletter

**Expo:** Prior year exhibitors shall have first right of refusal for exhibit space the following year. Exhibit space not reserved from prior year exhibitors shall be offered to other prospective exhibitors who may wish to participate. Members shall have priority over non-members for exhibit space.

### Sponsorship

1. Sponsorship opportunities within GWA programs shall be coordinated through the GWA headquarters. A listing of sponsorship opportunities and proposed companies to be solicited for support shall be provided by each event chair to the Executive Director who shall coordinate those activities with other events.
2. The Executive Director shall approve all sponsorship plans prior to a final commitment being made by the GWA. Upon approval, a written sponsorship agreement shall be signed by the sponsor indicating the name of the contact person for the sponsor, the type of sponsor support being provided, a general cost estimate, the benefit or service being conveyed to the sponsor by the GWA, and any special conditions required by the sponsor.
3. Sponsor Seniority: Sponsors of the same event for the previous year shall have first right of refusal for the same event the following year. Events not taken by previous sponsors shall be offered to other prior year sponsors who may wish to change the event they sponsor within the same meeting or activity. Events not selected by prior year sponsors shall be open to any other sponsor who may wish to become an event sponsor. Members shall have priority over non-members for sponsorship opportunities.

**Event Starting Time:** No tours or events shall start before 8:00AM except the early morning photoshoot and group breakfast activities.



**Speaker Expenses, Fees & Waivers:** GWA policy on payment for speakers is as follows

1. Volunteered & invited presentations: single session participants will receive a \$250 honorarium plus one-day of free registration; panelists will receive a \$125 honorarium for a two-member panel plus one-day of free registration and a \$75 honorarium for a three or more member panel plus one-day of free registration
2. Keynote presentation: fee, travel and lodging for one night
3. Like officers and directors, all committee members serve without compensation and are expected to register for the Annual Conference & Expo, except the Local Arrangements Committee Chair. Committee members may register at the lowest rate regardless of when they register.

**Registration:** Registration fees will be on a three-tier system: early, regular and late.

1. Early full member registrations will be up to \$450. This rate will end two months prior to the Conference.
2. Regular full member registration will increase to \$550. This rate will end two weeks prior to the Conference.
3. Late full member registration will be \$650

**Decorum Policy:** A registrant or participant to any GWA event may be expelled from a function or the entire event, without refund, for any action or activity deemed inappropriate or unsafe by the Board of Directors or their representatives.

**Notice to be included in registration and on-site meeting materials:** Professional decorum is expected at all GWA activities. GWA reserves the right to expel any participant from an event or entire meeting, without refund, for actions or activities deemed inappropriate.

**Holiday Avoidance:** It shall be GWA policy that annual conferences and associated Board of Director meetings shall not fall on religious and national holidays.



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## **SECTION III: REGIONS**

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**Balance:** Regions are established to have a balance of member numbers in each region.

**Number:** There will be seven or fewer regions in GWA.

### **Regional Meetings**

1. A budget and schedule must be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval at least 60 days prior to the event.
2. After the meeting has been officially approved, then the meeting can be announced to the membership.
3. Each region should hold at least one regional meeting per calendar year.
4. A GWA director or approved ambassador must be present at all regional meetings.
5. The meeting cannot take place within 30 days (before or after) the Annual Conference & Expo and cannot take place in the host city of the Annual Conference & Expo.
6. Meetings must be self-sustaining and shall be budgeted to at least break even. If it appears an event may lose money, the event can be canceled. Registration will be refunded.
7. Solicitations of sponsorships should have prior approval from GWA Headquarters.
8. All sponsorships must be committed in writing, describing the level of sponsorship and what they will receive in return.
9. Carpools or any other transportation (except GWA-provided transportation) must be organized by individuals, not by the contact or directors. GWA cannot accept liability for an individual's transportation.
10. All public facilities (hotels, restaurants, and public gardens) must be ADA compliant. Private gardens do not need to be ADA compliant, but accommodation of any disability should be made, if possible.
11. Expenses up to \$500 total or not to exceed 30% of income will be paid for all (not each) directors traveling more than 60 miles to represent the Board at a regional meeting.
12. A registrant or participant to any GWA event may be expelled from a function or the entire event, without refund, for any action or activity deemed inappropriate or unsafe by the Board of Directors or their representatives.

**Ambassador Designation:** This new designation would officially recognize current active members for their ability to reach across association and membership boundaries and represent the goals and objectives of GWA to a broader audience. This new designation attempts to advance GWA within the context of the following:

1. Expand outreach to other Green Industry Associations
2. Increase perceived value of membership in GWA
3. Enhance the GWA brand

4. Expand employment opportunities for GWA members throughout a diversity of Green Industry Associations
5. Work towards professional courtesy exchanges of registrations, admissions, or discounted educational events.

**Definition:** This designation would carry with it all of the requirements for hosting a Regional or Connect Meeting or a Workshop. The presence of a GWA Ambassador would also include the insurance coverage necessary for holding an officially sanctioned gathering.

**Eligibility for Ambassador Designation:**

1. Any current or former member of the Executive Committee
2. Any current or former National Director
3. Any current or former Regional Director who is/was responsible for the planning, organizing, hosting and completing of a regional/connections meeting or workshop.
4. Any other individual designated by a majority vote of the GWA Executive Committee to fill either a one-time or ongoing role for meeting attendance.
5. In addition to meeting the basic requirements above, all Ambassadors must be prepared to present the Association Outreach Initiative PowerPoint on the importance of GWA membership. The information contained in this presentation will allow Ambassadors to create a program for inclusion in lectures, symposia, conventions and trade shows.
6. An Ambassador must be a member in good standing with GWA having paid all of the dues required for that designation.

**On the QT Newsletter Regional Reports Guidelines:** This guideline is an attempt to restore focus on the purpose and content of the “Regional News” column.

**PURPOSE:** The “Regional News” column was designed to provide GWA members with information on public events, educational opportunities and regional issues of interest or concern to garden communicators.

**EDITORIAL CONTENT:** Regional reports are intended to announce “what’s happening” in a geographic area to allow members to plan for opportunities to learn, network or participate in green industry and/or media events. Content focus is on:

1. **GWA Events:** Regional meetings, workshops, seminars & courses
2. **Regional Member News**
  - a. Upcoming speaking engagements (open to other members)
  - b. Member news
  - c. Member book signings (in the region where other members can come see you)
  - d. New employment or job promotion (Jane Doe is head of XXX for YYY)
3. **Green Industry/Media Events**



- a. Horticultural trade shows
  - b. Association meetings and events
  - c. Botanic garden events & courses
  - d. City events
4. **Regional Issues**
- a. These are situational in nature but might include information local members should know but may not be of interest nationally like:
  - b. New fees assessed by a facility in the region on garden photographers
  - c. A change in the operating hours of a garden
5. **Not intended for Regional News Content**
- a. New Member Books (submit to “Hot Off the Press” column)
  - b. Awards & Honors (submit to *On the QT* editor)
  - c. Personal announcements (marriage, divorce, births, etc. do not meet editorial criteria)
  - d. Obituaries (submit to “In Memoriam” column)
  - e. Self-Promotion (does not meet editorial content criteria)

**OTHER GUIDELINES**

1. Each regional report should be 400 words or fewer
2. Dated items must be no sooner than the first of each even-numbered month following *On the QT* issue
3. All reports due the 15<sup>th</sup> of the odd-numbered months



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## SECTION IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Voting:** Voting for officers and directors by the general membership should be kept separate from any other balloting

**Notice:** Notice of the Board Meeting will be distributed no less than 30 days in advance of the meeting.

**Expenses:** All attending national directors and officers will be reimbursed a pro rata share of their travel expenses to attend board meetings in accordance with the approved budget for the meeting.

**Agenda:** Board of Directors meeting agendas shall be received by all Board members no less than one week prior to the meeting. That notice should contain all reports and materials that will be discussed at the meeting.

**Evaluation:** GWA Leadership shall do a self-evaluation on an annual basis.

**Director Job Descriptions:** Job descriptions for National and Regional Directors shall be as follows:

1. **National Directors:** National Directors are elected to the Board for a three year term, beginning and ending at the Annual Conference & Expo. The functions of National Directors are described as follows:
  - a. Shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors. Any Director whose business, professional or other activities or interests are detrimental to the interests of the Association or otherwise tend to discredit the Association through association of such person as a representative of the Association may, upon notice and opportunity to be heard, be removed as a Director upon approval of such action by at least two-thirds of the other members of the Board, acting at any meeting of the Board, provided that notice of the proposed action is contained in the notice of the meeting. Any Director **failing to attend at least one Board meeting and Annual Conference & Expo a year unexcused** may be removed upon a majority vote of the other members of the Board, provided that notice of the proposed action is contained in the notice of the meeting.
  - b. Shall not chair but shall serve as liaison to at least one national committee and shall be responsible for the reporting of the activities of their committee(s) at regular board meetings.
  - c. Shall decide the policies of the association and how policies are implemented.
  - d. Shall direct the efforts of the regional directors in the region and coordinate the conduct of at least one regional meeting annually in the region.
  - e. Shall provide a vehicle for the members in their region to address issues and concerns to the Board of Directors.
  - f. Is responsible for the regional report for the *On the QT* Newsletter.



- g. Shall be responsible for the submission of a dual slate of pre-qualified nominees' names to the Nominating Committee at least 60 days prior to the ballot publication date.
  - h. Is a member in good standing.
  - i. Shall come prepared to meetings by careful review of materials disseminated
  - j. Supports Board actions. Evaluates and follows up on actions taken at the Board meeting and on individual assignments.
  - k. Should treat matters discussed at Board Meetings as confidential and should act with discretion.
  - l. Active promotion of mission and goals of GWA.
  - m. Participates and supports all GWA activities.
2. **Regional Directors:** Regional Directors are elected to the Board for a two-year term beginning and ending at the Annual Conference & Expo. The primary function of the Regional Director is to create opportunities for the members of his/her region to connect. Other functions of Regional Directors are described as follows:
- a. Shall plan an annual regional event of one day or less in the region in cooperation with the National Director and the second Regional Director from that region.
  - b. Shall provide a vehicle for members in their region to address issues and concerns to the Board of Directors.
  - c. Shall coordinate with the National Director from their region the nomination and pre-qualification of a dual slate of nominees for regional and national office and the submission of such nominees to the Nominating Committee at least 60 days prior to the ballot publication date.
  - d. Is a member in good standing.
  - e. Shall come prepared to meetings by careful review of materials disseminated
  - f. Supports Board actions. Evaluates and follows up on actions taken at the Board meeting and on individual assignments.
  - g. Should treat matters discussed at Board Meetings as confidential and should act with discretion.
  - h. Active promotion of mission and goals of GWA.
  - i. Participates and supports all GWA activities.
  - j. Shall not be required to attend meetings of the National Board except that the most senior Regional Director (by length of term(s) served) shall substitute for the National Director from his or her region when the National Director is unable to attend.
  - k. Is encouraged to attend the Annual Conference & Expo but not required to.

**Unity Policy:** While Directors are encouraged to express their opinions on all matters of business



under deliberation by the Board, it is essential that the Board of Directors shall speak with one voice as approved by a vote of the Board, even if said vote shall not be unanimous. (9/07)

**Non-Advocacy:** Because the GWA membership is so diverse, the association shall not be a general advocacy organization. The association and Board of Directors shall not lobby, campaign or take a formal position on political issues or political candidates.

**Dual Election Slates**

1. A dual slate of candidates shall be offered to the membership for election of National and Regional Directors.
2. The positions of Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary may all stand for contested election.



**SECTION V: STAFF**

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The executive director and staff shall be directed in accordance with the current management agreement included as Exhibit I.

The executive director and staff will be evaluated on an annual basis in accordance with the current management agreement.



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## **SECTION VI: FINANCES**

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**Financial Statements:** Monthly financial statements are to be sent to the Treasurer and Financial Committee.

**Check Approval:** Any GWA check written for more than \$5,000 requires pre-authorization by the President or the Treasurer if unbudgeted.

**Account Access & Signatory Privileges:** The Executive Director, President and Treasurer shall have access and signatory privileges to all GWA banking or investments accounts, and may act on these privileges as approved by the Financial Committee and Executive Committee.

**Foundation Donations:** A line item for a donation to the GWA Foundation shall be included on all GWA dues and event forms.

### **Refund Policy**

1. Membership dues are non-refundable.
2. Refund information for activities and events hosted by the GWA may vary by event and are included with registration information for that event.

### **Privacy Policy**

1. Information provided by members and activity participants is accessible only to GWA office personnel.
2. Membership data is not shared with any third parties.
3. Limited contact information is provided to other members through the member locator options on the GWA website and in the GWA membership directory.
4. Limited contact information is shared with the public only through the GWA member locator option on the website and only if the member chooses the profile option to allow public (non-member) display of that information.
5. Registrant information is provided for all public events hosted by the association and is generally available only to other event registrants.
6. Email distribution will be made available to allied members and other appropriate third-party vendors for a pre-determined fee and must be distributed by GWA Headquarters. Lists will not be released directly to any party.
7. Mailing lists will be made available to allied members and other appropriate third-party vendors for a pre-determine fees. These lists will only be distributed in printed mailing label form, which may not be duplicated under any circumstances. Lists will not be releases directory to any party.

### **Investment Policy**

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this Investment Policy Statement is set forth in order that:
  - a. There is a clear understanding between the GWA Board of Directors and the investment manager(s) and the advisor(s) and service providers regarding the investment policies and objectives of the funds.
  - b. The investment manager(s) be given the guidance and limitations expressed by the Finance Committee for the management of the funds.
  - c. The Finance Committee has a basis for evaluation of the investment manager. The intent of this Investment Policy Statement is to state an attitude and philosophy, which shall guide the investment manager(s) toward the performance desired. It is intended that these objectives be meaningful and, at the same time, flexible in order to attain the objectives outlined.
2. **Role of GWA Finance Committee:** A permanent function of the Finance Committee is to establish and periodically review the investment policy, establish and review performance goals for the portfolio, identify appropriate asset allocation guidelines, review the investment portfolio results on a regular basis and select, monitor and, if necessary, replace professional investment managers.
3. **Investment Objectives:** Funds shall be invested so as to achieve a total return, which shall enhance the value of the portfolio, with emphasis on the preservation of the capital. Concurrently, the asset allocation strategy shall allow for a dependable source of funds for any current operational demands as well as strive for long term returns that match or exceed inflation.
  - a. **Short-term Investments:** The objective of these funds is to provide liquidity for grants, loans, special projects and operational needs. These funds shall seek a yield that is competitive with high quality money markets, without losing liquidity. These funds shall be invested in securities that shall maintain an average maturity of one year or less.
  - b. **Intermediate and Long-term Investments:** These funds are for the purpose of providing a principal base to provide income and/or growth. The principal shall be managed to maintain and preserve over time the real value of the funds. These funds shall be actively managed with the intention of obtaining the highest possible total return while accepting only prudent risk.
4. **Investment Guidelines**
  - a. Risk Tolerance – The following issues shall be recognized in terms of determining risk tolerance for the portfolio:
    - i. Real return objectives.
    - ii. The investment time frame (except for funds segregated to meet specific needs) deemed to be a market cycle defined as 3-8 years.
    - iii. Liquidity requirements shall be reviewed periodically with the President, the Treasurer and the Finance Committee.
    - iv. Purchasing power risk (inflation) shall be measured by the Consumer Price Index.

- v. Legal considerations shall be reviewed with the President, the Treasurer and the Finance Committee.
- b. Authorized Types of Investments
  - i. *Cash equivalents* – investments maturing within one year. Purpose is to provide liquidity and preserve capital.
    - 1. Checking accounts
    - 2. Certificates of Deposit (FDIC insured)
    - 3. Money Market accounts
    - 4. Treasury bills maturing in one year or less
  - ii. *Fixed income investments* – investments with maturities greater than one year. Purpose is to provide stability and generate income. Fixed income securities may include U.S. Treasury obligations, obligations of government sponsored enterprises, federal agency obligations, domestic corporate debentures, commercial paper, commercial bank certificates, money market funds, investment company funds which invest in the above, and shall also take into account the following:
    - 1. Certificates of Deposit must be in denominations to stay within FDIC Insurance qualifications.
    - 2. Commercial paper must be rated “A1” or “P1” by Moody’s or Standard & Poor’s Corporation.
    - 3. Fixed income mutual funds must be traded on either the New York Stock Exchange, American Stock Exchange on the National Association of Security Dealers Automatic Quotation System (NASDAQ) and invested only in fixed income securities consistent with this document.
    - 4. Fixed income securities must have a minimum rating of “A” or higher by Standard & Poor’s, or an “A2” rating by Moody’s, or its equivalent as defined by other recognized rating agencies.
    - 5. Taxable municipal bonds must have the same minimum rating as defined for fixed income securities above and be of suitable duration.
    - 6. Fixed income investments are to be selected and managed as to assure appropriate balance of quality, maturity and coupon consistent with this document.
    - 7. Convertible securities shall be considered equity derivatives and, as such, shall not be an acceptable investment in the fixed income allocation.
    - 8. Under certain circumstances, the Finance Committee may elect to have the fixed part of the GWA’s portfolio allocation to be funded, in whole or part, with loans made to GWA. These loans could be interest or non-interest bearing loans for any purpose that the Finance Committee feels is appropriate. If funds are loaned to GWA, regarding



- those loaned funds, all of the above restrictions with respect to credit quality, maturity, trading exchanges, etc. are waived.
- iii. *Equity investments* – primary purpose is to provide capital appreciation. Secondary purpose is to provide income. Investment in equities requires the assumption of greater market volatility and risk than investment in fixed income securities.
1. Equity securities may include common or convertible preferred stock, convertible debentures, or investment company funds which invest in the above. Receipt of stock rights or warrants from existing equity holdings may be held or sold solely at the discretion of the investment manager(s).
  2. Equity securities investments are to be selected within the criterion and declared strategy of the investment manager and applied consistently.
  3. Funds available for investment in equity securities may be temporarily invested in short-term U.S. Treasury obligations, short-term obligations of government sponsored enterprises, federal agencies, commercial paper, commercial bank certificates of deposit and other generally accepted money market instruments as directed by the manager(s).
  4. Equity investments may also include mutual funds invested in equities of companies listed on the New York Stock Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, or the National Association of Security Dealers Automatic Quotation System (NASDAQ).
  5. Foreign securities shall be allowed if the underlying security of the investment substantially meets the declared policy and strategy of the investment manager(s).
  6. GWA has determined that it wishes to delegate any and all shareholder proxy votes to the investment managers.
- iv. *General Restrictions*
1. No more than 10% of the portfolio shall be invested in securities issued by one corporation except for insured depositories and obligations of the United States Government and Government Agencies.
  2. Prohibited investments include:
    - a. Puts, calls, straddles, or other option related strategies if not part of an overall managed strategy with other securities
    - b. Income enhancing derivatives
    - c. Purchases of letter stock in the equity portion of the portfolio
    - d. Managed futures funds, investments in commodities or transactions of a similar nature
    - e. Tangible assets (e.g., gold and silver)

- f. Venture capital investments
  - g. Life insurance contracts
  - h. Variable and fixed rate annuities
  - i. Margin trading
5. **Implementation:** The goals and guidelines of the asset allocation as set forth in this policy shall be implemented as directed by the Finance Committee.
6. **Investment Review:** The Finance Committee shall review the investment manager(s) results three times per year and more frequently if the Finance Committee deems it necessary. External investment manager's performance shall be monitored and results measured against absolute and relative return objectives. The Finance Committee expects the funds to achieve at least 2 of the 3 investment goals, as described below, to be achieved over a complete market cycle (3 to 8 years).

For Equity Assets:

- a. The total rate of return of the equity component is to equal or exceed whichever is the most appropriate index (indices) as determined by the portfolio allocations index over a complete market cycle (3-8 years).
- b. The absolute annualized total rate of return for the equity managers is to equal or exceed 6%-9% over a complete market cycle (3-8 years).
- c. The risk-adjusted returns of the equity managers should be equal to or above the median returns of similarly styled equity managers on an annual basis, net of all fees.

For Fixed Income Assets:

- a. The total rate of return of the fixed income security component is equal to or exceeds whatever is the most appropriate index (indices) as determined by the portfolio allocations index over a complete market cycle (3-8 years).
- b. The risk-adjusted returns of the fixed income portfolios should be above the median returns of similarly styled fixed income managers on an annual basis, net of all fees.
- c. However, if the fixed income component is funded with loans to the GWA, the two points above do not apply.

7. **External Investment Managers:** The Finance Committee shall be responsible for evaluation and selection of external investment manager(s) as the need arises. A written agreement shall be executed between the investment manager(s) and the Finance Committee. The external investment manager(s), within the policies and guidelines approved by the Finance Committee, has full discretion to buy, sell, invest, and reinvest assets on behalf of GWA. The external investment manager(s) shall notify the President and Treasurer in the event that the investments in the GWA's portfolio do not meet the guidelines set forth in this Investment Policy Statement. Communications with the external investment managers at a minimum should include:
- a. The custodian shall provide monthly statements including information on actions taken in the portfolio during the past month. The investment manager shall provide

- quarterly statements, which shall provide information on performance results and should address criteria established by the Finance Committee.
- b. All pertinent changes in the firm shall be reported as they occur. These charges include, but are not limited to changes in personnel involved with investment decisions, and changes in ownership of the company.
  - c. Written confirmation on every transaction when completed.
8. **Asset Diversification:** Diversification of assets shall be employed to ensure that adverse results from one security or security class shall not have an unduly detrimental effect on the entire portfolio. Diversification is interpreted to include diversification by type, by characteristic, and by number of investments as well as investment style.

Asset Classes: Lower Limit - Upper Limit:

- a. Equities: 10-85%\*
  - b. Long Term Fixed Income Investments: 0-50%
  - c. Short Term Fixed Income Investments: 0-100%
  - d. Cash and Cash Equivalents: 10-100%\*
- \*Lower limits may be temporarily adjusted to 0% for short-term protection of funds.*
9. **Revisions:** This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Finance Committee and any appropriate modifications shall be made. It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to communicate such revisions, in writing, to the investment manager(s) and advisors within 30 days.

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## **SECTION VII: COMMITTEES**

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**General:** All committee chairpersons must be furnished with a complete job description and a schedule with deadlines for activities for the coming year. The current GWA committees and task forces are as follows:

1. Governance
  - a. Executive Committee
  - b. Finance Committee
  - c. Nominations Committee
2. Honors & Awards
  - a. Honors Committee
  - b. Awards Committee
3. Communications
  - a. Communications Committee
  - b. *On the QT* Editorial Panel
  - c. *GWAGrows* Blog Task Force
  - d. Website Task Force
4. Education
  - a. Annual Conference Program Committee
  - b. Annual Conference Local Arrangements Committee
  - c. Regional Meeting Committee
5. Membership
  - a. Membership Committee
  - b. Membership Outreach Task Force
  - c. Association Outreach Task Force
  - d. Sustainability Committee
  - e. Sponsorship Committee

**Executive Committee:** The Executive committee has the following duties:

1. Keeps the Organization aligned with Strategic Goals set by the Board
2. Reviews the Performance of the Staff
3. Reports to the Board of Directors on any actions the committee has taken on behalf of the Directors.

### **Honors Committee**

1. Members of the Honors Committee will be selected from past-presidents or other members with long-standing interest and knowledge of the Association.

2. The Honors Committee will develop a form for each of the Honors classes. The membership will be solicited for recommendations for each category through a note in the newsletter and other promotional means.
3. A limit is set on the number of awards that can be made in a year:
  - a. No more than one Hall of Fame
  - b. One Honorary
  - c. Two fellows.
4. Hall of Fame award will be rarely presented to afford real significance
5. A regional special award may be awarded to someone of horticultural communication note. The nominee for this award is to be cleared with the Honors Committee.
6. Current Officers and Directors are not eligible for GWA Honors, but may be considered upon the completion of their tenure on the Board of Directors.

#### **Awards Committee**

1. Contest announcements need to be made far enough in advance to give all eligible participants reasonable time to compete. Judges may **be**, but **shall** not be limited to, GWA members. Complete records of the judging must be kept
2. Awards should be given for content created within the previous year, not the current year.
3. Awards committee members are not allowed to submit materials for possible awards.
4. Officers and Directors are allowed to submit for awards.
5. The outgoing committee chair shall nominate a new committee member for the following year, subject to approval by the Executive Committee.
6. Awards Committee procedures and awards categories shall not be changed without the approval of the Board of Directors.

#### **Communications Committee**

1. The *On the QT* newsletter editor is automatically a member of the Communications Committee
2. The Newsletter will include a calendar of horticultural events, GWA Annual Conference & Expo. (09/81)
3. Advertising is allowed in the *On the QT* newsletter.
4. Three years of *On the QT* newsletter archives shall be maintained on the GWA website.

#### **Termination of Membership; Removal from Committee**

The Association reserves the right to terminate membership of any member who (a) fails to pay dues or fees in a timely manner, or (b) causes harm to other members or to the Association by violating stated policies, rules or regulations of the Association or ethical standards of conduct. The Association also reserves the right to remove from any committee any member who violates stated



policies, rules or regulations of the Association.

**Meeting Rules**

All members and guests are expected to be respectful and courteous to others at all committee and other meetings of the Association (including functions and events).

Whether or not an individual has a right to be present at the meeting of the Association, the member has no right to disturb the meeting. The Association may expel anyone who causes a disturbance at a meeting, whether or not he/she is a member.

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## SECTION VIII: MAILING LISTS

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### List Fees

1. Email Distribution
  - a. Allied Member/Partner: **FREE** (Included with membership)\*  
*\* Number of Uses Varies by level of Allied Membership*
  - b. Allied Member/Partner: **\$750**
  - c. Public Gardens & Non-Profits: **\$500**
  - d. Non-member Business: **\$1,500**
2. Mailing Labels
  - a. Allied Member/Partner: **FREE** (Included with membership)\*  
*\* As permitted with membership benefits package*
  - b. Allied Member/Partner: **\$750**
  - c. Public Gardens & Non-Profits: **\$500**
  - d. Nonmember Business: **\$1,000**

**Approvals:** Requests for email distribution and mailing labels shall require pre-approval of the mailer to be sent.

**Complimentary Lists:** The Executive Director may provide mailing labels without charge when in the best interest of the association or its members.

**Product Samples:** Companies shall be urged not to send samples of chemical products to members without their request.

**Restrictions:** Email distributions and mailing labels are subject to the restrictions and procedures outlined below:

1. Lists may not be integrated into purchaser databases and may only be used on a one-time basis.
2. Electronic lists will not be released to a third-party under any circumstances
3. All email distributions will be sent by GWA headquarters
4. A contract stating use restrictions and requirements shall be executed by the purchaser prior to sending the list.

**Non-GWA Event Promotions:** GWA shall not promote (for free) any events that the association does not directly host or co-sponsor. Other organizations may advertise or promote their events to GWA members using the advertising, mailing lists, email distributions, etc., or membership benefits offered by the GWA for a fee. The Executive Committee may reconsider on a case by case basis if list usage would be of great value to the membership



## **SECTION IX: LOGO**

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**Name:** The official name of our organization is GWA: The Association for Garden Communicators.

**Logo Usage:** One of the key identities of GWA is its logo. The use of the logo to identify members and show unity among professional garden communicators is both important and encouraged. To facilitate member use, the GWA shall make its logo available to members with the following guidelines for its uniform use. When using the logo:

1. The GWA logo must be used in its entirety and shall include the designation "Member".
2. The GWA logo must be sized proportionately. The GWA logo may not be cropped, distorted or altered in anyway without prior consent from GWA headquarters.
3. The GWA logo may be used on stationery, brochures, or websites to indicate that you or, if appropriate, your company is a member of GWA. However, **it may not be used on any products or in any manner that suggests or implies GWA endorsement of a particular product or idea.**

**Branding Guidelines:** See branding guidelines [here](#).





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**SECTION X: GWA CODE OF ETHICS**

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GWA: Association for Garden Communicators was founded to elevate and improve the standards of communication between the members of the Association and their public — to aid in the solution of many problems of the members of the Association — to designate certain members as having attained certain skills and knowledge — and to pledge that all members will maintain a high level of trust and integrity in their work.

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## **SECTION XI: CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

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### **Introduction**

When the volunteer leaders of GWA: Association for Garden Communicators (“GWA”) are acting in their official capacities, their actions and decisions should be based on what they honestly and reasonably believe to be in the best interests of GWA. Legally and ethically, this is what is expected of each volunteer leader. It is also what is expected by GWA members and other constituencies. If the judgment of a GWA official is influenced by an outside interest, the GWA may suffer harm directly from an ill-advised decision. But GWA can be harmed equally, if not more so, by the creation of a perception among members and others of inappropriate decision making. Especially for a nonprofit organization, reputation can be an invaluable asset. Therefore, even if a volunteer leader believes that he or she can exercise independent judgment despite a conflict, and even if the official in fact does so, the perception that another interest or relationship may inappropriately influence their judgment can be injurious to GWA.<sup>1</sup>

### **Definition of “Conflict of Interest”**

A conflict of interest exists when a volunteer leader has a direct or indirect<sup>2</sup> business, professional, or personal situation or relationship that might influence, or that might be perceived to influence, or that might be perceived to influence, the judgment or actions of the leader when serving GWA. Conflicts of interest may arise under numerous scenarios, including but not limited to:

1. Serving as an officer or director of another nonprofit organization in the general areas of interest to GWA.
2. Receiving compensation (e.g., consulting fees, speaking or writing honoraria, etc.) from a company offering products or services related to the interests of GWA.
3. Doing business with GWA or having a relationship with any company or organization doing business or wishing to do business with GWA.

The most fundamental concept in the area of conflicts of interest is disclosure. Those GWA officials subject to this conflict of Interest Policy must disclose all conflicts as defined above. It should be noted that the definition of conflict of interest adopted in this Policy includes any relationship that might influence or that might be perceived to influence the actions or decisions of a GWA official. Therefore, even if one believes that a relationship or other circumstance will not affect one’s judgment or conduct, if it could do so or if it reasonably could be perceived as having an improper influence, then it should be disclosed. Those covered by this Policy will have the burden of defending any decision not to disclose and therefore should err on the side of disclosure.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be emphasized that conflicts of interest are not inherently illegal or unethical, nor should they be interpreted as reflecting upon the integrity of any GWA official. Further, it is not the purpose of a conflict of interest policy to prevent volunteer leaders from having business or other relationships. Rather, it is the manner in which a conflict is addressed which determines the propriety of the situation.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. through a close family member or a business associate.



Disclosure shall be made on at least an annual basis in the first quarter of each fiscal year on forms provided by GWA. Completed forms will be shared with GWA Board of Directors, which may take such further action it deems appropriate. In addition, any relationship or circumstance that is created or arises in the interim should be disclosed to the Chairman of the Board and Executive Director of GWA as soon as possible, who will then notify the Board.

Finally, all those covered by this Policy have an obligation to bring to the attention of GWA any conflict or perceived conflict of any other GWA official also subject to this Policy.

### **Covered Officials**

The following are subject to GWA Conflict of Interest Policy:

1. Board of Directors and Officers
2. Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen

### **Effect of a Conflict or Perceived Conflict**

1. Once a conflict of interest arises, in addition to disclosure, the person with the conflict should use their best judgment as to whether and to what extent they should recuse themselves from deliberations, voting, decision making, and other participation with respect to the matter at issue, and whether they should resign from an office or position. In making this determination, the best interests of GWA should be the sole criteria. The Board of Directors may require full or limited recusal or other measures, including resignation from a GWA office or position.
2. Any conflict of interest involving a proposed contract or transaction between GWA and the person with the conflict shall be submitted to the Board for approval. The Board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether GWA should enter into the contract or transaction because it is in GWA's best interest. If appropriate, the Board in its discretion may appoint a committee to investigate alternatives to a proposed contract or transaction.

### **Intent of Policy; Violation of this Policy**

This Policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to non-profit corporations. Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from a GWA office or position and expulsion from GWA.