Proposal for a new Selection Process
by the Selection Process Review Task Force (SPRTF)
FINAL DRAFT

1. Introduction

This draft proposal has been created in response to a report written by the Inquiry Task Force set up to investigate the Tampering of the Ballot Boxes at the Selection Process for the Working Committee on 21.01.21. Concerns were expressed by members of the community and working groups that the present selection process is not effective, fair or aligned with our Auroville values, and that the process for selection should avoid politics and voting.

To this end, SPRTF has decided to design a selection process driven by a selection team chosen by a random selection from the community, using a proven, transparent method. The team will be given skills and information to enable them to do the work, but will be free to make their own judgements.

It has been agreed that Auroville’s values should be part of this process. The SPRTF views its work in the light of Auroville’s work as an experiment in human unity.

For the selection process, an organisational team will be created by the RAS comprising RAS members, silent observers, facilitators and other volunteers formed from an open call to the community, according to the skills required for the process.

2. The Candidates.

The RAS will keep track of the mandates of all Working Groups and the terms of the members. Each working group shall remind the RAS 8 weeks before the end of the terms of their members, and also all vacancies due to resignations or other unexpected reasons.

The RAS and all concerned WG’s shall work together to plan the timing of the selection process. As far as possible, the RAS will organise a selection process in one event per year to maintain the interest and the motivation of the community.

When it is time, a public call for interest for the vacant position(s) should be shared via Auronet, N&N, and mass email to the entire community, also sharing the Selection Process, and reminding community members that they could be requested to serve on the Selection Group.

Candidates can self-apply for the open positions, or may be nominated by another. When nominating another person, the approval of the nominee must be sought prior to the nomination.

Candidates will have 2 weeks to send their application to the RAS. The application must include:

- A motivation letter: the candidate must explain the reasons and motivations that drive his/her application.
- A resumé of his/her experiences (work, life experiences, internships, group participation, etc.) inside and outside of Auroville.
- Description of his/her skills, domain of expertise, specific interests etc...
All persons nominated by others must complete the application and submit at the same time for their names to be entered into the selection process.

Any application where this information is not provided or is considered incomplete, may be discarded at the discretion of the RAS.

3. **Feedback**

Feedback will be sought from the community by the RAS over a 2 week period, on all persons nominated. A format will be used which requests feedback on specific areas relating to the known conduct of the nominee:

- Records of violence or sexual misconduct
- Financial mis-management
- Criminal activity
- Land ownership in the masterplan area excluding family land
- Conflicts of interest specific to the area of work, or more than one member of a family nominated for one working group.
- Aurovillian engaged in a court case against a fellow Aurovillian / Newcomer

The format used will limit the number of characters which can be used by the feedback giver for each section to 140. The feedback giver can choose to remain anonymous to the Selection Teams, however his/her name will be recorded by the RAS.

The information will be provided to the Selection Teams (see section 6), who will decide if the feedback is relevant or significant. The feedback will be used to inform the selection of the working group members.

4. **The Selection Group.**

From Aurovilians on the Master List, 40 names will be drawn at random. To get 40 volunteers, it is understood that it is necessary to pick a larger number of names from the register of community members (more than 100, depending on the response). Selection will be made in a traceable and transparent fashion (eg. with an independently validated computer program) and will be done progressively until the appropriate number are selected and have agreed to volunteer for the work. The RAS will be responsible for this process, and may call witnesses to ensure that it is fair and transparent.

The RAS (assisted by volunteers/observers) will contact each person that has been drawn, providing the information they need to understand the Selection Process, and check if they are willing to participate. This process will continue until sufficient members of the Selection Group have agreed to participate.

5. **Preparation day for the Selection Group**

This day will be facilitated by the organisation team, and will prepare the Selection Group for their work in selecting the candidates for the working groups. The following (but not exclusively) will be included in the agenda:

- Training in team work with a focus on listening skills
• Training in recognising bias, both in themselves and others
• Consensus building.
• Introduction to the AV Foundation Act and working group structure and the mandates of the working groups involved in the selection process.
• Brief presentations (5 mins approx.) from present members of each working group to understand their needs, with a question and answer session for each presentation.
• Brief presentations made by any community member who can offer perspectives on the needs of working groups.
• Meetings with any other person/group requested by the Selection Group members, (this may need to be in a separate session organised for the members).

6. Independent sub-groups (selection teams).

At the beginning of the second day, the organisation team will divide the Selection Group randomly into 4 teams of equal numbers. These groups will remain separate and not interact with each other until they have chosen the candidates (section 7).

Each team will then interview (online or in person - at the same time or independently, depending on the number of candidates) all the candidates, in order to understand the qualities that each will bring to the work in the working group and their suitability for the work. Each candidate will be asked to present themselves and the qualities which they believe that they bring to the work. A copy of the profile of each applicant, and the feedback, will be available before and during that interview, to enable the team to have as far as possible a thorough knowledge of each person. Questions can be asked by any member of the team to clarify any issue. Care must be taken to ensure that each candidate is put at ease and is able to communicate without fear. Candidates may be assessed (but not exclusively) according to the criteria such as (according to the skills/qualities needed for each WG):

• An ability to do the work needed
• An ability to work harmoniously within a team
• A deep resonance to the Charter, “A Dream” and “To be a True Aurovilian”
• An understanding of the Auroville Foundation Act and the structure of the Foundation.
• The ability to listen with a non-judgmental attitude
• Fairness
• The ability to realign oneself after having listened to stories, struggles and disagreements
• The openness to understand another human being
• The ability to empathise with discernment
• Humility to acknowledge one’s own limitations
• Experience in communication and organisational skills
• Is trusted by the community and respected for their integrity

Any feedback on the nominee received from the community shall inform the decision of the team.

If there is a large number of applicants, then this step may take longer than one day, and could be extended into a second day. This will be decided by the Selection Group as a whole, and facilitated by the organising team.

The selection teams will each independently choose members for each post. The teams are given the freedom to conduct their selection work according to their way of working, but are requested to
come to a consensus. Tools can be provided by the RAS to aid their decision making process and facilitators can also be made available as requested by each team, to help them come to consensus.

In case any member of the Selection Group resigns or for any other reason are unable to attend the entire process, the work can continue if at least 24 selectors, 6 per group and at least 3 teams remain. If this quorum is not respected, the all process must restart from step 1.

7. Calculating the outcome.

On the 3\textsuperscript{rd} day (a 4\textsuperscript{th} day may be possible at the request of the Selection Group), the results from the 4 individual teams will be shared amongst the entire Selection Group, and the final result can be calculated:

- Any candidates chosen by all the selection teams are automatically selected for the position in the WG concerned.
- Any candidate chosen by less than all groups will have their names put in a hat (opaque container for drawing lots) in relation to the number of nominations: 3 nominations = 3 times in the hat, 2 nominations = twice and 1 nomination = once. Any candidate with no nominations will not have their names in the hat. Thus the likelihood of them being selected is proportional to the number of nominations by the selection teams.
- The remaining names for the WG positions will be drawn randomly from the hat by an independent person or child.

The remaining names in the hat will be kept securely as a backup resource in case any of the candidates declines to take up their positions after ratification.

Note: If there are insufficient candidates chosen during this process to fill the positions available in the WG’s, then these positions will remain vacant.

8. Final Result

The final result will be presented to the RA for publication by massbulletin, email, News and Notes, including a report on the process.

9. Notes

Silent observers should witness the entire process.

A survey will be carried out by the RAS covering all those who participated in the selection process, including silent observers, to assess the methods used, and provide suggestions for improvement. Such feedback may be integrated into the process for future selections.