



Call for Nominations for election as ASWA Board member

Are you a Sex Worker, a sex worker activist? Have you worked with sex workers, or are you a passionate advocate for the rights of sex workers?

Opportunity closing date: January 15, 2018.

The African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA) is the Pan African alliance of sex worker-led organization that advocates for commitment and action to safeguard the rights of sex workers. ASWA envisions a world where sex work is recognized as a protected work in Africa, and where the health and human rights of all sex workers living and working in Africa are secured in an environment free of stigma and discrimination. As of 2018, ASWA has members from 22 African countries. In the years since its formation, ASWA has increased in its reach, its power and its influence across Africa and around the world.

In April 2018, ASWA's board chair resigned leaving in place two board members who now act as co-chairs. ASWA also had a challenge relating to a due diligence process conducted by one of the funders and four resignations by key staff. This situation necessitated that ASWA undertakes an assessment that has informed an institutional strengthening process aimed at putting in place a formal governance structure, pursue an appropriate registration regime, support board and leadership transitions and come up with a current funding status report to help develop a fundraising plan to make ASWA fit for purpose and enable the organization serve its constituency better as a regional sex worker organization.

The lack of a fully functioning board poses a number of risks in that the implementation of ASWA's current strategic plan could stall without the leadership and guidance of a fully functional Board. The overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of ASWA processes stand to be compromised without a board to determine strategic direction and policies, establish and oversee control and risk management frameworks and to ensure that the organization achieves its aims and objectives. Though having a secretariat in place, the secretariat cannot oversee its own work and as such not having a board to oversight poses serious threat to the credibility of ASWA and all of its operations. In addition, some sex workers leaders were taking advantage of ASWA's weak governance to interfere in the operations of the regional secretariat. Without a functional governing body to intervene, the conflicts were threatening to derail the operations of ASWA.

To address this gap ASWA undertook an institutional assessment that recommended that ASWA constitutes an Interim Caretaker Committee (ICC) comprising of at least nine members nominated/ elected from ASWA's membership and secretariat to work with a team of two consultants over a six-month period to oversee an institutional strengthening process.

The mandate of the ICC is to:

- a) Strengthen ASWA's governance through collective decision making that represents the interests of the different members region wide.
- b) Help formalize ASWA's registration and legal identity
- c) Successfully organize an AGM that will pave way for a fully functioning ASWA board within 6months, i.e. by quarter one of 2019
- d) Review ASWA's financial and programmatic status and support the secretariat to develop a 2019 work plan and fundraising plan
- e) Support the Executive Director's (ED's) transition
- f) Act as the official communication and liaison with secretariat, funders and other stakeholders until a board is duly elected.

The ICC has since been constituted and held two meetings so far with one of those being in person on the 7th and 8th of October in Nairobi. The ICC has committed to oversee the short-term process of ASWA institutional capacity strengthening culminating in holding an annual general meeting of ASWA membership bringing together representatives of its membership organizations from across Africa to elect new board members and approve the strategic plan. The AGM will also discuss membership structure, roles and responsibilities as well as agree on membership code of conduct, whistle blowing and other policies that affect the membership and governance of ASWA.

A strong and credible governance is necessary for the success and sustainability of any organization. ASWA is keen on demonstrating this to both its community and also the partners and funders as an accountability measure.

This therefore is a call for nominations for people interested in serving as ASWA board members in a voluntary unpaid role. Board members provide leadership, governance and oversight to help further ASWA's Vision and Mission. Nominations are sought from sex workers based on the following Criteria

Criteria to serve as a member of ASWA board:

- Nominee represents the interest of sex workers and must belong to a sex worker led organization who is member of ASWA
- Nominee is passionate about the growth and development of ASWA
- Nominee is knowledgeable in issues of sex workers and governance of organizations and can contribute meaningfully in discussions
- Has demonstrated leadership in championing the rights of sex workers (e.g. has led an advocacy campaign, led a project in advancing the rights of sex workers, is an active member of a sex worker led organization)
- Have knowledge/experience of leadership and governance in community-based organization
- Must be a sex worker
- Should be comfortably literate and able to communicate (speak and write) in any of the three ASWA official languages of communication (English, French, and Portuguese)
- Is willing, available and has time to commit to ASWA's transition process in terms of
- Willingness to serve on a voluntary basis. Travel and accommodation related expenses will be taken care of to attend agreed upon joint meetings.
- Commit at least three meetings in a year - One in person and two online.
- Respond to communication in a timely manner
- Nominee has strong interpersonal skills and is keen on positive change and is focused on solutions.
- Be a confident communicator and enjoy working in a community with peers.
- Nominee is residing within Africa.

Regional Representation

This is necessary to position ASWA as a dynamic, innovative, community led and inclusive organization where sex workers in all their diversity find genuine expression. A nine-member ASWA board will be elected to reflect regional, gender identity and diversity as follows: -

- a. 2 Slots Eastern Africa
- b. 2 Slots Southern Africa – English and Portuguese speaking

- c. 2 Slots West Africa – English and French speaking members
- d. 2 Slots Central Africa
- e. ASWA secretariat will have the ED as the Secretary to the board with non- voting powers

Nominees should submit a letter of motivation, a CV and the names and contact details of two referees to ASWA@stepsahead.co.ke with 'Board Member nomination' in the email subject line

Nominations will be accepted until **January 15, 2019**.

Nominations received after that date will not be considered. The consultants will review the nominations based on the criteria and present the names at the AGM election by members