

AALHE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Welcome!

AALHE's goal is to continuously improve the volunteer experience. AALHE recognizes that our volunteers are crucial to the viability of the organization. In order to accomplish our strategic goals, we need volunteers such as yourself. AALHE appreciates your time, contribution, and dedication. Thank you.

We provide this handbook to help volunteers be successful, understand expectations, and know where to go for assistance.

Introduction to AALHE

The Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) is an organization of practitioners interested in using effective assessment practice in higher education to document and improve student learning. As such, it serves the needs of those in higher education for whom assessment is a tool to help them both understand and develop processes to improve learning. AALHE offers assessment practitioners a variety of ways to learn and share their thoughts about assessing and improving learning. Therefore, the viability and success of AALHE depends on its members and the many people who volunteer their time to the organization. AALHE encourages its members to seek formal and informal professional development; to network with others; to collaborate on presentations, research, and/or publications; and to be engaged in all that AALHE has to offer.

AALHE has a Board of Directors that manages the Association and consists of 12-15 members, including the President, Past President/Treasurer, President-Elect; and the Executive Director/Conference Director/Assistant Treasurer.

More information about AALHE: [History](#), [Legal](#), [Board of Directors](#), [Bylaws](#), [Organizational Chart](#).

Mission Statement

Our mission is to develop and support a community of educators and inform assessment practices in higher education to foster and improve student learning and institutional quality.

See our [Strategic Goals](#).

AALHE Volunteers

AALHE welcomes any member in good standing to become a volunteer. Volunteer opportunities include contributing time to support AALHE conferences or events; working on a committee, subcommittee, or task force; and becoming a Board member through the annual election. Qualities of effective AALHE volunteers include creativity, innovation, good work ethic, passion for student learning, reliability, and a willingness to dedicate time to the organization.

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Our volunteers come from professional diverse backgrounds and include:

- assessment directors and coordinators who support, organize, and manage assessment-related activities;
- faculty and student affairs professionals who use assessment strategies to understand their students' learning;
- graduate students from a variety of disciplines;
- institutional researchers who develop systems to support the use of data to continuously improve student learning;
- institutional leaders who support and direct learning-quality initiatives;
- consultants, authors, and researchers who focus their work on documenting and improving student learning;
- professionals in higher education support organizations and technology providers [Note: members that are employed by technology providers can be volunteers, however they cannot be nominated to the Board]; and
- individuals who have retired professionally from the above roles but continue to share a passion for this important work.

AALHE Committees

The AALHE Board develops the charge for each board committee, subcommittee, task force, and ad hoc committee. Committee goals and metrics are drafted by each committee, aligned to the strategic plan, and approved by the Board. Most volunteers are assigned to an AALHE standing committee. A volunteer can be on no more than two committees at one time. All committees, with the exception of the Executive Committee, Conference Committee and Finance Committee, are led by AALHE volunteers. The Board members serve as committee liaisons and members. AALHE has ten standing committees:

- Collaborations & Partnerships Committee
- Communications Committee
- Conference Committee
- Executive Committee (open only to AALHE Officers)
- Finance Committee
- Infrastructure Committee
- President's Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Professional Development Committee
- Publications Committee
- Recruitment and Retention Committee

In addition, volunteers may serve on task forces and ad hoc committees that are created as needed.

What Volunteers Do

Volunteers do many different things, and there is something for everyone. Examples:

- Analyze website analytics and develop website content
- Chair or Vice-Chair a committee, subcommittee, or taskforce
- Collaboratively write materials for members and volunteers

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- Generate tweets and other posts for social media campaigns
- Identify organizations who could partner with AALHE
- Interpret survey results and make recommendations
- Locate potential webinar facilitators
- Participate in collaborative research projects
- Participate in committee meetings
- Review and/or edit articles
- Review conference proposals
- Serve on the Board of Directors (through an election process)
- Visit restaurants and outing locations to determine suitability for a future conference

How to Volunteer and Length of Service

AALHE members volunteer by completing the current [Volunteer Form](#). The form is updated every year and must be completed by all volunteers. The Recruitment and Retention Committee matches the volunteer with an appropriate assignment, taking the volunteer's experience and the AALHE needs into consideration.

A standing committee assignment is a one-year commitment, July 1 – June 30, however it is highly encouraged for volunteers to remain on a committee for at least three years for continuity of work. In addition, this allows for the natural progression to the Vice Chair and Chair roles. For example, year one (member of committee), year two (vice-chair of committee), and year three (Chair of the committee). Task forces and ad hoc committee assignments may be less than one year.

Volunteers unable to meet the term length should inform their chair immediately.

Expected Workload for Volunteers

By serving, volunteers enter into an agreement with the organization. AALHE is a vibrant, healthy organization because its volunteers and staff are committed and hard working. There is plenty to do, and AALHE wants volunteers it can rely on to see tasks through. Thus, AALHE asks members to evaluate their current situation for availability, flexibility, and commitment before volunteering.

The time commitment will vary by committee and assignment, but volunteers should plan on a minimum of the following:

- one full year, three-years preferred;
- attending one or two virtual, 1-hour meetings every month;
- attending additional 1-hour meetings each month if also serving on a subcommittee;
- completing 4-12 hours of work every month in addition to attending the virtual meetings.

In some cases, especially if a volunteer assists in outputs contributing to scholarship, the time commitment could be increased. For example:

1. Volunteers who take on leadership roles will have greater time commitments.
2. Standing committees, subcommittees, ad hoc committees and/or task forces
 - a. that undertake the production of scholarship (e.g., Publications Committee),

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- conduct research (e.g., Knowledge Development Task Force), write articles or other types of written products, participate in AALHE-initiated mentoring/consulting will have greater time commitments.
- b. that have “seasonal” work (e.g., Conference Committee, Summer Book Club, Finance Committee) have greater time commitments in particular months of the year.

Attendance Policy. If a volunteer misses three consecutive committee meetings and/or five within an academic year (July-June), they may be removed from the committee upon consultation with the committee chair.

Expected Conduct from Volunteers

AALHE strives to offer an exceptionally high-quality environment for its volunteers. To that end, AALHE volunteers are expected to participate in and conduct any AALHE business in a professional manner, emphasizing the highest ethical standards. Essential qualities expected in all volunteers include:

- *Integrity.* Volunteers are good stewards of AALHE resources and try to do what is right.
- *Honesty.* Volunteers tell the truth.
- *Courtesy.* Disagreement and debate, even strong disagreement and debate, is expected and even welcomed. However, at all times volunteers are expected to be civil, show good manners, be polite, and treat others with respect.
- *Respect for others.* The Association does not discriminate on the basis of the following characteristics including, but not limited to race, color, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, religion, sex, age, affectional/sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, veteran status, personal appearance, genetic information, political affiliation, familial status, marital status, or disability in any of its policies, procedures or practices. Volunteers are expected to avoid disrespectful behaviors, such as critiquing particular assessment practices; shunning; offensive jokes; yelling or screaming; bullying behavior; abusive language or behavior; name-calling; unwanted physical contact; or rude gestures.
- *Completion of work in a timely manner.* If circumstances change and a volunteer is unable to complete work on time, we ask the volunteer to communicate this with the appropriate committee/subcommittee chair.
- *Avoidance of conflicts of interest.* Conflicts of interest arise when volunteers’ financial, personal, or professional interests prevent them from performing their volunteer duties in an unbiased manner. Volunteers are expected to disclose possible conflicts of interest and to remove themselves from situations where conflicts of interest prevent them from acting in the best interest of AALHE.
- *Protecting the rights of students and others when engaged in research.* Volunteers, when engaged in research, are expected to uphold the highest standards of protection for research participants. Volunteers are expected to protect the rights of students by avoiding disclosure of confidential student information including following the appropriate guidelines and regulations such as the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99).
- *Confidentiality and privacy of AALHE members.* There are times where member names, institutions, email addresses, or other sensitive information about AALHE

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members may be made available to volunteers. Volunteers must keep all member information confidential and at no time are volunteers allowed to use member information for any purposes beyond the scope of their volunteer duties, including but not limited to: forwarding, sharing, selling, or disclosing any member information to others (including active AALHE members and/or members within your assigned committee, as well as vendors or other associations). The Board liaison will determine information to be shared and will arrange for the information to be directly sent to those who need such information.

Volunteers who do not abide by these expectations may be removed from their volunteer position by the committee/subcommittee Chair or by an Executive Committee member.

How to provide feedback on the volunteer experience

AALHE's goal is to continuously improve the volunteer experience. AALHE recognizes that our volunteers are crucial to the viability of the organization. In order to accomplish our strategic goals, we need volunteers such as yourself. Communication is key in helping us to improve your experience. To this end, the Recruitment and Retention Committee will survey each active volunteer annually for volunteer experience feedback. In addition, AALHE encourages its volunteers to reach out to their committee chair/vice-chair, Board liaison, or any member of the Board of Directors to discuss their experiences anytime throughout the year. If you, as an AALHE volunteer, experience or witness harassment or disrespectful treatment, please report it immediately to the AALHE Executive Director, President, Past President, or President-Elect.

How to be a leader in the organization

Engagement is key to becoming a leader within AALHE. Volunteers have the opportunity to lead a committee, subcommittee, taskforce, ad hoc committee, and/or oversee the successful execution of the organization's outputs (e.g., *Intersection of Assessment and Learning* journal, emerging dialogues, newsletter, twitter chats, webinars, etc.). The below guidance should be followed by all committees [Note: The Publications--Intersection Subcommittee may follow separate guidelines, process, and/or structure due to the significant amount of work and need for sustainability].

Serve as a Chair of a committee or subcommittee. Chair level responsibilities include:

1. Scheduling, hosting, and leading meetings.
 - a. regular meetings should occur each month
 - b. regular meetings should be scheduled with at least one month's notice
[Note: in addition to regular meetings, ad hoc meetings could be scheduled on an as needed basis with a much shorter notice]
 - c. regular meetings should be scheduled the same day/time each month
 - d. if the chair cannot attend the regularly scheduled monthly meeting, the vice-chair will act on behalf of the chair.
2. Agenda setting.
 - a. agenda setting is critical to keeping the committee on task
 - b. agendas should be drafted in collaboration with vice-chair and/or the board liaison

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- c. agendas should be shared with the committee members at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
3. Committee Goals.
 - a. collaborate with members to draft short-term and long-term goal statements
 - b. collaborate with members to draft tasks and metrics
4. Board Reports.
 - a. committee board reports are submitted to the AALHE executive director monthly
 - b. reports are drafted by the chair, and reviewed by the entire committee prior to being submitted
5. Delegation.
 - a. the chair should not be doing all the work
 - b. create (as needed) any subcommittees
 - c. assign task(s) to each volunteer
6. It is critical that the Chair also maintain a current roster with contact information. Recruitment and Retention will supply the committee membership information. Any changes to committee membership should be sent directly to the Chair of Recruitment and Retention. Updated rosters will be posted in Basecamp on an as needed basis.

Serve as a Vice-Chair of a committee or subcommittee. Vice-Chair level responsibilities include:

1. Taking minutes at each meeting
2. Documenting decisions made in meetings and commitments for future action
3. Posting the meeting minutes in Basecamp within one week after the meeting takes place
4. Ensuring accuracy of attendance in the minutes - include all committee members and indicate who was in attendance, absent, or excused
5. Following up with committee members who are absent from meetings without sending prior notice

Serve on the Board of Directors. Nominations for open board seats are accepted in December or January. Board nominations and self-nominations are acceptable from any active AALHE member volunteer who has demonstrated their commitment to ensuring tasks are executed and implemented with integrity. Although not required, serving in a leadership role such as being elected as a committee vice chair or a chair, is one of the most successful paths toward being nominated and elected to the AALHE Board of Directors. [Note: all nominees may not appear on the final slate: the Board determines the final slate based on number of seats available, diversity, geographical location, institution type, and skills needed].

Process of Chair/Vice-Chair Rotation

In May of each year, the Board Liaison of each committee will send an email to all members on the committee requesting self-nomination of Vice-Chair. The goal is to allow anyone interested in leading the committee to have an opportunity. By self-nominating for Vice-Chair of a committee or subcommittee, the volunteer is committing to two full years; as Vice-Chair in year one and Chair of the committee in year two. If more than one person self-nominates, then voting by committee members will take place. Before the vote, the

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nominees will submit a brief bio and experience and expertise that they would bring to the committee as Vice-Chair (no more than 200 words) in order to assist the voting. Given that nomination to the Board of Directors is based, in part, on a volunteers' demonstrated commitment and leadership success in AALHE, serving as chair and/or vice-chair is an appropriate step for those interested in serving on the Board.

What volunteers can expect from AALHE leaders

AALHE leaders are the Board of Directors and any volunteer assigned to lead a committee/ subcommittee. The Board of Directors has the responsibility for general management and control of the activities of the Association. The Board aims to serve the needs of those in higher education for whom assessment is a tool to help them understand learning and develop processes for improving it. Volunteers can expect that Board members will conduct themselves with integrity and professionalism as they fulfill the mission and strategic goals of the organization; develop policies, resources, and opportunities for AALHE member interaction and networking; and continually monitor the effectiveness of the organization, its services, and staff. Volunteers can expect timely email correspondence regarding agendas, meeting minutes, board reports, and/or the status of assigned tasks. Volunteers can expect to be treated fairly and respectfully.

Each Committee is assigned a Board Liaison. *The Role of the committee's Board Liaison.*

1. Communicate to the Board any committee proposals needing a Board vote
2. Report Board actions/outcomes back to the committee
3. Share with the committee any Board actions that may impact the committee and/or committee work
4. Attend all meetings
5. Fill in as needed for the Chair and/or Vice-Chair
6. Assist in drafting agendas and minutes
7. Ensure all committee work is shared with the Board
8. Enter Basecamp Team for their committee at least two times per week [unless on leave that has been reported to the Executive Director] and respond to any inquiries
9. Assist in transitioning chair and vice-chair roles
10. The liaison is a non-voting member

Intellectual property ownership policy

AALHE encourages its members, member volunteers, committees, and task forces to contribute to scholarship through the production of books, articles, web sites, blogs, and other scholarly materials. AALHE members, member volunteers, committees, and task forces will also regularly be engaged in the production of content that are essential for the operation of the organization, including conference promotional materials, social media posts, brochures, advertisements, etc. For ownership purposes, all materials created will be classified into one of four categories:

1. Materials created as part of the routine operation and business of AALHE. This includes, but is not limited to: materials created by committees (such as conference advertisements; meeting minutes; organizational policies; committee plans and strategies; advertising materials; etc.). These materials will be owned solely by AALHE.

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The contributions of the authors and committees who created the materials will be recognized by AALHE in a manner determined by AALHE.

2. Materials given to AALHE for the purpose of publication. Unless otherwise agreed, authors of materials published by AALHE in the Intersection of Assessment and Learning, Emerging Dialogues, Conference Proceedings, Conference Materials, and video and audio content in webinars and podcasts agree to grant AALHE a non-exclusive license to share those materials at AALHE's discretion.
3. Materials commissioned by AALHE. Materials that AALHE directly requests be produced will be solely owned by AALHE. For example, if AALHE charges a task force with creating a book on Assessing Civic Engagement, then AALHE will solely own the project. All contributors to the materials will be recognized by AALHE in a manner determined by AALHE. Agreement for AALHE's ownership of the commissioned material between AALHE and the contributors to the material shall be collected as close to the beginning of the project as practicable.
4. Non-commissioned materials that are not part of the routine operation and business of AALHE. Unless described by categories #1, #2 and #3 above, all created materials are owned by the individuals that contributed to the creation of that material. For example, if members of the Recruitment and Retention committee decided, on their own, to create a proposal for a book that would chronicle the lives of several AALHE members, this material would be jointly owned by all of the authors who contributed to that project. AALHE reserves the right to withhold endorsement of or promotion of any non-commissioned project. AALHE may, at its sole discretion, prohibit the use of AALHE resources in the production of any non-commissioned project. AALHE recommends authors involved in non-commissioned projects develop written agreements with each other.

Contact AALHE

For all AALHE-related questions please contact our Executive Director, Angela Hoffman-Cooper.

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The AALHE Volunteer Handbook was created by the Recruitment & Retention Committee with approval from the Board. The Recruitment and Retention Committee reviews and updates the handbook on a yearly basis. As such, the committee encourages volunteers to provide suggestions for additional content to be considered. Please send suggestions to info@aalhe.org.