

ASLE Advocacy Policy

Advocacy Statement Procedures

ASLE seeks to inspire and promote intellectual work in the environmental humanities and arts. Our vision is an inclusive community whose members are committed to environmental research, education, literature, art and service, environmental justice, and ecological sustainability. As part of this vision, and only in selective cases, the ASLE Executive Council is permitted to endorse a policy or statement if it meets the criteria below.

The ASLE Executive Council is empowered to speak for the association on public issues where these directly affect our ability to safely meet in national or regional conferences, and freely conduct our business. Such issues include, but are not restricted to, the passage of laws and regulations tending to discriminate against particular classes or groups of association members. The ASLE Executive Council is authorized to make such public statements only when an ASLE member in good standing has proposed the location for a biennial conference, an off year symposium, or other event to be sponsored by ASLE.

Additionally, ASLE members in good standing can propose that ASLE endorse a particular stance on academic issues that may be of concern to our members, especially those that threaten tenure, shared governance, and academic freedom. In order to qualify, the member(s) must provide a rationale that highlights the issue's wide scope and its relevance to the association's mission, particularly as it relates to "scholars, educators, students, and writers in the environmental humanities and arts."

Finally, ASLE may consider requests for advocacy brought by non-members to the officers or the Executive Council. In such a case, an officer or member of the Executive Council will become responsible for investigating the validity of the request based on the criteria outlined above. The investigator will offer a report on the situation and render an initial judgment of validity. The officers and Executive Council will then consider how to respond to the request.

ASLE will not advocate on behalf of individual tenure cases. Neither does the Association have the resources to advocate for individual programs or departments, though it may do so in exceptional cases where a decision or policy may have wide-reaching implications across academic institutions. The proposing member(s) should also provide information in their rationale about other associations and entities that have taken a similar stance with regard to the specific issue and provide specific information about how their decision or policy would have broad impact beyond their institution.

Proposed advocacy statements should be submitted to the ASLE Executive Council. If the proposed statement is approved by a two-thirds majority of the ASLE Executive Council, then the Executive Council can draft its own advocacy statement or sign onto an existing statement. If the Executive Council decides that the advocacy statement is inappropriate, proposing member(s) will be informed as to why it is deemed outside the scope of ASLE advocacy. Depending on the timing and content of the request, the Executive Council may decline to support or reconsider the advocacy statement, suggest revisions to the resolution for future reconsideration, or suggest that the proposal follow the resolution policies, rather than be submitted as an advocacy statement to the ASLE Executive Council. Any officer or Executive Council member with a conflict of interest relative to a given request must immediately disclose the existence of the conflict and recuse themselves from discussion and voting *before discussion begins*.

Current and incoming ASLE Executive Council members and staff may not initiate or sponsor advocacy statements involving the Executive Council member or their immediate family's job or institution.

Advocacy statements will be publicized to our membership. Members requesting the advocacy statement will be informed that the statement will be made public. All new advocacy statements will be announced at the Business Meeting at the annual conference.

The ASLE Executive Council will select representatives who can speak to the press/media and answer inquiries regarding the advocacy statement. These representatives can be current Executive Council members or the Executive Council can designate ASLE members in good standing to speak on their behalf. ASLE members, including former Executive Council members, can speak about the advocacy statement, but they are representing themselves, not ASLE.

Resolutions Proposal Procedures

In addition to requesting advocacy statements by the Executive Council, ASLE members in good standing can also propose resolutions on issues that may be of concern to our members. In order to qualify, a proposed resolution must have at least ten (10) sponsors and 100 signatures of ASLE members in good standing for a total of 110 members. Both the resolution and the signatures must be presented to the ASLE Executive Council for consideration at least two months prior to the date of the biennial conference.

The ASLE Executive Council can decide if the resolution would be appropriate for the membership to discuss, debate, and vote on; it may provide suggestions for revisions to the resolution.

If the resolution is approved for consideration by a two-thirds majority of the Executive Council, the resolution will be presented to the membership via email at least one month before the biennial conference.

The resolution will also be presented at the general business meeting at the biennial conference for consideration by the general membership. At least ten (10) members in good standing who are sponsoring the resolution must be present at the general business meeting to explain the merits of the resolution and field questions. Sponsoring members will also serve as primary contact people for the resolution. The resolution will be given at least 15 minutes of time at the business meeting, which is usually one hour.

Additionally, the ASLE Executive Council can reserve a special session(s) for a full discussion of the resolution. Members will be given time to ask questions and debate the pros and cons of the resolution, with Executive Council members moderating the session and providing equal time to all sides, as much as possible.

The Executive Council will decide by at least a two-thirds majority within 30 days after the biennial conference if more discussion and educational sessions are needed for the membership and if/when a vote by the entire membership should be held. The Executive Council has up to 15 months maximum after the biennial conference when the resolution was introduced to have the issue go up for a vote by the membership. The Executive Council can ask for further clarification on the resolution, make suggestions for revisions to the resolution, and postpone a decision, if circumstances warrant this. The Executive Council can solicit further feedback, organize educational sessions or panels at the next conference, etc., to ensure that members are aware and educated on the resolution.

All ASLE members in good standing may vote on a submitted resolution. Voting will be conducted electronically. For a resolution to pass, at least half of the members in good standing must vote. For voting purposes, the number of members shall be calculated as of January 1 of the conference year. A

simple majority (50% + 1) of those voting is required to approve the resolution. If so approved, the resolution shall be binding on the association.

The resolution should be officially signed with the names of the ten (10) resolution sponsors (or more), particularly those present at the general business meeting. The final resolution can be posted and publicized on the ASLE website. If the ASLE Executive Council decides to write a statement about the resolution, the statement must be approved by a two-thirds majority of Executive Council members.

Current and incoming ASLE Executive Council members and staff may not initiate or sponsor resolutions until such time as their elected term or appointment has ended. In educational panels or other sessions related to the resolution, they cannot present, but can moderate or chair these panels or forums. The ASLE Executive Council will select representatives who can speak to the press/media and answer inquiries regarding the resolution. These representatives can be current Executive Council members or the Executive Council can designate ASLE members in good standing to speak on their behalf. ASLE members, including former Executive Council members, can speak about the resolution, but they are representing themselves, not the ASLE.

Political Campaigns

ASLE may not intervene, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign for or against a candidate for public office. The association may not endorse candidates, contribute to campaigns, raise funds, distribute statements or become involved in any other activities that may be beneficial or detrimental to a candidate.

This policy was adapted from the policies of the Association for Asian American Studies and the American Studies Association.