

Proposal for a Biennial Delegate Assembly - 2/27/2025 - Dana Bredemeyer

The SCICR proposal, as it stands, eliminates the TDA completely, and has voting members vote directly for, and elect, Governing Board members. I believe that the TDA process has very significant value to the Fellowship and should not be eliminated. The BDA is described here in general terms. If there is sufficient interest, I will write the constitutional language.

The current TDA is a triennial meeting. The SCICR proposal is for Governing Board elections to take place every two years, so the delegate assembly proposed here is a biennial meeting, a BDA, a Biennial Delegate Assembly.

To become a Fellowship member, the original SCICR proposal required only that a person express an interest in the Urantia Book. To become a voting member, that person only had to wait 180 days after joining. The Membership Improvement Committee's recommendations, just adopted by the General Council as an amendment to the SCICR proposal, increases the 180 days to a full year, and requires that the applicant satisfy three of these four criteria:

1. Attests to having read or listened to the Urantia Book in its entirety.
2. Provides evidence of service to the revelation.
3. Submits recommendations from at least 2 voting members.
4. Documents participation in a Urantia Book study group.

Even with these more meaningful requirements for voting members recently adopted, having individual voting members directly elect Governing Board members is a very big change from the current TDA process. I have not heard any good argument in favor of it, let alone a compelling argument, and such a big change should have a compelling argument.

I have participated in 5 TDAs for two societies spread over 40 years. If you have not participated in a TDA, please speak with some friends who have, and get their perspective on its value. The value of the TDA is not its association with societies. Abandoning the society aspect of the TDA is a necessary step, I believe. The real value of the TDA is that it concentrates and amplifies - through confidential and facilitated, sharing and discussion - the experience, knowledge, perspective, and wisdom of the TDA delegates concerning Governing Board candidates, AND applies that group-enhanced experience, knowledge, perspective, and wisdom in the election of members of the General Council or Governing Board. In addition, the TDA provides:

- Additional opportunities for leadership development and service to the Fellowship (as delegates to the TDA, and as its Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary).
- Additional ways for all members to engage with the governance processes of the Fellowship.
- A balancing mechanism. TDA delegates can, and do, consider overall composition and balance of the full General Council or Governing Board, looking at such factors as gender, geography, skills, and any other criteria that seem important to produce a high-functioning Governing Board.

I propose this Biennial Delegate Assembly.

- The BDA would have 15 delegates, though this number could be adjusted up or down.
- The BDA would take place every two years, IN BETWEEN the years when Governing Board members are elected.
- Any voting member in good standing may apply to be a delegate to the BDA.
- The Nominations Commission receives and vets delegate applications, and provides a slate of candidates who wish to be delegates to a BDA.
- All voting members participate in the election of delegates to the BDA, and they can vote for up to twelve (12) candidates.
- The 12 candidates with the most votes become delegates.
- The other BDA candidates, with at least (X to be determined) votes, become alternates. If a delegate is unable to participate in the BDA, the alternate with the most votes replaces them.
- In addition, two delegates are elected by the Governing Board, and one is appointed by the President. This is in recognition of the particular knowledge and wisdom of the GB and President. I would hope that these three delegates would be selected to insure broad representation, particularly of the under-represented.
- BDA delegates are known for a full year before the Governing Board election.
- In the GB election year, the Nominations Commission provides a slate of candidates for the GB, as provided in the SCICR proposal.
- The BDA delegates meet and discuss and elect the GB members
- At the conclusion of the GB election, the BDA can dissolve, or remain in effect, and periodically meet to fill vacated GB seats.

After using this new BDA model for a few elections, we can decide whether to keep it, adjust it, or move to a SCICR model.

Thanks for considering this proposal. Please share your thoughts or questions with me directly (dana.bredemeyer@urantiabook.org) or with the Governing Board Improvement Committee (gbic@urantiabook.org) chartered by the Executive Committee 2/23/2025.