

Alumni-Elected Trustee, Cornell University Board of Trustees

General Information

Nomination start - 07/01/2025
Nomination end - 06/01/2026
Process for Filling Position: Submission of a nomination
Number of Seats: 2
Location: Non-geographically based
Eligible Constituent(s): Alumni

Summary of Position

Subject to the Charter of the University and laws of the of the State, the Board of Trustees shall have supreme control over the University, including every college, school, and academic department, division and center thereof. The Bylaws delegate responsibility for day-to-day administration of the University to the president and his staff; but the Board retains ultimate policy-making authority. Other responsibilities include but are not limited to: electing tenured faculty; electing the president, provost, university counsel/secretary of the corporation, VPs, Deans, other senior administrators & establishing their compensation; providing advice on educational policy, programs, and campus life; and adopting the University's budget.

Cornell Interests:

Affinities

University-Wide

Talent Expectations: Skills

Communicate

Speak to Groups

The ability to communicate the role of the Board of Trustees in context of the role of the University's administrative officers is a critical skill, as is the ability to answer questions about difficult or controversial decisions made by the Board or administration with tact and discretion as well as honesty and forthrightness. Must have persuasive communications skills and good listening skills.

Lead/Manage/Serve

Lead a Group

Manage Projects

Serve on a Committee or Board

Provide policy oversight for the University's real estate and physical plant. Provide policy guidance on alumni and fundraising activities. With a large board, much of the work of the trustees necessarily takes place in committees. Thus, trustees must be able to work collegially with each other and with members of the Administration. Provide advice on financial policies and practices that have a significant impact on the University's operations. Provide advice on the University's role and responsibilities as the land grant

institution for the State of New York.

Build/Maintain Relationships

Engage Individuals

Represent Cornell

Cornell's Board is an active one, and regular attendance at meetings and other special events is expected. Trustees are fiduciaries of the University and represent the best interests of the University as a whole, not just the group that nominates and elects them. Trustees are expected to make significant contributions to Cornell. Those contributions may be of time, professional expertise, fundraising ability, financial contribution, or in a variety of other ways; but each trustee should be selected because he or she has the ability to help Cornell in a unique manner. Furthermore, trustees must represent the Board at events in the Cornell community.

Responsible Contact

Contact Name: Cornell Volunteer Programs

Email: ovp@cornell.edu

Time Commitment

Average Time Commitment: 5-7 hrs/month

Duration: Not Applicable

Term of Office: 4 years

Number of terms in Office: 1 term

Requirements

Prerequisites Eligibility: An alumnus or alumna of Cornell University is someone who has matriculated at the university. All alumni may vote in the annual alumni trustee election. In order to be eligible to be on the ballot as an endorsed or unendorsed candidate, an alumnus must have attended the university for a minimum of one year at one of the Cornell University campuses and meet the other points of eligibility (as outlined below). Current Cornell University students are not eligible to run on the alumni-elected trustee ballot. A two-year hiatus is required for any CATN member/leader prior to being considered for the ballot. Criteria for nominations include these suggested skills, attributes, and experiences of trustees: 1) Contributions to the Board of Trustees: recognized level of success; demonstrated commitment to Cornell; acknowledgement of the importance of higher education; strong integrity and exemplary conduct; diversity; and satisfaction of both broad and specific needs of the board. 2) Personal skills and characteristics: interpersonal ability in both one-on-one and group settings; good judgment and strong analytical aptitude; fervent yet not dogmatic convictions; proven leadership; vision and perspective, and the ability to articulate them; common sense and pragmatism. 3) Effectiveness as a prospective trustee: ability to put the university ahead of special interests or constituencies; undivided allegiance (e.g., concurrent service on another Ivy board would probably not work); availability to attend all the meetings and participate in committee work; collegiality (i.e., shares ideas and decision-making); and ongoing commitment to offer financial support to Cornell.

Hiatus Required? No hiatus required

Dues Required? No

Meetings

Meeting Attendance Required? Yes

Meeting Location(s):

On Campus: Yes

Off Campus: Yes

Off Campus Location: Meetings at off campus locations are typically held in NYC. Other meetings are on campus in Ithaca or via conference call.

Conference Call: Yes

Meetings per year: 4x year

Other Meeting Details: there may be additional committee meetings as well as the full meetings of the Board.

Additional Attendance Requirements: TCAM attendance

Yearly Philanthropic Expectation:

Make a gift to Cornell at a level of individual comfort

Alumni Trustee Election

Vote in the annual trustee election