



# Nomination Committee

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REPORT | 25th May 2023



**TOGETHER IN THE WORLD**

FEDERATION ASSEMBLY | JUNE 20TH - 24TH 2023

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## Introduction & Context

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**The Nomination Committee was named in February 2021, by the International Leaders, the International Leadership Team, and the International Stewardship Board, in accordance with Article 12 of the International Constitution. Our responsibilities included:**

- Drafting, through a process of consultation and discernment, a five-year mandate for the International Federation of L'Arche
- Recommending to the Federation Assembly, through a process of discernment, individuals to be appointed to the role of International Leader, Vice International Leader, Chair, and members of the International Stewardship Board
- Recommending to the International Leaders members of the International Reflection Council

**The members of the Nomination Committee are:**

- **Jenn Power**, Regional Leader, L'Arche Canada
- **Chris Asprey**, Head of Partnerships and Communication, L'Arche UK
- **Eileen Glass**, long term member, L'Arche Australia
- **Aden Raj**, Chair of Governing Council, Asha Niketan Chennai
- **Ben Nolan**, Regional Leader, L'Arche France

## Initial work

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**We began our work by learning about each other, about the role of the committee, and about the work of the Federation.**

In order to better understand the current reality, ongoing work, and priorities of the Federation, we met with several people involved in the leadership and projects of L'Arche International. These included:

- Key people involved with the Charter Team, Inclusion, and Evaluation and Learning
- Current International Leader and Vice International Leader
- Chair of the International Stewardship Board
- Director of Operations
- Individual meetings with each member of the International Leadership Team
- A mixture of small group meetings, individual meetings, and email submissions from members of the International Stewardship Board and Support Team

## Mandate Consultations

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### **Our work on the mandate began in earnest at the Extended Leadership meeting in March 2022.**

At this meeting, we shared what we had learned through the initial phase of our work, including the key priorities identified through our various interviews and consultations as named above. We engaged the participants at this meeting in small group discussions on what they saw as the key priorities for the Federation today. We asked for input from this group about how best to engage community members across the Federation in the mandate process.

In May 2022 we began to consult broadly throughout the Federation. We shared a first draft of a mandate based on the input from the Extended Leadership meeting, and asked communities to answer one key question - "What's the most important work L'Arche must do in the next five years?"

We had more than 60 submissions from individuals and groups around the Federation, including pictures, video, emails, and artwork. We used this feedback to write a second draft, which was circulated throughout the Federation in September 2022. There was widespread support for the priorities in this draft of the mandate. We received more than 30 contributions from individuals and groups about ways the draft could be improved. This input became part of the third and final draft of the mandate, which was circulated throughout the Federation in December 2022.

Since then, the mandate has been translated into 16 languages. We created an easy read, illustrated version which is available in English, French, and Spanish.

## International Stewardship Board

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### **Three members of the International Stewardship Board, including the Chair and Treasurer, are completing their second terms and thus are not eligible to continue on the Board. A fourth member, while eligible, is not available for a second term.**

Through our consultations, the Nomination Committee received many nominations for International Stewardship Board members. In our discernment, we took many factors into account. Our first priority was to propose a Chair. We next looked for a candidate with the skills and willingness to take on the role of Treasurer. We considered the priorities of the mandate along with what we had learned through our consultations with the International Leadership Team and looked for candidates whose skills and availability matched the needs of the Federation. We also worked to find a balance of genders and cultures.

At a time of significant transition, we feel we have secured a slate of candidates for the ISB who have the skills, commitment, and passion for the mission of L'Arche that will enable them to serve the Federation well over the next five years.

## Leadership Nomination

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### **Early in our work, it became clear that the leadership nomination process would be complex.**

We learned of tensions within the International Leadership Team, differing visions for the Federation, and a lack of clarity around questions of governance, authority, and power. In addition, the current International Leaders asked for a more open nomination process, a fact we shared with the Extended Leadership meeting in March 2022, and with the Federation as a whole in our communication of May 2022.

The decision of the current leaders to withdraw their candidacy in November 2022 significantly changed the landscape of our process. In December 2022 we shared the news of their decision with the Federation, and invited nominations for the roles of International Leader and Vice International Leader. We received more than thirty nominations from across the Federation. We also heard questions about what led the current leaders to withdraw, about the impact of such a change during a time of insecurity, and about what transition supports would be put in place.

The conditions named above, along with the release of the Study Commission report in January 2023, meant that the leadership selection process was taking place in a very unsettled context. Under those circumstances, the Nomination Committee held open the question of whether the conditions were right for discerning an International Leader and Vice International Leader for the Federation. During the Federation Leadership meeting in March 2023, we received clear direction that the Federation was not ready to name an International Leader or Vice International Leader at the Federation Assembly in June 2023. Instead, the International Stewardship Board and the International Leadership Team would recommend an interim plan, designed to put the conditions in place to support a successful nomination of those two key leadership roles.

## Recommendations

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**After two and half years working as a committee, we have learned a great deal about each other, about the 2012 Constitution, about the challenges and opportunities facing those who carry leadership roles at the international level, and about the nature of the International Federation of L'Arche Communities with all its strengths and vulnerabilities.**

We have also learned about the process of finding the right people at the right time to serve in the roles of International Leader and Vice International Leader. In light of that learning, we have some recommendations for how this process might be improved to better serve the needs of the Federation and its members.

- 1.** The role descriptions for International Leader and Vice International Leader should be reviewed to ensure they accurately reflect the responsibilities and demands of these roles in a way that can be understood by those within and outside the L'Arche network.
- 2.** The committee responsible for selecting leaders should contain representation of the International Stewardship Board. The work of the committee should be supported by the L'Arche International Director of Human Resources.
- 3.** A clear, objective process should be designed for the committee to follow, including a timeline, outline of key stakeholders to consult, documented evaluation of the current leaders, and a progress report on the mandate.
- 4.** When recruiting for new leaders, the role should be advertized both within and beyond the L'Arche network. Internal and external candidates should be invited to apply based on a clear role description, candidate profile, and expected outcomes.
- 5.** The support of an external recruitment/HR professional should be available to ensure the best possible outcome of the process.

## Conclusion

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**The work of the Nomination Committee has been more challenging than we anticipated, and has not led to all the outcomes we might have expected when we began our work in early 2021.**

Our work has also been incredibly rich and inspiring. We have had the privilege of listening to the wisdom of people across the Federation - leaders at the International level and members of local communities around the world. We have been challenged to think about the role of leaders in new ways. We have learned to listen - to you and to each other - more deeply. In our work as a committee, and through our interactions with so many of you, we have been part of the laughter, struggles, celebrations, and hard work that make up our daily life in L'Arche at all levels. For that - and for each of you who are working to live the mission of L'Arche every day - we are extremely grateful.