

# Region Council Handbook



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### 1. Purpose and Charter of Region Councils

A Region Council fosters coordination through effective communication among a grouping of WTS professional Chapters to build relationships, share best-practices and play an important role in advancing the vision and mission of WTS. The regional approach provides a forum of geographically aligned chapters to explore opportunities for leveraging programs, practices and membership benefits, as well as enhance ideas that achieve greater effectiveness of the organization. The Region Councils offer an important communication linkage from the local Chapter perspective to the WTS Chair’s Advisory Board, the International and Foundation Boards of Directors and with WTS staff.

There are six region councils that include one representative from each chapter in the region. Members serve as volunteer leaders of WTS and represent their chapter within the Council, and work to keep the interest of all members in the region in mind. Region Councils work with WTS International staff to implement organization-wide initiatives and in some cases host events that advance the region’s reach and connection to members and guests. To strengthen two-way communication with the International Board of Directors, a designated Board member serves as a liaison to each Region Council. Two members, the Chair and Vice Chair of each Region Council make up the Advisory Board to the Chair of the International Board.

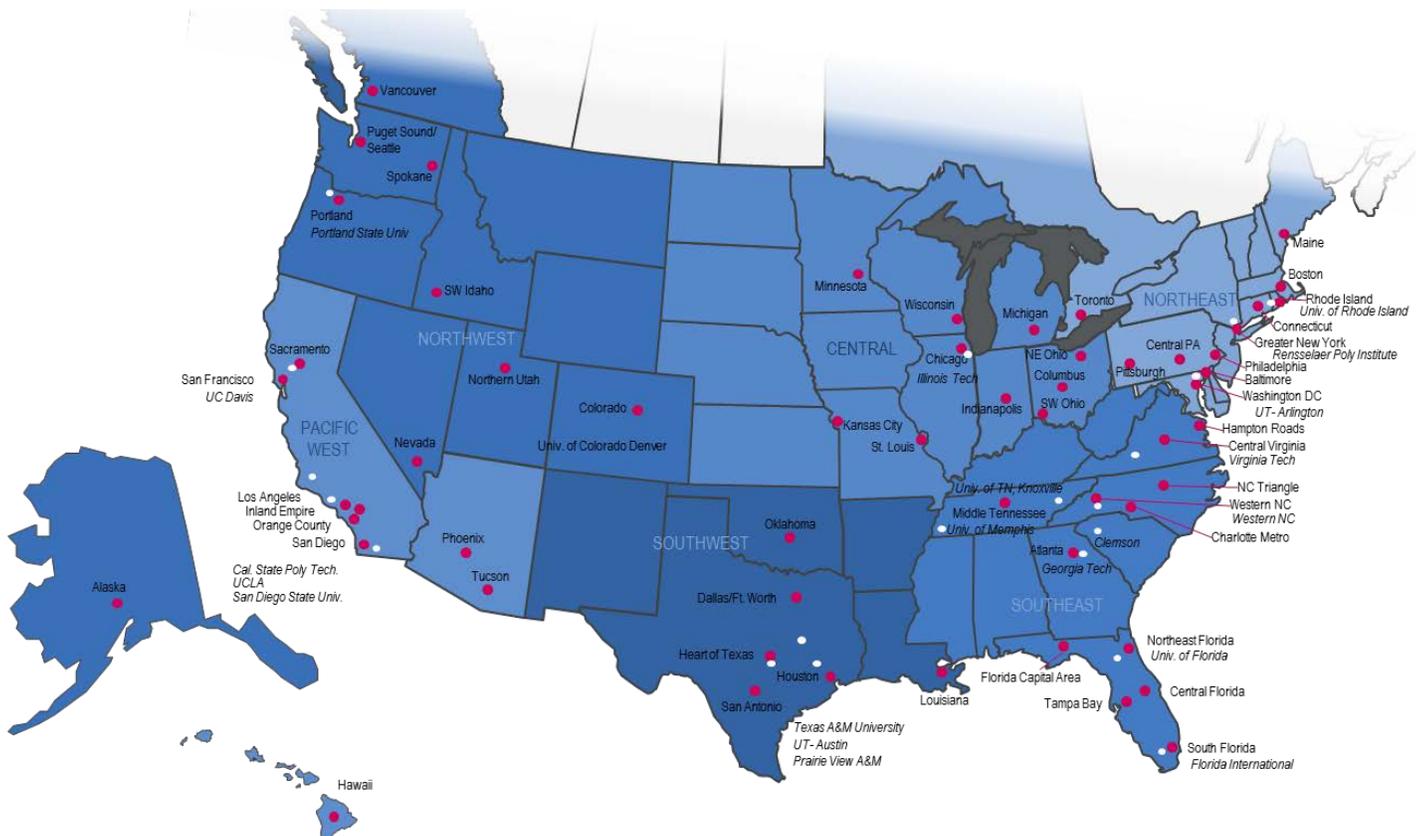
WTS Regions are formed and appointed by WTS Board of Directors and operate independently as a council of local chapters. WTS Regions are part of the greater WTS organization, they are not required to incorporate, apply for an EIN number, conduct annual audits, maintain independent budgets or bank accounts, or file taxes.

## Region Council Charter

- 1) Uphold the WTS mission and vision.
- 2) Collaborate and share ideas with the other chapter leaders within the region to share best practices and define local benchmarks.
- 3) Use the WTS International Strategic Plan as a guiding document to help Regions and Chapters select and implement activities and programming to achieve the organization’s goals and objectives.
- 4) Support the WTS organization to raise awareness about WTS and its mission, and grow membership in WTS.
- 5) Serve as a communication link between Chapters and the International Board.
- 6) Support the development and onboarding of new Chapters and strengthen small Chapters within the region.

## 2. Regions

The six regions are (inception year): Central (2013), Northwest (2014), Northeast (2015), Southwest (2016), Southeast (2018), Pacific West (2018). See Appendix for listing of Chapters in each Region.



## 3. Membership

### Membership Selection and Terms

A Region Council is made up of individuals who possess exemplary credentials and expertise. Requisites to be appointed to a Region Council include

- Be a current WTS member (required)
- Reside in the region (required)
- Be a base chapter member of the chapter represented (required)
- Past chapter board or committee member (preferred) or
- Graduate of the WTS Mid-level or Executive Leadership Training Program (optional)

*\* Chapters less than five years old or have 40 or less members, may have a current Board member on the Region Council.*

Region Council members represent their local chapter and as such are recommended for approval by their local chapter leadership. Terms for Region Council members are typically two (2) years, starting on January 1 and ending two years later (December 31) of odd-numbered years (i.e. 2019, 2021, 2023 etc) (this date may be adjusted as needed when a Council is first launched).

The Executive Committee of each Chapter Board should select their Region Council representative from amongst their membership who meets the requirements above by October 1<sup>st</sup> of the even-numbered year (i.e. 2018, 2020, 2022 etc). Once they have selected their representative to the Council, the Chapter notifies WTS Staff and the Board Liaison. The Board Liaison will present the Region Council slate to the November WTS Board meeting for approval.

At the formation of a Region Council, the Board Liaison will work with WTS staff and the Council representatives to select a Region Chair and Region Vice Chair. If there are multiple nominations for a position, the Board Liaison will facilitate an election.

The Chair and Vice Chair serve a two-year term. At the end of the two-year term, the Vice Chair becomes the Chair. At the beginning of a new Council term, the Board Liaison will work with the ascending Chair of the Region Council to solicit nominees for the position of Vice Chair and hold an election within the Council. The WTS International Board approves Region Council representatives at any time there is a change in members.

Region Council representatives may serve a maximum of two (2) terms consecutively. After serving two consecutive terms, the individual is not eligible to serve on the Region Council for another two terms (four years) unless they are assuming the Chair or Vice Chair position.

In the case that a Region Council member is unable to attend an in-person Region Council meeting, he/she may send another member of chapter leadership (chapter president, vice president, secretary, etc.) in his/her place.

### Council Member Resignation

If a council member changes their base chapter or finds they are unable to complete the two-year term, they may resign from the Council. To resign, the council member shall notify the Chair who will then notify the Board Liaison and Staff, who will notify the WTS International Board. The chapter that the member represents will be asked to recommend another qualified council member to finish the current term. The new representative will be presented to the WTS International Board for appointment. If the replacement representative is appointed with less than half of a full term remaining, the term will not count towards the “two consecutive term” maximum.

### **Council Member Removal**

If necessary, the Region Council Chair (or Vice Chair if the Chair is unable), shall notify the International Board Liaison that a council member is unable to fulfill duties and a replacement is needed. These two individuals will work together to determine the best way to initiate the replacement from that member's Chapter. Once a new representative is determined, the WTS International Board will need to approve the member.

## **4. Leadership and Responsibilities**

### **Chair and Vice Chair Position Descriptions**

#### **Region Council Chair**

- Schedules Council meetings, conference calls and works with the Vice Chair to set council meeting agendas, submits meeting minutes to WTS International Office for Region Council archiving
- Leads Council members in activities such as taking meeting minutes, initiative management, etc.
- Ensures quarterly reporting to the WTS International Board is accomplished
- Represents the Council on the International Chair's Advisory Board

#### **Region Council Vice Chair**

- Performs the duties of the Council Chair in his/her the absence
- Support the Council Chair in setting council meeting agendas
- Represents the Council on the International Chair's Advisory Board

### **Region Council Responsibilities**

With a focus on fulfilling the Region Council Charter (above), the Council's responsibilities are as follows:

- Support local Chapters efforts to provide value and engagement opportunities for members within the region
- Development and execution of regional action strategies to support the WTS Strategic Plan implementation
- Implementing regional activities, events and/or programs that benefit Chapters members
- In collaboration with the Region's WTS Board Liaison, serve as a representative voice of their Chapters with the International Board, Region Council Advisory Board and WTS Staff
- Identify and develop leaders for Region Council sustainability
- Support the formation of new Chapters within the region and the rejuvenation of rebuilding Chapters that may have membership decline.

## **5. International Board Liaison to Region Council**

To support the work of Region Councils, the Chair of the WTS International Board will appoint a Board member to serve as the "Region Council Board Liaison" in each region.

### **Board Liaison Role and Responsibilities**

The Board Liaison serves a Region Council by offering guidance, advice and connectivity to other parts of the organization. The Board Liaison should be viewed as a credible resource in regards to the WTS

International mission, vision, goals, and guiding principles. The Board Liaison should promote the strategies and activities of the Region Council while also keeping Council members abreast of WTS International Board news. The Board Liaison's role includes:

- Serving as a resource to the Region Council and promoting the Region Council's work within the organization.
- Assisting the Council with local matters, such as promotion of region events and activities, using their local connections and influence where applicable.
- Participating in region activities in a collaborative capacity.
- Promoting "One WTS" mind-set.
- Encouraging the Region Council to accomplish their work, inspiring and motivating them, and recognizing their accomplishments.
- Being sensitive to potential duplication of efforts between WTS International Committees and other Region Councils and raise awareness to minimize that duplication by suggesting communication and coordination.
- Serve as a communication conduit between the Region Councils and the WTS International Board to brief the Region Councils on Board activities and initiatives, answer questions, and also take feedback from the Regional Councils to the Board on issues they would like the Board to address.
- Board liaisons serve a role as a supporter of the Council and to ensure that the group has resources needed to carry out their goals.

It is important for each Board Liaison to conduct progress checks with the Region Council and offer any assistance they need to accomplish their work. If there is an issue that needs immediate attention of the WTS International Board, the Board Liaison will notify the WTS International Board Chair as soon as possible. It is recommended that the agendas for the WTS International Board include a standing item for general reporting of Region Council activity.

## 6. WTS International Chair's Advisory Board

The Advisory Board consists of the Chair and Vice Chair from each Region Council. For special circumstances, the International Board Chair may invite other representatives to also serve on the Advisory Board, including the Executive Director and other International Board members. The term is based on the individual holding the Chair or Vice Chair role on the Region Council.

The function of the Advisory Board is to be a conduit of information stemming from the local Chapters up to the International Board Chair, Executive Committee and/or the full International Board as well as receive information to take back to the Region Councils and Chapters. The Advisory Board may offer fresh perspectives, make recommendations, and/or provide key information and materials on any topic requested from the International Board. While each Region Council will implement an actionable plan for the Chapters to carry out the International Strategic Plan and vision, the Advisory Board and Board Liaisons will help establish and set priorities for each or all regions based on the International Board's vision and direction. The Advisory Board has the ability to focus on a specific programs and initiatives in order to advise or support WTS. It may evaluate the performance of a program, review/monitor/assess a specific program, gather input from Chapters and provide feedback, or be an independent/unbiased sounding board to the International Board Chair, Executive Committee and/or the full International Board.

It is recommended to have a minimum of two Advisory Board meetings per year. If possible, an in-person meeting may be held at the Annual Conference (May) and/or at Chapter Leadership Training (November). The date, time and place of the meetings shall be set by the International Board Chair. Conference calls are a viable option as well. The International Board Chair will solicit Agenda items from the Advisory Board members and establish the agenda.

## 7. Operations

### **Region Council Meetings**

The Region Council shall hold meetings to transact the business of the Council by conference call on a periodic basis agreed upon by the Council. The date, time and place of the meetings of the Region Council shall be set by the Chair. It is recommended to hold one meeting in person each year. These meetings may take place at the WTS Chapter Leader training, at one of the Council member's offices, or at another mutually agreeable and cost-effective location. Council members are responsible for their own travels expenses. All members including the Board Liaison are encouraged to attend all meetings.

Minutes of the meeting shall be taken by a Council volunteer and distributed shortly after the conclusion of the meeting. All meeting minutes shall be sent to the WTS office for official record keeping.

### **Annual Budget and Resource Allocation**

Region Councils are not required to open a bank account or manage finances. Region events and activities should be self-sustaining and may include fundraising in which the Region Council will lead and conduct, as long as it is not in conflict with local or international fundraising efforts.

### **Fundraising**

*To be further developed.* There is an initiative underway to determine Region involvement when an Annual Conference is held in the region.

## 8. Quarterly Reports and Communications

The Region Council Chair or designated representative is responsible for Region Council communications and development of a quarterly report for the International Board packet. *A template is under development.*

Communications activities include:

- Region Council website updates
- Collaborates on communication support on web and newsletters
- Work with Board Liaison to facilitate information sharing between Region Council and International Board

## 9. Programs and Activities

There are several programs and activities for the Region Council to give attention. The members of the Council shall give priority to those that best support the implementation of the International Strategic

Plan. *This section will be updated on a periodic basis where priorities and needs will shift from time to time.*

**A. Initiative implementation driven from International strategic plan**

- During the first 6 months of the Region Council term (Jan –Jun odd-number year), the members shall set priorities that work on advancing areas of the strategic plan

**B. Assess Chapter health across the region**

- Help develop new chapters within their geography and play an important role in fostering new chapter success
- Develop a “buddy” Chapter program to help develop small, struggling or new chapters in the region
- Student Chapter development should be considered

**C. Conduct Chapter Committee Leader calls**

Provide connectivity for best practices and information sharing. This shall be determined by the interest in the Region to host such calls. A Council member shall volunteer to be the leader of the calls and hold the responsibility for setting and managing the calls.

- Chapter Presidents
- Communications
- Membership
- Mentoring
- Programs
- Recognitions
- Scholarship / Foundation
- Transportation YOU
- Treasurers

**D. Region Events and Activities**

- Educational events and conferences for members (webinars, in-person format)
- Networking activities (may include receptions tied to other events)
- High-level leader roundtable discussions (with local industry leaders)
- Industry research projects (for example Glass Ceiling Initiative)
- Bring national focus to local high-level projects and industry initiatives
- Development of chapter operations materials
- Student activities (Transportation YOU-age, college)
- Participate in WTS awareness activities that recruit members and may lead to development of new chapters
- Activities that foster chapter idea sharing and collaborations

**E. Host a mini-conference**

- Determine the model based on lessons learned in other regions to accomplish any of the activities in Sections A through D above.
- Must avoid hosting in the calendar year when Annual Conference or Chapter Leader Training is also being held within the Region

# Appendix 1

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## Regional Conferences

### **A. Hosting a Regional Conference**

WTS Regional conferences have been developed by some Region Councils as an opportunity for members in the region to attend a local conference that will provide networking, technical awareness and professional development as well as raise the visibility of the local chapters and the WTS mission. The Region Council is responsible for conference program content, local fundraising, and serves as high-level advisors on location, timing and pricing of the conference.

### **B. Planning a Regional Conference: An Overview**

Before the Region Council commits to hosting a conference, it's important to consider the work involved and map out a plan to ensure that they are fully prepared to commit to executing a successful event. The Region Council is asked to submit a letter proposal to the International Board and Executive Director for organizational approval before proceeding with any conference planning. In the case that a regional conference is not approved, the Council may consider to resubmit a proposal in the future. A regional conference may not occur in the region if there is an Annual Conference or Chapter Leader Training slated for that region in the proposed year.

The Proposal will need to respond to the following:

- List the program goals and expected outcomes of conducting this event
- Proposed date and location (city, state) for this event
- Identify the Chapter that will serve as the financial “bank” and contract signatory for the conference
- Proposed theme
- Target number of attendees
- Registration price range
- Target fundraising goal
- Identify the programming for the conference: proposed topics, keynote and panel speakers, and other activities to occur during the conference
- Length (one day, one and half days, etc.)
- Format (general session, breakout sessions, panels, etc.)

# Appendix 2

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## Chapters by Region

### Central

1. Chicago
2. Columbus
3. Indianapolis
4. Kansas City
5. Michigan
6. Minnesota
7. Northeast Ohio
8. Southwest Ohio
9. St Louis
10. Wisconsin

### Northwest

11. Alaska
12. Colorado
13. Nevada
14. Oregon
15. Seattle
16. Spokane
17. Southwest Idaho
18. Utah

### Northeast

19. Baltimore
20. Boston
21. Central Pennsylvania
22. Connecticut
23. Greater New York
24. Maine
25. Philadelphia
26. Pittsburgh
27. Rhode Island
28. Toronto
29. Washington DC

### Pacific West

30. Hawaii
31. Inland Empire
32. Los Angeles
33. Metro Phoenix
34. Orange County
35. Sacramento
36. San Diego
37. San Francisco
38. Tucson

### Southwest

39. Austin
40. Dallas/Ft Worth
41. Houston
42. Louisiana
43. Oklahoma
44. San Antonio

### Southeast

45. Atlanta
46. Central Florida
47. Central Virginia
48. Charlotte Metro
49. Florida Capital Area
50. Hampton Roads
51. Middle Tennessee
52. North Carolina Triangle
53. Northeast Florida
54. South Florida
55. Tampa Bay
56. Western North Carolina