

Candidate board formation policy

‘Apollo’, shoot for the moon

Adapted by ‘Doppler’, a colourful shift on the GA of 22-11-2022

In the past few years, different formation processes for the next candidate board of Van der Waals have been applied. In general this went quite smoothly, with or without applications. However, one thing that was noticed is that it is not clear when certain parts of the process should take place and who has something to say about this. In this document, the timeline of this process is captured, which ensures a good information flow for the association. At the end of this document, a recommendation is included about the number of people that should be on a board.

First of all, the (kandi)⁵-info lunch should take place just before the Christmas break. During this lunch, the first things about doing a board year at Van der Waals are explained and every member is welcome to join. Wervingsdagen and the FSE-DB should be invited to this as well, as it is a good way for them to introduce themselves and broadens the view of the members on doing a board year. With this timing, members can use the Christmas break well to think about their options of doing a board year.

About two weeks after the Christmas break, or at least before the start of quartile 3, the (kandi)⁴-Borrel should take place. Only people who are still seriously considering a board year at our association should attend this drink. During this drink, more detailed questions can be asked and the board functions are better explained as well. Preferably, the whole current board is present to answer questions.

After this (kandi)⁴-Borrel, the interested members should decide on how they want to form the final candidate board. This includes thinking about optional new functions or board tasks. Regardless of the method of formation (application or something else), it should be known beforehand if there are new functions and how many people are going to take part in the new candidate board. However, it is important to note that it is not necessary to write policies yet, as it is still unknown who will take place in the candidate board.

The formation of the (kandi)³ group should be done no later than halfway quartile three to leave enough time for group bonding, to write focal points and to acquire support from the current board for the election GA. During the formation process, it is very important to keep the association involved. If the (kandi)⁴s would like the formation to take place before the third GA (which is at the end of February or the beginning of March) it is important for them to discuss the formation process beforehand with multiple former boards and the AdCo. If the (kandi)⁴s would like to have the formation after this GA, it is advisable to schedule a candidate board agenda point during the third GA. During this agenda point, the (kandi)⁴s can present their plans for the formation to the association. Here, feedback on the plan can be given and if members feel like the process should be adjusted, they can indicate it at that time. Still, the decision lies with the (kandi)⁴s. However, they know that they have to be elected officially during the election GA, so it is good to take the feedback into account.

When the plan has been decided upon, the actual candidate board formation can take place. This can either go via applications or not. In case of applications, it is convenient if the current board discusses the application options with the kandis and presents a proposal on how these will take place. This is because of the fact that the kandis aren't that aware of how applications can take place in the most convenient way. For example, is it binding or advising and will functions play a role or not? The candidate board can then consider this option and decide what is the best way. When the formation has been completed, it is known who the (kandi)³s are and they can start thinking about how they want to fill in their board year, together with their focal points and their division of tasks.

It is most convenient to host the election GA in May, as this is a good moment for members to deliver input on the focal points and the candidate board still has enough time to make changes or come up with new plans. After election during the election GA, they are official kandis of Van der Waals. The current board can then start the training process and familiarize them with the association.

Below, a table with the actual timeline is shown.

Just before Christmas break (December)	(kandi) ⁵ -info lunch
End of quartile 2 (January)	(kandi) ⁴ -Borrel
Third GA (February or March)	Update on the candidate board process
Halfway quartile 3 the latest (March)	Final group of (kandi) ³ s
Beginning of quartile 4 (May)	Election GA with first plans

Number of board members

In the past few years, a Van der Waals board has consisted of different numbers of people. According to the rules of the association the board of Van der Waals has to consist of at least five people and at most nine people. The candidate board can decide their group size for themselves, however, either six or seven people is advised. There are advantages and disadvantages to both options. There are multiple factors to take into account upon making this decision:

- Board tasks

Before the start of the board year it is important to thoroughly think about the board tasks for the coming year. It is possible to run the association with a six-member board during a regular board year, however, it has to be taken into account that it is difficult to spend a lot of time on executing the board policy. If the candidate board decides to form a six-member board, they have to take this into account when writing their board policy. If the candidate board has great ideas for improvement of the association and would like to spend significant time on this during their board year, a seven-member board might be advised. With seven board members, it is more likely that this policy is executed and more room for creative ideas during the year is left. Furthermore, with a seven member board the board members have more time to be an active board responsible in committees, which often results in a more fun experience for committee members. Lastly, if there is anything special that should be done during a board year (e.g. the organization of a lustrum, a moving of the association or a policy part from the university) it could be smart to do a board year with seven people as well.

However, it is also possible that after an evaluation of the board tasks, certain tasks become smaller or disappear. This should be taken into account as well upon making the decision. It should be considered how much time you want to put in a certain board task. For some tasks, it is not efficient to execute them with more people. If there aren't extra things to be executed, it is advisable to do a board year with six people. In case of a board year with five people, the board should investigate thoroughly which things to not execute that year. Otherwise, it would be too busy.

- Personal development and wellbeing

An important motivation for many people to do a board year is personal development. During the year the board members are often exposed to a high workload, something from which a lot can be learned. Learning how to handle stress and to collaborate well with a group of students is very valuable. Increasing the number of board members might decrease the workload and therefore the possibility to learn how to deal with stress. However, it does open up possibilities for other ways of

personal development. More people could enable the board to more actively participate in other parts of the university, for example by joining the FSE working groups or by contributing to one of the parties for the university council election. A lot can be learned from these kinds of things as well. It is up to the candidate board what their focus for personal development is.

Equally important is personal wellbeing. A lot can be learned from the high workload during a board year, however, it is important that it does not impact the personal wellbeing of the board members to a harmful level. With six people, especially the first two quartiles of the board year are often experienced as tough. There is hardly any room for a break and it is difficult to do things outside of the board year. A seven-member board could alleviate the work pressure and create room to fall back on in case of personal issues for one of the board members, thereby providing the board members with a better state of wellbeing. The candidate board should carefully consider what is the right division for the amount of work- and spare time.

- Financial considerations

It costs the association more if there are more people on the board, for example on the reimbursement of board suits and activities. Also the board grants might scale down if there are more board members, since there probably aren't enough grants in total for the FSE.