



# **GLOBAL JAMAICA DIASPORA COUNCIL**

*Moving Diaspora Engagement Forward-  
A Model for Deeper Partnership*

## **ELECTION PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE GJDC**

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## **PART A- INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Context**

1. The Global Jamaica Diaspora Council will comprise elected and appointed members. The Election Process is for elected members. With the endorsement of the Draft National Diaspora Policy at the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference and its inclusion of focused priority areas for Diaspora Engagement; it is critical to ensure the election process provides a transparent, orderly, fair and systemized way to allow qualified members of the Jamaican Diaspora to offer themselves for service.
2. This election process will be implemented in the three locations which contain the largest Jamaican Diaspora populations, namely: the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada, referred to as the established Diaspora locations. As other Jamaica Diaspora populations in other regions of the world become more organized, this document will serve as instructive resource material on conducting elections.
3. It is acknowledged and agreed that references to the sitting Council in this document shall, at the inauguration of the Council, be taken to refer to the Diaspora Advisory Board existing immediately prior to the establishment of the Council.

## **PART B- ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL COMMITTEE**

### **2. Elections**

1. To become a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council (“the Council”), a person shall be elected by the Diaspora in each established Diaspora region, and subsequently issued a letter of confirmation by the Minister with responsibility for Diaspora Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (“the Minister”).

2. In each established Diaspora region an independent Electoral Committee shall be established to conduct elections and manage the logistics for the election of Global Jamaica Diaspora Council members.
3. An independent body shall be commissioned by the sitting Council members in consultation with the relevant Jamaican Overseas Mission(s) to appoint the membership of the Electoral Committee.
4. Proposed members of the Electoral Committee should be individuals of good character, in good standing with the Diaspora communities in which the election will take place and have no convictions of any crime which may bring the electoral process into disrepute.
5. Elections shall be conducted over a 24 day period (the "Voting Period") and the Electoral Committee shall designate the day on which the Voting Period will commence.
6. The start of the referenced Voting Period in 2.5 above shall be in the same week, for all elections in the established Jamaican Diaspora locations. This week shall be decided by the sitting Council, or the Council may delegate this responsibility to the Electoral Committees who shall coordinate to select an appropriate time for elections.
7. The Election Process shall begin no less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the term of the sitting Council Members, except for the first election in which the election process will begin 40 days prior.
8. Each regional election shall elect the corresponding number of Council Members for the respective Diaspora location from among persons having been approved by the Electoral Committee as candidates who have met the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 5.
9. Subject to section 2.10 below, Youth Leaders shall be elected by the Diaspora Youth and Young Adults in regional elections to sit on the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council.

10. The first cohort of Youth Leaders on the Council will be appointed by the Minister. This appointment will only occur with the inaugural cohort of Youth Leaders.

### **3. Electoral Committee**

1. The function of the Electoral Committee is to initiate, coordinate and manage the nomination and voting processes for the election of Council Members. (See Election Timetable.)
2. The Electoral Committee shall develop the rules of engagement with respect to the conduct of campaigns.
3. The Electoral Committee shall operate without bias and in a timely and efficient manner in the management of the election process.
4. It is recommended that the Electoral Committee has a membership of at least five (5) but no more than ten (10) persons.
5. An Electoral Committee shall not consist of any sitting member of the Council (or for the avoidance of doubt at the inauguration of the Council, the immediately previously constituted Diaspora Advisory Board), representative or current employee of the Jamaican Government.

## **PART C – NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES AND ELIGIBILITY**

### **4. Nominations**

1. A call for nominations shall be published no less than twenty (20) days prior to the start of the Voting Period.
2. The Electoral Committee shall produce a form for recording and receipt of nominations termed Nominators Declaration. The standard nomination form to be used is attached as Appendix 1.

3. Nominations will only be accepted from members of the Jamaican Diaspora community as particularly prescribed at 4 below.
4. To successfully be nominated for candidacy to contest Council Membership elections, a person must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 5 and have accurately completed a nomination form which shall include the names, addresses, and endorsement signatures of at least five (5) members of the Jamaican Diaspora community resident in the region for which the election is being contested.
5. A Nominee may withdraw his/her nomination and shall do so by notifying the Electoral Committee in writing at least one week prior to the start of the Voting Period.
6. The Electoral Committee shall verify and confirm the withdrawal of a nomination, and subsequently inform nominators and the public as soon as practicable after it has received the notice of withdrawal.
7. Nominations deemed ineligible shall not be approved and the nominators and nominees shall be duly notified in writing by email of their ineligibility by the Electoral Committee. The decision of the Electoral Committee shall be final.

## **5. Eligible Candidates**

To be eligible for nomination for election to the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council, a person shall meet the following requirements:

1. possess experience, skills, network and influence in any of the 10 thematic areas outlined in the draft National Diaspora Policy;
2. be a Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage<sup>1</sup>;
3. be at least twenty-one (21) years of age;

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<sup>1</sup>Jamaican or Jamaica heritage refers to persons by birth, descent or by acquisition that is by naturalization, registration on the basis of marriage, being a commonwealth citizen or registration as a minor or restoration (having renounced their citizenship).

4. be between the ages of eighteen (18) to thirty-five (35) years of age to be elected to the Council in the capacity of a Youth Leader<sup>2</sup>
5. has not been declared bankrupt by a court of law or other competent authority in Jamaica or any other jurisdiction;
6. has been registered by the established Electoral Committee to be a candidate for elections;
7. possess a reasonable level of demonstrated management and leadership skills or experience;
8. has no disciplinary proceedings or sanctions pending or imposed by a professional or administrative body;
9. has a willingness to commit and has sufficient time to discharge his or her duties to the Council;
10. be properly resident in the region in which the candidacy is sought; and
11. acknowledge that any false declaration of eligibility shall render the candidacy or the candidate's election, null and void.

## **6. Finalising the slate of Candidates**

1. The Electoral Committee shall notify individuals of the approval of their nominations and their consequent standing as candidates for the election.
2. The Electoral Committee shall publish the final slate of candidates on their respective websites and those of the nearest Jamaican Overseas Missions, and/or through social and traditional media prior to the start of the Voting Period.
3. A candidate and his or her nominators shall be notified separately by the Electoral Committee of the candidate's ineligibility in writing citing evidence of ineligibility.

## **PART D – Voter Eligibility, Registration, Voting & Timelines**

### **7. Eligible Voters**

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<sup>2</sup> The first cohort of Youth Leaders will be appointed by the Minister and shall be drawn from the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council leadership. Elections to these seats will take place in 2022.

To be eligible to vote in an election for Council Membership, a person shall meet the following requirements:

1. be at least eighteen (18) years of age;
2. be a Jamaican or of Jamaican Heritage; and
3. reside within the respective region for which the respective elections are being held.

## **8. Voter Registration**

1. The Electoral Committee shall register voters using the prescribed form ("Voter Registration Form") which may be electronic or paper-based. See Appendix 4.
2. All persons intending to vote shall register by completing the Voter Registration Form and submit it during the Voter Registration period:
  - a. through the on-line portal to the Electoral Committee during the Voting Registration Period of 25<sup>th</sup> October to 17<sup>th</sup> November (closes at 11:59 p.m.).
  - b. during any on-going registration carried out by the relevant Overseas Mission during the registration period.
3. The Electoral Committee shall register only eligible voters and shall cease registration 4 days prior to the start of the Voting Period.
4. The Electoral Committee shall produce a list of registered voters (Voters List) prior to the start of the Voting Period.
5. Only registered voters shall be allowed to vote in the Election for Global Jamaica Diaspora Council members.
6. The Electoral Committee shall verify that there are no duplications in voter registration.
7. The link to the electronic ballot on the electronic voting platform shall be sent by "email invitation" to verify registered voters from the voters list.

**9. Voting**

1. Votes may be cast electronically during the Voting Period.
2. Where paper-based voting is permitted by the Electoral Committee:
  - a. paper ballots may only be cast on the first day of the Voting Period
  - b. the Electoral Committee shall designate the polling places to be used for same;
  - c. Votes may be cast from 10a.m. to 7p.m. on the said day, at the designated polling places; and
  - d. the Electoral Committee shall at the end of such voting hours tally the paper ballots, secure and report them as part of the results at the end of the Voting Period.
3. A decision to permit voting by paper ballots shall be communicated on the announcement of the Voting Period by the Electoral Committee.
4. Supplemental voting by paper ballot other than on the first day of the Voting Period will only be permitted due to special unforeseen circumstances and by permission of the Electoral Committee.
5. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
6. The Electoral Committee shall ensure that no person votes in both electronic and paper ballot form for the same elections.
7. The Electoral Committee may also establish 'walk in' electronic voting stations to increase voter access to the electronic voting platform.
8. All voting stations and voting equipment shall be monitored and secured at all times by one member of the Electoral Committee or a volunteer provided that the Electoral Committee agrees and so designates the Volunteer to participate in the Elections at least two weeks prior to the start of the Voting Period.
9. Best efforts shall be made to ensure that any electronic voting platform used shall be secure and tamper proof.

**UPDATED: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE**



10. The Electoral Committee shall establish a sub-committee of no less than three representatives to access and tally the votes in the presence of a person designated by each candidate. Such sub-committee shall not include any person related to or connected to a candidate or his / her campaign.
11. At the end of the tally process (counting), the results shall be printed and signed by all three (3) members of the sub-committee and by the designee of the candidates.
12. The Electoral Committee shall send the final results by e-mail not more than one (1) day after the election to the nearest Jamaican Overseas Mission within whose jurisdiction the election falls.

**TIMETABLE FOR THE FIRST ELECTION FOR MEMBERSHIP TO  
THE GLOBAL JAMAICA DIASPORA COUNCIL**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Electoral Activity</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Appointment or Reinstatement of Electoral Committee
<b>25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	The publication of: a) Call for Nominations - nomination criteria and candidate nomination period. b) Voting procedure c) Official call for voter registration - Voter eligibility requirements, and d) Voting Period
<b>10<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Start of Candidate Nomination Period
<b>15<sup>th</sup> November</b>	End of Candidate Nomination Period
<b>16<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Start of review period of received nominations by Electoral Committees
<b>19<sup>th</sup> November</b>	End of review period of nominations
<b>20<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Publishing of the final slate of Candidates (with profiles)
<b>25<sup>th</sup> October – 17<sup>th</sup> November (11:59 p.m.)</b>	Voter Registration Period
<b>19<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Compilation of Voters List by Electoral Committees
<b>20<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Publication of final slate of Candidates
<b>21<sup>st</sup> November – 15<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Voting Period

## PART E- APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### Nominators' Declaration

We the undersigned electors for the established Diaspora region of.....  
.....do hereby nominate.....  
as a person to serve as a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council. We certify that to the best of our belief that this person is qualified for election as a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council as prescribed by Section five (5) of the *Election Process for Membership to the Jamaica Global Diaspora Council*.

**NOMINATORS:**

	<b>SURNAME</b>	<b>OTHER NAMES</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

**Appendix 2**

**Nominee's Consent of Nomination**

I ....., nominated in the  
(FULL NAME in BLOCK LETTERS )  
above Nomination Form, hereby consent to such nomination as Candidate for election as a  
member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council for the established Diaspora region of  
....., and submit my name and my address for  
the serving of papers under the Terms of Reference for the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council  
and its supplemental Election Process document.

Address .....

Email address .....

Telephone Number .....

Signature of Nominee.....

Date .....

**Appendix 3**

**Nominee’s Declaration/Statement of Qualification**

I ....., solemnly declare that:

(a) I am a Citizen of Jamaica or am of Jamaican heritage.

Tick the appropriate box:

i.  by birth

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

Place of Birth (city/parish) \_\_\_\_\_

ii.  by descent

iii.  by naturalization Date citizenship granted \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

iv.  by other means (Provide details) .....  
.....  
.....

v.  of Jamaican Heritage. Please indicate lineage.....  
.....

(b) I am qualified to be an elector.

(c) I am by virtue of Section five (5) of the *Election Process for the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council* document qualified to sit as a member of *the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council*.

(d) I am submitting a JPEG passport size photograph and my profile of no more than 150-200 words.

(e) I acknowledge that if any of my declarations of eligibility above are false, that my candidacy and my election shall be null and void.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Nominee

Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

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**1. OFFICIAL'S RECEIPT (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)**

Received by: .....  
Electoral Committee Representative

.....  
Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

Time:

Receipt No:

*N.B. A copy of receipt is to be given to the Nominee*

**Appendix 4**

**GLOBAL JAMAICA DIASPORA COUNCIL  
Voter Registration Form**

<b>Name</b>	First Middle SURNAME
<b>Gender</b>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Home Address</b>	Street Address, City/Town, State, Zip Code / Postcode
<b>Mailing Address</b> (if different from above)	Street Address, City/Town, State, Zip Code / Postcode
<b>Date of Birth</b>	dd/mm/yyyy
<b>Place &amp; Country of Birth</b>	
Country of Citizenship (state all)	
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Telephone number</b>	
<b>Occupation</b>	
Are you a Jamaican Citizen by birth?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
By marriage or naturalization?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
By descent?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Of Jamaican Heritage?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, through parent or grandparent?.....

I will be at least 18 years old or older before start of the voting period.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>DECLARATION</i></p> <p><i>I have reviewed the information I offered in the sections above and affirm that it is true. I also understand that if any of the information that I have provided is found to be false that my vote will be disqualified.</i></p> <p><i>This information will be retained by the relevant Overseas Mission / Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica. In addition to GJDC Elections my information may only be used by those entities for communication on Diaspora issues.</i></p> <p>By affixing your signature below you have confirmed your agreement with the above statement.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>	