TMS New Initiative/Project Proposal Form

THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM

TMS is a Society of great volunteer and staff enthusiasm, aspiration, and innovation. Volunteers and staff have many ideas for new initiatives and projects. Not all ideas can be pursued, however, as resources that are available beyond the support required for the Society's many existing commitments are limited. Therefore, the Society employs the rigor of its governance structure and staff analysis to determine how to deploy available resources to the greatest common good and broadest positive impact. Completing this form is the first step toward activating such analysis.

NOTES ON USING THIS FORM

1. This form must be completed to propose a new initiative or project.
2. An "initiative" is an ongoing activity; a "project" is an activity of limited duration.
3. The form can be completed by any volunteer group that has been duly charged to conduct work within the administrative structure of TMS—a division, a standing committee, a workgroup, a subcommittee, an ad hoc committee, etc.
4. Completion of this form cannot be delegated to staff, although staff advice can be requested for guidance as needed at any step.
5. There are three possible financial models to support a new activity: *Revenue Generating* (an activity that provides surplus revenue to TMS once all expenses are subtracted from all revenue received), *Self-sustaining* (an activity that operates at breakeven, meaning that revenue and expense are in balance), or *Subsidized* (an activity that requires TMS to fund the some or all of the activity on an ongoing basis). Staff time and overhead required to conduct an activity are considered among expenses.
6. Once approved, initiatives or projects with surplus-generating potential are generally more likely to be prioritized over activities that are revenue/expense neutral or that require a subsidy to conduct.
7. Completion of this form is not required for a duly charged volunteer group to conduct work under its existing charge and for which no new or additional resources are required.
8. Completion of this form is not required for one volunteer group to make a recommendation or suggestion to another volunteer group or to act on a request from the staff liaison to the volunteer group.

REVIEW PROCESS (in sequential order)

A. The volunteer group originating the proposal should review the completed form and vote on whether to advance it through the approval process.
B. Once approved by group originating the proposal, the proposal should next advance through all applicable volunteer administrative levels until it reaches a Board-level committee or division.
C. A proposal *approved for analysis* by the Board-level committee or division will be referred to staff to consider general viability, compatibility with other initiatives, validity of proposal assumptions, revenue opportunities, expense, and staffing. Staff will develop an assessment of the proposal with recommendations.
D. Considering the staff assessment of the proposal, the Board-level committee or division can make a final decision on the proposal and, if approved, move that the Board of Directors to adopt the proposal.
E. If the Board approves the proposal, it will prioritize when the proposal will be addressed in consideration of existing priorities and resource commitments.

1. **Is this an initiative or a project?**

2. **Name of initiative or project**

3. **Volunteer body originating the proposal** *(include name of the chair with contact details)*

4. **Describe what is being proposed** *(150 words or less)*

5. **What is the envisioned financial model (or models) for developing and then sustaining this initiative or project?**

6. **Is there an existing analog within TMS for this activity or will new expertise and/or capabilities have to be acquired?** *(Explain)*

7. **Is there an existing analog for this activity within another society outside of TMS?** *(Describe)*

8. **What TMS member constituencies or interests will be served by conducting the initiative or project and what unmet needs of TMS will be addressed?**

9. **What will characterize the successful implementation of—or the decision to sunset—this initiative or project? What are the metrics of success and the timetable for achieving them?** *(Include milestones and early indicators of success.)*

10. **What forms of volunteer support will be required to conduct the initiative or project, and what volunteer group will have principal oversight of making sure the required volunteer support is reliably provided, that milestones and metrics are satisfied, and that expected outcomes are attained?**

11. **What forms of staff support will be required to conduct the initiative or project?**

12. **Are there additional considerations?**