

AVA Transition Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Your questions and our answers

Version 7- October 2025

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About the Transition Project



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About the Transition Project

Q: What is the AVA Transition Project?

The AVA Transition Project is all about updating how the AVA works based on what members have told us matters most.

We are looking at things like governance, membership options, services and technology so that the AVA is easier to engage with, provides better value and stays strong into the future.

Q: Why is AVA implementing this?

In 2024, more than 2,500 members and non-members gave feedback.

You told us **you want the AVA to be more inclusive, affordable, and supportive.**

This project is shaped by that feedback and aims to deliver the changes you've asked for.

Q: What is the AVA Transition Project delivering?

The plan includes:

- ✓ An all-inclusive, more affordable membership model
- ✓ Technology upgrades for a better user experience
- ✓ Governance reforms for transparency and agility
- ✓ Better support for students and early-career vets

About the Transition Project

Q: What is the timeline for delivery?

We're planning to roll out the project in stages, targeting for the all-inclusive membership model ready for the 2026 renewal period.

You'll be kept in the loop every step of the way, and member input will continue to shape the process.

Q: Can I get involved?

Yes, and many already have.

In June 2025, we ran 42 focus groups with over 350 people from across the profession. These were supported by one-on-one conversations and written submissions, giving depth to what we heard. This built on our 2024 consultation, which included 17 focus groups and a survey with 2,551 responses.

You can [email us](#) or share feedback through the [anonymous form](#) anytime.



Email us



Submit feedback

Q: How can I stay up to date?

We've created a [Transition Project web page](#) with all the latest updates, including what's changing and how to stay involved. You'll also find updates in our weekly Member Newsletter and across AVA's social media channels.



Visit our webpage

About the all-inclusive membership model



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All-inclusive membership model

Q: What is the all-inclusive membership model?

The proposed all-inclusive membership model means AVA Members would pay one flat annual fee that provides access to all SIGs.

It makes it easier to join, explore new areas of interest and get more out of your membership through collaboration with more Members.

Q: What would the all-inclusive fee cover?

You will get access to all SIGs without paying separately for each one.

This opens up more ways to get involved and makes the whole experience easier to manage.

Some optional extras will still sit outside the flat fee like the EVA Drug & PPE Forms App, ACV's PREGCHECK™, or AVBM's journal.

Q: When is this being implemented?

We are rolling it out in stages, with member input guiding every step. Consultation is happening now, and the new model is penciled to launch by **July 2026**.

This includes working closely with SIGs, updating systems, and making sure everyone's supported along the way.

All-inclusive membership model

Q: What is a value proposition and why does it matter?

A value proposition simply explains what you get from your AVA membership and why it matters.

It helps each Division, Branch, SIG and Group clearly show the unique value they offer.

These statements were shaped during the engagement focus groups and will guide how we personalise the membership experience under the new model.

Q: How did the AVA develop the value propositions?

We have co-designed them with members, Divisions, Branches, SIGs and Groups in focus groups supported by independent association expert **Belinda Moore**.



[Meet Belinda Moore](#)

Q: What is the impact of these changes on the financial sustainability of the AVA?

The in-principally approved membership model changes have been developed with financial sustainability at the core.

The Board, together with the AVA Executive Leadership Team, has modelled multiple scenarios including best case and worst case to confirm that the proposed membership model is viable, responsible and supports long-term stability.



[Explore more topic areas](#)

All-inclusive membership model

Q: Is AVA undertaking the change specifically to increase Member numbers?

No. This change is about listening to members and acting on what you've told us matters.

In 2024, consultation revealed that only **32% of the profession** were AVA members, and many current members weren't involved in any SIGs.

The most common feedback? **Make it easier to join, remove extra SIG fees and increase the value of membership.** That's what this model is aiming to do.

Yes, we hope more people will join and stay but not through sales tactics or gimmicks. Growth will come if we deliver a membership that genuinely helps members connect, learn and make a difference in the profession.

If we get it right, here's what we expect to see:

- ✓ More members getting involved in SIGs and AVA activities
- ✓ Deeper engagement across all parts of the profession
- ✓ Higher renewal rates and stronger participation in training and events
- ✓ Stronger finances to reinvest in member support
- ✓ A stronger united voice for advocacy and policy

All-inclusive membership model

Q: How will the AVA support SIGs/Divisions if fees are reduced?

We will continue funding Divisions, Branches SIGs and Other Groups and their important community initiatives. While SIG fees have helped in the past, they've never fully covered the real costs of running these groups.

Instead, AVA draws income from things like education and events, sponsorships, advertising, member services and investments.

This helps fund not just SIGs and Divisions, but also advocacy, policy and other work that supports the profession.

We are committed to making sure this support continues even as the membership model changes.

Q: Why not reduce the AVA base fee instead of making SIGs free?

Because members told us SIG fees were the biggest barrier. In the 2024 Stakeholder Survey, vets said the extra costs were stopping them from joining SIGs and over 40% of members are not involved in one.

By removing those fees, we are making it easier for all members to connect with the groups and resources that matter most.

That said, we're also looking at ways to reduce the base fee over time. Our goal is a membership that's both inclusive and affordable no matter where you are in your career.

All-inclusive membership model

Q: Why not offer tiered membership options instead of one flat fee?

Tiered models sound appealing but can be hard to navigate and often end up excluding the very groups we want to support like students and early-career vets.

The all-inclusive model simplifies things. It allows Members to explore, connect and grow without worrying about extra costs. It also helps reduce administrative burden and supports a more unified, collaborative AVA community.

Q: Could SIGs be influenced by Members with conflicting views? How will SIGs values and culture be protected?

This is a legitimate concern, particularly for SIGs operating in politically or ethically sensitive areas. While removing fees does increase accessibility, it doesn't mean opening the door to individuals who don't align with the SIG's purpose or values.

SIGs can still set clear expectations for how members engage codes of conduct, and criteria for leadership roles. These will be documented and shared with members up front.

Removing fees doesn't make a SIG more vulnerable. External advice has confirmed that price has never been a strong barrier. A well-designed onboarding process is a more effective safeguard to protect a SIG's values, purpose and culture.

All-inclusive membership model

Q: How would PREGCHECK and BULLCHECK operate?

PREGCHECK and BULLCHECK are vital accreditation programs and will continue to be delivered with the same high standards and separate fees. As more members gain SIG access, including cattle vets and mixed practitioners, we expect greater participation in these programs.

To manage this well, AVA is looking at ways to improve administration, support volunteers, and maintain clear eligibility pathways.

Accreditation fees will stay in place to protect program quality and ensure there is proper resourcing.

Q: Will Members vote on this model?

No. Operational details like how the all-inclusive fee works or how SIG access is managed, don't require constitutional change and won't go to a formal vote.

Q: Are the changes to the membership model linked to the constitution reform?

Partly.

They are connected but separate. The membership model itself isn't written into the Constitution, but both are part of the broader Transition Project to modernise how the AVA operates. The Constitution updates set the governance framework for membership categories and rights, while the membership model focuses on how those categories are structured, priced and delivered in practice.

About the Stage 3 Constitution reform



Explore more topic areas

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About the Constitution reform

Q: What are the Stage 3 reforms all about?

Stage 3 is the final step in a multi-year plan to strengthen the AVA Constitution, the document that underpins how decisions are made and how members are represented.

Stages 1 and 2 focused on procedural amendments and alignment with ACNC and the Corporations Act.

Stage 3 is about modernising how we govern to better reflect today's profession and support a stronger, more inclusive AVA.

Q: What governance improvements are planned?

The proposed changes aim to modernise how the AVA is governed making it fairer, clearer and more future-focused.

These proposed changes include:

- ✓ A Board, elected by voting members with representation from key sectors including Cattle, Equine and Small Animal.
- ✓ Simplified membership categories with no loss of Member rights or voting entitlements.
- ✓ A focus on Board skills and experience, supported by a new skills matrix, clear position descriptions and an independent Nominations Committee.
- ✓ A clearer Constitution focused on governance, with operational details moved into policy.



What are the proposed changes?

Most of the Constitution is not changing



Clause Range	What it Covers	Status
Clauses 1–9	Purpose, structure and guarantee	No change
Clauses 11–16	Membership application, approval, fees, transfers	No change
Clauses 18–20	Dispute resolution and disciplinary process and Divisions	No change
Clauses 26–42	General meetings, resolutions and voting	No change
Clauses 46–62	Directors, Board meetings, duties, powers	No change
Clauses 63–71	CEO, Secretary, financial year, records, notices	No change
Clauses 72–76	Indemnity	No change

Proposed updates for improvement



Clause Range	What it Covers	Update
Clause 10	Member categories	Streamlined based on member feedback.
Clauses 20–23	Divisions, Branches, SIGs and Other Groups	Simplified: structure retained, detail to Policy.
Clauses 24–25	Policy Advisory Council, Representation	Simplified: structure retained procedural elements to PAC Charter.
Clause 43, 44 & 48	Board composition, elections and appointments process	Updated: Clearer, skills-aligned nomination & appointment process.
Clause 45	President and Chair	Updated: The President and Chair would be separate roles with the President to always be a veterinarian.
Clause 6 & 77	Not-for-profit and Taxation	Makes the AVA's not-for-profit status clearer.
Clause 78	Definitions	New definitions added for clarity and consistency.

About the Constitution reform

Q: Are Member rights changing?

No. Your rights, including voting and participation **are not** changing.

What is changing is how member categories are defined, to make things simpler and more intuitive.

This helps all veterinary professionals across every sector and career stage understand where they fit and how to get involved.

These changes are about improving access and making it easier for the profession to be part of the AVA community.

Q: Will changes affect my membership fees?

No. These governance changes will not impact your fees.

As part of the broader Transition Project, the AVA Board has approved, in-principle, a new **all-inclusive membership model** in response to member feedback.

This work is not impacted by the Constitution Stage 3 reform.



Clause 10: Member categories

FROM



TO



WHY SIMPLIFY?

Categories of membership

Clause 10

There are currently 7 categories of membership

- (a) Full Membership
- (b) Life Membership
- (c) Student Members
- (d) Overseas Members
- (e) Associate Members
- (f) Honorary Members
- (g) Fellows

Simplify membership categories

- (a) Veterinarian
- (b) Student Members
- (c) Allied Professional

Simpler, more intuitive categories mean members can more easily identify where they fit.

Life Members, Honorary Members and Fellows will be recognised in the constitution as accorded statuses.

✓ **75% supported the idea of fewer, clearer membership categories,** making it easier to join and engage with the AVA.

✓ **62% of members say our categories don't reflect today's workforce.** Especially for those in part-time, locum or non-traditional roles.

✓ Necessary in simplifying AVA's pricing and back-end technology platforms for a streamlined member experience.



Clause 10: Member categories in practice

CATEGORY

CAREER STAGE MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

1

Veterinarian

Clause 10.2



Early career Veterinarian

(1-3 years) | (4-5 years)



Full-time Veterinarian



Part-time Veterinarian



Career break Veterinarian



Overseas based Veterinarian



Retired Veterinarian



Fellow

2

Allied Professional

Clause 10.3



Allied Professional



Honorary

3

Student member

Clause 10.4



Student

Clause 43: Number of Directors

FROM

Number of directors

Clause 43.1 The association has 9 Directors, made up of the President and 8 directors appointed in accordance with this constitution.

3 of these are SIG nominees who are directly appointed by the largest SIG (by number as per clause 44.4).

6 of these are general members elected by the membership at the AGM

TO

Maintain up to 9 Directors with the proposed composition:

- 4 AVA Veterinarian Directors- from the general membership **elected by voting members**.
- 3 Sector Veterinarian Directors (one each for cattle, equine, small animal) - **elected by voting members**.
- 2 Independent Directors to bring specialist skills in areas like governance, finance and advocacy- **elected by voting members**.

BECAUSE

- ✓ 9 directors balances diversity, efficiency and strategic oversight
- ✓ 2 independent directors strengthen objectivity and broadens expertise.
- ✓ Balances sector and member representation with independent insight and risk oversight.
- ✓ Strengthens sector input and preserves objectivity and fairness to fulfil director responsibilities.



Clause 43: Number of Directors FAQs

Q: What are the proposed changes to the Board structure?

The proposal maintains up to nine Director positions on the AVA Board.

The new composition includes:

- Four AVA veterinarian Directors,
- Three veterinarian Sector Directors one each from Cattle, Equine, and Small Animal sectors, and
- Two Independent Directors.

All Directors will be elected by voting Members.

Q: How will the criteria for Board representation change?

The proposed changes include more formalised selection criteria to nominate for an AVA Board Director.

These include clear Director position descriptions, a Board-approved skills matrix and the oversight of an independent Nominations Committee.

A position description for the new sector-specific positions have been developed in collaboration with the relevant SIG Executive Committee and AVA Board.

Q: What is the role of the Board?

No changes to the role of the Board.

The Board remains responsible for strategic direction, governance leadership, financial stewardship and oversight of organisational risk while operational matters continue to be managed by the CEO and executive team of the AVA.



Clause 44: SIG Nominee to Sector Director

FROM

Clause 44.4 Nominees appointed by Largest SIGs By Number

Directors appointed by Special Interest Group

(a) Each of the three largest special interest groups by number..

(c) ... These Directors may hold office for a term of three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

TO

✚ 3 Sector Directors: One each from Cattle, Equine and Small Animal sectors **to embed representation.**

✚ These sectors reflect the largest and most established segments of the profession, irrespective of SIG size.

✚ A new independent Nominations Committee will assess all nominees against agreed criteria and recommend to the AVA Board via the Nominations and Governance Committee.

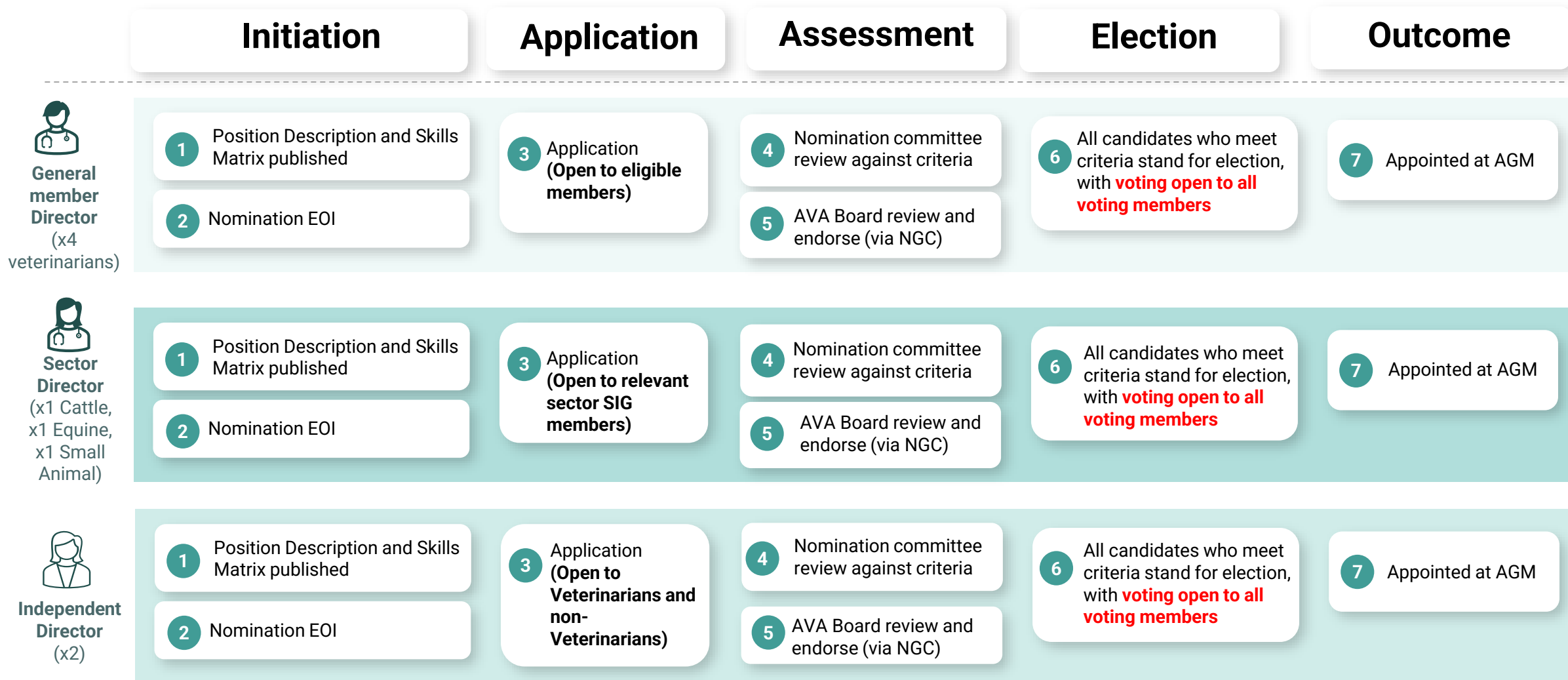
BECAUSE

Sector representation guaranteed.

- ✓ SIG size may fluctuate; sector insights do not.
- ✓ Supports transparent, merit-based selection, helping Boards identify capability gaps and improve performance
- ✓ Introduces objectivity, fairness, and protection from bias or conflicts of interest



Nomination pathway: Proposed standardised process



Clause 44: Nominations committee

Q: How would the proposed independent Nominations Committee be formed?

The proposed independent Nominations Committee (iNC) would include a mix of AVA Members and independent representatives, appointed through clear criteria to support balance and fairness.

The Board approved Terms of Reference and position descriptions for committee members are available on the AVA website.

Q: Would the proposed Nominations committee block someone from standing for election?

No. The iNC would not prevent eligible members who meet the criteria outlined in the position description and skills matrix from standing.

As part of the process, they would assess candidates and make a recommendation to the AVA Board via the Nominations and Governance (NGC) Committee, a sub committee of the AVA Board.

Q: Will current AVA Directors be on the Nominations Committee?

No. Not under the current Terms of Reference.

Clause 44: Independent Directors

Q: Will members elect the Independent Directors?

Yes, all voting members will vote on all Director positions.

Candidate information would be shared in advance.

Q: Why two Independent Directors instead of one?

The goal is to strengthen governance by bringing in diverse external perspectives and skills. Two voices create better balance, more support and a greater impact than one alone. It also reduces the risk of isolation.

If the proposal is adopted, the two positions would be introduced in a planned and staggered way as existing director terms end, supporting continuity on the Board.

Q: Will an Independent Director be expensive?

No. The remuneration would be aligned with the current, member approved, Director arrangements.

As a purpose-driven organisation, we expect to attract experienced, values-aligned professionals who are motivated by purpose.



Clause 45: President and Chair

Q: Will the President always be a veterinarian?

Yes. This clause confirms that the AVA President must always be a veterinarian, directly responding to member feedback requesting this assurance.

Q: Why introduce a separate Chair role?

The revised clause creates a distinct Chair position to lead governance and Board meetings.

This role may be filled by an independent director, allowing the Board to draw on specific governance expertise while keeping the President focused on representing the veterinary profession.

Q: How will the President and Chair be elected?

Each year, the Board will elect both a President (who must be a veterinarian) and a Chair (who may be an independent director) from among the current directors.

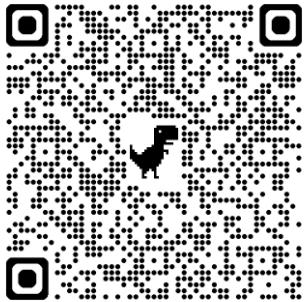


Thank you for your contributions

1

Register to Vote
30 October 2025

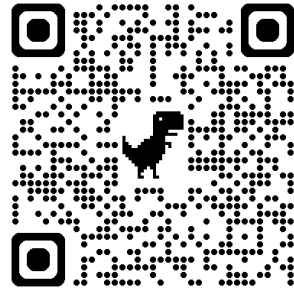
REGISTER HERE



2

Read the side-by-side proposal

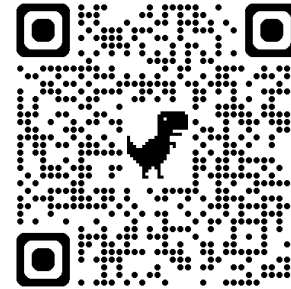
READ THE PROPOSAL



3

Watch the townhall recordings to catch up on the proposal

WATCH ONLINE



4

Ask us a question

EMAIL US



Technology and operational evolution



Explore more topic areas

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Technology and system upgrades

Q: Are Technology and process improvements part of the Transition Project?

Yes. We value the feedback from our Members, and we are acting on what we heard in the 2024 Stakeholder Survey. You told us that the website is frustrating, communication tools are limited, and processes can be slow or unclear. As part of the Transition Project, we are reviewing and updating our technology, business rules and ways of working to address these issues and deliver a better Member experience.

Q: What is AVA prioritising?

We are focused on prioritising the areas members told us matter most:

- ✓ A better website.
- ✓ Smarter communication tools to reduce email fatigue.
- ✓ Clearer, more flexible business rules.
- ✓ Better onboarding, support and visibility for volunteers.

Q: How can I get involved in the planned improvements?

Member feedback is central to how we are shaping improvements. From late 2025, we'll be reviewing key technologies and processes, such as the website, event planning and SIG communication, with input from Members.

There will be opportunities to get involved through workshops, pilots and testing groups, so you can help shape the solutions that best support your experience. If you would like to be part of the process, please email us.

 Email us



Technology and system upgrades

Q: What is changing and when?

As part of the transition to the proposed all-inclusive membership model, we're making important improvements to the way our systems and processes work. The process and technology improvement will roll out in phases, allowing time for collaboration, testing while setting the foundation for long-term improvements.

- ✓ **Late 2025:** Review of technology, systems and business processes based on member and stakeholder feedback.
- ✓ **Late 2025:** Co-design of improved tools and business rules, informed by insights from the membership model consultations and shaped in partnership with Members, SIGs, Divisions, Branches and committees.
- ✓ **Commencing in early 2026:** Gradual rollout of improvements, including early enhancements such as better communication tools.
- ✓ **Throughout 2026 and beyond:** Major updates, including website improvements, will be implemented as part of the broader membership transition, followed by ongoing enhancements based on Member feedback and evolving needs.

Q: Will these upgrades affect my membership?

Yes, but in a positive way.

We are working to improve the Member experience by making tasks like renewing membership, registering for CPD or accessing member-only content easier and more user-friendly.

Changes will be rolled out gradually, with clear communication and support along the way.

Thank you