# Becoming a Better Cotton Member

This document comprises of:

1. The membership application form
2. The membership contract (Membership Code of Practice and Terms of Membership)

The membership application form must be completed, signed and returned to Better Cotton along with required support documents as outlined in the form before membership applications can be accepted.

Membership Application Form

Retailers and Brands

***Retailers and Brands*** include any for-profit organisation selling goods or services directly to consumers or, intended for direct use of consumers.

Membership Criteria

Membership is open to all organisations. Better Cotton is an inclusive initiative which aims to work with its members and partners to achieve its goal of transforming cotton production worldwide by developing Better Cotton as a sustainable mainstream commodity. Applicants to membership should fulfil the following:

1. Your organisation’s long-term aspirations **support Better Cotton’s mission**, aims and strategic principles for Better Cotton ([Who we are - Better Cotton](https://bettercotton.org/who-we-are/)).
2. Your organisation is **a legal entity** or a group of legal entities.

*If your organisation forms part of a group, Better Cotton recommends that the entire group becomes a member of Better Cotton. If your organisation runs integrated operations including several processing steps, your membership will be categorised according to the highest value activity exercised.*

1. Your organisation should have a minimum of **1 year’s existence**.
2. Your organisation is able to demonstrate an **existing commitment to good environmental and social standards**.

*Evidence includes but is not limited to a publicly available commitment to sustainability as well as either implementing a code of conduct or implementing a management standard covering both environmental and social practices.*

1. Your organisation **does not pose a reputational risk to Better Cotton** through past or present activities. This includes but is not limited to, child labour, health and safety violations or being listed on an internationally recognised default list or advisory list (e.g. ICA’s List of Unfulfilled Awards). Better Cotton reserves the right to protect and safeguard itself against risks to Better Cotton’s integrity and credibility.

***Companies not meeting one or more of the membership criteria*** *listed above may still apply to the Better Cotton Initiative by adding a justification to their application form. The justification addendum can be requested from Better Cotton for completion by applicant after a review of the application form. The addendum includes clear instructions on what is requested from the applicant.*

Company Information

**About the Organisation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Company |  |
| Business Registration Reference No. |  |
| Address (Headquarters) | Building |  |
| Street |  |
| City |  |
| State  |  |
| Postcode/Zip |  |
| Country  |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Website |  |

The information you provide below will be shared with our Members and Better Cotton Council as part of the consultation and approval process. Answering fully and factually is important to the success of your application.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date your organisation was established |  |
| Brief description of your company’s key activities |  |
| Motivation for joining Better Cotton (sustainability and business motivation) |  |
| What would your organisation like to achieve during your first year as a member? |  |
| Do you have any interest in becoming a Better Cotton Implementing Partner (IP)? *Note that an IP works with farmers at the local level to implement the Better Cotton system.* | YES / NO |
| Do you have a publicly available commitment to sustainability and either implement a code of conduct with your supply chain or a management standard covering both environmental and social practices? (please specify)  |  |
| Do you work with or purchase any form of non-conventional cotton e.g. Organic, Fairtrade, Cotton Made in Africa, other? |  |
| Which Brands does your company own and/or operate? This could include registered trademarks, retail outlets and other brand names. Please include any subsidiary you have as well as their Brands. (All cotton containing products under all your Brands should be included in the cotton consumption you submit with this application.) |  |

Data Protection

By becoming a Better Cotton Member, you accept that contact names and email addresses may be shared through internal group communication (or other means). For more information, please see the [Better Cotton Data Privacy Policy](https://bettercotton.org/better-cotton-data-privacy-policy/).

Members often wish to contact each other outside of Better Cotton. If you do not wish your contact details to be shared, please indicate by ticking the box below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | No, I do not wish my or my organisation’s contact details to be shared with other members  |

Better Cotton publishes a Membership list on its website and in some presentations. If you *do not* wish your organisation to appear in this list, please tick the box below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | No, I do not wish my organisation to appear in the Better Cotton Membership list. |

Better Cotton displays members’ logos on its website and includes a link to members’ websites. If you do not wish this for your logo and website, please tick the boxes below.

If you agree for Better Cotton to use your logo it will only be displayed on the Better Cotton Website and in presentations together with other member logos to showcase Better Cotton Members. For any other use of your logo Better Cotton will seek your permission.

If you want us to use your logo, please attach it to the application when submitting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | No, I do not want Better Cotton to link to my organisation’s website |
|  | No, I do not want Better Cotton to make use of my organisation’s logo |

Contact Information

**Primary Contact**

The primary contact nominated should be the person within your organisation who will act as the organisation’s day-to-day representative with Better Cotton. All communications from Better Cotton to your organisations will be directed to the primary contact.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| First Name |  |
| Last Name |  |
| Position within Organisation |  |
| Email |  |
| Telephone (incl. country code) |  |

**Secondary** **Contact**

The application should also be endorsed and signed by a **senior member** of the organisation who will take responsibility for ensuring that the organisation follows the obligations laid out in the Better Cotton Principles of Participation. You may nominate this senior member as the secondary representative to this function. The secondary contact may be copied into communications but will not be the first point of contact.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| First Name |  |
| Last Name |  |
| Position within Organisation |  |
| Email |  |
| Telephone (incl. country code) |  |

Invoicing Address

Please supply details to be used for invoicing purposes. Also, please state if your organisation requires any specific information in order to process an invoice (such as Purchase Order numbers).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Contact Name for Invoices | First Name |  |
| Last Name |  |
| Email |  |
| Telephone (incl. country code) |  |
| Address *(if different to HQ)* | Building |  |
| Street |  |
| City |  |
| State  |  |
| Postcode / Zip |  |
| Country  |  |
| Do you have any specific invoicing instructions? If so, please explain. *(e.g. PO numbers, invoice portals, etc.)* |  |

Membership Cost

Retailer and Brand (RB) Members pay a membership fee for 12 months of membership and a variable Volume Based Fee (VBF) based on a calendar year of Better Cotton sourcing. Total cost of participation in Better Cotton is a combination of these fees.

First time RB Members pay a membership fee for 12 months of membership and a “Farmer Support Contribution” equivalent to membership fee in the year of joining Better Cotton. As of the second calendar year, the RB Member is subject to VBF as all other RB Members in Better Cotton.

These fees are explained in more detail below.

1. Membership Fee

The table below shows the fees for the membership category Retailers and Brands.

|  |
| --- |
| **2024 MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR RETAILERS & BRANDS** |
| **Fee Level** | **Annual Cotton Consumption (Metric tons)**  | **Annual Fee (EUR)** |
| Very Small | < 5,000 MT | 7,250 € |
| Small | 5,000 - 20,000 MT | 12,650 € |
| Medium | 20,000 - 50,000 MT | 23,000 € |
| Large | 50,000 - 125,000 MT | 38,530 € |
| Very Large | > 125,000 MT | 57,500 € |

The annual membership fee is based on the member’s total Annual Cotton Consumption, that is, the equivalent of the cotton fibre required from spinner level to produce 12 consecutive months of final end products. This is based therefore on a calculation of cotton fibre or lint consumed. Better Cotton provides guidelines and resources for measuring cotton consumption for its members, and they can be found on the Better Cotton [website](https://bettercotton.org/measuring-cotton-consumption/).

1. New Member Farmer Support Contribution

All first-year Members must pay an entry **Farmer Support Contribution** equal to their membership fee in their first year of joining Better Cotton. This is a one-time contribution to the supply that has been created by Retailer and Brand Members who have been investing since Better Cotton’s foundation. The Farmer Support Contribution is invested into the Better Cotton Growth and Innovation Fund ([GIF](https://bettercotton.org/what-we-do/investing-in-farming-communities-growth-innovation-fund/)) to support farmer capacity building, innovation and credibility activities. This payment will contribute towards your sourcing-related fees at the end of your first calendar year in Better Cotton, but it is not reimbursed if you have not sourced Better Cotton.

1. Volume Based Fee (VBF)

The Volume Based Fee (VBF) is paid by Retailer and Brand and Supplier and Manufacturer Members sourcing for their consumer facing brand products. The reference period is 1 January to 31 December each year., The VBF form each year of sourcing provides the core funding for the Better Cotton Growth and Innovation Fund for the year invoicing is carried out.

The VBF is variable based on

* the proportion (%) of Better Cotton sourced in one calendar year, and
* the Annual Cotton Consumption that can be sourced as Better Cotton (i.e., it excludes for instance, certified organic cotton, and ISEAL Code Compliant standard in sustainable cotton like Fair Trade Certified™) in a calendar year.

These two variables of the sourcing member are used to locate the VBF rate on the VBF fee table.

The first table below indicates 2024 VBF rates. They were approved by the Council at the end of 2023 and apply to Better Cotton sourced from 1 April 2024. The second table indicates the old VBF rates (2016 – 2023) that still apply for Better Cotton sourced from 1 January to 31 March 2024.

|  |
| --- |
| **2024 Volume Based Fee Rate (EUR/MT BC procured)** |
| **Volumes of cotton sourced as Better Cotton** |
| **Absolute Procurement** | **Relative procurement\*\*** |
| **< 20%** | **≥ 20%** | **≥ 40%** | **≥ 60%** | **≥ 80%** | **100%** |
| **≤ 200 MT** | 17.5 € | 16.5 € | 15.0 € | 14.0 € | 13.5 € | 13.0 € |
| **>200 - 1,000 MT** | 16.5 € | 15.0 € | 14.0 € | 13.0 € | 12.0 € | 11.5 € |
| **>1,000 - 3,000 MT** | 15.0 € | 14.0 € | 13.0 € | 11.5 € | 11.0 € | 10.5 € |
| **>3,000 - 5,000 MT** | 14.5 € | 13.5 € | 12.0 € | 11.0 € | 10.5 € | 10.0 € |
| **>5,000 - 25,000 MT** | 14.0 € | 13.0 € | 11.5 € | 10.5 € | 10.0 € | 9.5 € |
| **>25,000 - 75,000 MT** | 13.5 € | 12.0 € | 11.0 € | 10.0 € | 9.5 € | 9.0 € |
| **>75,000 - 150,000 MT** | 13.0 € | 12.0 € | 11.0 € | 10.0 € | 9.5 € | 9.0 € |
| **>150,000 - 300,000 MT** | 10.5 € | 9.5 € | 8.0 € | 7.0 € | 6.5 € | 6.0 € |
| **>300,000 MT** | 9.5 € | 8.0 € | 7.0 € | 6.5 € | 6.0 € | 5.5 € |
| \*Fees are subject to annual review by the BCI Council.\*\*Relative procurement is the percentage of cotton lint sourced as Better Cotton compared to the total cotton consumption.*NOTE: For Better Cotton sourced in calendar year 2024, there is an additional discount of 7% on an opt-in basis, for members paying gross Volume Based Fees of more than 1 million EUR to be applied only to the amount in excess of 1 million EUR.*  |
| **2016-2023 Volume Based Fee Rate (EUR/MT BC procured)** |
| **Volumes of cotton sourced as Better Cotton** |
| **Absolute Procurement** | **Relative procurement** |
| **< 20%** | **≥ 20%** | **≥ 40%** | **≥ 60%** | **≥ 80%** | **100%** |
| **≤ 200 MT** | 15.0 € | 14.0 € | 13.0 € | 12.0 € | 11.5 € | 11.0 € |
| **>200 - 1,000 MT** | 14.0 € | 13.0 € | 12.0 € | 11.0 € | 10.5 € | 10.0 € |
| **>1,000 - 3,000 MT** | 13.0 € | 12.0 € | 11.0 € | 10.0 € | 9.5 € | 9.0 € |
| **>3,000 - 5,000 MT** | 12.5 € | 11.5 € | 10.5 € | 9.5 € | 9.0 € | 8.5 € |
| **>5,000 - 25,000 MT** | 12.0 € | 11.0 € | 10.0 € | 9.0 € | 8.5 € | 8.0 € |
| **>25,000 - 75,000 MT** | 11.5 € | 10.5 € | 9.5 € | 8.5 € | 8.0 € | 7.5 € |
| **>75,000 - 150,000 MT** | 11.0 € | 10.0 € | 9.0 € | 8.0 € | 7.5 € | 7.0 € |
| **>150,000 - 300,000 MT** | 9.0 € | 8.0 € | 7.0 € | 6.0 € | 5.5 € | 5.0 € |
| **>300,000 MT** | 8.0 € | 7.0 € | 6.0 € | 5.5 € | 5.0 € | 4.5 € |

At the beginning of each calendar year , the VBF of the previous year is collected in time to prepare for the coming cotton-growing season. Relevant Retailer and Brand as well as Supplier and Manufacturer Members must understand the invoicing cycle, budget and plan to pay these invoices in a timely manner.

1. Invoicing cycle for Volume Based Fees

### **Pre-payment of VBF (called Pre-paid VBF or PPVBF at Better Cotton)**

To secure funding and share risk at the start of the cotton-growing season, there is an obligatory, non-refundable, pre-payment of VBF, invoiced at the beginning of the year for existing Retailer and Brand Members. The prepaid VBF is equivalent to 75% of the previous year’s Gross VBF.  With the assumption that Members will maintain, or increase, their Better Cotton sourcing year-on-year, the pre-payment is therefore smaller than the Gross Year-End VBF, thus fully deductible.

### **Year-end Gross VBF**

At the end of each calendar year, the Gross VBF is calculated based on actual volumes of Better Cotton sourced as registered on the online Better Cotton Platform by 31 December. This is expected to exceed the Member’s pre-payment as explained above. All sums exceeding pre-payment are invoiced at the beginning of the year following the sourcing year as Net VBF. Please note that in the rare case that the Gross VBF is lower than the pre-payment, **Better Cotton cannot refund VBF as all pre-payments are invested into the Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF) for farmer activities and paid out to Programme Partners. After investment into the GIF, the funds are no longer available to Better Cotton.**

To understand how these fees impact Member budgeting and planning, Better Cotton provides additional information and tools for Members.  Please reach out to your key contact or membership@bettercotton.org**.**

**Important Note:  VBF Calculation for Better Cotton sourced in 2024**

VBF for Better Cotton sourced in 2024 will be invoiced according to the regular invoicing cycle, meaning that prepayments will be invoiced at the beginning of 2024 and the net VBF will be invoiced at the beginning of 2025.

* The prepaid VBF will be based on the 2023 Gross VBF, and therefore will not be impacted by the new VBF rates that apply from 1 April 2024.
* At the beginning of 2025, the 2024 Gross VBF will be calculated in two parts, one for the first quarter using the old 2016 – 2023 rates, and another for the rest of the year using the new 2024 rates.
* The VBF rate for both periods will be determined by the total amount sourced in 2024 (absolute and relative procurement).
* The sourcing period will be determined by the transaction date in the Better Cotton Platform.

Therefore, the impact of the new 2024 rates will thus be seen in your net 2024 VBF invoice at the beginning of 2025.

1. **Traceability Activation Fee**

Better Cotton Traceability is available from November 2023. A one-time, non-refundable Traceability Activation Fee will apply for Retailer and Brand Members who want to start sourcing Traceable Better Cotton. The fee must be paid before the Member can start sourcing. The fee will only provide access to the technical platform, it will not guarantee access to actual Traceable Better Cotton.

The Traceability Activation Fee will be invoiced upon submission of a Traceability Activation Form to membership@bettercotton.org. The form is available on [myBetterCotton](https://my.bettercotton.org/) (your Primary Contact will have a login).

A discounted fee is offered to Members that sign up before 1 January 2025. After that date, the regular fee will apply. The exact amounts are listed in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Size Category**  | **Cotton Consumption** | **Promotional Fee\*** | **Regular Fee** |
| Very Small | < 5,000 MT |  4,000 € |  6,000 € |
| Small | 5,000 - 20,000 MT |  9,000 € |  13,000 € |
| Medium | >20,000 - 50,000 MT |  25,000 € |  33,000 € |
| Large | >50,000 - 125,000 MT |  50,000 € |  70,000 € |
| Very Large | > 125,000 MT |  80,000 € |  110,000 € |

 \*Valid until 31 December 2024.

**Traceability Panel Members**

Members of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 Retailer and Brand Traceability Panels are not subject to this fee, as they have already made financial contributions to the programme. Retailer and Brand Members who were not part of the 2023 Panel but did participate in the 2021 or 2022 Panels will receive a 50% discount.

Check List

Together with this application form, please make sure you submit the following:

1. **A copy of your company registration certificate**

This document will typically be a copy of your company’s legal registration with the local administrative authorities. If you are applying as a group which is not a legally registered entity, the certificate of incorporation of each of the companies within the group must be submitted.

1. **Cotton calculation**

You may send a filled out Better Cotton Calculation tool or another document clearly stating your annual cotton consumption (in lint).

1. **A signed copy of the Better Cotton Membership Code of Practice**

The Better Cotton Membership Code of Practice is included in this application pack and must be signed separately. It outlines the commitment and expected behaviour of a Better Cotton Member.

1. **A digital copy of your logo (optional)**

The provided logo should preferably be in PNG format, with a transparent background.

Signature

With my signature, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (entity name) is applying for membership to the Better Cotton Initiative. I confirm that I have the legal mandate officially to act on behalf of my organisation.

With the signature below, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (signatory name) acknowledges and accepts the attached Better Cotton Code of Practice, the Better Cotton Terms of Membership, the Better Cotton Fee Structure, the Better Cotton [Statutes](https://bettercotton.org/documents/bci-statutes/), the [Better Cotton Chain of Custody Guidelines](https://bettercotton.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Better-Cotton-CoC-Guidelines-V1.4-Final-Dec-2020-updated.pdf), the [Better Cotton Claims Framework](https://bettercotton.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Better-Cotton-Claims-Framework-v3.1.pdf) the Better Cotton [Anti-trust Policy](http://bettercotton.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/BCI_Antitrust_Policy_final_eng_ex.pdf) and the [Data Privacy Policy](https://bettercotton.org/better-cotton-data-privacy-policy/), as well as the resulting rights and obligations.

I declare that all information provided is, to the best of my knowledge, comprehensive and correct.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Signature: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Position within Organisation: |  |

Member Code of Practice

Our vision is a world where all cotton farming is sustainable.

Better Cotton’s mission is to help cotton communities to survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. Cotton farmers are at the centre of what we do.

General

Better Cotton is a not for profit multistakeholder membership association. It is politically neutral and it does not discriminate on any grounds.

Better Cotton is a pre-competitive initiative, and does not act in any way that can be construed as limiting competition. The members of Better Cotton ("Better Cotton Members") abide by a strict anti-trust policy. Better Cotton does not set a premium for Better Cotton and pricing of the commodity is a function of the market. The ultimate beneficiaries of Better Cotton’s actions are cotton farmers, cotton farm workers, cotton farming communities and the environment.

Better Cotton has a collaborative approach to other established sustainability initiatives, it complements, rather than competes with them. Better Cotton works alongside others to increase the amount of cotton produced in a more environmentally and socially sustainable way.

Code of Practice

Better Cotton Members are expected to act with integrity and not partake in any activity that could negatively impact the credibility of Better Cotton. This Code of Practice outlines areas in which internationally recognised best practice is expected. The Better Cotton Secretariat reserves the right to define best practice in case of dispute.

Not acting in accordance with this code may lead to the termination of membership in accordance with the Better Cotton Statutes and the Better Cotton Terms of Membership.

* **Commitment and Conduct**
Better Cotton Members are committed to the mission of Better Cotton. They support Better Cotton in their communication, are transparent in all their dealings, and collaborate with Better Cotton and its key stakeholders. They provide truthful and accurate input to the organisation. and participate in its governance to improve how Better Cotton works.
* **Business Integrity**
Better Cotton Members act with integrity in their businesses, comply with all relevant legal requirements, respect contract sanctity, do not offer or accept bribes or deliberately withhold information. They act with fiduciary responsibility and protect data responsibly.
* **Decent Work and Human Rights**
Better Cotton Members uphold internationally recognised standards with respect to decent work and human rights (incl. the eight fundamental ILO conventions relating to principles and rights at work) . They do not accept any form of harassment or discrimination on any grounds. They respect workers’ rights to organise themselves and care for their health and safety.
* **Communication**
Better Cotton Members are honest and transparent in their sustainability marketing and communication. They do not use unsubstantiated, or in other ways, misleading claims about Better Cotton or of the impact associated with it. They do not communicate on behalf of Better Cotton.
* **Sourcing**
Better Cotton Members abide by applicable chain of custody guidelines as developed and implemented by Better Cotton, or otherwise recognised officially by Better Cotton.
* **Environmental compliance**
Better Cotton Members are committed to (i) protecting the environment they operate in and (ii) adhering to, at a minimum, the local environmental laws for the location(s) in which they operate.

Credibility and Reputation

These are universal principles that Better Cotton has established for the credibility and wellbeing of its membership community, and to protect the reputation of the association and its members. Above and beyond these principles, if the Better Cotton Council deem that a particular entity, for whatever reason, poses a risk to credibility and/or reputation, Better Cotton reserves the right to protect the reputation of the association for purposes of supporting its mission.

Implementation of the Better Cotton Standard System, and other parts of the Better Cotton programme have their own rules of engagement, however, the above underpin behaviours expected from all members within the Better Cotton Community.

\*\*\*

I am authorised on behalf of my organisation to hereby confirm that we understand and commit to this Code of Practice.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signature   | Company stamp   |
| Name   |
| Role   |
| Date and Place   |

Terms of Membership

Better Cotton membership is renewed annually upon fee payment.

Members wishing to terminate their membership shall give three months’ advance notice in writing by emailing membership@bettercotton.org. Fees already paid for current membership year are not refundable.

1. Terms of Payment

1.1 Membership fees are payable on an annual basis.

1.2 Invoices will be sent electronically by email by default and as hard copy by post upon request only.

1.3 Invoices will be considered as received on the next business day following the day the documents were emailed.

1.4 Membership fee invoices are payable within 60 days of receipt.

1.5 After 30 days a reminder will be sent by the Better Cotton Secretariat. Fee payments will be considered late if received after the payment term has expired. A fee of up to 5 % of the initial amount invoiced may be charged for late payments.

1.6 Failure to pay membership fees for 5 months or longer may result in suspension and/ or termination of membership.

1.7 Fees are reviewed annually by the Better Cotton Council.

1. Adherence to the Better Cotton Initiative Code of Practice

The adherence of members to the Better Cotton Initiative Code of Practice is fundamental to the integrity, credibility and success of Better Cotton.

A violation of the Better Cotton Code of Practice may lead to the suspension and / or termination of membership. A breach of the Better Cotton Code of Practice includes, but is not limited to the following:

**Practice contradicting the spirit of Better Cotton, its mission, aims and strategic principles**

2.1 Endangering the interests or the reputation of the Better Cotton Initiative and of Better Cotton.

2.2 False representation of Better Cotton.

2.3 Making misleading or unsubstantiated claims about the production, procurement or use of Better Cotton and the impact associated with it.

2.4 Being listed on a default list.

2.5 Behaving in a manner contradictory to the Better Cotton anti-trust guidelines.

2.6 Taking part in anti-competitive practices.

1. Termination of Membership

**Under the Better Cotton Statutes, a member ceases to be a member of the Association if the** **member:**

3.1 becomes insolvent

3.2 is wound-up or is dissolved

3.3 resigns that membership by written notice to the Better Cotton Secretariat with a notice period of at least three months

3.4 or is expelled from the Association, according to art. 3.5-9.

**The Council may expel a member if it determines that:**

3.5 the member no longer meets the definition specified for the member’s membership category

3.6 the member no longer meets the membership criteria

3.7 the member fails to adhere to the Better Cotton Member Code of Practice

3.8 the member fails to pay their membership fees on an annual basis and in accordance   with the membership fee structure

3.9 or the member is endangering the interests or the reputation of Better Cotton.

In case of expulsion, the Council must give the member at least 30 days written notice of the expulsion, stating the grounds for the expulsion and allowing the member to provide a written submission stating why they should not be expelled, with such submission to be received prior to the proposed date of expulsion. The Council’s decision whether or not to expel a member is final.