

Technical Advisory Committee

Description

The Mountaineers is known in the climbing community for being slow to adopt new techniques and struggles with inconsistency in techniques across branches. We also have an opportunity to play a meaningful role in the American Alpine Club's development of national club climbing standards. The Technical Advisory Committee will consist of members from each branch and potentially some folks from the greater climbing community, and will be responsible for staying current on cutting edge climbing technology, working with partner companies like Petzl and Black Diamond to understand the nuances of gear and techniques. The committee will be responsible for bringing those things back to The Mountaineers.

Scope

The Technical Advisory committee will make annual recommendations to climbing committees for implementation of new skills, techniques and devices. The committee will coordinate annual skills and techniques symposiums similar to Seattle's Forefront event in 2016 to ensure all branches' committees have a clear understanding of the techniques we teach. The committee will have a representative who works as a liaison to the AAC standards committee. The committee will also work directly with Mountaineers Books to ensure publications are relevant and teaching the most up-to-date techniques. Additionally, the committee will develop a system whereby leaders and course chairs can make technique recommendations.

Membership

The Climbing Technical Advisory Committee will be a group of 7-14 volunteers representing a variety of branches and committees and will include guest members from partner organizations in the climbing industry. During the first year, we'll recruit 7 members to establish the committee and charter. The 7 initial members will recruit an additional 7 to join during year two. Each year thereafter, 7 members will roll off, leaving a spot for each branch to nominate a new representative on the TAC.

Qualifications:

- Leader status in climbing OR leader status in another Mountaineers activity plus extensive experience climbing
- Ability and desire to stay apprised of cutting edge climbing technology
- Commitment to safety
- Ability and desire to reach consensus about climbing techniques through research, testing and analysis
- Commitment to ensuring climbers receive proper training in any new or altered techniques

Requirements:

- Membership is a 2-year commitment, approximately 1-3 hours per month plus some full-day visits with partner organizations
- Attend monthly meetings (some in person, some remote)
- Liaison with your branch & committee(s), including ongoing two-way communication

Timeline/Milestones

The Education Director will work with the Climbing Education Manager to begin working with committees in spring of 2017 to recruit members of the Technical Advisory Committee, targeting a first meeting in April 2017. The TAC will meet regularly and develop an annual training calendar, appoint a liaison to the American Alpine Club, and review new techniques on an ongoing, consistent basis. They will also liaison with Mountaineers Books on an ongoing basis to ensure our books are relevant and timely to our courses.

Expected Outcomes

By investing in technique development, we anticipate achieving greater consistency among courses and with other organizations leading to a greater degree of trust. By working with the American Alpine Club, we will increase our relevance in the broader climbing community, and we will be better prepared to include new techniques into our courses.