



The New Role of the FGS Delegate

What is FGS?

The Federation of Genealogical Societies empowers the genealogical and family history community, especially its societies and organizations, by:

1. Advocating for the preservation and access of records
2. Providing resources that enable genealogical organizations to succeed in pursuing their mission

1. Advocating for the Preservation and Access of Records

To serve our records preservation purpose, FGS engages in projects some of which involve fundraising and some that do not. We concluded fund-raising in 2016 for the [Preserve the Pensions Project](#) which raised funds to facilitate the digitization of U.S. War of 1812 pension files at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). These documents are being digitized, indexed, and added to Fold3.com where they will be permanently free to access. A recent non-fundraising project was the [US-Mexican War Database](#), in which we partnered with the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park to create a searchable database of soldiers of the US-Mexican War.

FGS is a co-founder and participating member of the [Records Preservation and Access Committee](#), in partnership with other leading genealogical organizations. RPAC was created to advise the genealogical community on ensuring proper access to historical records of genealogical value in whatever media they are recorded, on methods to affect legislation, and on supporting strong records preservation policies and practices. RPAC monitors legislative activities at the state and national level to prevent closure and access reduction to important records of genealogical value.

2. Providing resources that enable genealogical organizations to succeed in pursuing their mission

FGS provides educational experiences to help societies thrive and to help their members grow as genealogists. FGS hosts an [annual conference](#) – four days of excellent lectures, including society management topics. FGS produces [webinars](#) dedicated to society management education. FGS publishes [FORUM magazine](#), a quarterly interactive electronic magazine providing current information essential to both society leaders and the informed genealogist. The [FGS Voice blog](#) provides time-sensitive information.

FGS publishes an extensive series of [Society Strategy Series Papers](#), covering topics about effectively organizing and operating a genealogical society. FGS provides society-strengthening services to our member societies such as [reviews of bylaws, newsletters, and websites](#), suggesting improvements. The second edition of our [Bylaws Workbook](#) published in 2012 aids societies in creating bylaws that strengthen societies and prevent confusion, dissension, and disagreement. FGS also recognizes excellence in the genealogical community with [awards for societies and individuals](#).

Why does your society need a delegate?

Delegates act as the main voice between FGS and your home society. Your society's FGS delegate will bring news from FGS (conference news, RPAC issues, webinars, and so on) to your home society's general membership as appropriate. FGS news and announcements can be made at your general meeting, in your newsletter, as a part of your website or blog, or in your society's email blasts. Likewise, the delegate is tasked with keeping FGS up-to-date on your home society's activities, announcements, meeting information and so on by sharing your society's newsletter with membership@fgs.org (we comb through these to share society announcements in the *FORUM* magazine), and submitting your events to the Society Events calendar. Every FGS member society has one vote in FGS annual elections, on any business matters (i.e. bylaws changes), and on motions in the annual business meeting. The delegate is the voting member of your society.

Delegate Job Description

To sum it up, a delegate's job includes the following:

- Attend the FGS delegate or member leadership event at annual FGS conference.
- Vote in all FGS elections, on business matters, and motions at the annual business meeting held at the FGS conference each year.
- Ensure the society's online account and "Find a Society" profile are current. When changes are needed, advise the person designated as the main contact on the membership account to make the changes.
- Submit your society's activities to the Society Events calendar (<https://fgs.org/society-events/member-only/add>).
- Disseminate information about FGS Conferences to your home society.
- Read the FGS *FORUM* magazine for tips, ideas, news, and other information and encourage your board members to read the magazine by sharing what you've read.
- Provide information on member discounts (when available) to your society members (see the members-only section of the website for special discount codes and information).
- If your society has a seminar or special annual event, request 10 free *FORUM* subscriptions per year to be used as door prizes.
- Watch FGS leader webinars on topics of society management with your board or appropriate leadership for your society, or encourage those board members to log into their own accounts to watch.
- Submit your society's newsletter, bylaws, or website for a review and suggestions
- Nominate members of your society for FGS awards to be recognized for their hard work.

It is an important job! The delegate is the conduit through which FGS and your society communicate. It is through the delegate that the society can benefit the most from FGS. If you have any questions regarding delegate duties or your membership, please don't hesitate to email us at membership@fgs.org.