

AMERICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL
NIGERIA

MEMBERSHIP MANUAL

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1. WHO WE ARE

American Business Council (ABC or “the Council”) is the voice of American Business in Nigeria and has become an effective advocacy platform with the Nigerian public and private sectors. It was incorporated in 2007 as a non-profit entity to be the key vehicle for promoting trade and investment between Nigeria and the United States.

A General Meeting of US Companies doing business in Nigeria in May 2007, unanimously endorsed the need for ABC to operate as a “think tank” with focus on policy reforms for improving the Nigerian business environment. ABC aims to bring the perspectives and voice of Nigerian based leaders of American businesses combined with the US Government support, to bear on selected issues and reform initiatives that show potential for win-win results to support Nigeria’s quest for stable economic development.

ABC is an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world’s largest business organization and business-oriented lobbying group representing companies of all sizes across every sector of the economy. For more than 100 years, the US Chamber has advocated for pro-business policies that help businesses create jobs and grow their domestic economy. ABC members and partners are leading industry associations and large corporations across various sectors of the Nigerian economy. They count on ABC to be their voice in Abuja and across Nigeria.

ABC has a good understanding of the policy and legislative processes in Nigeria, which makes the organization an effective advocacy platform. ABC also functions as a convening platform, reservoir of data and insights. As a lobby vehicle, it collaborates with partners in government and other like minds in policy shaping. Equally important is carrying out projects and activities on behalf of members by following due process and adhering to Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. We build and implement a roadmap to guide our client from the introduction of a Bill to its enactment.

We work very closely with the US Embassy in Nigeria, Government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), including Nigerian Investment and Promotion Council, Nigerian Export Promotion Council, Central Bank of Nigeria, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, State Governments and the National Assembly. We also have good working partnerships with similar stakeholders, such as The Nigerian Economic Summit Group, Nigerian American Chamber of Commerce, and Lagos Business School.

Visit our website and follow us on LinkedIn, Twitter and our podcast “*Business Insights: How business works*” and have a look at our YouTube page to be up to date with our activities. Opt-in to receive curated content from our email products, which include a bi-monthly newsletter.

2. WHO CAN JOIN ABC?

American Business Member

Membership in this category shall be open to American businesses with a presence in Nigeria either independently or in affiliation with a Nigerian company or citizen.

(I) “American businesses” include:

- (a) Wholly owned Nigerian subsidiaries of U.S. corporations, firms, associations, institutions and other U.S. organizations and entities;
- (b) Corporations, firms, associations, or institutions substantially owned or controlled by Americans;
- (c) Corporations, firms, associations, or institutions which are members of a global network with significant presence in the U.S; and
- (d) Corporations, firms, associations, or institutions that are U.S. subsidiaries or affiliates of foreign owners or are otherwise listed on a US stock exchange, which have both their own significant and independent U.S. operations, and or significant and independent business interests in Nigeria.)

(II) “American-controlled business” shall for the purpose of these Articles mean a business whose ownership or decision-making organs, such as the Board of Directors and management, is or are controlled by American corporations, firms, associations, institutions or individuals having at least a simple majority of ownership or representation and the related voting rights of the business, and which applies American values, business principles and practices in its operation. A simple majority in this context shall mean 51%.

Nigerian Business Member

Membership in this category is open to companies with a presence in Nigeria and which carry on, as a major business:

- (a) a business which is managed or operated substantially by American professionals in accordance with American standards, or which otherwise has a strong tie with an American business;
- (b) a business which by itself or through its parent or affiliate is regulated by US laws and subject to US regulatory reporting requirements.

Non-resident Member

Membership in this category is open to companies and individuals which:

- (a) do not have a presence in Nigeria;
- (b) would otherwise qualify for American Business Membership, American Individual Membership, or Nigerian Business Membership; and
- (c) have a significant business interest in Nigeria.

3. ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

ABC is governed by a Board of Directors led by its President. The Board consists of 16 members responsible for defining and implementing its strategies and policies. Directors are elected once a year, while a third of directors retire rotationally at every Annual General Meeting (AGM). Each director has a tenure of 3 years. The heads of US-controlled company members occupy the office of the President and Vice-President of the Council.

The President and Vice-President are elected for two years and can hold office for two consecutive terms. Although the Presidency and Board representation require high-ranking executives, all positions are attached to companies not individuals. The Executive Secretary/CEO of ABC oversees the daily business of the Council.

4. COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

Be a member of one of our Committees and ensure that the ABC adopts good corporate practices and the charters of the Board. Be involved in the team that develops and oversees the implementation of ABC's approach to challenges facing your industry.

ABC has 5 standing Committees and Ad hoc Committees. Our Committees review ABC's performance to improve alignment with the Council's objectives and to incorporate any regulatory changes or relevant developments in the field.

- I. Finance Committee
- II. Membership Committee
- III. Advocacy Committee
 - i. Government and External Relations, stakeholder engagement
- IV. Programmes Committee
 - i. Media and Publicity, Research and Publications
- V. Governance and Nominations Committee
- VI. Ad hoc Committees
 - i. Committee on the Economic Impact Survey
 - ii. Healthcare Committee
 - iii. ICT Committee

5. MATTERS OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Our overarching focus areas include –

Economic Recovery Recommendation Engagements

ABC has been involved in economic growth and recovery engagements with governments since inception. Recently, ABC carried out a survey of Covid-19 impact on Business and summarized impact on eight sectors including ICT/Tech Sector. The Secretariat shared this at a dialogue with the US Ambassador and compiled outcome of the Economic Recommendations for further work.

There is on-going work with NIPC for Economic Recovery Recommendation with focus on the ICT/Digital space.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property cuts across the sectors in which ABC members operate, such as Tech, FMCG and Agriculture, and significantly affects the economy of Nigeria in general.

Data protection

The Council engaged stakeholders in both public and private sectors to address data protection concerns and to formulate a Data Protection Bill that best fits the Nigerian market.

Key successes

- Commercial Investment Dialogue (CID): The U.S.-Nigeria Commercial and Investment Dialogue (CID) is a U.S. Department of Commerce and Nigeria's Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment-led mechanism designed to promote increased, diverse and sustained Trade and Investments between the United States and Nigeria. The Dialogue is focused on five key areas, namely, agriculture, investments, regulatory reforms, infrastructure, and digital economy. The objective is to address policy issues in these sectors and identify areas for support to the Nigerian Government. The conversations are held between both Governments as well as Governments to private sector. The Council is a critical stakeholder of the CID.
- The Council has been one of the revered advocacy groups in Nigeria driving policy initiatives, such as the Ease of Doing Business, Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, exchange controls of 2015, Data Protection Bill, and Postal Bill.
- The Council has also engaged critical policy stakeholders to resolve critical issues for members, such as NAFDAC, NCS, FMITI, NIPC, NITDA, Nigerian Immigration Service and the National Assembly.

Kindly visit our [website](#) for more information on our ongoing activities.

6. BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. ACCESS TO MEETINGS, WEBINARS AND ALL ABC EVENTS.

Members of the Council gain free entry to ABC-sponsored events, such as our quarterly Economic Updates, Networking events, Onboarding of new members, Workshops with Nigerian MDAs and the US Government, as well as meetings with AmChams in other countries.

2. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

ABC has access to information on various projects currently carried out by US multilateral agencies in Nigeria and is in partnership with US government on such projects as the Economic Impact Survey, the Commercial Investment Dialogue and Power Africa. The Council also has the unique opportunity to share information among members about the different activities of member companies with the authorization of the specific members. Current policies and laws, which are of interest to members are also provided.

3. PARTICIPATION IN THE US ECONOMIC IMPACT SURVEY, other surveys

Every year, the Council, in conjunction with the US Mission in Nigeria, PwC, KPMG and Verraki, carries out a survey that shows the economic and social impact of US Companies and activities on the Nigerian economy. The outcome of this report is deployed as an advocacy material and shared with the appropriate arms of government.

4. SECTOR AND COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES.

The Council has Blue Chip US Companies operating in key sectors, including Infrastructure, Real Estate, Healthcare, Digital Economy, FMCG, Oil and Gas, and Professional Services. These sectors occasionally have specific issues around regulation, policies and legislation at the State and Federal Government levels.

The Council may require financial support from members to hold workshops and conferences targeted at developing ideas for the reform of specific areas of the business environment.

Every member can participate in the relevant Sector activities and the serve on the various standing Committees of the Council. Members are encouraged to participate in these Committees and other Ad hoc Committees that are set up from time to time to advance the work of the Council and member companies.

5. ACCESS TO ALL COMMUNICATION FROM THE COUNCIL

The Council provides information through periodic Newsletters, social media platforms including Website, LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp and, more recently, Podcasts. All members have their logos on the website to create visibility for their brands. New members are showcased once onboarding is done and members can share press releases, which the Council circulates through these platforms. The Council encourages its members to sponsor specific projects through adverts at subsidized rates.

6. ACCESS TO PARTNERS EVENTS

Members have access to conferences and workshops organized by ABC partners, such as The Nigerian Economic Summit Group, Lagos Business School etc., at discounted rates.

7. VISA SERVICES.

There are fast track opportunities with the Nigerian Immigration Service and US Consulate to improve business travel experiences in and out of the country. The Council provides advisory and support in setting up of fast track appointments, for which members may be required to pay a service charge, depending on the intensity of involvement of the Secretariat.

8. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & ENGAGEMENTS

ABC has access to different government stakeholders at all levels and is able to facilitate introductions and meetings for members and attend meetings with them or on behalf of members. However, members may be required to pay for services that go beyond introductions.

9. BUSINESS ADVISORY SUPPORT, CONFERENCES AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- **Specialist advice**

This service entails areas where the Council has particular expertise and can, therefore, advise when required on specialized topics. The Secretariat has strong links to industry and leading consultants who working with us can expedite unrivaled access to these services. Making the right choice for the client is part of the service.

- **Specific PR engagements, including launches and media engagements.**
- **Strategic Business Research Activities**
- **Collaboration between member companies**
- **Lobbying**

The Council has a highly developed understanding by which the legislature conducts its business. More important than doing all the right things on behalf of our members' interests is doing them at the right time and in the right order. Our approach includes diagnosis of the issues, mapping stakeholders and prioritizing stakeholders to engage. Members will be required to pay for these services in appropriate cases.

7 CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Currently, the Council has 57 **members** operating across 11 industries in the Nigerian economy.

CONSULTING	COURIER/ LOGISTICS	OIL/GAS	FINANCE	SECURITY
Verraki	Red Star	11 Plc	J.P Morgan Chase	Worldwide canine
KPMG	UPS	Spring Rock Energy	Citi Bank	
Bain & Co	ARC	Halliburton	Visa	
BCG		Lekoil	A.C.A.	
PwC		TechniPFMC	Mastercard	
		Schlumberger		
		Dubri Oil		
		Exxon Mobil		
FMCG	AGRICULTURE	HEALTH	INFRASTRUCTURE	ICT
Kimberly Clark	USSEC	Pfizer	General Electric	Microsoft
Dow Chemical	DuPont	Johnson & Johnson	North West Quadrant Development (Rendeavour)	Cisco
Coca-Cola	Dupoint (Corteva)	Bristol Scientific	Cummins	Oracle
7up		MSH	ATC	IBM
Kelloggs Tolaram		Varian	Aviat Networks	Selectium
P&G			Mantrac	Hewlett Packard
TGI				NCR
SC Johnson				Google
				Uber
				Amazon*
				Jumia*
				Intel

* e-commerce