

INTERNATIONAL CHINESE BOXING ASSOCIATION

SYSTEM RECOGNITION PROGRAM



ICBA System Recognition Program

Vetting Process and Requirements

1.0 Introduction & Purpose

The International Chinese Boxing Association (ICBA) is committed to upholding the highest standards of excellence, integrity, and representation.

The System Recognition process is a rigorous and strictly controlled vetting procedure designed to identify and recognize practical, well developed and effective martial system/styles/methods, with only the most qualified, legitimate and validated individuals being recognized as system heads.

This document outlines the official requirements and procedural steps for attaining System recognition & for being recognized as a System/Style/Method Head of Family.

The ICBA is offering two options, so that the Petitioner can choose the option that best fits their desires and situation. These options are: Founder Recognition & Founder Recognition with Rank Recognition.

Adherence to this process ensures that all Martial Systems recognized by the ICBA embody the quality and character expected of our organization.

2.0 Application & Submission Requirements

To initiate the vetting process, each applicant must submit a complete petition portfolio containing the following documentation:

Requirement	Description
Formal Petition	A formal written request for Sokeship/Sijoship recognition.
Letters of Recommendation	Written endorsements from the applicant's (as applicable) most recent instructor(s), respected peers, or other distinguished figures within the martial arts community.
ICBA Board Endorsement	A formal endorsement from a current ICBA Board Member is mandatory.

Background Screening Authorization	Consent for a thorough background and character screening. The ICBA reserves the right to conduct criminal and character reference checks. An impeccable reputation is requisite for any candidate.
Copies of Rank Certifications	Legible copies of all Black Belt/Sash level certificates, which must be accompanied by their corresponding under-belt certificates and any Letters of Recommendation pertaining to System Recognition. (For Head of Family Recognition: Preferred Title, Letters of Inheritance, Head of Family documentation, Lineage charts, Etc.
System Curriculum	A complete document outlining the formal curriculum of the system for which recognition is sought, as well as belt/sash levels and corresponding curriculum.
Demonstration Video	A video submission demonstrating proficiency in the system, including but not limited to self-defense applications, forms (kata), and weapon usage, where applicable.
Written Thesis	A formal essay detailing the applicant's rationale for seeking recognition, an explanation of the system's philosophy and structure, and what makes it a unique and valuable contribution to the martial arts community.
Instructor History	A comprehensive list of all past and current instructors, including their contact information, for verification purposes.

3.0 Examination & Vetting Protocol

3.1 In-Person Examination

- All qualified applicants must undergo a private, in-person examination, scheduled during an annual ICBA gathering, workshop, or seminar.
- The applicant is responsible for providing their own partner (*uke*) for the testing.

3.2 Review Panel

- Examinations will be conducted exclusively by a panel of high-level, ranking board members, preferably comprised of Grand Masters/Soke.

- The panel will consist of an odd number of members to prevent a tie in voting. A panel of 3 will be the minimum allowed number for the testing panel and must be approved by the ICBA Chairman.

3.3 Examination Format

- The examination is a closed, private session with a minimum duration of 1.5 hours to ensure a thorough evaluation.
- Testing will consist of both a physical skills demonstration and a formal question-and-answer session, to ensure the panel's understanding of the proposed martial system.

4.0 Administrative & Financial Requirements

Item	Details
Membership Status & Eligibility	Applicants must be a current ICBA Executive Member in good standing throughout the entire process. Executive Members in their first year of membership are not eligible. Executive Members who are in their 2nd consecutive year (at a minimum) are eligible for submitting to this program. (Please refer to section 6.0, Rank Considerations, for eligibility)
Petition Fee	A non-refundable fee submitted with the initial application portfolio. Petition Fees will be set at \$399 for Founder w/ Rank Recognition, & \$299 for Founder only.
Review Fee	No fee is required prior for the in-person examination. There are no review fees. However, the Petitioner is required to be reviewed by the Board of Review for Demonstration and Q&A. This is to be done in person, at an ICBA sanctioned event.

5.0 Adjudication & Special Provisions

5.1 Non-Acceptance

Should an applicant not be approved by the testing panel, the ½ of the testing fee will be refunded. The applicant is permitted to re-apply during the following Executive Membership year. Testing will be conducted at the next annual gathering or sanctioned event.

5.2 Process Termination

If at any point during the vetting process an applicant is found to not meet the required

standards, the process will be terminated. The applicant will be formally notified, and any applicable fees will be refunded.

5.3 Waiver for Board-Recognized Candidates

In cases where an applicant is nominated by an Executive Board Member or a Board Advisor, and said applicant's skill and character are already well-established within the ICBA, the Board may elect to waive certain documentation requirements. These cases will be reviewed and decided upon at the Board's discretion.

6.0 Rank Considerations

6.1 Historical Process References

Historically, there has never been a universal system used in regards to issuing rank to the Founders of a new martial art style/system. So the question is how was this issue handled in the past and how is it handled now. While exceptions and exceptions to the norm will always exist, the below historical information is the most widely accepted on the subject.

The following are examples for the most widely used structure for belt ranking only, not the Menkyo System (Okinawan):

When a Founder was looking to be ranked in his/her own created style/system, this person was the authority in said system. There was no one above him/her within this system to issue any rank. This created a problem for a belt structured ranking system.

For reference to how this was handled, I will use Japan/Okinawa as examples; as their process is arguably the most widely used ranking structure used world wide, since its' inception in the early 1900's.

In the recent past (the last 100 years or so) ranking was historically issued by a board or panel of recognized style/system heads of Grandmaster status, usually 9th and 10th Dans. Looking into Japan's history on this subject shows this to be true. In Japan in particular, martial arts training was tied into the ministry of education as an approved education standard; specifically with Judo and Kendo. This does not mean the ministry itself issued rank. In fact, most members of the ministry were not high ranking martial artists or even martial artists at all. Typically, they did not decide how technically legitimate the new style was. They relied on recommendations from respected martial arts organizations and individuals. The most notable organization during those times was the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai.

The Dai Nippon Butoku Kai was instrumental in evaluating the new system and instructors, issuing Dan ranking and titles and helping to legitimize the new system. In the early 1900's this recognition process depended heavily on review by established organizations and masters. Sometimes a new founder remained at the rank they already had in another already established style, other times ranking was Issued.

In modern times, founding a new martial art does not mean an automatic 10th Dan ranking. In independent organizations (organizations that represent many style/systems, not bound by any one style's requirements), ranking either remains the same or it is granted at one or two grades above current rank, as common practice.

So a 5th Dan in an already established style, could be ranked to a 6th or 7th Dan. A 6th Dan to 7th or 8th Dan and a 7th or 8th Dan to a 9th Dan. Ranking time to reach 10th Dan is generally tied to a founder who has recognized impeccable credentials and the longevity of said system and the influence it has.

Moreso, in modern times, rank upgrading or not tends to depend on the organizational standards and requirements, but both methods are widely considered acceptable.

You will note that we did not address the martial arts from countries such as Philippines or China. The martial arts of these countries is historically and mostly family, village and clan based hierarchy. Although today, this is changing in China with the implementation of the Duan/Tuan system.

The International Chinese Boxing Association's System Recognition Program will model the historical methodology, as described above, and shall deliver a decision upon completion of the in-person Review according to the criteria above. A Master's Level Ranking is required for eligibility and submission of a Petition.

Applicants who do not possess a Master Level Rank may apply, provided that they have ample, documented experience in several arts and request a waiver of this requirement. The ICBA Board of Review (BoR) will determine if the submission quality is supportive of a waiver by the BoR.

System Recognition Package Checklist

- ☐ Completed Petition/Application Document w/ ICBA Sponsor endorsement
- ☐ Printed/Signed Authorization for Background Check and References Check
- ☐ Copies of All Applicable Rank Certificates
- ☐ Copies of All Applicable Letters
- ☐ Instructor History or Resume
- ☐ System Curriculum/Program Documents
- ☐ System Thesis
- ☐ Demonstration Video (minimum of 30 minutes)
- ☐ Petition Fee Submitted

SYSTEM RECOGNITION PETITION

Current Rank/Title: _____

Full Legal Name: _____

System/Style: _____

Martial Art Type: _____

Email: _____ TEL# _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

NOTE: Attach all supporting document and information to this Petition. Petition will not be assigned and reviewed without payment.

Circle One: FOUNDER RECOGNITION FOUNDER w/ RANK

ICBA Sponsor: _____

I, _____, named in the above petition/application, do hereby give my consent and authorization to have a background check conducted by the International Chinese Boxing Association (ICBA) and further authorize the ICBA's appointees to conduct verifications of my references for the purpose of the petitioned program name within this document.

Name of Petitioner

Date

Witness Signature

Date

Witness Contact Email

Witness Contact Number