International Play Association: Promoting the Child's Right to Play (IPA)

Constitution

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IPA Constitution

1. Name

The name of the Association shall be the International Play Association: Promoting the Child's Right to Play (first known as the International Playground Association and subsequently as the International Association for the Child's Right to Play).

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Association is to protect, preserve and promote the child's right to play as a fundamental human right.

3. What the Association is

The Association is a non-governmental organisation. It is interdisciplinary and embraces in membership all professions concerned with the well-being of children. Membership is open to any individual or group that endorses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially article 31 which in summary states: every child has a right to rest, leisure, play and recreation and to participate in cultural life and the arts.

4. Objective

The objective of the Association is to provide an international forum to promote and improve opportunities for play, and the development of play environments, leisure time facilities and programmes for all children and youth in all countries, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

5. Activities of the Association

The Association seeks to pursue its objective by:

(a) organising the exchange of experiences and ideas through international meetings, courses and conferences;
(b) facilitating personal contact and correspondence between members of the Association;
(c) developing partnerships and co-operating with national and international organisations;
(d) disseminating information, publications and reports, and maintaining a website;
(e) producing an official IPA magazine;
(f) increasing membership and encouraging the establishment of national branches;
(g) setting up working groups to develop projects and conduct research;
(h) taking other action which may further the objective of the Association.

6. Membership

The Association may admit as members any individual or group accepting the objective of the Association as set out in Clause 4 above.

Membership of the Association shall consist of the following:
(a) individuals;
(b) non profit-making groups, for example local and area organisations, local professional agencies, national voluntary organisations and government departments at all levels, whose objective is compatible with the objective of the Association;
(c) benefactors, that is profit-making groups, for example commercial associations and corporate bodies, whose objective is compatible with the objective of the Association.

7. Rights and Duties of Membership

(a) Each individual or group shall apply to become a member, shall agree to accept the objective of the Association, and shall pay an annual subscription.
(b) All members shall be entitled to attend the Association's conferences and other events at a reduced rate, to receive copies of the Association reports, financial statements and the official magazine.
(c) Individual and non profit-making group members are entitled to exercise their right to vote.
(d) Non profit-making group members shall be entitled to send a maximum of three members at member rates to Association conferences.
(e) Membership shall cease on written notice of resignation or if the annual subscription is not paid in due time.
(f) Membership may be suspended by the Council of Representatives (Council) and terminated on the passing of a resolution by the Council.

8. Affiliation

(a) Any international organisation which desires to become affiliated to the Association and whose objective is compatible with the objective of the Association, may be allowed to do so on payment of a special fee to be determined by the Executive Board or through an agreement for reciprocal membership.
(b) The Association may become affiliated to or agree to reciprocal membership with any organisation whose objective is compatible with the objective of the Association.

9. National Representation

(a) Ten or more members forming a Branch

(i) Ten or more members in a country wishing to form a Branch of the Association, will be recognised as a Branch on signature of an 'Agreement of Association' approved by the Council.
(ii) Signature of an 'Agreement of Association' represents agreement with the purpose, objective and clauses contained within this Constitution.
(iii) The 'Agreement of Association' shall include provision for the good management of the Branch and the exercise of the duties set out in Clause 10 below.
(iv) Where a Branch has been formed, members of that Branch shall elect one of their members to be their National Representative on the Council of Representatives.
(v) On the dissolution of a Branch, its funds and assets, after payment of all the debts, shall pass to the Association. (suggest cutting this clause as per email)
(vi) Should a Branch wish to be formally constituted or registered in accordance with local or national requirement such a constitution or registration shall be compatible with IPA's purpose and objective.

(c) Less than ten members

(i) In a country or large geographical region with less than ten members, the Board may appoint a member of the Association to act as a link between those members and the Association. Countries with less than ten members shall not have a place on the Council of Representatives.

10. Duties of a Branch and their National Representative

The duties of a Branch and their National Representative, shall be:
(a) to further the purpose and objective of the Association locally and nationally;
(b) to recruit members;
(c) to liaise with and to facilitate contact between the members of the Association in an area, country or region;
(d) to collect subscriptions due to the Association and account for receipts and payments to the Treasurer of the Association;
(e) to report to the Board on developments in the area, country or region at least annually.

11. Management

(a) The Association shall be managed by an international Executive Board and Council of Representatives.
(b) The Board will be elected by members of the Association at the General Meeting in accordance with Clause 19, and will be accountable to them for the good governance of the Association. The Board shall be deemed to have delegated to it such general responsibilities and authority as may be necessary to implement the purpose and objective of the Association set out in Clause 2 and Clause 4, and to promote and manage its affairs.
(c) The Council shall be composed of the National Representatives and the Executive Board.
(d) The Council will be chaired by the President of the Association.

(e) Members of the Executive Board do not have votes in Council, except the President (or in his or her absence the Chair of the meeting) who may have a casting vote when called upon.

12. The Executive Board

(a) The Executive Board shall consist of the Officers of the Association.
(b) The Officers, namely President, Vice-President(s), Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Officer, Communications Officer and Development Officer, shall be elected by members of the Association at the General Meeting, in accordance with Clause 19.
(c) The elected officers shall hold office until the next General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election.
(d) A National Representative elected to the Executive Board shall step down from the position of National Representative and request that their Branch elect a replacement.
(e) The Board shall meet at least once per year in person.
(f) Other meetings shall be convened in person or by using recognised methods of communication technology.
(g) The duties of the Board shall be:
  (i) to promote the purpose and objectives of the Association;
  (ii) to maintain a headquarters and an up-to-date register of members;
  (iii) to work closely with the Council.
(h) The Board shall be responsible to the members of the Association.

13. Authority and Responsibility of the Executive Board

Without limiting the general authority given by Clause 11, the Board shall have authority:
(a) to promote the purpose and objective of the Association and conduct its activities in consultation with members;
(b) to manage the business of the Association in the interests of the membership;
(c) to maintain a headquarters and an up-to-date register of members;
(d) to engage and dismiss staff;
(e) to make other paid or unpaid appointments for specific tasks as may be found necessary;
(f) to expend money received from any source;
(g) to appoint committees of members for such special purposes as it sees fit and to delegate to them such authority as it considers necessary;
(h) to co-opt members to the Board; for specific purposes non-members may be co-opted.
(i) to appoint persons to represent the Association; such representatives shall submit a report within an agreed time.
(j) in order to get an urgent decision of the membership or to sound the opinions of the membership, to conduct polls in accordance with Clause 19 (b) below;
(k) to raise and expend money received from any source in accordance with ethical and other policies approved by the Council;
(l) to recommend to the Council the rates of membership subscriptions which shall relate to the economic or other circumstances of members;

(m) to appoint a suitably qualified and independent person or persons to examine the annual accounts and report to the Board and Council;
(n) to appoint Trustees to hold any necessary property on behalf of the Association;
(o) to formulate and amend Standing Orders for approval at a General Meeting;
(p) to produce an annual report.

14. The Council of Representatives (the Council)

(a) The Council of Representatives shall be composed of the National Representatives and the Executive Board.
(b) The Council of Representatives shall meet in person at the Triennial Conference.
(c) Annual meetings of the Council shall be convened in person or by using recognised methods of communication technology.
(d) Other meetings of the Council shall be convened as necessary in person or by using recognised methods of communication technology.
(e) Each National Representative on the Council shall have one vote.

15. The Authority and Responsibility of the Council

The Council shall have authority and responsibility:
(a) to determine the rate of membership subscriptions which shall relate to the economic or other circumstances;
(b) to discuss and approve the policies of the Association;
(c) periodically to review and update the 'Agreement of Association';
(c) to work closely with the Board;
(d) to receive and discuss reports from the Board;
(e) to represent the views of members;
(f) to decide the venue for the Triennial Conference
(g) to invite and receive nominations and arrange elections for the Officers of the Association (in accordance with Clause 19).

16. General Meetings

(a) The Association shall hold a General Meeting every three years.
(b) The business of the General Meeting shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders.
(c) The business of the General Meeting shall be:
(i) To receive apologies for absence, approve the minutes of the previous meeting and deal with any matters arising.
(ii) To receive and adopt reports and financial statements from the President and Officers of the Association for the period since the last General Meeting.
(iii) To elect the Executive Board.

(iv) To appoint as Honorary Members for Life, persons who have made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Association.

(v) To decide on any proposition or motion that may be submitted to the meeting. No proposition or motion other than those relating to Clause 16 (c) paragraphs (i) to (iv) above shall be moved at the meeting unless the proposition, signed by the proposer and seconder and stating its terms, has been received in writing by the Secretary at least eight calendar months before the date appointed for the holding of the meeting. The Chairperson shall have the power to admit any proposition of which insufficient notice has been given, only with the consent of the majority of members present at the meeting. A proposition to add to, amend or alter this constitution or to dissolve the Association can not be admitted with insufficient notice in this way.

(vi) The proposals received in accordance with Clause 16 (c) (v) shall be circulated to all members with the agenda for the meeting at least seven calendar months in advance of the meeting. Members may then submit amendments to the said proposals provided these amendments are received by the Secretary at least four calendar months in advance of the said meeting. The Secretary shall then circulate these amendments to all members at least ninety days before the date appointed for the holding of the said meeting.

(vii) To approve or amend Standing Orders and conduct any other business of which due notice has been given or which is urgent.

(viii) Decisions of the General Meeting shall be effective immediately unless the Meeting decides otherwise.

(d) A Special General Meeting may be called by the Executive Board or shall be called by the Secretary on the request of not less than fifty registered members from at least five different countries. The notice convening the meeting shall state the business to be transacted and no other business other than that specified in the notice shall be dealt with at a Special General Meeting.

17. Notice of Meetings

a) Notice convening a General Meeting shall not be less than twelve calendar months.
b) Notice convening a Special General Meeting shall not be less than six calendar months, except in the case of an emergency.
c) Notice convening the annual meeting of the Executive Board shall not be less than 90 days unless otherwise agreed by them.
d) Notice for the annual meeting of the Council of Representatives shall not be less than 90 days.
e) Notice may be given to a member either personally or by sending it by post, fax, email or other recognised method.

18. Quorums at Meetings

a) A quorum for a General Meeting and Special General Meeting shall be fifty subscribing and registered members from at least eight countries present at the meeting.
b) The quorum for meetings of the Executive Board shall be four members.

c) The quorum for meetings of the Council of Representatives shall be fifty per cent of the current number of Council members rounded up to the nearest full figure.

19. **Voting**

(a) At General and Special Meetings

(i) The vote of each registered individual member present at the meeting and who has paid the current subscription shall count as a single vote.
(ii) The vote of a registered group member present at the meeting, irrespective of the number of delegates of that group attending, and which has paid the current subscription, shall count as three votes.
(iii) Benefactors are not entitled to vote.
(iv) Voting shall either be on a show of hands or on a poll.
(v) A member may appoint another member to be a proxy at a meeting but no member appointed as a proxy shall hold power of proxy for more than three members and must provide evidence of their appointment to hold power of proxy in each case.
(vii) Proxy voting at meetings shall only be allowed for proposals circulated to all members in advance of the meeting.
(viii) In the case of equality of votes, the Chairperson shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.

(b) Voting by post, fax, email and other recognised methods

(i) Voting by post, fax, email and other recognised methods may be undertaken as and when decided on by the General Meeting or as and when the Board or Council considers it necessary.
(ii) The vote of each registered individual member who has paid the current subscription shall count as a single vote.
(iii) The vote of each registered group member which has paid the current subscription shall count as three votes.
(iv) Benefactors are not entitled to vote.
(v) Proxy voting by post shall not be allowed.
(vi)Votes received after the closing date will not be counted.

20. Finance

(a) All monies received by, or on behalf of, or in the name of, the Association shall belong to the Association and be devoted to the purpose and objective of the Association.
(b) The Board of the Association shall be responsible for all monies received and expended by the Association and for the preparation of an annual budget.
(c) The Treasurer of the Association shall be accountable to the Board for keeping all monies and proper books of accounts showing receipts, payments, balances and assets.
(d) Branches and Representatives shall account to the Treasurer of the Association on all financial matters.

(e) The accounting period of the Association shall start on 1st January and end on 31st December of each year or as otherwise decided on by a proposition to a General Meeting. This period shall apply to all accounts held in the name of, or on behalf of, the Association unless otherwise authorised by the Board.
(f) The Treasurer of the Association shall, as soon as practicable but not more than three months after the end of each accounting period, prepare a financial statement and arrange for the accounts to be examined by an independent person or persons appointed by the Board for the purpose.
(g) All those holding a bank account in the name of, or on behalf of, the Association shall submit to the Treasurer of the Association a copy of an independently examined financial report and statement for that account.
(h) The Treasurer of the Association shall report on the financial situation of the whole Association to all the membership annually and make available a copy of the latest independently examined financial statement on request.
(i) The Board may authorise the Treasurer of the Association to invest the Association's funds and to change investments in accordance with ethical and other investment policies of the Association that have been approved by the Council of Representatives.
(j) The Board shall have power, subject to such consents (if any) as may be required by law, to raise any money required for any of the purposes of the Association by mortgage or charge of all or any part of the property of the Association.

21. Languages

The language of the Association shall be English and such other languages as may be decided by the Council of Representatives.

22. Additions and Alterations to the Constitution

(a) The provisions of this Constitution shall not be altered except on a proposition to a General Meeting or Special General Meeting and approved by a majority vote. The person presiding at the meeting shall not have power to admit any such proposition of which insufficient notice has been given. (See Clause 16 (c) (vi) & (vii).
(b) Proposals for additions and alterations to be considered at the General Meeting shall be circulated as in Clause 16 (c) (vi) and for consideration at a Special General Meeting with the notices as in Clause 16 (d).
(c)Amendments shall then be as for Clause 16 (c) (vii).

23. Dissolution

The Association may, at a General Meeting or Special General Meeting, decide by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, that the Association be dissolved. The notice convening the meeting shall be given in accordance with Clause 17 and shall state the

proposition for the dissolution of the Association. The Board as soon as practicable after such resolution, pay all the proper debts and liabilities of the Association and thereafter pay or transfer any surplus to an appropriate organisation determined at the General Meeting or Special General Meeting.

End