

WASLI



WORLD ASSOCIATION OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

WASLI is committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide

THE WASLI GOVERNING DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

'This document is the official Governing Document for the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI), adopted at the first WASLI Conference on 2 November 2005 in Worcester, South Africa.

The document uses British English because this is the most widely used and understood form of English.

This Governing Document includes the aim and objectives of WASLI and the general principles of the Association. The Executive Board will be responsible for developing and maintaining 'Internal Rules'. The internal rules will give the detail of how the aim, objectives and general principles of the Association will be achieved.

References in this document to 'Sign Language Interpreter' - refers to both Deaf interpreters and Hearing interpreters

References in this document to 'National Association' – refers to any interpreter association which has similar goals to WASLI and represents the views and interests of interpreters in (1) a single country (e.g. RID in the US) (not precluding the fact that some countries have more than one interpreter association e.g. Italy) (2) a number of countries (e.g. ASLI for England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or (3) countries where there are more than one official language and there are interpreter associations representing each (e.g. ARILS (French speaking Switzerland), BGD (German speaking Switzerland, ILISSI (Italian speaking Switzerland))'

CHAPTER 1 – ORGANISATION

Article 1 NAME - The name of the association is the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI).

Article 2 LOCATION - WASLI is an international association with its Headquarters at a place determined by the Executive Board.

Article 3 LANGUAGE – English is the official language for WASLI documents. English and International Sign are the official languages of WASLI meetings. The translation of documentation is encouraged.

CHAPTER 2 – AIM

The principal aim of WASLI is to advance the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide.

Article 1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of WASLI are to:

- Encourage the establishment of national associations of sign language interpreters in countries that do not have them
- Be a support network for existing national associations of sign language interpreters
- Share information and be a reference on interpreting issues
- Support the work of sign language interpreters working at international events such as conferences, sporting events and other gatherings and,
- Work in partnership with Deaf and Deafblind Associations on sign language interpreting issues
- Liaise with spoken language interpreter organisations and other organisations having common interests

Article 2 ACTIVITIES

To achieve these objectives WASLI will:

- Provide information through the World Wide Web
- Encourage research
- Promote realistic standards for high quality training of sign language interpreters
- Network with other consumer and professional associations and organisations
- Host conferences and seminars at meetings and related conferences
- When able, establish an office for communication other than through the Internet

CHAPTER 3 MEMBERSHIP

WASLI has voting and non-voting members.

National Members are voting members.

Provisional, Sponsoring and Honorary members are non-voting members.

All members have the right to debate and share opinions during WASLI meetings.

The Executive Board will, on behalf of the membership, consider all applications for membership.

Article 1 POWERS AND LIMITATIONS

The supreme decision making body of WASLI is the membership.

The Executive Board will manage WASLI between meetings of the General Membership.

No WASLI officer, agent, or employee shall have any power or authority to bind WASLI by any contract or commitment or pledge or to make WASLI

liable financially for any purpose or in any amount unless authorised by the Executive Board.

Article 2 NATIONAL MEMBERS are those national associations of sign language interpreters with goals similar to WASLI.

The President of the national association, or their proxy, will have one vote in the business of WASLI.

Article 3 PROVISIONAL MEMBERS are those interpreters from a country where there is no national association of sign language interpreters. The Provisional Member will have no vote.

The Provisional Member must provide a working plan toward the development of a national association. This plan must be received and accepted by the WASLI Executive Board before being allowed to join as a Provisional Member.

Article 4 SPONSORING MEMBERS are individuals, businesses, agencies, institutions, or others who support WASLI through payment of the appropriate membership fee and possible contribution of donations. (*Proposal 2007:1*)

Article 5 HONORARY MEMBERS are individuals or groups because of their significant international contribution to the profession are given 'Honorary' membership for life.

Article 6 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in WASLI may be terminated for non-payment of fees, resignation, or significant reason.

CHAPTER 4 FEES AND ASSESSMENTS

The Membership Fee structure of WASLI shall be set by the Executive Board. (Please refer to Appendix A – Membership Fee Schedule and Appendix B – IMF Listing of Countries and GDP)

Article 1 MEMBERSHIP FEES REQUIRED

Members must pay their annual membership fee by the first day of January each year with the exception of 2006 when the Board will make special arrangements.

The Executive Board may also ask for the payment of a reasonable late fee and/or reinstatement fee to join again.

Article 2 NOTIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP FEE CHANGES must be announced to WASLI members at least 1 year before the change.

Article 3 VOTING RIGHTS REQUIREMENT

National Members must have their membership fee paid in full to be allowed to vote.

CHAPTER 5 VOTING

Article 1 VOTING AT THE GENERAL MEETING

All proposals brought to WASLI will be decided by a 51% vote of those members in attendance (including proxy votes). *(Proposal 2005:11)*

Proposals to make amendments to the Governing Document or to dissolve WASLI will require a 2/3 majority vote of those members in attendance (see Chapter 10, Section 2). *(Proposal 2005:11)*

Article 2 VOTING BY MAIL REFERENDUM

Mail voting will be allowed.

Article 3 PROXY VOTING

Proxy voting will be allowed.

CHAPTER 6 MEETINGS

WASLI has meetings of the General Membership, the Executive Board, the Regions, and committees.

Article 1 QUORUM - A quorum for the General Membership is 25% *(Proposal 2005:10)* of the voting membership.

A quorum for the Executive Board and committees and Regional meetings is 51% *(Proposal 2005:11)*.

Article 2 ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETINGS

Face-to-face meetings of the General Membership must be announced at least 6 months in advance. The announcement of the meeting must include an agenda or purpose for the meeting.

Face-to-face meetings of the Executive Board must be announced at least 3 months in advance.

Article 3 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting consists of National, Provisional, Sponsoring and Honorary Members. General Membership Meetings are held at least every 4 years.

Article 4 FUNCTIONS OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING are to:

- Review and approve reports on activities of WASLI during the previous period
- Review and approve financial documents
- Approve membership fees
- Elect members of the Executive Board

- Consider and decide upon proposals submitted by the membership or the Executive Board

Article 5 MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD shall happen at least once each year. 3 months notice is required.

Meetings of the Executive Board shall also be held immediately before or after and at the same place as any General Membership Meeting. The remainder of the annual meetings will happen where ever and however possible. (Proposal 2005:6)

Article 6 ON-LINE MEETINGS may be held if a majority of the membership is able to connect. The Executive Board, committees, and membership are encouraged to make full use of technology in the sharing of information and as part of the decision-making process.

CHAPTER 7 THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Article 1 COMPOSITION

The Executive Board consists of four Officers (the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) and a number of Regional Representatives to be determined by the Board with the approval of the membership.

A Secretary General may be appointed as a staff member of the Association. The Secretary General attends meetings as a non-voting participant.

The Executive Board is elected for a 4-year period by the members at the General Membership Meeting.

Article 2 REGIONS

WASLI will be divided into Regions to be determined and modified by the Board with the approval of the membership.
(See Appendix C for List of WASLI regions)

Article 3 GENERAL DUTIES - The Executive Board is responsible to:

- Determine the official member list of WASLI, subject to approval by the majority of the Membership
- Develop and follow an action plan
- Provide a financial report by 1 April each year
- Approve the annual budget
- Appoint committees
- Employ and supervise the Secretary General
- Prepare documents to be discussed at the General Membership Meeting
- Supervise fund raising, accounting and other WASLI business

Any decision of the Executive Board may be reversed by a majority vote of the Membership.

Article 4 DUTIES OF THE ELECTED OFFICERS

Officers

The **President** shall:

- Chair General Meetings and meetings of the Executive Board
- Represent WASLI at appropriate activities
- Appoint committees with Executive Board approval
- Co-sign cheques with the Secretary, Treasurer or any other person designated by the Executive Board
- Provide at least annual reports to the membership concerning Executive Board activities, the business and financial status of WASLI

The **Vice President** shall:

- Assume all duties of the President if the President is absent or unable to complete their duties
- Liaise with the General Membership Meeting planning committee
- Carry out other duties as requested by the Board

The **Secretary** shall:

- Keep complete and accurate records of the proceedings of the Executive Board and the General Membership Meeting
- Supervise the keeping of all Association records
- Co-sign cheques with the President, Treasurer or any other person designated by the Executive Board

The **Treasurer** shall:

- Supervise the receipt and safekeeping of all Association funds and financial records
- Co-sign cheques with the President, Secretary or any other person designated by the Executive Board
- Liaise with the external auditor

Regional Representatives:

Regional Representatives shall:

- Chair Regional Conferences
- Facilitate the development of Regional activities
- Provide quarterly reports of their Region's activities and concerns to the Executive Board and to the members of the Region they represent
- Serve as a resource to the members within their Region
- Communicate regularly with the members in their Region

Article 5 QUALIFICATIONS - After the election of the first Executive Board, all candidates for the Executive Board shall have been members of their national Association in good standing for at least 3 consecutive years immediately prior to candidacy. Furthermore, all candidates for Regional Representative shall have been a resident of their region for at least 2 consecutive years immediately prior to candidacy.

Article 6 TERMS OF OFFICE

Officers and Regional Representatives shall serve a term of 4 years OR from the time of their elected appointment up until the next WASLI Conference whichever is the greater. (*Proposal 2007:2*)

Officers will be eligible for re-election to the same office after a break of 4 years. (*Proposal 2005:9*)

Article 7 NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS –

Executive Board Candidates must be nominated by a National Member and will be elected by a simple majority of the National Members of the Association.

Regional Representative Candidates must be nominated by a National Member from that region and will be elected by a simple majority of the National Members of that region.

Article 8 VACANCIES

Vacancies on the Executive Board will be filled by the Board as per the Internal Rules.

A decision for removal of a Regional Representative must be approved by 2/3 of the eligible and voting members from that Representative's Region.

CHAPTER 8 COMMITTEES AND STAFF

Article 1 COMMITTEES

The Executive Board may appoint committees. These may include permanent or special committees, or individual members with particular expertise to carry out specific functions of WASLI.

Committees and individuals serve as directed by the Executive Board. A member of the Executive Board will serve as a Board Liaison for each committee.

Article 2 STAFF

The Executive Board is responsible for the determination of WASLI's ability to hire staff for an international office. The chief staff position will be the Secretary General.

The supervision of the Secretary General is the responsibility of the Executive Board. Any other staff that are hired are under the direct supervision of the Secretary General.

CHAPTER 9 GENERAL DIRECTIONS

Article 1 SIGNING FOR THE ASSOCIATION

The signature of the President or the Vice President plus 1 additional member of the Executive Board representing WASLI may be used on contracts and other agreements as approved by the Executive Board.

Article 2 THE REPORTING AND ACCOUNTING PERIOD

The period of reporting and accounting is the 1 January to 31 December.

Accounts must be submitted to external auditors approved by the membership.

Accounts must be submitted to the External Auditors 3 months before the General Membership Meeting.

The External Auditor's report must be completed and sent to the members 2 months before the General Meeting.

Article 3 INSPECTION RIGHTS AND CORPORATE SEAL -

A copy of the WASLI Governing Document shall be available on the Internet and sent to anyone requesting it.

The WASLI name and the WASLI logo shall be used by WASLI and its members for official and/or approved purposes only.

Article 4 NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

WASLI does not discriminate according to age, colour, creed, disability, ethnicity, hearing or vision status, national origin, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

CHAPTER 10 AMENDMENTS AND DISSOLUTION

Article 1 AMENDMENTS TO THE GOVERNING DOCUMENT -

A proposal for amendment of the Governing Document must be submitted to the Executive Board at least 1 year before a General Membership Meeting. Amendments to this Governing Document require a 2/3 majority vote at the General Membership Meeting or through a special mail ballot vote (as detailed above).

Article 2 DISSOLUTION - The Executive Board or a majority of voting members may propose that WASLI dissolve. Approval for dissolution requires a 2/3 majority vote.

If WASLI dissolves all the funds and assets of WASLI shall be used to benefit Sign Language Interpreters in accordance with the aims of WASLI.