

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

CONSTITUTION

1. Name

- 1.1. The name of the Society shall be the "SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING"
- 1.2 The Society is a Charity, non-sectarian and non-political.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 To preserve, make known and encourage the practice in the United Kingdom of Folk Dances from across the world, while respecting their traditional form.
- 2.2 To promote the knowledge and practice of Folk Dances by means of classes, demonstrations, social activity, publications in all forms, the Internet and other suitable methods which may include a periodical.
- 2.3 To provide and encourage for the public benefit research into, and study of, the origin, development and traditional practice of Folk Dances.
- 2.4 To encourage the performance, playing, collection of and research into Folk Dance music with particular regard to traditional styles.

3. Membership

- 3.1 Any person living in the United Kingdom or overseas wishing to become a member of the Society, will apply in a form prescribed by the Executive Committee, which will include a statement that the applicant agrees to support the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society.
- 3.2 The Executive Committee shall accept or reject all applications for membership.
- 3.3 To continue membership, annual subscriptions shall be payable in September. Membership will lapse if the subscription is not paid by November.
- 3.4 An Annual General Meeting may confer honorary membership on a member who has belonged to the Society for at least five consecutive years, in recognition of services to the Society. This must be on the proposition of six members who have each belonged to the Society for five consecutive years.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee may unanimously agree to terminate an individual's membership of the Society, provided the Member has first been given a reasonable opportunity to show cause to the Executive Committee why membership should not be terminated. If there is not unanimity within the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee, by a majority decision, may call an Extraordinary General Meeting to deal with the matter. The Member may appeal to the Appeals Panel. The Panel shall consider evidence from all interested parties, and deliver a recommendation to a subsequent General Meeting for endorsement. If the Member does not accept the recommendation of either the Executive Committee or the Appeals Panel, the Member may put their case to a General Meeting which shall be the final arbiter.
- 3.6 If termination of an individual's membership of the Society is proposed and that individual wishes to appeal against the termination, an Appeals Panel shall be constituted, consisting of three members of the Society who are acceptable to both the individual and the Executive Committee. Nominations for and election of the Panel will be made at the Annual General Meeting. When the Appeals Panel is called, it shall invite the appellant, who may be accompanied by a friend, and a delegated Executive Committee member, to present their cases. Members of the Executive Committee are not eligible to be members of the Appeals Panel.

4. Branch Committees

- 4.1 The Executive Committee may establish branch committees in association with local affiliated and associated groups and members in an area. The objects of the branch committee are:
 - a. to assist in organising combined events in the area, including socials, education classes and displays
 - b. to publicise the Society

- 4.2 An application to the Executive Committee to form a branch committee may be made by two or more Groups or Affiliates in an area. Such application must be in accordance with this Constitution and based on the model branch committee rules published by the Society.
- 4.3 Branch committees shall be elected by SIFD members in the local affiliated and associated groups.
- 4.4 The Executive Committee and members of the Groups and Affiliates in an area have the right to examine the branch committee accounts and branch committee minutes.
- 4.5 The disbanding of a branch committee shall only take place if an appropriate motion is passed at an Annual General Meeting of the Society.

5. *Affiliated Organisations - Affiliates*

- 5.1 Organisations which further the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society may apply in writing to affiliate to the Society. The application shall include:
 - a. confirmation to further the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society
 - b. confirmation to do nothing that might reasonably be regarded as in contravention of these *Aims and Objectives* or to bring the Society into disrepute
 - c. an agreement to promote the interests of the Society, as appropriate in the circumstances of the applicant
- 5.2 Affiliation may be granted by the Executive Committee and shall be reported to the subsequent Annual General Meeting.
- 5.3 To continue affiliation, Organisations will pay an annual fee in September. Affiliation will lapse if the fee is not paid by November.
- 5.4 The Society:
 - a. shall not be responsible for the finance or property of Affiliated Organisations
 - b. will arrange to list Affiliated Organisations in the Society's publications
- 5.5 An Affiliated Organisation may appoint a delegate to attend Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings, and have one vote.
- 5.6 Each Affiliated Organisation will be entitled to financial support for courses subject to regulations defined from time to time by the Executive Committee.
- 5.7 Each Affiliated Organisation shall be entitled to receive two copies of any printed periodical of the Society.
- 5.8 The Executive Committee may terminate the affiliation of an Organisation in the interests of the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society. This must be endorsed by the subsequent Annual General Meeting.

6. *Associated Classes or Groups - Associates*

- 6.1 The Executive Committee may grant Associated status to any Class or Group whose Teacher makes application in accordance with this Constitution and the following conditions:-
 - a. The Teacher approved by the Executive Committee shall:
 - i) be a member of the Society
 - ii) be acceptable as a Society Teacher
 - iii) promote the interests of the Society in the Class or Group
 - iv) apply annually to renew Associated status
 - b. The Society:
 - i) shall not be responsible for the finance or property of the Class or Group
 - ii) will arrange to list the Class or Group in the Society's publications
- 6.2 Each Associated Class and Group will be entitled to financial support for courses subject to regulations defined from time to time by the Executive Committee.
- 6.3 Each Associated Class and Group will be entitled to receive one copy of any printed periodical of the Society in addition to the Teacher's own copy as a member.
- 6.4 The Executive Committee may terminate the Associated status of a Class or Group in the interests of the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society. This must be endorsed by the subsequent Annual General Meeting.

7. Executive Committee

- 7.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of a minimum of three and no more than ten Society members elected annually by postal ballot.
- 7.2 Notice of the election shall be given at least 60 days before the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 7.3 Nominations for the Executive Committee shall be proposed and seconded by members, with the agreement of the nominee, and submitted to the secretary at least 45 days before the AGM.
- 7.4 If up to ten nominations are made those nominated shall be declared appointed at the AGM without the need for a ballot. The AGM will have the right to reject nominations.
- 7.5 If there are more than ten nominations, ballot papers accompanied by a 50 word biography of each nominee shall be posted to members at least 21 days before the AGM. These should be returned at least one week before the AGM or handed to the secretary prior to the start of the AGM. These ballot papers may accompany the papers for the AGM. The ballot will remain secret until tellers appointed by the AGM count the votes.
- 7.6 The Executive Committee:
- a. shall elect the officers necessary to manage the Society including a chairman, secretary and treasurer who are the Principal Officers of the Society
 - b. shall be the Trustees of the Society
 - c. will have the power to conduct the Society's business in the manner in which it sees fit
 - d. may co-opt up to three members who can hold office, except that of chairman, but not have a vote
 - e. will take decisions by consensus if possible. The quorum for a Committee meeting is an absolute majority of the current Committee membership.
 - f. will, if consensus cannot be achieved, take decisions by simple majority of the members present. If however that majority is not a majority of the entire committee membership, the member(s) who is/are outvoted shall be allowed to require the absent members to be consulted and their votes to be counted before the decision is made final.
 - g. will, if consensus cannot be achieved, take decisions by simple majority, providing there is a quorum of five. The Chairman will have a casting vote in the event of a tie
 - h. may take decisions between meetings, provided that all Committee members are consulted if possible, or failing that at least an absolute majority of the current Committee membership including at least one Principal Officer of the Society. In the absence of consensus, the decision shall be taken by simple majority of the current total Committee membership, with the Chairman having a casting vote.
 - i. will keep minutes of Executive Committee, Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings
- 7.7 The Executive Committee shall determine the standard of teaching and shall keep and publish an official list of Society Teachers. The Executive Committee may appoint a subcommittee for these purposes.
- 7.8 Executive Committee members:
- a. shall not receive payment for holding office but may be paid in accordance with 8.5
 - b. will vacate their seat if they enter into regular employment of the Society or an Affiliated Organisation
 - c. shall refrain from voting on any contract with the Society in which they are directly or financially involved

8. Finance, Property and Accounts

- 8.1 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for keeping accounts of all monies received or expended by the Society. The Accounts of the Society shall be inspected annually by an Independent Examiner who shall be appointed by an Annual General Meeting. An Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet will be circulated to members before presentation at the Annual General Meeting for endorsement.
- 8.2 Members may inspect the accounts after giving adequate notice of no less than 14 days.
- 8.3 The income and property of the Society shall be used to further the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society.
- 8.4 The Society may appeal for donations, receive subscriptions and gifts of all kinds and receive such monies in trust as may be offered.

8.5 Expenditure of the Society may include expenses of any member and Executive Committee member, and fees for professional services rendered by an International Folk Dance instructor, leader, adviser or musician at an event or on a project which promotes the *Aims and Objectives* of the Society.

9. Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings (AGM and EGM)

9.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place within the nine month period following the accounting year end, as convened by the Executive Committee.

9.2 The Executive Committee may convene an Extraordinary General Meeting. Twenty members or one fifth of the membership, whichever is the smaller, giving written notice of the business to be addressed, can require the Executive Committee to convene an EGM within 90 days. Notice of the business of the EGM to be sent to members at least 30 days beforehand.

9.3 The Executive Committee will give at least 60 days notice of an AGM and invite motions proposed and seconded by members to be received at least 40 days before the Meeting. The Executive Committee and Branch Committees may also put motions to AGMs.

9.4 Papers for an AGM will be sent by the Executive Committee to members at least 21 days beforehand. These papers will include: the agenda; any motions; any proposals for Honorary Members; any motions to change the Constitution; proposals to appoint an Independent Examiner; any proposals to change the annual membership and affiliation fees.

9.5 The Executive Committee will present reports to the AGM including independently examined accounts.

9.6 Emergency motions may be received by an AGM providing the Chairman of the AGM and two thirds of those present agree. The following actions may not be the subject of an emergency resolution: to dissolve the Society; to amend the Constitution; to terminate membership; to spend more than ten percent of the financial assets of the Society.

9.7 The quorum for an AGM and EGM is twenty members or one fifth of the membership - whichever is the smaller.

9.8 Business at an AGM and an EGM will be conducted by normal rules of debate.

9.9 Standing Orders at AGMs and EGMs may be suspended by a two thirds majority vote. Standing Orders are a separate document and may be amended by a GM on the advice of the Executive Committee, subject to due notice

10. Constitution

10.1 The Constitution may be amended only at an AGM or EGM of the Society and then by a two thirds majority vote.

11. Dissolution

11.1 If the members resolve to dissolve the Charity the Trustees will remain in office as charity trustees and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Charity in accordance with this clause.

11.2 The Trustees must collect in all the assets of the Charity and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the charity.

11.3 The Trustees must apply any remaining property or money:

- (a) directly for the *Objectives*;
- (b) by transfer to any charity or charities for purposes the same as or similar to the Charity;
- (c) in such other manner as the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales ("the Commission") may approve in writing in advance.

11.4 The members may pass a resolution before or at the same time as the resolution to dissolve the Charity specifying the manner in which the Trustees are to apply the remaining property or assets of the Charity and the Trustees must comply with the resolution if it is consistent with paragraphs (11.3a) – (11.3c) inclusive.

11.5 In no circumstance shall the net assets of the Charity be paid to or distributed among the members of the Charity (except to a member that is itself a charity).

11.6 The Trustees must notify the Commission promptly that the Charity has been dissolved. If the Trustees are obliged to send the charity's accounts to the Commission for the accounting period which ended before its dissolution, they must send to the Commission the Charity's final accounts.