

Constitution, Bylaws, and Policy Manual Review Committee

Constitution and Bylaw Amendment Proposal – FAQ Briefing for ISME Members

Overview

The ISME Constitution, Bylaws, and Policy Manual Review Committee (CBPMRC) was established at the 2014 General Assembly (Porto Alegre, Brazil) to review and renew ISME’s governance documentation. The CBPMRC comprises Gary McPherson(Chair), Margaret Barrett, Ana Lucia Frega, Gary Ingle, Patrick Jones, Paul Lehman, Mark Reid, Patrick Schmidt, Amanda Watson, and Graham Welch. In September 2017, and following a decision by the ISME Board of Directors, Patrick Jones stepped down from the committee to take over as the ISME Parliamentarian.

In addition to working online continuously since its establishment, the Committee held a series of meetings at the World Conference in Glasgow in July, 2016, and met by itself for three days in Los Angeles in January, 2017. Following extensive online discussions, the Committee has prepared a set of recommended revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws of ISME which are intended to preserve and maintain the traditional values and vision of ISME, while at the same time enhance the Society’s ability to promote the learning and teaching of music for all people and the professional growth of music educators throughout the world.

This collection of *Frequently Asked Questions* is intended to inform the membership of the changes to the Constitution and Bylaws that are being proposed, and invite feedback and comments which can be considered by the Committee before it finalizes its recommendations for consideration at the ISME General Assembly to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan in July 2018 .

Members are invited to submit their feedback on the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws by January 31st, 2018 by clicking the ‘submit comments’ button on this website page. All comments will be reviewed by the CBPMRC and a summary of comments received and any responses from the CBPMRC will be posted to this website in April 2018. A final set of recommendations will appear before the 2018 General Assembly.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we revising the Constitution and Bylaws?

ISME was founded in 1953, in connection to work supported by UNESCO. As with many international organizations at that time, ISME’s governance and political model was constructed with similarities to the United Nations model. The 2016 General Assembly (Glasgow, UK) adopted a change to the Bylaws, affirming that ISME is a Society of individuals rather than nations. This change retired the

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practice of each represented nation having one vote, transitioning to the practice of ‘one member, one vote’ on matters before the General Assembly. Now, given the proliferation of communication technologies, access to information, and a modernized geopolitical map, it is time for ISME to adopt a renewed approach to governance, international outreach, and enfranchisement of members.

Our Society is governed by three documents: (1) its Constitution, (2) its Bylaws, and (3) its Policy Manual. The Constitution outlines the basic framework of our governance structure. It can be revised by a two-thirds majority vote in the General Assembly. The Bylaws establish and define the mechanisms for implementing our governance structure. They can be revised by a simple majority vote in the General Assembly. The Policy Manual prescribes and explains in detail the procedures by which the Society will conduct its affairs. It can be revised by the Board of Directors. The current proposals concern only the Constitution and Bylaws. The CBPMRC will offer proposals concerning the Policy Manual to the Board at a later date.

What exactly are these proposals designed to achieve?

The proposed changes are intended to:

1. Bring our governing documents into alignment with the practices that our experience has demonstrated to be effective
2. Provide guidance in contingencies not previously considered
3. Re-order various provisions in a more logical and systematic manner
4. Distinguish between categories of ‘membership’ (Individual, Student, Honorary Life) and forms of ‘partnership’ (Professional, Institutional, Corporate) that will expand ISME’s ability to connect and collaborate at national, regional and international levels
5. Clarify in greater detail the role of the General Assembly within the Society
6. Provide more complete procedural guidance for the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee
7. Specify more thoroughly the procedures of the Society regarding elections.

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Importantly, the new provisions are designed to also:

1. Promote acceptance, inclusion, and diversity in the work of the Society and to ensure against discrimination
2. Ensure fairness, consistency, and legitimacy by establishing a parliamentary authority and practice for conducting the business of the Society
3. Provide a means to deal with questions of ethics among our leadership
4. Establish an archive to collect and preserve the records and documents of the Society

What happens to the recently formed INA Council?

The 2016 General Assembly (Glasgow, UK) established a formalized body of the ISME National Affiliates (INA), national professional associations with a formalized relationship with ISME. A combination of Bylaws and policies limit each nation to just one INA, excluding a number of organizations who support and engage with ISME activities. A more inclusive approach has been recommended and is in the best interest of strengthening ISME's international network.

The proposed amendments will replace the INA Council with the Council of Professional Associations (CoPA), an expanded group open to all organizations that have acquired a professional association partnership with ISME. The CoPA is an advisory body designed to support the work of the Board of Directors. The composition of the CoPA allows for inter-organizational and institutional exchange to strengthen networks of music educators around the world.

When will these changes take effect?

The 2018 General Assembly (Baku, Azerbaijan) takes place on July 19, 2018. A resolution will be presented that proposes November 19, 2018 as the date on which the amended Constitution and Bylaws will be in force and effect. This will give the newly installed Board of Directors four months after the General Assembly has approved to proposals to adopt revisions to ISME policy and procedures.