



Women in Technology and Science

WITS Articles of Association

1. The name of the Association is Women in Technology and Science.

2. The purpose of the Association is actively to promote women's participation in Science & Technology by:

- (i) Enabling women scientists and technologists to meet and correspond.
- (ii) Providing a support and information network for women working in science and technology
- (iii) Promoting co-operation between women scientists and technologists in all aspects of scientific and technological endeavour
- (iv) Holding and promoting meetings on subjects relevant to the interests of women scientists and technologists
- (v) Informing public attitudes on the participation of women in science and technology
- (vi) Encouraging the participation of young women in science and technology
- (vii) Promoting the investigation of the role and influence of women in Irish science and technology
- (viii) Examining science policy and its implications for women scientists and technologists
- (ix) Establishing links with existing scientific and technological organisations and with groups promoting women in enterprise and equality for women. In establishing such links due account will be taken of the interests of all WITS members and any such links will be of benefit to all within the WITS membership.

3. Membership:

3.1 Full Membership is open to everyone from all areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Ireland. Affiliate Membership is open to students from all areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Ireland. Currently paid up members as referred to in the Association Rules, unless otherwise specified, includes both those with Full and Affiliate membership.

3.2 All eligible staff in an organisation shall be entitled to full membership on payment by their organisation of an annual corporate membership fee.

4. The business of the Association shall be conducted in accordance with rules adopted by a properly convened Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.).

5. An A.G.M. shall be held within each calendar year.

6. Notification requirements:

6.1 The date of the A.G.M. shall be notified to all currently paid-up members not less than 6 weeks prior to the A.G.M.

6.2 Any currently paid-up member can submit a proposed rule change to the A.G.M. Such proposed rule changes shall be notified to the Secretary of the Association, in writing, not later than one month prior to the A.G.M.

6.3 Ten days written notice of the A.G.M., together with notification of any proposed rule changes, shall be given to all currently paid-up members.

7. Executive nominations and elections:

7.1 An Executive, comprising of a Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and not more than 12 and not less than 9 ordinary members, shall be elected at the A.G.M. For the purposes of continuity, if the Chairperson is standing down, she shall be nominated as an ordinary member of the incoming Executive.

7.2 Candidates, proposers and seconders shall be currently paid-up members.

7.3 An individual member shall occupy an Officer position for not more than four consecutive terms. An individual member shall occupy an ordinary executive positions for not more than four consecutive terms.

7.4 Nominations for the position of Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer (Officers of the Association) shall have a proposer and seconder and shall be forwarded to the Secretary one month prior to the A.G.M. Nominations for ordinary positions, which also shall have a proposer and seconder, can be made at any time prior to, or during, the A.G.M.

7.5 A list of nominees for the Officer positions, and nominees for ordinary positions (where known) shall be circulated to all currently paid-up members prior to the A.G.M.

7.6 Elections for Officers and ordinary members of the Executive shall be carried out via the straight vote system. All currently full, paid-up members attending the A.G.M. shall be eligible to vote. Affiliate members are not entitled to vote at the A.G.M.

8. A.G.M. Finance:

8.1 Membership fees (including corporate membership fees) shall be agreed annually by the A.G.M. on the basis of a recommendation from the Treasurer.

8.2 The audited accounts shall be circulated to all members attending the AGM and be opened to comment at that time. They shall be made available to other members on request.

9. Conduct of the A.G.M.:

9.1 The A.G.M. shall be conducted in accordance with Standing Orders adopted by the A.G.M.

9.2 All decisions of the A.G.M. shall be by simple majority except in the case of changes to the rules or suspension of Standing Orders where a two-thirds majority is necessary. All full, currently paid-up members who are present shall have equal voting rights. The Chairperson shall exercise a casting vote in the event of a tie.

10. The Association shall annually nominate an Honorary President or Patron at the A.G.M.

11. Other Business of the A.G.M.:

In accordance with 9.2 the A.G.M. shall:

- (a) elect four tellers from those in attendance who shall be responsible for counting votes at the meeting and reporting the result to the Chairperson.
- (b) elect two auditors from the membership of the Association and nominate two trustees. No serving member of the executive shall be eligible to act as auditor or trustee.
- (c) discuss and decide upon proposed rule changes and motions.
- (d) receive the report of the Secretary.
- (e) receive the report of the Treasurer.

12. The Executive may at any time it sees fit, or when requested as indicated at 13 below, call an Emergency General Meeting (E.G.M.).

13. Upon receipt by the Secretary of a request, signed by a minimum of 75 members, for an E.G.M. the Executive shall call an E.G.M. within 30 days.

14. If all of the officer positions are vacant the Executive shall appoint a temporary Chairperson whose sole function shall be to call an E.G.M.

15. Notification of an E.G.M. shall be circulated to all currently paid-up members within 14 days of the E.G.M.

(For establishment and membership see Rule 7.)

16. Executive Functions:

16.1 Between A.G.M.s the affairs of the Association shall be managed by the Executive.

16.2 Should any of the officer positions be left unfilled at the A.G.M., or fall vacant during the year, the Executive shall nominate, from amongst its members, a person to fill the vacancy.

16.3 The Executive shall establish sub-committees to deal with specific aspects of the Association's work. The Executive shall, at its first meeting each year, review the requirement for each sub-committee, review the membership of the required sub-committees and nominate an executive member as a member of each such sub-committee.

16.4 The Executive or Officers may nominate representatives to non-Association meetings, committees or organisations as it feels appropriate. If possible such representatives should be members of relevant Association sub-committees.

16.5 The Executive shall be responsible for fixing a date and venue for an A.G.M. to be held between January 1st and December 31st of each year.

16.6 The Executive shall recommend an Honorary President or Patron of the association for nomination by the A.G.M.

17. Executive Meetings:

17.1 The Executive shall hold a minimum of five meetings during the period between A.G.M.s – one of these meetings to be held within a month of the preceding A.G.M. The Executive may meet at any other time it, or the Officers, deem necessary.

17.2 All decisions of the Executive shall be by simple majority of those present and voting as entitled. All Executive members shall have equal voting rights. In the event of a tie the Chairperson shall exercise a casting vote.

17.3 The Executive may co-opt, or invite attendance of, advisors to Executive meetings for specific reasons. These advisors shall be non-voting.

17.4 The quorum for an Executive meeting shall be one-third of the members of the Executive.

17.5 All Executive members shall be circulated with draft minutes of the previous Executive meeting and an agenda, at least 14 days in advance of a meeting. Where feasible, copies of reports for discussion shall be included.

18. The Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, elected at A.G.M. shall be deemed the officers of the Association.

19. The Officers of the Association shall carry on, on behalf of the Executive, the day-to-day business of the Association.

20. Chairperson:

20.1 The Chairperson shall be responsible for chairing Officer, Executive and general meetings of the Association.

20.2 The Chairperson is the official spokesperson of the Association and shall issue statements in accordance with Association policy as she sees fit. The Chairperson shall consult with members of the Association who have responsibility or expertise in the relevant area. Where appropriate, the Chairperson may delegate the responsibility as spokesperson for a particular issue or time. No other member of the Association shall have the right to speak or publish, or give the impression of doing so, on behalf of the Association without the prior permission of the Chairperson, Officers or Executive.

20.3 In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the chairperson.

21. Treasurer:

21.1 The Treasurer, reporting to the Executive and the A.G.M., shall be responsible for the control of all Association moneys, including those relating to meetings and publications of the Association.

21.2 Following consultation with the Officers and the Executive, the Treasurer shall recommend adjustments in membership fees to the A.G.M.

21.3 The Treasurer shall prepare the Association's accounts annually. Where required the accounts shall be prepared and audited by a qualified accountant or accountants proposed by the Executive. The Treasurer shall submit them to the honorary auditors in time for audit/review before the AGM.

21.4 The Treasurer shall present the audited accounts to the A.G.M.

22. Secretary:

22.1 The Secretary shall be responsible for minuting Officer, Executive and general meetings of the Association. The Secretary shall also be responsible for giving appropriate notice of meetings to the members concerned and ensuring that each such member is furnished with a copy of all relevant reports for discussion at the meeting allowing adequate time for reading.

22.2 The Secretary shall retain all records and general correspondence of the Association.

22.3 The Secretary shall present a report of the activities of the Association to the A.G.M.

23. Financial Year:

23.1 The association's financial year shall run from September 1 to August 31 of the following year. The membership fee will be payable during the calendar year. Affiliate (student) membership shall run for the association's financial year. Full membership shall run for the calendar year.

23.2 All financial undertakings given on behalf of the Association must have the permission of the Treasurer.

24. The Executive may seek and accept moneys from any bodies or individuals provided that the conditions specified by the donor do not contravene the aims of the Association.

25. Auditors & Trustees:

25.1 The accounts for the previous financial year of the association shall be approved by the AGM. Where required the accounts shall be prepared and audited by a qualified accountant or accountants proposed by the Executive. The honorary auditors, who shall be members of the Association elected at the AGM, shall review/audited the accounts before the AGM.

25.2 All investments and property of the association shall be vested in the trustees. In the event of the association not having a validly elected and active executive, the association's funds shall devolve to the care of the trustees.

26. A statement of the accounts, including income and expenditure, shall be circulated to members of the Executive at their meeting immediately prior to the A.G.M. (Also see Rule 8.2)

27. All payments made on behalf of the Association shall have the authorisation of at least two members endorsed by the Treasurer.

28. The President/Patron shall be entitled to attend, in a non-voting capacity, any meeting of the Association held during her/his term of office.

29. The Executive or officers may request the President/Patron to represent the Association at various meetings/functions during her/his term of office.

(For establishment and membership of sub-committees see Rule 16.3)

30. All members of sub-committees shall be members of the Association.

31. The Executive shall decide what, if any, allocation of moneys will be made to each sub-committee.

32. A sub-committee may, in consultation with the Treasurer, seek and accept moneys from any bodies or individuals provided that any conditions specified by the donor do not contravene the aims of the Association.

33. Financial transactions of a sub-committee shall be notified to the Treasurer.

34. The Convenor of a sub-committee shall be responsible for:

- (a) calling meetings as necessary and at least once per year.
- (b) preparing and presenting a written report to the Secretary at least one month prior to the A.G.M. and at any other time when requested by the Executive or Officers to do so.
- (c) preparing and presenting full accounts of all moneys received and paid by the subcommittee to the Treasurer at least one month prior to the A.G.M. and at any other time when requested by the Executive or Officers to do so.
- (d) ensuring that the policy of the Association is not infringed by the sub-committee.
- (e) keeping minutes of all sub-committee meetings.

35. A sub-committee may invite advisors to attend their meetings in a non-voting capacity. Advisors need not be members of the Association.

36. Decisions at sub-committee meetings shall be made by simple majority voting with the Convenor having a casting vote if necessary.

37. The Executive shall be responsible for the disbandment of sub-committees when:

- (a) their work is completed.
- (b) their work task no longer exists.
- (c) the sub-committee fails, as a unit, to function to the satisfaction of the Executive.