

By-Laws

Article I – Name and Status

1.1 This Association shall be known as ‘the International Association for Women’s Mental Health (IAWMH).

1.2 The Association will be registered as a Not for Profit Non-Governmental Organization in the United States of America. Any assets or property shall be dedicated to the not for profit international and scientific activities of the Association.

Article II – Mission, Purpose and Activities

2.1 The **mission** of the Association is:

2.1.1 To improve the mental health of women throughout the world.

2.1.2 To expand the fund of knowledge about Women’s Mental Health.

2.1.3 To promote gender-sensitive and autonomy-enhancing mental health services for women.

2.1.4 To advance collaboration with other Societies and Sections.

2.2 The Association’s **purposes** are:

2.2.2 Through international collaboration and networks, to promote research, education, sharing of experience and policy in these areas:

- The social, economic, ethical, legal, cultural, psychological and biological factors which affect Women’s Mental Health.
- Women’s roles in relationships, marriage, family, the workplace and society, and the effects on mental health.
- The prevention, causes, effects, remedies and elimination of Intimate Partner Violence, abuse and discrimination against women.
- The social, psychological and biological causes, effects, treatment and prevention of mental diseases or disorders that are specific, more prevalent, more severe or have different risk factors or outcomes in women, including gender-specific effects of treatment.
- Basic sciences pertinent to gender difference and female biology
- The collaboration between preclinical, clinical and health policy related to Women’s Mental Health: Translation into health policy and practice of knowledge from basic and social sciences and clinical studies.

2.2.3 Together with Societies and Sections, to act as international advocates for Women’s Mental Health, for

- The elimination of conditions harmful to women’s physical and mental health.
- Safe and respectful treatment of women with mental health problems
- Improved education and autonomy for women.
- Better professional education and public information about Women’s Mental Health.
- Increasing the number, status, education and resources of Women’s Mental Health providers.
- The appropriate representation of women in research, education and organizations concerned with Mental Health
- Empowerment of women to control their personal fertility.

2.2.4 To pursue any additional action needed to achieve the mission of the Association

2.3 Main activities:

Activities of the Association will include, but will not be limited to:

- 2.3.1 Promotion of research through the development of international networks, focused workshops, seeking funding opportunities and other means.
- 2.3.2 Collaboration with advocacy groups concerned with women’s mental health, especially people living with illnesses and their families.
- 2.3.3 The organization of World Congresses, to which individuals, Societies and Sections concerned with Women’s Mental Health are invited.
- 2.3.4 The support of international, regional, national and local conferences and symposia, for exchange of information about scientific advances, clinical services, and social or legal developments related to Women’s Mental Health (hereinafter called “meetings”).
- 2.3.5 Circulation of information about Women’s Mental Health, through the World Wide Web, Newsletter and other publications and media.
- 2.3.6 Education of clinicians and the public through educational workshops as well as printed and electronic material.

Article III – Membership

There shall be two classes of members – Regular Members (“Members”) and Fellows.

- 3.1 Regular members are scientists, mental health workers or people from any profession or background, active in furthering the aims of the Association.
 - 3.1.1 Membership shall be approved and confirmed by the Executive Committee.
 - 3.1.2 Membership will lapse if dues are not paid, with no acceptable reason, for three (3) years.
- 3.3 Past presidents shall be Fellows upon completion of their term.

Article IV – Officers

- 4.1 The Officers of the Association shall be the President, Vice President (President-Elect), Secretary and Treasurer.
- 4.2 Officers shall be elected by the Membership by a simple majority.
- 4.3 The president shall serve one term of office – from a World Congress until the end of the next World Congress. If there is no World Congress within four years, the President’s term will expire after 4 years.
- 4.4 The President-Elect shall automatically succeed the President at the end of the World Congress or after four years – whichever comes first.
- 4.5 The President and Vice President shall not be eligible for re-election for a second term.
- 4.6 The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected for a term from a World Congress to the end of the next one or a maximum of 4 years. They can be re-elected to the same office for an additional period of the same length.
- 4.7 In case of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President (as President-Elect) shall automatically succeed to the office and complete the unexpired term. Upon completion of this partial term, the new President shall continue as President for her/his own previously elected full term of office. The Executive Committee will then nominate candidates for election by members as President-elect.

4.8 In case of a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer, the Executive Committee shall appoint a person to serve in the vacated office until the next regular election.

4.9 Duties of the President

- The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Association.
- S/he presides over all meetings of the Association, including Executive Committee meetings, General Meetings and the World Congress. S/he shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- S/he shall have general responsibility for the Association and supervision of its affairs, working in consultation and approval by the Executive Committee .
- S/he shall appoint, in consultation with the Executive Committee, such Advisory Committees, Standing Committees and Task Forces, as s/he and the Executive Committee deem necessary for the proper functioning of the Association during her/his tenure.
- S/he may sign and execute in the name of the Association, authorized documents and contracts with the approval of the EC.
- S/he shall perform any other duties as may be requested of her/him by the Executive Committee. S/he will be the spokesperson for the Association.

4.10 Duties of the Vice-President

- S/he is the President-Elect, who automatically succeeds the President, when that office becomes vacant.
- S/he shall substitute for the President when necessary and shall assume executive responsibilities as assigned to her/him by the President and Executive Committee.
- S/he shall be an ex officio member of all of the Association's committees.
- S/he has a specific role as Chair of the World Congress Scientific Program Committee.

4.11 Duties of the Secretary

- S/he shall coordinate the Committees' correspondence and activities and distribute the agenda for Executive Committee, Council and Membership meetings in coordination with the Executive Director.
- S/he shall undertake any other duties which may be assigned to her/him from time to time by the Executive Committee or President.

4.12 Duties of the Treasurer

- S/he shall act as the fiscal-financial officer of the Association.
- In coordination with the Executive Director.
- S/he shall be responsible for collection, management and distribution of funds.
- S/he shall submit annual reports to the Executive Committee and the membership.
- S/he shall be responsible on behalf of the EC, for complying with all government financial requirements and audits.
- The fiscal year of the Association shall be from January 1st through December 31st

Article V – Committees and Task Forces

5.1 The **Standing Committees** of the Association shall include:

- a. Executive Committee
- b. Education Committee
- c. Membership and Nominations Committee

- d. Finance and Development Committee
- e. Publication and Communication Committee
- f. Advisory Committee

5.2 Other committees or task forces: These may be established by the Executive Committee, as needed, and their membership shall be designated by the President in consultation with the Executive Committee.

5.3 Appointment to committees and task forces

Standing committees and task forces (with the exception of the Executive Committee,) shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation and with the approval of the Executive Committee.

5.4 Membership of committees

- Although individual merit and democracy should be the principle for advancement in a professional association, it is expected that women will be the majority (by at least one) in the Association's committees and task forces, and in its regional and cultural groups. In all its activities, the Association will strive to ensure their worthy representation.
- The interdisciplinary character of the Association will be maintained by the inclusion of members of diversified mental health professionals. In accordance with these principles, the Executive Committee shall be responsible for maintaining the proper balance of committee structure. The Executive Committee may co-opt up to five members to Standing Committees, special committees or task forces, if deemed necessary for diversity, inclusiveness and balance.

5.5 Terms of office.

- The term of officers for all standing committees will be from the end of a World Congress to the end of the next one for a maximum of 4 years. Chairs of standing committees should not serve more than two consecutive terms.
- The term of office for task forces will be determined by the Executive Committee, task forces will be disbanded when they have completed the task assigned, or as
- determined by the President

5.6 Reports from committees and task forces.

- All committees and task forces shall present written reports. An annual report shall be submitted to the Executive Committee. Written and verbal reports shall be presented to the Membership at the World Congress.

5.7 The Executive Committee:

- The Executive Committee (EC) shall consist of the Officers, the immediate past-President, the immediate past-Secretary, and the Chairs of the Standing Committees on education, finances and publications.

5.7.1 The EC's duties shall be:

- To further the objectives of the Association.
- To assume responsibility for achieving the Association's purposes and assure that the Association works in ways that are consistent with its mission.
- To advise the President and officers in all aspects of management and affairs of the Association
- To receive reports from the officers, committees and task forces.

- To plan World Congresses and other activities.
- To replace Officers, Chairs and Regional Representatives, if vacancies arise between World Congresses. Those selected would serve until they are confirmed or replaced at the next World Congress.
- To determine the Regions to be represented.
- To establish and oversee special committees and task forces.

5.7.2 The EC shall meet regularly in person or by teleconference.

- The Secretary shall send the agenda to all members of the EC one week in advance. The Quorum for EC meetings shall be five. Decisions will be reached by a simple majority, the Chair (normally the President) having a casting vote.

5.8 Regional Representatives

5.8.1 Regional Representatives shall include

- North America,
- Latin America and the Caribbean,
- Sub Saharan Africa,
- North Africa & the Middle East,
- Western Europe,
- Central and Eastern Europe,
- Central and South Asia,
- Western Pacific Rim

The regions may be determined or amended at the discretion of the Executive Committee, and on the advice of representatives from the regions.

5.8.2 Regional Representatives coordinate regional Educational collaborations and other activities.

5.8.3 Representatives will be elected at General Meetings following nominations by members from their own regions, and will serve until the election at the next World Congress. They may be re-elected to serve for one additional term.

5.8.4 They may establish subcommittees as needed, in consultation with the Executive Committee.

5.9 The **Education Committee** shall be composed of a chair and at least four other members. It will organize educational materials and workshops and contribute to the educational content of the congress.

5.10 The **Nominations Committee** shall consist of a chair appointed by the President at least six months before the congress., and at least two additional Members, one of whom shall be from the EC (appointed by the chair) Its functions include:

5.10.1 Development of the list of candidates for the EC and regional Representation positions. This list shall be ready six weeks before the congress.

5. 10.2 Dissemination of the list of candidates and invitation to the paid members of the Association to cast their electronic votes

5.10.3 Information of the results of the election to the EC and to the General Meeting of the Association

5.11 The **Finance and Development Committee** shall be composed of the Treasurer (the Chair), and at least 3 additional members. It shall advise the Executive Committee on financial matters. It will recruit corporate support and establish funds for the Association's functions and awards. The Association's balance sheets, financial dealings and proposed budgets will be prepared by the Treasurer and the Executive Director, discussed by the Finance and Development Committee and submitted to the EC

5.12 The **Publications and Communication Committee** is responsible for communication between the Association and the public, after approval by the EC. The committee will also recommend pertinent publications and communications.

5.13 The **Congress Scientific Program Committee** shall be chaired by the Vice President and be composed of the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee, at least three of its members, the scientific chair of a previous congress, the immediate Past-President and at least 5 additional members. The Committee shall provide guidance and consultation to the Local Organizing Committee concerning program theme and content, and shall suggest invited participants. For each congress, a new committee will be formulated no later than 12 months prior to the scheduled congress.

5.14 The **Local Organizing Committees** for the World Congress, Regional or local Congresses, shall be comprised of a Chair appointed by the Executive Committee, and members recruited by the Chair in consultation with the Association's President and Vice President. The Committees shall be responsible for all local organizational and financial aspects of the Congress. A written agreement delineating all aspects of management and responsibilities, as well as financial arrangements and division of responsibilities, will be signed by the Chair of the Committee, the Professional Congress Organizer – if relevant, and the President or Secretary – on behalf of the Association.

5.15 The **advisory committee** shall consist of all former presidents and all former office holders (who are permanent members). Temporary are three members who have not yet been members of the EC but are active in their region and have contributed to the field. These three temporary members shall serve for the period elapsing between two congresses only. Their functions are to advise the elected officers in matters pertaining to the organization meetings, finances and relations with other societies and associations.

5.16 The **Executive Director**

IAWMH Executive Director Duties:

5.16.1 Provide administrative and management services for the association including:

- Maintain and manage website
- Maintain and manage newsletter
- Maintain and manage mailing lists
- Maintain and manage membership records and applications
- Maintain and manage financial records including bank account, tax filings and tax-exempt status
- Maintain and manage headquarter office which serves as the official and legal address for association
- Serve as main association contact for members, non-members, cooperating organizations, interested parties, vendors and others
- Other administrative duties as required

5.16.2 Provide services and support for biennial Congresses:

- Manage PCO hired services, including marketing and promotion, abstract management, registration, hotel and travel arrangements, scientific program and speaker management, CME, logistics, sponsor and exhibitor management and other services necessary for a successful Congress
- Provide experienced guidance and support in site selection and detailed planning process
- Liaison with Executive Committee, Planning Committee, Scientific Committee, Presenters and PCO
- Maintain and manage financial records for the Congress
- Provide additional meeting management services as required

- Other Congress related duties as required

Article VI – Meetings of the Association

6.1 The **World Congress of Women’s Mental Health** shall be the Association’s official meeting, held every two years. Congresses shall be in locations across the globe, and convenient for travel of members that shall not impose political or discriminating restrictions on participants.

6.1.1 The Executive Committee in consultation with the Executive Director shall solicit proposals for organization of the Congress and shall evaluate the proposals, decide on the location and appoint the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee.

6.1.2 Organization Guidelines for World Congresses will be developed by the Executive Committee and adapted to local conditions.

6.1.3 The EC and Executive Director will attempt to avoid conflicts with the meeting schedules of collaborating and other societies.

6.2 General Meetings

6.2.1 General Meetings are business meetings of the Membership who have paid their current dues.

6.2.2 They shall take place at each World Congress.

6.2.3 The Secretary will send Notices of General Meetings to Members at least one month before the World Congress. These notices will be electronic communication and will include an agenda, background papers and papers regarding nominations.

6.2.4 In view of the expense of attending World Congresses, we will hold electronic elections for officers in the EC and regional and regional representatives in the three weeks prior to the congress.

6.2.5 At General Meetings, the results of Elections of Officers and Regional Representatives will be announced.

6.2.6 With the exception of amendments to the Constitution, all decisions will be reached by a simple majority, the President having a casting vote. Amendments to the Constitution shall require a two-thirds majority.

6.3 Regional and National Meetings, and Meetings focused on particular topics

6.3.1 The Association will encourage the activities of Regional Representatives, Chairs of Collaborating Societies and Members to organize other meetings which promote Women’s Mental Health.

6.3.2 Provided that the Executive Committee agrees, these organizers shall be able to state that the meeting is held with the co-sponsorship of the Association. In such cases, the Association will consider how it can support the meeting, by sending representatives, and in other ways.

Article VII – Amendment of Bylaws

7.1 The Executive Committee shall consider Amendments of the Bylaws proposed by the Executive Committee. Input from individual will be considered.

7.2 Those Amendments, which are proposed by the Executive Committee or by a petition signed by at least 10% of the individual Membership shall be sent to all Members and voted on by an electronic ballot (referendum). At least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the votes cast are needed for approval of Amendments.

Article VIII – Dissolution of the Association

8.1 A proposal to dissolve or merge the Association shall be dealt with in the similar way as an Amendment to the Constitution.

8.2 It shall be proposed by the Executive Committee or by petition, and submitted to the entire Membership.

8.3 It shall then be debated at a General Meeting.

8.4 If confirmed at the General Meeting, it will be submitted to an electronic vote, as a referendum.

8.5 Dissolution or merger will be approved only if at least 25% of the Membership return the ballot, out of which at least a two thirds majority approves the dissolution.

8.6 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for deciding how any remaining funds will be spent.

8.7 The Treasurer and Executive Director shall be responsible for winding up the financial affairs of the Association.