



CONSTITUTION OF THE NAMIBIAN INFORMATION WORKERS ASSOCIATION (NIWA)

as adopted on 1 March 1990
and amended on 15 Nov. 1990, 28 Nov. 1991, 24 Nov. 1993, and 15 Nov. 2006, 16 Nov. 2015 and
Nov 2016

Namibia Information Workers Association
P.O. Box 308, Windhoek, Namibia
Email: niwaassociation@gmail.com



Our Vision

Empowering the Nation through information and knowledge

Our Mission

1. To unite all information workers in Namibia in an autonomous and representative body
2. To promote equitable access to quality information knowledge to support social-economic, scientific and cultural development

1. **The Name**

The name of the Association shall be the Namibian Information Workers Association, hereafter referred to as the Association

2. **Mission and vision**

The Association is a body corporate with the authority to take legal steps or to defend an action in its own name. It is an independent, non-profit organisation which uses its income and property solely for the promotion of its objectives as stated in the constitution.

3. **Definitions**

3.1. Information worker

An information worker shall mean any person who is actively involved or interested in the collection, preservation or dissemination of information through libraries, documentation centers, archives and records management, or who by virtue of his/her academic qualifications may become or may have been involved in such activities.

3.2. Information service

Any activity connected with the collection, preservation or dissemination of information.

4. **Objectives**

The Association strives to promote the development of the information professions and information services in Namibia through the following functions:

4.1. To unite all information workers in Namibia in an autonomous and representative body.

4.2. To organise and co-ordinate the efforts of information workers in the promotion of the information services in Namibia.

4.3. To make and maintain contact with international related activities and national organisations in the information sector.

4.4. To obtain and serve as a channel for national and international funding for information service projects or research.

4.5. To actively support programs designed to meet specific community information needs.

4.6. To work closely with relevant authorities in order to promote the interests of information workers by making representations to concerned authorities regarding matters affecting the training, grading and remuneration levels of information workers and the collection, preservation, or dissemination of information.

- 4.7. To raise the level of expertise of information workers by offering training courses, seminars, workshops, or other relevant activities.
- 4.8. To advise academic institutions involved in the training information workers in curriculum development.
- 4.9. To advise the accrediting body on information workers qualification.
- 4.10. To nominate members to national boards, commissions and councils related to NIWA objectives.
- 4.11. To issue publications regarding the Association, its activities and information services in Namibia in general.
- 4.12. To partner and collaborate with research institutions.
- 4.13. To promote the production, dissemination, and preservation of information media in the widest possible meaning.
- 4.14. The Association is not intended and not acting as a Trade Union. It may refer action in labor relations matters in the interest of its members to the concerned trade unions.
- 4.15. To define professional codes of conduct for information practitioners in Namibia.

5. **Membership**

Benefits of members and privileges:

5.1. **Categories of membership**

There shall be six categories of membership.

5.1.1. **Full membership:**

5.1.1.1.

Any person who is engaged in the provision of information and archive services and in possessing the academic qualifications, or having sufficient experience, is eligible for Full membership

5.1.1.2.

Any person who is engaged in the provision of information or and archive services and not possessing the academic qualifications, or not having sufficient experience, is eligible for Full membership.

5.1.2. **Personal membership:**

Any person interested in the objectives of the Association, but not qualifying for membership in any other category, shall be eligible for Personal membership.

5.1.3. **Student membership:**

Any person studying at an academic institution to gain academic qualification in the library, documentation, records and archives, heritage management and information fields shall be eligible for Student membership.

5.1.4. Institutional membership:

Any institution, organisation, association or other formal body which is concerned with the collection, preservation or dissemination of information, will be eligible for Institutional membership.

5.1.5. Honorary membership:

The Association may on the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Committee to confer Honorary membership on any person or institution or organisation who in its opinion has made an outstanding contribution to the objectives of the Association. An Honorary member does not pay any membership fees and has the right to attend all general meetings with full voting powers.

5.1.6. Retired person

Any person mentioned under 5.1 and is now retired is eligible for Full membership.

5.2. New members

Application for membership of the Association shall be by completion of the prescribed membership form, and if a person's application is accepted by the Executive Committee, he/she shall be admitted into the applicable category of membership. Members qualifying for more than one category of membership shall pay the highest applicable dues and shall receive the corresponding privileges.

5.3. Cancellation of membership

Any member of the Association may resign his/her membership on giving one calendar month written notice to the Secretariat, but prior to such notice he/she must pay all sums due by him/her to the Association.

6. Membership fees

6.1. The annual subscription shall be reviewed at each Annual General Meeting, following a recommendation by the Executive Committee. Membership fees are payable by all categories, excluding Honorary membership.

6.2. Membership fees are payable to the Treasurer and shall become due on the first day of January each year. To provide for new members who join the Association during the course of a year, membership fees shall be proportionally decreased by 25% per quarter.

6.3. Should a member fail to pay the subscription by the 31st March of each year, he/she shall be considered not paid- up, and be excluded from voting until such time as all arrears are paid.

7. The Executive Committee

The controlling body of the Association shall be the Executive Committee with general administrative and executive powers. The Executive Committee executes such general matters which may be necessary between general meetings.

7.1. Composition of the Executive Committee

Conditions:

The Executive Committee shall comprise the following:

- The Chairperson
- The Vice-Chairperson
- The Secretariat: (Secretary and Assistant Secretary)
- The Treasurer
- The Editor or Member of the Editorial Board
- A further 1 additional member

If necessary the Chairperson may with the approval of the Executive Committee co-opt not more than two members to the Executive Committee for the execution of special tasks. Co-opted members have the same rights as elected members for the duration of the completion of the special task.

7.2. **Terms of the office of the Executive Committee**

The terms of office of the Executive Committee members shall be two years.

7.3. **Election of Executive Committee**

- 7.3.1. The Executive Committee shall be elected by secret direct ballot at the Annual General Meeting. Each elected member shall hold office for the period concluding with the date of the second next Annual General Meeting. Three respectively four of the members shall automatically retire from office every year but will be re-eligible for membership of the Committee, provided that they continue to qualify. No member shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.
- 7.3.2. Only paid-up full, personal, student or honorary members, whose have been ratified prior to the start of the membership nomination process (as stipulated in Article 7.3.3), are eligible for nomination and election.
- 7.3.3. Nomination forms for the Executive Committee must be sent by the Secretariat **six** weeks before the Annual General Meeting. Nominations must be received by the Secretariat **three** weeks before the Annual General Meeting, signed by the nominator, seconder and nominee.
- 7.3.4. After the necessary scrutiny, the Secretariat shall announce the eligible candidates two weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting. The election of officers will take place at the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.3.5. The Annual General Meeting shall appoint two electoral officers from amongst the members present, who will count the votes and shall communicate the results to the Chairperson of the meeting, who will announce the results at the meeting.
- 7.3.6. Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by a simple majority and shall take office at the end of the Annual General Meeting and continue in office until the end of the second Annual General Meeting of their terms of office.
- 7.3.7. The first meeting of the term shall be a joint meeting of the incoming and outgoing Executive Committee.

7.4. **Termination of Office of the Executive Committee**

If any officer, whether eligible for re-election or not, is not re-elected to his representative office, such officer shall continue to discharge the duties of such office until the termination of the meeting at which the relevant election takes place.

7.5. Election, powers and duties of Office Bearers

Members of the Executive Committee shall elect the Office Bearers of the Association as stipulated in 7.1.

7.5.1. The Chairperson

- 7.5.1.1. The Chairperson, if present, shall preside over all meetings of the Association and shall perform all duties pertaining to the office. In his absence the Vice- Chairperson shall take over his duties.
- 7.5.1.2. The Chairperson has a casting vote in the event of a tie of votes during all Executive Committee and General Meetings.
- 7.5.1.3. The Chairperson may at the Executive Committee's discretion be an ex office member of any sub-committee of the Executive Committee.
- 7.5.1.4. The Chairperson shall have powers to call an urgent meeting in the Executive Committee and in consultation with the Executive Committee shall have powers to call an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- 7.5.1.5. The Chairperson shall prepare an Annual Report of the proceedings and activities of the year and submit it to the Annual General Meeting.

7.5.2. The Vice-Chairperson

- 7.5.2.1. The Vice-Chairperson shall take over the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.

7.5.3. The Secretariat

- 7.5.3.1. The Secretariat shall consist of two members of the Executive Committee, namely the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary and shall be responsible for the official correspondence of the Association and the preservation of documents written on behalf of the Association.
- 7.5.3.2. It shall be the first duty of the Secretary of an incoming Executive Committee to upon the replacement of the holders of the office of Treasurer, Secretary or Chairperson to forthwith inform the Association's bank in writing of such changes and arrange for the uninterrupted continuation of the financial affairs of the Association.
- 7.5.3.3. The Secretariat shall keep in proper form all minutes of the Executive Committee, sub-committees, and General meetings of the Association and shall prepare the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.5.3.4. The Secretariat shall maintain the Association's archives in such a manner and place as is approved by the Executive Committee from time to time.
- 7.5.3.5. The Secretariat shall carry out such further duties as are reasonable in terms of the office and as are required by the Chairperson.
- 7.5.3.6. The Secretariat shall maintain a register of all members within their respective membership categories in such a manner as the Executive Committee shall determine.
- 7.5.3.7. The preferred medium of communication between the Secretariat and members is electronic mail. Members without or with unreliable electronic mail connection may request written communication through hand delivery or the postal service.

7.5.4. The Treasurer

- 7.5.4.1. All monies due and owing to the Association shall be payable to the Treasurer of the Association for the account of the Association and the Treasurer shall keep a proper record of all financial transactions concerning the Association.
- 7.5.4.2. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all funds and property belonging to the association and shall pay all bills properly approved by the Executive Committee.
- 7.5.4.3. The Treasurer shall present an audited annual Financial Report to the Annual General Meeting and it must be sent to members together with the agenda for the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.5.4.4. The Treasurer shall prepare a quarterly financial statement of the financial matters of the Association for the meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 7.5.4.5. The accounts of the Association auditing shall be audited annually by two auditors elected at the previous Annual General Meeting. An external audit may be requested by the Executive Committee or the Annual General Meeting.

7.5.5. The Editorial Board

- 7.5.5.1. The Editorial board shall consist of two members, of which at least one shall be a member of the Executive Committee. The Editor could be either of these two members and shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.
- 7.5.5.2. The Editorial Board shall be responsible for the publishing and distribution of the Association's printed and electronic publications.
- 7.5.5.3. The Editorial Board shall be responsible for the public relations and media liaison of the Association as well as contact with members.
- 7.5.5.4. The Editorial Board shall use one or more suitable electronic discussion lists for contact with members.

7.6. Vacancies

- 7.6.1. Any member of the Executive Committee may at any time resign by giving notice in writing.
- 7.6.2. Any member of the Executive Committee who is absent from a meeting of the Executive Committee without an apology, shall be informed by the Secretariat that members absent from two consecutive meetings without an apology, shall cease to be a member of the Executive Committee.
- 7.6.3. The Executive Committee may appoint to a member fill a vacancy until the end of the next Annual General Meeting of the Association during which an electronic may be held to fill the vacancy.
- 7.6.4. Should the office of the Chairperson become vacant due to any reason, other than the term having expired, the Vice-Chairperson will automatically take office as Chairperson and a new member will be appointed to hold until the next Annual General Meeting as stipulated in 7.6.3.
- 7.6.5. An office bearer may be dismissed by the Executive Committee from his/her office owing to neglect of duty, dishonesty or when he/she has been found guilty of thwarting the aims of the Association, provided that such a decision of the Executive Committee is taken unanimously by those members not affected by the decision.

7.7. Executive Committee meetings and Quorum

- 7.7.1. The Executive Committee will meet at least four times per year at regular intervals, and more often if necessary.
- 7.7.2. The Chairperson acts as Chairperson at all meetings. In the absence of the Chairperson the Vice-Chairperson acts as Chairperson and in the absence of both, the members present elect a temporary chairperson.
- 7.7.3. The Secretariat shall call an Executive Committee meeting upon request of the Chairperson or three committee members. He shall give notice in a way as decided by the Executive Committee.
- 7.7.4. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be four.

7.8. Matters of urgency

- 7.8.1. In matters where speed is essential, the Chairperson in consultation with two other members of the Executive Committee, may take a decision and take action in the name of the Executive Committee of the Association.
- 7.8.2. The Chairperson must as soon as practically possible call a meeting of the Executive Committee to have the urgent decision ratified.

7.9. Records of the Association

- 7.9.1. The Executive Committee shall decide on institutional repositories for the records of the Association and the library of the Association.
- 7.9.2. This decision is subject to ratification by the Annual General Meeting.

7.10. Neglect of duties

Should an Executive Committee fail to organize meetings or due elections within three months, any ten members of the Association may publicly call an Extraordinary General Meeting to decide on the way forward.

8. Meetings

8.1. General Meetings

- 8.1.1. The Association shall meet at least four times a year. The last meeting of the year shall be the Annual General Meeting and will be held during November each year.
- 8.1.2. The dates of the Annual Meetings and General Meetings which may be convened during the year shall be fixed by the Executive Committee.

8.2. Extraordinary General Meetings

- 8.2.1. Extraordinary General Meetings may be called by the Executive Committee upon seven days written notice to members.
- 8.2.2. The Chairperson is obliged to call an extraordinary General meeting upon receipt of a letter requesting this and signed by at least 15 paid-up professional, full, and personal members of the Association. At least seven days' notice must be given to members. The matters raised by the petitioners must appear on the agenda.

8.3. Quorum of General Meetings

- 8.3.1. At any General Meeting of the Association one fifth of the paid-up professional, full, personal and institutional members shall form a quorum.

8.3.2. Should the quorum not be present within 30 minutes, the meeting will be postponed for a week exactly. Members then present will form the quorum.

8.4. Notice of meetings for General Meetings

8.4.1. Members shall be given not less than 30 days written notice of the Annual General Meeting and not less than seven days written notice of any ordinary general Meeting.

8.4.2. There shall be an agenda for every meeting and such agenda shall be distributed with the written notice announcing the meeting.

8.4.3. The Secretariat must be informed of motions to be tabled at the Annual General Meeting two weeks before the Annual General Meeting and should inform members of the motions seven days before the Annual general Meeting.

8.5. Voting powers during General Meetings

8.5.1. Whenever a matter is put to the vote every paid-up member of the professional, full, personal, institutional and honorary membership categories shall have a single vote.

8.5.2. Members who are absent with apology at an Annual General Meeting may transfer their vote in writing to another member.

9. Patron

The Association may decide to appoint a patron who shall be elected by the Association at any general Meeting and who shall continue as a patron for a period to coincide with the term of office of the incumbent Executive Committee. The patron shall enjoy the full rights and privileges of a Full Member but shall not be liable for payment of any duties and shall not be eligible for any office.

10. Finance

10.1. The finances of the Association shall be conducted through one or more bank and/or building society accounts in the name of the Association as the need may arise and as approved by the Executive Committee.

10.2. All properties and monies shall belong to or be held in trust for the benefit of the Association.

10.3. The Executive Committee shall pay and discharge all the debts and liabilities of the Association which have been incurred with the approval of the Executive Committee.

10.4. The Executive Committee may from time to time authorise the Treasurer to retain in hand such monies as may be considered necessary for use as petty cash.

10.5. No monies may be withdrawn from the bank except on the authority of any two of the following three persons: Treasurer, Chairperson, Secretary.

- 10.6. Payment on behalf of the Association shall be by cheque signed by any two of the following three persons: Treasurer, Chairperson, Secretary. As against the bank only such signatures shall be sufficient evidence of such authority.
- 10.7. The accounts of the Association shall be annually audited by an auditor to be appointed annually by the Executive Committee.
- 10.8. The financial year of the Association shall be from 1st January to 31st December.

11. Branches

- 11.1. The Executive Committee shall have the power to create Branches and determine the minimum number of members for a Branch and define the districts to be served by such Branches, in consultation with the affected members.
- 11.2. No Branch shall levy any membership fees from its members.
- 11.3. A Branch may elect a Branch Committee to manage its affairs so far as Branch matters are concerned but shall not take any action other than by recommendation or with the approval of the Executive Committee which affects the other Branches, the general conduct of the Association or the external relations of the Association.
- 11.4. Branches may request up to half of their local members' membership fees to execute regional activities.
- 11.5. All monies received by the Committee of a branch shall be expended in accordance with the policy of the Association.
- 11.6. The monies of a Branch shall be kept in a special bank account under the name of the Branch.
- 11.7. The Branch Secretary shall forward to the Secretariat of the association not later than 15th October of each year a statement of accounts and a balance sheet showing the assets and liabilities of the Branch as on 30th October.
- 11.8. The Secretary of the Branch shall forward a report on the work of the Branch during that year for the information of the Association.
- 11.9. In the event of a Branch dissolving, all funds and other assets shall revert to the Association.

12. Sub-Committees

- 12.1. Sub-committees may be appointed by the Executive Committee for the purpose of looking into specific matters arising.
- 12.2. The Executive Committee shall have powers to appoint members of the association on a sub-committee.

12.3. Functions of the Executive Committee may be delegated to standing sub-committee for the duration of the term of office of the Executive Committee.

12.4. Sub-committees may co-opt experts from outside the Association with the consent of the Executive Committee.

13. Interest Groups

The Executive Committee of the Association shall have the power to create Interest Groups upon receipt of a request by at least five paid up members of the Association for the formation of such an Interest Group, defining and demarcating the field of interest.

14. Affiliation

The Association may affiliate with such related organisations as approved at a General Meeting.

15. Interpretation and amendment of the constitution

15.1. Were any question arises as to the interpretation of the constitution, the decision of the Chairperson shall be final.

15.2. The constitution of the Association may be amended by the Association at any Annual General Meeting of the Association by a two thirds majority of members represented either in person or by proxy. Any proposal for an amendment shall be made in writing to the Secretariat at least two weeks before the Annual General Meeting, and communicated to members at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting.

16. Dissolution

16.1. The Association may only dissolve upon a two-thirds majority decision of paid-up members represented either in person or by postal ballot, at an Annual General Meeting or an extraordinary meeting called for this purpose, after at least six weeks prior written notice by the Executive Committee.

16.2. Members will only be liable for all outstanding member ship fees and all property of the Association in their possession. No ordinary member or Executive Committee member will in his/her private capacity be liable for the debts of the Association or of any other member of the Association.

16.3. If, after all liabilities have been dealt with, any assets remain, they may be transferred to one or more organisations to be determined by a two thirds majority of paid-up members represented either in person or by postal ballot at the dissolution, provided that such organisation or organisations have objectives similar to those of the Association.