

IFIA

STATUTES

EDITION 2015



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ARTICLE 1 DEFINITION

The International Federation of Inventors' Associations, established on June 11, 1968 in London, is a non-profit Association governed by the present Statutes and the Swiss Civil Code. It is neutral politically, and non-denominational.

The name of the Association shall be the International Federation of Inventors' Associations.

The short name of the Association shall be IFIA.

IFIA headquarters are located in the State of Geneva, Switzerland. IFIA branches can be situated in other countries to further fulfill its objectives.

The Association shall be of unlimited duration.

All official matters shall be published on IFIA official website with the domain name of www.ifa.com.

ARTICLE 2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of IFIA are:

- a) to improve the status of inventors and promote cooperation between inventors' associations in different countries (or persons acting in place thereof);
- b) to collect information about the state of affairs and practical conditions relating to inventors and inventions in different countries and to disseminate such information among members;
- c) to study national laws and international conventions including proposals for their amendments in order to reform them in accordance with the continuous changes in the innovation field, with due consideration to the rights of the inventors, and to intervene in national and international proceedings for the purpose of achieving such reforms;
- d) to increase the knowledge and understanding of inventors and invention among private individuals and government bodies of importance and influence, and to speak with a common voice in all matters relating to the aforementioned objectives;

- e) to communicate with any government or public body, and to cooperate with them or any other Institution, association or person for any purpose contributing to the attainment of the aforementioned objectives;
- f) to establish the conditions for successful knowledge and technology transfer within the particular countries and internationally via the Technology Transfer Center, working under the supervision of IFIA Office;
- g) to raise the appreciation of inventors and inventions;
- h) to support inventor's project from the idea development to the invention commercialization;
- i) to perform all necessary activities to encourage and promote invention and innovation.

ARTICLE 3 MEMBERS

There are four categories of members of IFIA: full members, candidate members, collaborating members and corresponding members.

- a) Full members are national associations, the aims and activities of which correspond broadly to those of IFIA and the Statutes of IFIA. They have voting status.
- b) Candidate members are national associations in the early stages of development or associations requesting to become a full member. They do not have voting status. If they participate determinedly in IFIA activities, they can be accepted as full members after gaining the approval of the Executive Committee.
- c) Collaborating members are foundations, research centers, science parks, universities, governmental agencies, international invention exhibitions, companies, etc., which are active in the field of invention and innovation. They do not have voting status.
- d) Corresponding members are associations and individuals involved or not with innovation as such. They do not have voting status.
- e) Exceptionally, and only where no suitable association exists, individual members, acting in a similar capacity, or temporarily acting pending the formation of a national association may be admitted for a period of one year at a time.

ARTICLE 4 **ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP**

Requests to become a member must be submitted to the Secretariat and addressed to the Executive Committee. The Committee admits new members the Secretariat informs the General Assembly accordingly.

The Executive Committee and the President are authorized to establish collaboration/relationship with relevant organizations or persons.

The association's leader is responsible for introducing the contact person to IFIA in writing either by post or electronically.

ARTICLE 5 **CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. Resignation of membership shall be notified in writing either by post or electronically to the Secretariat with six months' notice, to become effective in June or December. This resignation shall be accepted provided that all obligations have been honored. Resignation shall not relieve a member of unpaid dues, or of any other charges previously accrued.
2. The General Assembly may expel a member which or who does not fulfill its or his/her obligations according to the Statutes and regulations from time to time promulgated by IFIA, and which or who does not remedy such default within six months after being formally called upon so to do.
3. Only the Association's assets may be used for obligations/commitments contracted in its name. Members have no personal liability.

ARTICLE 6 **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The General Assembly is the supreme governing body of IFIA and consists of full member delegations operating through the Executive Committee. It is composed of not more than three delegates from each full member, one of whom shall be the head delegate and not more than three observers, who shall not have the right to speak in the Assembly, but an observer may exceptionally have the right to speak by request if the Assembly agrees. Each full member shall have one vote.

Candidate, collaborating and corresponding members may each send not more than two observers to the General Assembly. In the exceptional case where there is more than one member from a country, each of such members shall be entitled to appoint up to three delegates.

ARTICLE 7 DUTIES OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly has the following duties:

- a) to nominate the Honorary President and to elect the President as well as the Executive Committee members. The election takes place through anonymous voting cards that voters put in the ballot box. Full members are liable to officially introduce presidency candidates to the General Assembly;
- b) to expel members;
- c) to determine the general policy and program strategy for IFIA; consider, approve and adopt financial plans and budgets covering the period to the next General Assembly; determine annual subscription policies, and supervise IFIA's finances; amend the Statutes; and dissolve IFIA;
- d) to consider the reports of the President and the Executive Committee, and the financial situation of IFIA;
- e) to approve the criteria proposed by the Secretariat for the election of the President, and Executive Committee members;
- f) to act generally on behalf of IFIA.

ARTICLE 8 GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTING

Decisions of the General Assembly shall be reached in the following ways:

1. General Meetings

Every full member shall have one vote. An absent delegation may also send its vote by proxy for one or more items on the Agenda to the Secretariat.

All members may participate in the discussions but only full members shall have the right to vote. Individual members may participate in the discussions but shall have no right to vote.

A quorum of three full members is necessary to hold a meeting.

Unless otherwise stated in the following section, a resolution is carried if the votes given in favor of it are more than one half of the total number of the full member votes. When the number of votes in favor is exactly one half of the total number of the full member votes, the presiding Chairman shall have the casting vote.

The votes in favor must be at least two thirds of total number of the present full members delegates votes to carry the decisions concerning the following items:

- a) amendment of the Statutes;
- b) dissolution of IFIA;
- c) expulsion of members;
- d) transfer of the right to appoint a head delegate from one member to another, when there are several members from one country (Article 6);
- e) change of the annual subscription amounts.

For items (a) or (b) the resolution must be carried on two separate occasions (one of which may be by circular letter) within a period of thirteen months.

2. Virtual meeting

Items which cannot without detriment be postponed until the next ordinary meeting, and are not considered to justify the cast of an extraordinary meeting, may be decided upon in Virtual meetings on the IFIA website. It shall be specifically stated that answers must be clear and to the point as they will be treated as a vote. The Virtual meeting decisions shall be reached by a majority of votes received.

3. Minutes

Minutes shall be drawn up of all decisions made under subparagraphs (1) and (2) hereof and drafts thereof shall be published on the IFIA website by the Secretariat. In case of objections by at least one-fifth of full members, a formal letter of objection shall be signed and submitted to the Secretariat within two weeks after its publication on the IFIA website. If the Secretariat can settle the objection through negotiation with the members, the final Minutes shall be signed by the President, and then sent to all members and delegates.

If the objection is not settled, the Minutes shall be approved and signed at the next meeting.

ARTICLE 9 MEETINGS

The compulsory meetings of IFIA shall be the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings which shall be as follows:

1. The Ordinary General Assembly meeting is to be held biennially at any time as decided by the General Assembly or the Executive Committee. A draft of the Executive Committee's Report/President's Report and a preliminary agenda shall be published on the IFIA website at least one month in advance. Motions from the delegates must be received by the Secretariat not less than six weeks before the date of the meeting. These motions, with the investigations and comments of the Executive Committee/President thereon and with information of other items and the final agenda shall be published on the IFIA website and circulated at least three weeks before the meeting.

Such agenda must include the election of the President (once in four years) and the Executive Committee members; consideration of the reports of the President and the Executive Committee; consideration of the budget of IFIA and any proposed changes in the annual subscription amounts.

2. The Extraordinary General Assembly meeting shall be summoned when the President deems it necessary or it is demanded in writing to the Secretariat by at least one-fifth of full members. The Executive Committee members may submit a report to the President proposing the need for an extraordinary meeting. The summons shall include a preliminary agenda, and the delegates may within one month add further items to the agenda.

The final agenda shall be published on the IFIA website not less than three weeks before the meeting. The place of the next meeting shall be determined by the General Assembly or, failing the General Assembly, by the President, on the advice of the Executive Committee.

3. The Executive Committee shall meet twice a year in ordinary session upon convocation of the President.
4. The Executive Committee shall meet in extraordinary session upon convocation of the President, either on his own initiative or at the request of over a half of the Committee's members.

ARTICLE 10 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. In addition to the President, the Executive Committee shall consist of up to one third of the full members of IFIA. The members of the Executive Committee will be elected by the General Assembly for two years (until the next ordinary session of the General Assembly). These shall represent equitably the different regions of the world, and not be more than one from each country.
2. The Executive Committee may, on the initiative of the President, reach decisions by correspondence.
3. The Executive Committee shall make its decisions by simple majority of the votes cast. A quorum of one-third is however necessary.
4. The Executive Committee will ensure that the decisions of the General Assembly are carried out within the means of IFIA; will be responsible for the operation of any further committees and working bodies of IFIA; will examine applications for membership to the various membership grades.
5. The General Assembly may delegate such further powers to the Executive Committee as it thinks fit, with the exception that the right to make decisions in items concerned in (a), (b), (c) and (d -- in so far as it relates to expulsion of members) in Article 8 subparagraph 1 may not be delegated. The Executive Committee shall in the exercise of powers so delegated thereto conform to any regulations that may from time to time be imposed upon it by the General Assembly. The Executive Committee shall propose to the General Assembly ratification of the appointment of the Chairman of all such Committees.
6. The Executive Committee members work on a volunteer basis with no remuneration.

ARTICLE 11 HONORARY PRESIDENT, PRESIDENT, DIRECTORS AND SECRETARIAT

1. Honorary President(s) shall be nominated by the General Assembly for an unlimited period fulfilling the following duties:
 - a) keep an eye on the function of IFIA according to the Statutes;
 - b) represent IFIA as mandated by the President;
 - c) exercise the function of the General Assembly Chairman when a new President is to be elected;
 - d) be authorized by the President to award the prizes in the name of IFIA.

2. The President shall be elected by the General Assembly for a period of four years (until the ordinary session of the General Assembly). He/she can be reelected.
3. The President shall represent IFIA.
4. The President shall be the Chairman of both the General Assembly and the Executive Committee meetings.
5. The President shall act as the Managing Director of IFIA. He/she shall, in particular:
 - a) expedite all the current affairs of IFIA;
 - b) report on the activities of IFIA in each ordinary session, and he shall present in each such session the recommendations of the Executive Committee together with the draft Program and Budget;
 - c) shall manage administrative and financial functions of IFIA. The President is authorized to employ within the budgetary limits as approved by the Executive Committee, one or more persons to assist him/her – under his responsibility – in this regard; IFIA president shall propose his salary and that of Secretariat to the Executive Committee;
 - d) shall appoint one or more persons as IFIA Directors and Treasurer;
 - e) shall have the right to sign IFIA official documents. The President's signature is adequate to formalize all the financial and legal documents.
6. The President is authorized to prevent the Full members from voting in General Assembly if the membership dues are not duly paid or other obligations are not fulfilled, as reported by the Secretariat.
7. The President and such person(s) as Directors, Secretary(ies), Treasurer and any other person the President deems necessary shall constitute IFIA Secretariat.
8. IFIA Directors shall collaborate with the President in the creation of IFIA policies in an advisory role. In case of Honorary President's absence, one of the Directors can be authorized by the President to be the chairman of General Assembly or Executive Committee meeting, or to represent IFIA on special occasions or events when the Honorary President and the President are unable to attend personally.
9. The Treasurer shall assist the President in managing IFIA financial affairs.

ARTICLE 12 LANGUAGE

English is the official language of IFIA. All discussions in the General Assembly, all the minutes, documents and reports as well as all correspondence between the Secretariat and the members are made in English.

ARTICLE 13 CONGRESS

When it is found desirable and practically or economically feasible, the General Assembly may arrange congresses in different countries to discuss questions of common interest within the realms of IFIA in order to promote interest in such problems by the public and within the member associations of IFIA.

The theme, program and organization of a congress shall be decided upon by the General Assembly.

All members of the member associations shall have the right to attend a congress. In addition, the General Assembly may invite such persons or organizations as it may think fit.

A congress may pass recommendations to the General Assembly but shall have no right to make decisions on behalf of the IFIA.

ARTICLE 14 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Member associations have the following duties:

- a) to provide either a certificate of registration or the Statutes of the association to IFIA Secretariat;
- b) to act under the Statutes of association which shall broadly correspond to IFIA Statutes;
- c) to send the Secretariat without delay excerpts of English minutes electronically, giving the names of appointed head delegate and other delegates;
- d) to take part in the events and activities organized, sponsored or approved by IFIA;
- e) to send before the end of January a comprehensive annual report on its activities to be published on IFIA website;
- f) to pay to IFIA the subscriptions (membership fee) which have been duly determined by the General Assembly;
- g) To keep the Secretariat informed of any events in its country in the field of inventors and inventions that is likely to be of major interest.

ARTICLE 15 REGIONAL BODIES

Member associations, which have the cognate languages, similarity of laws in the invention field, geographical proximity, or for any other reasons may derive advantage from regional co-operation in simpler and less expensive forms, may form a regional body or network. The Statutes of the Body and networks shall be compatible with the Statutes of IFIA, and shall be communicated to IFIA in the same way as the Statutes of member associations (see Article 14).

Such bodies and networks which work under the supervision of IFIA Secretariat shall have no delegates in the General Assembly and no special rights within IFIA.

ARTICLE 16 FINANCE

A bank account shall be opened under the name of IFIA in Switzerland or any other country where IFIA has a registered office in parallel with IFIA objectives. The ownership of this account belongs to IFIA. Money can be withdrawn from IFIA's account with the president and the treasurer's signature. In case of treasurer's absence, the signature of another person who is approved by the Executive Committee can be used.

IFIA President is authorized to open a bank account with his own signature in other countries where IFIA has a registered office approved by Executive Committee members. The money can be withdrawn from this account with IFIA President's signature.

The mandate as delegate to the General Assembly is honorary and delegates are not entitled to remuneration or compensation from IFIA.

The Association's resources are derived from:

- Donations and legacies;
- Sponsorship;
- Public subsidies;
- Membership fees;
- Any other resources authorized by the law.

The funds shall be allocated and used for the social aims of IFIA and such activities as may be necessary to enable IFIA to carry out the purposes for which it was formed.

The financial year shall begin on 1 January and end on 31 December of each year.

Membership subscriptions are due from 1 to 31 January of each year. The annual subscription for new Members for the year in question shall be paid within 30 days of the closing of the committee at which they were admitted.

The General Assembly shall fix the amount of the annual subscription every two years on the recommendation of the Executive Committee or the President. The subscriptions from the member associations shall differ according to the status of their country namely the least developed, developing and developed countries.

In case members do not pay the annual subscription in due time, the President and Executive Committee are authorized to suspend their membership status.

The President, Executive Committee and Secretariat shall also be obligated to seek additional sources of funding for IFIA.

The Secretariat shall publish a yearly financial report on IFIA website.

ARTICLE 17 AUDIT

The General Assembly shall cause accounts to be kept of the sums of money received and spent by IFIA. Books of Accounts shall be kept at IFIA Office, and shall be open to inspection by members on any day during the usual working hours.

Once at least in every year the Accounts of IFIA shall be examined and the correctness of the Balance Sheet ascertained by one or more Auditors nominated by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 18 AMENDMENT TO THE STATUTES

The Statutes may be amended by a resolution carried by at least two thirds of the total number of the full members votes on two separate occasions (one of which may be by electronic circular letter decision) within a period of thirteen months (see Article 8(2)). Attention shall be specifically drawn to the proposed amendments on the agenda.

ARTICLE 19 DISSOLUTION OF THE FEDERATION

A proposal for the dissolution of IFIA shall be treated in the same way as amendments of the Statutes. The assets may not be divided among the members, but with the records shall be made over to international organizations or institutions benefiting from tax exemption with approved objectives in the field of invention to be used in accordance with conditions laid down by the General Assembly (see Article 8 (1) (b)).

Under no circumstances will the assets be returned to the founders or members. Nor should they use any part or the whole assets for their own benefit.

The present Statutes has been approved by the constituent Extraordinary General Assembly of IFIA, held on October 30, 2015 in Nuremberg, Germany.



International Federation of Inventors' Associations - IFIA
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