

The Federation of Astronomical Societies

CONSTITUTION



1 NAME

- 1.1 The name shall be known as:
THE FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES

2 OBJECT

- 2.1 The object of the Federation shall be to promote the interests of Astronomical Societies, with particular regard to the formation and organisation of Astronomical Societies and their relations with Educational and other Authorities.

3 MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 Membership shall be open to all Astronomical Societies fulfilling the following criteria:
- (a) The society is run by a committee or council or otherwise clearly recognisable group of named, electable office holders and members, and that an election meeting is run on a democratic basis.
 - (b) The society arranges regular meetings for its members.

Societies applying for membership must use the guidance provided on the FAS website to demonstrate compliance with the above criteria to the satisfaction of the FAS Council.

- 3.2 Individuals or Organisations other than Astronomical Societies may subscribe to Publications of the Federation.
- 3.3 Subscribing to Publications does not allow such Individuals or Organisations any voting rights connected with the Federation.
- 3.4 Applications for membership shall be submitted in writing to the Council of the Federation for approval.

4 COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION

- 4.1 The Federation shall be governed by a Council consisting of Executive & Non-Executive Officers

5 OFFICERS OF THE FEDERATION

- 5.1 All Officers shall be eighteen years or older at the time of their election or appointment.
- 5.2 Executive Officers:
- (a) President
 - (b) Vice President
 - (c) Secretary
 - (d) Treasurer
 - (e) Membership Secretary
 - (f) Public Liability Insurance (PLI) Secretary

- 5.3 Non-Executive Officers:
- (a) Meetings Organiser
 - (b) Editor (FAS Newsletter)
 - (c) Publications Secretary
 - (d) Web Site Organiser
- 5.4 Any other Officer proposed by the Council for election at the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.5 The President shall be Chairman at all meetings in normal circumstances, but when absent, or a conflict of interests, the Chair shall be taken by one of the Executive Officers in the order listed at 5.2.

6 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- 6.1 The officers of the Federation shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- 6.2 Election shall be confirmed by a show of hands or other method so that the votes cast are either visible to all in the meeting or are counted in such a way as to produce an unfalsifiable electronic record, excepting that, if any member raise an objection, a ballot shall be conducted after any objections against the candidate(s) have been heard.
- 6.3 All Member Societies and the Council shall be entitled to nominate candidates to fill any or all the posts.
- 6.4 Nominations may be received up to and including the day of the Annual General Meeting.
- 6.5 No more than two people from one Society shall serve as executive officers of the Federation at the same time.
- 6.6 Only member Societies who are up to date with their annual subscriptions will be allowed to nominate.
- 6.7 Each Member Society is entitled to have one vote in the ballot for each post.
- 6.8 A simple majority vote shall decide those elected.
- 6.9 If there is a tie for any post the issue shall be decided by giving the tied candidates up to three minutes each to represent themselves to the meeting after which the ballot will be re-run. In the event of a second tie between the same candidates the President shall have the casting vote.
- 6.10 The officers shall take their posts after their election until the next Annual General Meeting.

7 POWERS OF THE COUNCIL

- 7.1 The Council shall have the power to transact all business relating to the management and direction of the Federation and in particular to:
- (a) Decide the general policy for the publication and control of the Federation's Journals.
 - (b) Appoint committees for special purposes with such powers as may be necessary.
 - (c) Fill any vacancies among Officers of the Federation during the year, such appointments being valid for the remainder of the year only.
 - (d) Increase its numbers by co-opting members proposed at a committee meeting for a specific related function as deemed necessary in the interest of the Federation.

(e) Administrate within the Federation on any point not covered in this Constitution.

- 7.2 Co-opted members shall have no power to vote at any Council meeting.
- 7.3 Decisions by Council are binding on Member Societies.
- 7.4 Any Member Society which acts in such a way as to contravene this Constitution, disrupt Federation Meetings, harass other Member Societies, or in any way acts irresponsibly, or brings the Federation into disrepute with the Public, other Member Societies, or acts any way outside of the spirit of the Federation's Constitution, shall render that Member Society liable to disciplinary action as determined by Council.
- 7.5 Disciplinary action and any action resolved by the Council will be final.

8 MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- 8.1 The Council shall normally meet quarterly with a minimum of three meetings in a calendar year.
- 8.2 At a Council Meeting the quorum shall be four, at least two of whom shall be Executive Officers of the Federation.
- 8.3 The President shall have no vote except in the case of a tie when the President shall have the casting vote.
- 8.4 In all cases, the meaning of 'Council Meeting' shall be taken to include both in-person and online Council Meetings. Online meetings shall have the same status as in-person meetings.

9 REGIONAL GROUP FORMATION

- 9.1 Subject to the Councils approval a Regional Group may be formed by a number of Member Societies of the Federation according to geographical location and social contact.
- 9.2 The Member Societies shall decide how their Regional Group shall be governed.
- 9.3 The Regional Group shall appoint their Regional Group Representative.

10 FINANCE

- 10.1 The Federation's accounting year shall commence on the 1st June and end on the following 31st May.
- 10.2 The funds of the Federation shall be managed by the Treasurer who shall produce the audited accounts at the Annual General Meeting.
- 10.3 The FAS Auditor shall be nominated by Council for approval at an Annual General Meeting for auditing the following year's accounts.
- 10.4 The Treasurer will normally produce a statement of the Federation's Accounts at each Council meeting or for the attention of any Officer on the Council if so requested.
- 10.5 If the Treasurer is unable to attend any Council Meeting, an up-to-date statement of the Federation's Current and Deposit Accounts will be provided to the President and Secretary with further copies for Council Members at that meeting.
- 10.6 The income and property of the Federation, whencesoever derived, shall be used solely to promote the Federation as set out in the Constitution.

- 10.7 No member of the Federation shall enter into any contract on behalf of the Federation without the prior consent of the Council.
- 10.8 Each Member Society shall pay to the Federation an annual subscription which shall fall due on the 1st April.
- 10.9 The first annual subscription shall become due upon acceptance by the Council of an Astronomical Society as a Member of the Federation and shall be paid within eight weeks of receipt by the Society of written notice of acceptance.
- 10.10 A Society admitted in the last three months of the Federation's subscription year (*i.e.* between 1st January and 31st March *inclusive* in any year) shall pay the first annual subscription of only 50% of the full subscription otherwise due.
- 10.11 The Council may, at its discretion, reduce to 50% the first annual subscription of Societies that, at the time of their application for membership, have been in existence for less than two years or have a membership of fifteen or less.
- 10.12 Where the applicant is the Astronomical Section of a larger body, the membership shall be that of the Astronomical Section alone and not of the complete body.
- 10.13 A Society failing to pay the first annual subscription shall cease to be in the Federation.
- 10.14 A Member Society failing to pay its annual subscription by the end of eight weeks after the due date shall be suspended from membership of the Federation until such time as the arrears and the current annual subscription are paid.
- 10.15 The Federation shall meet all reasonable expenses incurred by Council members in performance of their FAS duties. In the event of a dispute the matter shall be decided at the following Council meeting.

11 GENERAL MEETINGS

- 11.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Federation shall be held each year, normally in the autumn.
- 11.2 Any other General Meeting shall be an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting:
 - (a) An Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the Federation may be convened by the Council.
 - (b) An Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the Federation shall be convened by the Council at the written petition of 20% or more of the total paid up Astronomical Societies of the Federation to the Secretary.
- 11.3 Notice of any General Meeting and the Agenda shall be sent to all Member Societies at least four weeks before the date of the meeting; the notice shall state the business to be considered and only such business shall be discussed at the Meeting.
- 11.4 The Annual General Meeting shall receive the reports of the Council on the year's work and the audited accounts.
- 11.5 The Annual General Meeting shall settle the annual subscription for the coming year.
- 11.6 A quorum at all General meetings shall be:
 - (a) 10% paid-up Member Societies with voting rights are present at an Annual General Meeting.
Or
 - (b) 20% paid-up Member Societies with voting rights are present at an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting.

- 11.7 In all cases, the meaning of 'General Meeting' shall be taken to include both in-person and online General Meetings. Online meetings shall have the same status as in-person meetings.

12 VOTING

- 12.1 Each paid-up Member Society shall have one vote.
- 12.2 A motion shall be carried by a simple majority vote unless specifically stated otherwise within this Constitution.
- 12.3 The President shall have no vote except in the case of tie when The President shall have the casting vote.
- 12.4 Council shall make provisions to accept postal and/or proxy votes from Member Societies who are unable to appoint a delegate to attend a General Meeting.
- 12.5 Where proxy and/or postal votes have been submitted by a Member Society that Society shall be included in the count of Societies present for the purpose of establishing a quorum.
- 12.6 Proxy votes shall be exercised by a delegate appointed by the Member Society authorising the proxy. The authority shall only exist for the duration of the General Meeting for which the proxy is specifically arranged. A delegate may only act as the proxy for one Member Society during a General Meeting.

13 ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 13.1 This Constitution shall only be changed by a simple majority vote at an Annual or Extra-Ordinary General Meeting.
- 13.2 Written notice of proposed changes shall be sent to all Members Societies at least four weeks before the date of such meeting giving such details and the reasons for the proposed changes.

14 WINDING UP OF THE FEDERATION

- 14.1 Should the Federation be wound up for any reason the complete assets of the Federation, including the balances of any grants made by the Federation shall be placed in the hands of trustees appointed by, and independent of the Federation.
- 14.2 Any assets shall be wholly distributed (after costs) to the individual member societies that comprise the Federation.

15 JURISDICTION

- 15.1 English law applies to this Constitution.

16 COPYRIGHT

- 16.1 All previous editions of the Federation of Astronomical Societies Constitution are now replaced with this edition.
- 16.2 Copyright ©Federation of Astronomical Societies September 2020.

Approved at the General Meeting held on: 19th September 2020

President's Signature: Dr Paul A Daniels

Printed: Dr Paul A Daniels