

# WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

## Rules Applicable to WMA Associate Membership

amended by the  
34<sup>th</sup> World Medical Assembly, Lisbon, Portugal, September/October 1981  
126<sup>th</sup> Council Session, Jerusalem, Israel, May 1990  
50<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, October 1998  
53<sup>rd</sup> WMA General Assembly, Washington 2002  
54<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, Helsinki 2003  
65<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, Durban 2014  
67<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, Taipei 2016  
68<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, Chicago 2017  
73<sup>rd</sup> WMA General Assembly, Berlin 2022  
and the  
75<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, Helsinki 2024

### CONTEXT

1. The following rules for the Associate Membership must be applied in accordance with the [WMA Articles and Bylaws](#), [Procedures and Operating Policies](#) and the [Rule of Procedure for all deliberative bodies](#).

### MANAGEMENT

2. The Secretary General shall administer all matters relating to Associate Members.
3. The Secretary General may forward membership applications for review by the Council. The Council may reject any application for Associate Membership without cause.

### MEMBERSHIP

4. Associate members shall be limited to physicians, as that term is defined in the WMA Bylaws (Section 1c (i) of Chapter I), and medical students who are properly enrolled in a medical school, listed in the *World Directory of Medical Schools* of the World Federation for Medical Education, who have applied for such membership and who have paid the amount of dues prescribed for such members. Associate membership is available to such individual physicians and medical students whether or not their National Medical Association is a Constituent Member of the World Medical Association. The Associate Membership shall include individual members in good standing, consisting of Independent Members, Student Members, all members of the Past Presidents and Chairs Network and all members of the Junior Doctors Network.
5. Applications for Associate Membership shall be obtained only from the WMA directly, or from a National Medical Association that is a Constituent Member of the WMA. The application should be returned, with the proper amount of membership dues, to the WMA or to a National Medical Association that is a Constituent Member of the WMA.

6. Associate members shall receive confirmation of membership, a subscription to the World Medical Journal (WMJ) and such other benefits as the Council may approve. Associate members may attend meetings open to all membership of the WMA General Assembly upon payment of the registration fee therefor, and upon request and approval. Associate Members may attend open meetings of the WMA Council. Attendance at all such meetings shall be at the expense of the Associate Member.
7. Medical students and junior doctors (on graduation as physicians for a period of five years) will be granted Associate Membership in the WMA without a membership fee, but no products, services or publications (except electronic publications) will be provided to these members.
8. Past Presidents and Past Chairs of Council will be granted life Associate Membership in the WMA. No membership fee will be charged. They may be included in the Past Presidents and Chairs of Council Network (PPCN). Further details of PPCN are defined in [Terms of Reference](#).
9. Associate Members in good standing who are medical graduates within ten (10) years of graduation may be members of the Junior Doctors Network (JDN). Further details of JDN are defined in [Terms of Reference](#).
10. Associate Members in good standing who have graduated from medical school, and who are neither members of the Past Presidents and Chairs of Council Network (PPCN) nor members of the Junior Doctors Network (JDN) shall be known as Independent Members.
11. All Associate Members must comply with the Associate Membership Rules.
12. All Associate Members in good standing shall have the right to vote at plenary meetings of the Associate Membership.

#### **TERMINATION FOR CAUSE**

13. The Council may terminate the membership of any Associate Member for cause. Cause for termination of membership shall consist of any action by the member that is inconsistent with WMA purposes and objectives, or action that tends to bring the WMA or the medical profession into disrepute, or any action harming the reputation of the WMA. Prior to terminating the membership of an Associate Member for cause, the Council shall invite the member to respond in writing to the complaints alleged against the said member. The Council shall consider the member's response, if any, in making its decision, which can be conducted by correspondence or virtual meeting.

#### **CHAIRPERSON OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

14. The Associate Members shall elect a Chairperson from their own number present and in good standing at the plenary meeting immediately preceding the WMA General Assembly. The Chairperson shall preside over meetings of the Associate Members.
15. The Chairperson shall serve for a term of two years, and shall be eligible for re-election at the pleasure of the Associate Members, for no more than a total of three two-year terms. In the event of the death, inability to serve, resignation or if the Chairperson's membership is terminated, the next Plenary Meeting shall elect a Chairperson to serve the unexpired portion of the term. In the interim period, the Immediate Past Chairperson will serve as Chair or if he/she

is not available, the Steering Committee shall make other provision as it may deem expedient for the discharge of the duties of the office concerned.

16. The first two-year term referred to in 15 will begin at the end of the term in force when these Rules are first adopted, notwithstanding possible revisions.

### **STEERING COMMITTEE**

17. There shall be a Steering Committee of the Associate Membership, which shall include:
  - 17.1 the Chairperson of Associate Members
  - 17.2 the Immediate Past Chairperson of Associate Members
  - 17.3 the Chair of the Junior Doctors Network (or the designee of the Chair of the JDN))
  - 17.4 the Chair of the Past Presidents and Chairs of Council Network (or the designee of the Chair of the PPCN)
  - 17.5 the two (2) Associate Member Representatives to the WMA General Assembly.
  - 17.6 an Independent Member-at-large to be elected by the Independent Members
  - 17.7 a Student Member-at-large to be elected by the Student Members
18. No person may hold two positions on the Steering Committee.
19. The Steering Committee shall meet at least every two months either virtually or in person unless otherwise agreed by a majority of the Steering Committee.
20. The Steering Committee shall
  - 20.1 review and propose activities of the Associate Membership,
  - 20.2 make and implement internal Associate Membership decisions between scheduled plenary meetings of the Associate Membership,
  - 20.3 give advice to the Chairperson on decision making,
  - 20.4 recommend leadership and membership of task forces and workgroups,
  - 20.5 discuss potential changes in internal Associate Membership governance and process,
  - 20.6 foster voluntarism to support the work of the WMA, and
  - 20.7 represent the collective interests of the Associate Membership.

### **PLENARY MEETINGS**

21. Within one week prior to each meeting of the WMA Council, there shall be a plenary meeting open to all Associate Members in good standing. Meeting attendance may be in person and/or virtual, following the existing WMA rules. The Secretary General or designee shall be available throughout the meeting to advise, assist and counsel the members.
22. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the request of twenty (20) Associate Members in good standing, or by at least 2/3 of the members of the Steering Committee, or by the Chairperson of the Associate members. At least two weeks' notice of special meetings shall be given to the members. The notice shall state the place and purpose of the meeting. No business shall be dealt with by an additional meeting other than that for which it has been specifically convened.

### **ELECTIONS**

23. Nominations for candidates for available leadership positions included on the Steering Committee can be made for any Associate Member in good standing.

24. A call for nominations shall be sent to all Associate Members at least six (6) weeks before the Associate Member plenary meeting during which the election shall occur. Nominations can also be made during the plenary meeting.
25. Nominations shall be submitted according to the current requirements determined by the Associate Membership and will include, at a minimum, a curriculum vitae, a description of the candidate's reasons for wishing to occupy the leadership position, a photograph of the candidate if applicable, and any additional documentation as required by the Steering Committee. These materials, if available in advance, will be distributed with the meeting materials.
26. Elections for the following positions shall normally occur concurrent with the October Meeting of the Associate Membership that precedes the Council Meeting and the General Assembly; elections follow the existing WMA rules.
  - 26.1 If the term of the Chairperson is expiring, there shall be an election of the new Chairperson, conducted by the Secretary General. The elected Chairperson shall conduct the rest of the meeting.
  - 26.2 Two (2) Representatives to the WMA General Assembly, who shall serve also as members of the Steering Committee for a one-year term.
  - 26.3 One (1) Independent Member-at-large for a one-year term on the Steering Committee.
  - 26.4 One (1) Student Member-at-large for a one-year term on the Steering Committee.
  - 26.5 The election of the Student Member-at-large may take place virtually.

### **REPRESENTATION TO THE WMA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

27. Only those motions approved and adopted by a majority of the Associate Members in good standing participating in a meeting of the Associate Membership may be presented for consideration to the WMA General Assembly in the name of the Associate Membership.
28. The representatives to the WMA General Assembly elected by the Associate Members shall have the right to speak in the WMA General Assembly and the right to introduce policy or proposals passed at meetings of the Associate Membership, but shall not have the right to introduce additional business, nor to make a motion, nor to vote.

### **EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION**

29. Associate Members may not represent the WMA in any capacity without the expressed prior authorization of the Council or by the Chair of Council, or by the Secretary General on their behalf. The active use of this affiliation to promote or give a misleading impression of an official WMA endorsement of a third-party event is not permitted.

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