

## CONSTITUTION

### **THE INTERFAITH SOCIETY**

#### **1. NAME:**

The name of the Society shall be “**The Interfaith\* Society**” hereafter referred to as “the Society”.

\*Where “interfaith” is not limited to “faith” or “belief”, but rather is inclusive of all religious, spiritual, secular worldviews and necessitates dialogical and relational engagement across traditions.

Where the term “secular” hereafter includes non-religious, atheist, agnostic, humanist and other worldviews.

This is distinct from “multi-faith” which is limited to the presence of multiple religious groups and “ecumenical” which indicates interdenominational engagement only.

#### **2. MISSION:**

(1) The Society’s aims shall be to:

- a) promote religious, spiritual and secular dialogue and engagement to mitigate religiously motivated violence, prejudice and cultural racism
- b) to cultivate trust, mutual respect and friendship and
- c) promote ethical social action.

#### **3. MEMBERSHIP:**

(1) Membership of the Society shall be open to all members of the University and any others that have an interest in the aforementioned mission of the interfaith society.

(2) The Society may offer Life Membership to alumni and Honorary Membership to members of the public who have demonstrated exemplary interfaith engagement in local and global communities and shown enduring support for the mission of the Society.

(3) The Executive Committee may expel any member whose conduct seems likely to bring the Society into disrepute. Such expulsion shall be undertaken in accordance with Section 8, and is subject to confirmation at the next General Meeting of the Society. Any person expelled shall have the right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer.

#### **4. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

(1) The day-to-day management of the Society's affairs shall be in the hands of the Executive Committee, which shall normally be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM);

(2) The Executive Committee shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Junior Treasurer, who shall be elected by the members as in 4(1). In addition there shall be a Senior Treasurer, who shall be a member of the Regent House, or other person approved by the Junior Proctor. The Senior Treasurer shall be appointed by the elected members of the Executive Committee and shall be *ex officio* a member of the Executive Committee;

(3) A majority of the elected members of the Executive Committee shall be full-time undergraduate or postgraduate students of the University;

(4) Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be chaired by the President or in their absence the Vice-President. If neither the President nor Vice-President is present, the remaining members shall elect a chairperson for that meeting. The quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be three members and a written record of each meeting shall be kept.

## **5. GENERAL MEETINGS:**

(1) The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) during each Academic year. All Members, other than Honorary Members, shall be entitled to attend and vote at any General Meeting. At least fourteen days written notice shall be given to members before the AGM;

(2) The AGM shall approve Minutes of the last General Meeting and the Society's Accounts for the preceding year, elect the Executive Committee for the year ahead and conduct such other business as is necessary;

(3) Candidates for election to office shall be proposed and seconded by two other members. Every motion at a General Meeting shall be proposed and seconded by two members. Voting shall be by secret ballot and if there are more than two candidates for a post or more than two options on a motion, voting shall be by Single Transferable Vote;

(4) An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be held at any time during Full Term. It shall be held in Cambridge and may be called by the Executive Committee or at the written request of at least ten members. Twenty-one days written notice shall be given to members before an EGM is held. An EGM shall have the same powers as an AGM;

(5) The President or in his or her absence the Vice-President shall take the Chair at any General Meeting. In the absence of the President and Vice-President the meeting shall elect a Chairperson for that meeting. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be five members and a written record of every General Meeting shall be kept.

**6. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

(1) The Society shall maintain a banking account with a suitable Bank or Building Society to hold the Society's funds;

(2) It shall be the responsibility of the Junior Treasurer to ensure that monies received are properly accounted for, and that the Society's financial records are kept in good order. In particular, the Junior Treasurer shall ensure continuity of Cambridge resident signatories for any bank accounts held by the Society;

(3) The Senior Treasurer shall make arrangements for the Society's Accounts to be properly audited, either by himself or herself, or by some other person approved under University Ordinances;

(4) The Senior Treasurer shall not be liable for any financial debt or other obligation of the Society unless he or she has personally authorised such a debt in writing;

(5) For so long as the Society shall be Registered with the Junior Proctor, it shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to ensure that the Society complies with the requirements for Registration as a University Society.

**7. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION:**

The Constitution may be amended at a General Meeting, with approval of at least two thirds of those present. No amendment to this Constitution intended to remove the position of Senior Treasurer, to alter its prerogatives and duties, or to change the criteria and procedure for the appointment of a Senior Treasurer can be put to a vote without the prior written agreement of the Junior Proctor of the University of Cambridge.

**8. DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES:**

The Society's only disciplinary sanctions are to expel or to suspend a member whose actions are felt to be such as to bring the Society into disrepute, or to adversely affect the smooth running of the Society in a major way. Such expulsion or suspension can only be effected by a majority vote of all Executive Committee members, excluding the Senior Treasurer. In the event of an expulsion, the excluded member is required to return all equipment, documents and finances belonging to the Society within 7 days.

If the excluded or suspended member wishes to appeal the decision, that appeal should be made to the Senior Treasurer, who will consider all the facts, and whose decision will be final. An appeal as to the process of exclusion, but not a further investigation into the facts, may be lodged with the Junior Proctor.

## **9. DISSOLUTION:**

(1) The Society may be dissolved at a General Meeting provided that at least Twenty-one days written notice of the intention to dissolve the Society has been given to the members. At least two thirds of those present and voting at the General Meeting must vote in favour of the motion for Dissolution for it to be effective;

(2) Any motion for Dissolution of the Society shall provide that assets remaining after all liabilities have been met shall be transferred either to another Registered University Society, or to the Societies' Syndicate.

## **10. CODE OF CONDUCT**

(1) The Society respects the deeply held religious, spiritual, or secular worldviews of its members. Therefore, in a spirit of mutual respect, members agree to hold space for each other's points of view, despite these views differing from their own.

(2) Members seek to create an environment in which people:

- (a) Feel free to share their deeply held religious, spiritual, secular worldviews
- (b) Listen with respect, intention and presence
- (c) Dispel myths or misinformation about religious, spiritual, secular worldviews

(3) The Society acknowledges that its members of diverse religious, spiritual, and secular worldviews interact with historical consciousness and communal memory by which meaning and identity are constructed in the present. Thus members must be committed to:

- (a) Cultivating the ability to hold space for tension, nuance, and engagement with stories, memories, lived experience that challenges one's own narratives and/or deeply held convictions
- (b) assuming the best intentions of fellow members

(4) The Society will appoint a minimum of (1) member to act in the role of mediator. The mediator must be present during discussions concerning sensitive, controversial, or potentially divisive issues, as determined by the Society.

(5) Members and external speakers involved in the Society's activities are involved in topics to share, inform, learn, and educate; **not** to debate, convert, proselytize or judge. Instead, without the intent to appropriate, members commit to:

(a) Being open to acknowledging aspects of other religious traditions or faiths that are admirable, and that might somehow enrich or find expression within our own.

(b) Drawing on sacred wisdom from all traditions to address the crises of our place in historical time