

Constitution of Irish Research Staff Association (IRSA)

ARTICLE I – NAME, PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES

1.1 NAME

The name of the Organisation shall be Irish Research Staff Association (IRSA) hereinafter referred to as the “Association”.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association is to establish an Organisation of Research Staff Associations, hereinafter referred to as “RSA”, and advocate for their common interests at a National and International level.

1.3 ACTIVITIES

The Association shall work to provide a collective voice for the RSA.

The Association will:

- (1) gather information and build consensus among the RSA regarding best practice policies for research staff;
- (2) articulate and promote these policies at the National and International level;
- (3) engage with government bodies, funding agencies, professional Organisations and other relevant parties to advocate for improvements in policies affecting research staff;
- (4) do all such others things as the Association may think incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

2.1 MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Association consists of RSA represented at the Inaugural Association Meeting held in Galway on September 15th, 2007.

2.2 ADDITIONAL MEMBERS

An RSA of any Third Level Institution in Ireland can apply to become a member of the Association. Criteria for membership will be set by Association ByLaws.

2.3 OBLIGATIONS

1° Members and their representatives shall be obligated to observe this Constitution and the By Laws of the Organisation.

2° Should a member not attend three consecutive meetings of the Association they will be deemed to have resigned from the Association.

2.4 EXPULSION OF MEMBERS

Members may be expelled from the Association following a motion passed in an Association meeting by a majority vote of which there is not more than one dissenting vote.

ARTICLE III – MEETING

3.1 MEETING

1° The Association shall hold meetings open to representatives of all members, to further the purpose and activities of the Association, provide a forum for open discussion of issues relevant to members, and debate the policies and vision of the Association.

2° As far as is practical Association meetings will be held at least 3 times a year.

3° A member can call an extraordinary meeting of the Association if they receive the support of at least half the members of the Association. In this event, the member calling the meeting will assume the Chair of the Association.

3.2 NOTIFICATION OF MEETING

Email notification of a meeting of the Association, including the date, time and place shall be disseminated by the Secretary of the Association to the members. Members shall be given such notice not less than four weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

3.3 REPRESENTATIVES

1° Members are entitled to nominate representatives to attend Association meetings. The number of representatives each member can nominate shall be set by Association ByLaw.

2° In the case of a member nominating more than one representative, only one representative shall be designated “voting representative” and only the voting representative shall be entitled to cast the member’s vote at the Association meeting.

3° Members shall nominate their representative or representatives in advance of Association meetings by emailing the Secretary not later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

4° A quorum meeting shall be a meeting at which representatives of at least one half of the members of the Association are present.

3.4 CHAIR

1° The Chair of the Association will be rotated among the members, with the Chair passing by agreement to the next member at the close of each meeting.

2° The Chair is responsible for hosting the subsequent Association meeting.

3° The Chairperson of the Association meetings shall be a representative of the member holding the Chair of the Association and shall be entitled to cast the Chair's vote.

3.5 AGENDA

1° The Secretary will email the representatives the agenda of the Association meeting not later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

2° Members must send all motions and items for discussion to the Secretary for dissemination and circulation not later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

3.6 DECISION MAKING

1° All decisions at Association meetings shall be built upon the principle of consensual agreement. However, should a consensus not be achieved, a vote may be taken and a motion will be passed if there is not more than one dissenting vote.

2° Each member shall have only one vote at Association meetings and their vote shall be cast by their representative or, in the case where members nominate more than one representative, by their "voting representative".

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

4.1 OFFICERS

The Officers of the Association are the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer, and they shall be answerable to the members.

4.2 PRESIDENT

1° The President shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Association and shall report to the members at Association meetings.

2° The President shall manage the affairs of the Association in accordance with strategic direction prescribed by the members at Association meetings.

3° The President shall represent the Association in dialogue and negotiations with outside bodies only following the approval of the members given at an Association meeting.

4.3 SECRETARY

1° The Secretary shall be responsible for the preparation of the agenda and minutes of Association meetings.

2° The Secretary shall manage the information resources of the Association, maintain and extend the contact information network of the Association, oversee the membership lists of the Association, maintain the records and archives of the Association, and organize the production of any Association reports.

4.4 TREASURER

1° The Treasurer shall ensure that the records of the fiscal transactions of the Association are maintained, and shall report on revenue and expenditures to members at Association meetings.

2° The Treasurer, in conjunction with the President, shall be custodian of the operating funds of the Association and jointly they shall have the authority to enter into contracts for the Association that have been approved by the members at Association meetings.

4.5 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1° The election of Officers shall be undertaken at Association meetings with the positions being held for a period one year.

2° Nominations for a vacant position of any Officer must be sent to the outgoing Secretary at least 2 weeks prior to an Association meeting. Nominations can only be submitted by a member RSA.

3° Each member can only nominate one individual for each Officer position.

4° Where more than one election is to be undertaken at an Association meeting, the election of the President shall precede the election of the Secretary, which in turn shall precede the election of the Treasurer.

5° Each member shall have one vote to be cast by their voting representative.

6° The Chairperson shall propose the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for appointment as Officer. In the case of two or more candidates receiving an equal number of votes, these candidates will be subject to a new vote and the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes will be proposed for appointment by the chairperson. If no candidate receives a plurality of votes the chairperson will appoint an interim Officer and a new election will be undertaken at the next Association meeting.

7° The candidate proposed for appointment as Officer by the chairperson will be ratified by a vote of the members present and will assume Office if there is not more than one

dissenting vote. If there is more than one dissenting vote the chairperson will appoint an interim Officer and a new election will be undertaken at the next Association meeting.

8° In the case of either Office becoming vacant between Association meetings, an election to the Office will be conducted at the next Association meeting. The Chair may appoint an interim Officer until the election can take place.

9° An Officer may be removed from office following a motion passed by a majority vote of which there is not more than one dissenting vote at an Association meeting.

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS

5.1 PROPOSAL OF AMENDMENTS

Proposed Constitutional amendments must be sent by email to the Secretary not later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

5.2 ACCEPTANCE OF AMENDMENTS

Amendments may be made to this Constitution by a majority vote of which there is not more than one dissenting vote. Amendments to the Constitution will become in full effect immediately following the conclusion of the vote.

ARTICLE VI – BYLAWS

6.1 BYLAWS

Members can propose ByLaws that will govern the activities of the Association as an extension of this Constitution.

5.2 ENACTMENT

The ByLaws of the Association shall be enacted pursuant to the proposal and acceptance of amendments as described in Article IV.

ARTICLE VII – RATIFICATION

7.1 RATIFICATION

This Constitution is the only Constitution of the Association and shall take effect immediately pursuant to ratification by a majority vote, of which there is not more than one dissenting vote, of the voting representatives of the Association, physically present at the Inaugural Association meeting.