

Bylaws on INFITT Elections

Preamble:

For the running of the organization, INFITT Constitution (art. 6-9) envisages two groups of elected members, a General Council of 51 members and an Executive Committee of 9 members. A two year term is indicated for both these bodies. The following set of bylaws shall govern the modalities for various steps involved in the election of new members for its General Council GC and Executive Committee EC.

1. Terms of Office for the EC and GC

1.1 The terms of office for members of GC and EC is two years, on a calendar year basis, starting on Jan 1 of Year 1 to Dec 31 of year 2.

2. Electoral College

2.1 Electoral college for GC election shall consist of ALL GB members in "good standing".

2.2 GB members in "good standing" are those who minimally have paid their annual dues for the calendar year by 31 March of that year, new members who joined the organization during the year and paid annual dues before 31 Sept. of that year) are eligible to vote in the GC elections. Members who have indulged in activities against the objectives and well being of the organization and have been subjected to "disciplinary" measures cannot compete for election to the GC during 3 year period following the date of disciplinary action.

Secretariat shall publish a "current official list of GB members in "good standing" in the INFITT website prior to the call for election (latest 31 Sept.). This list shall be the "official list of eligible voters" who can cast ballots for the election to the GC. The official list of GB members also should indicate duration of the years for which the annual membership dues have been paid.

2.3 Eligibility to contest for GC: Those who want to serve in the GC should have registered members of INFITT at least for TWO calendar years before contesting for membership in the GC. Similarly those who want to contest for EC membership should have served in the GC for at least one term (2 years).

2.4 The candidates also for the GC and EC should renew their membership at least for the first year of the 2-year term they want to serve, well before the date when the Election officers call for nominations for the GC election.

3. Electoral Returning Officers for the election

3.1 At least 3 months before the expiry of the term for EC and GC (mid Sept at the latest), EC shall nominate an electoral officers team (one CRO chief returning officer, assisted by two Returning Officers) to conduct the election of members to the GC and EC. It is the duty of the outgoing EC to furnish the Returning officers with sufficient information about the election, including a list of the names of members of "good standing" as well as those who underwent any disciplinary actions in order to be excluded from participating in the election.

3.2 The electoral officers selected should be "senior" members of INFITT in good standing, those who command the respect and admiration of the INFITT GB at large (preferably within the pool of INFITT Advisors and former Chair(s) –ED(s) - EC member(s))

3.3 The present set of bylaws on INFITT election shall serve as the reference document to the EOs to conduct the INFITT elections.

4. Election Phase I, II and their deadlines

4.1 Election Officers shall conduct election first for the 51 member GC and in the second phase for the 9-member EC.

4.2 The election of office-bearers of INFITT for the next term (Chair, Vice-Chair, Executive Director and Treasurer) shall be conducted by the Chair of INFITT of the current term in discussion with all newly elected members of the EC.

4.3 Various deadlines for the Elections to be observed by the EC:

15-31 Dec: Election of office-bearers (Chair, Vice-Chair, ED and Treasurer) of the parent body. The person holding the office of ED and Treasurer need not be elected EC members though this is recommended at least for the ED position.

1- 15 Dec: Election of 9 members to serve in the EC and results announced

15-30 Nov: Call for nomination for EC election

1-15 Nov: Election of 51 members for the GC and results announced

1-30 Oct: Call for nominations for election to the 51-member GC

5. Casting of ballots and election results

5.1 Casting of ballots (votes) shall be by electronic means, via official ballot forms issued by the Election Officers (ROs). The ballot should indicate clearly the membership ID of the person casting the vote (consult the INFITT membership database for this info.). The ballots have to be sent only using official Email ID of the member as registered in the INFITT database. The ballot can be sent only once, for which the RO shall send an acknowledgement receipt. When in doubt, concerned members should seek clarification from the CRO rather than sending duplicate (or multiple) copies of the ballot.

5.2 Within few days of the closing date for sending of ballots, CRO shall release an official list of election results, indicating the number of votes received by each candidate along with number of votes declared invalid. The results announced by CRO are final. When in doubt, candidate may seek clarification and review of their case directly with the CRO.

6. GC election by Regional Groups

6.1 Article 8 of INFITT Constitution envisages the composition of the General Council to be based on regional representation of its grass roots membership (GB), limiting the representation by each region as follows: India- 16; Sri Lanka - 06; North America - 08; Malaysia - 04; Singapore - 03; Europe - 05; Australasia - 01; Middle East & Africa - 02 and Institutional Members and Members-at-Large: 6. The latter is for members from countries or regions not recognized explicitly with a quota as listed above with max. quota of three for the Institutional members. When GB members from regions with a quota contest

under this category, Returning Officer shall ensure that, under no circumstances the total number of elected GC members from any given region exceed the regional quota cited above.

6.2 Only GB members of good standing of a given region form the electoral college (eligible to contest and to cast vote) for the election of GC members of that region. Elections shall be organized for all the regions where there are more candidates contesting for GC seats than the allocated number for that region.

6.3 GC election shall take place in two phases: in Phase 1 for the first 45 seats listed under 5.1. In Phase II election shall be organized for the remaining 6 seats.

6.4 Bylaws on INFITT membership defines the number of eligible votes each "Institutional" member is entitled to. Members-at-large category refers to GB members who do not fit into any of the geographical regions with allocated seats in the GC.

6.5 When there are no "institutional members", elections may be organized for the "six seats" amongst the "GB members of all regions" in a second phase of the GC election.

6.6 In the event of insufficient number of candidates contesting from any given region, remaining seats of that region in the GC shall remain "vacant" and cannot be allocated to other regions, upsetting the equitable geographical representation. Thus GB members can contest for a seat under "members-at-large" category but not for vacant seats of any specific region.

6.7 In case of members of allocated regions contest under "members-at-large" category and get elected, no region can be represented in the GC by more than one-third for India (max. 17), one-fifth for Sri Lanka and North America (max. 10 for each) and one-tenth for all other regions (max. 5 for each) of the total seats in the GC.

7. EC election

7.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of Nine elected members, elected from the newly members of the General Council GC.

7.2 Within 2 weeks of the declaration of results of the GC election, the CRO shall conduct the election for EC, using electronic balloting as in the case of GC elections.

7.3 The composition of the EC shall be such that it retains nearly the same proportional regional representation in the GC as indicated in the INFITT Constitution. No single region or country can have more than 2 seats in the EC. . Examples of possible EC composition; IN-2, NA-2, SL-1, SG-1, MY-2, EU-1 ; IN-2, NA-2, SL-1, MY-1, SG-2, EU-1.

7.4 All elected GC members (max. 51) cast their ballots to elect 9 members of the EC, taking into account max. seats allocated for each region as indicated above (art 7.3)

7.5 Except for participation in the Chapter Management Committee (CMC) of regional chapters, members once elected to the EC serve the interests of ALL geographical regions without any special affiliation/allegiance to any specific region.

8. Election of the Office-Bearers of INFITT

8.1 The Chair, Vice-Chair, Executive Director @Secretary and Treasurer are considered as Office-bearers authorized to represent INFITT officially with other parties, govt. agencies and organizations. Their duties and responsibilities are outlined explicitly in the INFITT Constitution.

8.2 Other than the "nine" elected members of EC, immediate Past-Chair, ED and the Treasurer are associated with the EC as Members on an "ex-officio" basis. They can participate regularly in the EC deliberations without any voting rights. Ex-officio members who want to take part in the EC with voting rights should get elected as one of the 9 EC members.

8.3 Soon after the election of the new EC, the EC members deliberate amongst themselves to elect one of their members as the Chair and Vice-Chair for the two year term.

8.4 The term of office of the Chair and Vice-Chair is one year. The elected "Chair" may continue for the second year if majority in the EC vote in favour. Else the Vice-Chair takes up the role of Chair during the second year of the two-year term.

8.5 In order to give equal opportunities to members of different regions in the key management unit of INFITT (geographical representation is mandatory in the composition of GC and EC), the posts of Chair, Vice-Chair and ED be rotated among all key geographical regions and not repeatedly from the same region. Constitution envisages a permanent representation for India in the EC and nothing beyond. Thus elected Chair and Vice-Chair cannot be from the same geographical region.

8.6 The ED is the main Administrative Officer of the organization, responsible for the Secretariat and for the overall finances. In the latter task, the ED shall be assisted by the Treasurer (also named by EC) . Along with the ED, the Treasurer also will have the required authority to file periodical tax returns to US and other agencies required to maintain the NGO status of the organization.. Since efficient, stream lined administration requires continuity, there is no mandatory requirement to replace the ED every 2 years when the EC changes its composition (in fact this is not desirable).

The newly elected EC either "renew" the existing ED and Treasurer or "appoint" new candidates for the duration of 2-year term of the newly elected EC. Since the position of the Treasurer requires signatures with the bank authorities, at least for this position, "renewal" for another term reviewed first prior to "replacement".

8.7 Every two years when the new EC takes office, the new EC among other items, shall review the efficient functioning of the INFITT "secretariat" during the past 2-year term and may choose to retain the ED or replace with someone else. If ED is to be changed, a viable alternative is for the EC to appoint a permanent "Admin. Manager" for the INFITT secretariat who shall retain all key/sensitive information and ensure continuity of the Secretariat function during biannual replacement of GC and EC. Such EC appointed Admin. Manager shall manage the Secretariat and work under the guidance of the ED and the Chair of the Organization.

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