



International Association for Ladakh Studies

Constitution

1. Name

The name of the Association is the International Association for Ladakh Studies (IALS). It is a non-profit-making, non-political and non-sectarian organization.

2. Address

The Association's address shall be that of the Secretary for the time being.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Association are:

- a) To promote the study and awareness of all aspects of the art, history, language, culture and natural environment of Ladakh and its surrounding regions, both within Ladakh itself, within the academic world, and on the international stage.
- b) To promote research on Ladakh, and in particular constructive interaction between the international academic community and Ladakh's own scholarly community, and to provide a forum for constructive, scholarly and non-partisan discussion and debate.
- c) To organise seminars and conferences both in Ladakh and abroad, normally including a biennial international conference.
- d) To foster the publication of research material on Ladakh, including the proceedings of IALS conferences, and the regular publication of the *Ladakh Studies* journal.

4. Membership

a) Membership of the Association is open to any person interested in the objectives of the Association, subject to the payment of an annual subscription.

b) Benefits of membership include:

- i) Members will be entitled to receive copies of the official magazine *Ladakh Studies*;
- ii) Members will be entitled to propose paper contributions to the Biennial Conference, subject to acceptance by the Conference Committee.

c) Subscription and fees.

- i) Membership will run for 2 years from the start of one conference to the start of the next. A reminder for renewal will be sent out not less than 30 days before the start of the conference. Conference participants may join or renew their membership by paying the subscription in cash at the time of registering for the conference; other members by cheque, secure online payment &c. New members joining less than one year before the next conference may make an initial payment of one year's subscription.
- ii) The Executive Committee, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, shall review the level of the membership fees for each two-year period, taking into consideration, among other things, the prevailing foreign exchange rates. They shall post their decision on the website not less than 30 days before the start of the forthcoming conference. The new rates shall be immediately payable for the forthcoming two-year period, but are subject to ratification by the General Meeting.

d) Membership of the Association may be terminated on two grounds:

- i) A person's membership will lapse if their subscription remains unpaid for more than one year, but may be resumed once payment is made.
- ii) A person's membership may be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the combined Executive and Advisory Committees, if it is felt that the member has caused unnecessary dissension within the Association, or brought the Association into disrepute. Such a person will be informed in advance of the intention to take such a vote, and will have the right to make written representation to the committee before any final decision. Expulsions from the membership are effective for five years.

5. Committee Structure

Ordinarily, there shall be four committees of the Association: the Executive Committee, the Advisory Committee, the Editorial Committee and the Conference Committee.

a) *The Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Secretary, the Treasurer/Membership Secretary, the Editor, the Ladakh Liaison Officer and such other persons (including a Conference Convenor) as they may co-opt between conferences. The President, the Secretary, the Treasurer/Membership Secretary, the Editor and the Ladakh Liaison Officer may only enter office through election at a quorate General Meeting (see notes on General Meetings).

In the event that a post may fall vacant between General Meetings, the remaining members of the Committee (elected, not co-opted) may, after consultation with the Advisory Committee, co-opt a replacement to act in the vacant post until end of the next General Meeting of the Association.

The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are: to oversee the effective running of the Association; to recommend suitable venues for forthcoming Association conferences and oversee their successful organisation; to oversee the scholarly standards of items published under the auspices of the Association; and to co-opt such members as it sees fit between conferences for the adequate fulfilment of the Association's responsibilities. The Association

is not obliged to take responsibility for academic, political or personal matters or disputes outside this direct remit. In cases of major policy decisions and academic issues, decisions of the Executive Committee will be made in consultation with the Advisory Committee. Decisions shall be made by a majority of the Executive Committee.

b) The Advisory Committee

i. The Advisory Committee shall consist of up to twelve members who are recognised scholars and persons of good standing, and who have been paid-up members of the association for at least two years. The Committee's role is to represent a broad range of academic disciplines and regions; to promote the aims of the IALS within their professional circles; and to provide general guidance to the Executive Committee in accordance with the Association's aims and objectives. The Executive Committee shall consult the Advisory Committee on major policy and academic issues. If a post in the Executive Committee, other than that of President, becomes vacant between conferences, the remaining members of the Executive Committee shall make an interim appointment in consultation with the Advisory Committee.

Where called upon, members of the Advisory Committee will make themselves available to review papers within their own disciplines that have been submitted for conferences or for publication. If possible, they will attend at least one conference during their membership of the Committee.

ii. Membership of the Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee shall at all times include at least four Ladakhi members. It shall also include at least one member representing each of three broad areas of scholarship: the social sciences (anthropology, sociology, economics, politics, development studies), the humanities (history, art and architecture, religious studies, language and literature, folklore), and the physical and life sciences (medicine, geology, geography, agriculture).

The members of the Advisory Committee shall be elected at the General Meeting of the Association. Members will serve a term of six years, covering three conference cycles, one third of the posts coming up for election at every General Meeting. Committee members who have completed their term may accept nomination for re-election immediately.

c) The Editorial Committee

The primary purpose of the Editorial Committee is (i) the regular publication of *Ladakh Studies*, normally on at least an annual basis, and (ii) maintenance of the Association website. The Committee is run by the Editor who may, in consultation with the Executive Committee, co-opt individuals from both within and outside the Association to help fulfil this objective.

d) The Conference Committee

The primary purpose of the Conference Committee is the organisation of individual IALS Conferences, normally to be held on a biennial basis. The Committee is run by the Conference Convenor in association with the Secretary and may, in consultation with the Executive Committee, co-opt individuals from both within and outside the Association to help fulfil this objective. The Conference Convenor is a co-opted member of the Executive Committee; this office comes to an end at the successful completion of the designated conference.

Publication of Association conferences proceedings will occur on an *ad hoc* basis, through consultation between the Secretary and the outgoing Conference Convenor. This may be carried out by the Association on its own or in association with another organiser or publisher.

6. Patrons of the Association

One or two senior scholars, who may or may not be members of the Association but who have made a notable contribution to Ladakh studies, may be invited to be patrons or joint patrons of the Association.

7. Officers of the Association

The Officers of the Association shall be:

- i) The President, whose responsibilities include: chairing the Executive Committee; chairing the General Meeting of the Association, and; representing (or delegating representation of) the Association in the public domain.
- ii) The Secretary, whose responsibilities include: drafting and publicising the Agenda for all General Meetings; co-ordinating any interregnum between Presidents; taking the minutes of General Meetings; publicising key changes and decisions made at General Meetings, as they might affect the general membership; managing the election to vacant posts on the Executive and Advisory Committees and liaising with the Conference Convenor over the organization of individual conferences.
- iii) The Treasurer and Membership Secretary, whose responsibilities include: effective maintenance of the rolls of membership; maintenance of Association subscription fees; keeping of Association accounts and expenses; presentation of Association accounts to the General Meeting.
- iv) The Ladakh Liaison Officer, whose responsibilities include: acting as liaison officer for Association business in Ladakh, as stipulated by the Executive Committee; maintaining an Association bank account in Ladakh for the purposes of conferences and Association business.
- v) The Editor, whose responsibilities include: ensuring the timely publication of *Ladakh Studies*; overseeing the maintenance of the Association website.
- vi) The Webmaster whose responsibility it will be, in consultation with the other members of the Executive Committee, to keep the website maintained and updated on a regular basis.
- vii) Such members as may be co-opted onto the Executive Committee, including the Conference Convenor.

8. Terms and Election of Officers

Determination of key post-holders of the Association shall be as follows:

- a) In the case of the Patron or Joint Patrons, nominations will be made on the grounds of a majority vote of the combined Advisory and Executive Committees. This nomination will then require ratification by a majority vote of the membership at the next available quorate General Meeting.
- b) In the case of the President, election is open to all members of the Association who have demonstrated a clear commitment to the objectives of the Association, normally either through a term of office on one of the Association's committees, or through Association membership of at least five years. Once elected, they will take office immediately upon the closing of the Association Conference or General Meeting (whichever event is later) at which they were elected, and shall normally hold office for the duration of two subsequent Association Conferences or four years, subject to the normal conditions of termination of

office. Presidents may not normally be immediately re-elected (unless the post would otherwise remain empty), but may stand for election again following the term of a subsequent President.

c) In the case of the Secretary, the Treasurer/Membership Secretary, and the Editor, election is open to all members of the Association of at least two years' standing; once elected, they will take office immediately upon the closing of the Association Conference or General Meeting (whichever event is later) at which they were elected, and shall normally hold office for the duration of two subsequent Association Conferences or four years (whichever is shorter), subject to the normal conditions of termination of office. There is no limit on the number of times a member may stand for re-election for these posts.

d) In the case of the Ladakh Liaison Officer, election is open to all members of the Association of at least two years' standing permanently resident in Ladakh, who are legally eligible to operate a bank account in the Association's name in Ladakh. Otherwise, the conditions of election to this office are the same as to that of the Secretary &c.

e) The Webmaster, on account of the technical nature of the work, will be appointed by the Executive Committee, and the appointment ratified by each successive Executive Committee.

All officers shall serve without compensation. However, they may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably related to and incurred in the discharge of their offices, the accounts of which must be made available to the membership at the next General Meeting.

9. Conduct of elections

Notice of the election the Association's officers shall be given along with the announcement of each forthcoming conference; it shall also be posted on the Association's website at least 60 days before the conference. Each nomination shall be accompanied by the assent (either in writing or in person) of the nominated candidate; these must reach the Executive Committee at least 30 days before the beginning of the General Meeting, so that they can be posted on the Association website. Successful election of single candidates requires the assent of a majority of voters, at a quorate General Meeting

For posts for which there are multiple nominations, the Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring the preparation of ballot papers. These shall be posted on the website at least 15 days before the date of the General Meeting, and may be downloaded, filled and sent electronically or by post to the Secretary by members unable to attend the General Meeting. These ballots, verified by the Secretary, shall be included in the voting along with those of the members present at the General Meeting to determine the election of the officer(s) concerned. The inclusion of such votes will not be relevant to the calculation of the meeting's quorate status. The procedure for electing members of the Advisory Committee shall be exactly the same.

10. Termination of Office

The termination of the office of Patrons and Committee members may occur through resignation, a vote of no confidence by the membership (see Extraordinary Items of Business), or death.

In the event of the termination of the post of President between General Meetings, the Secretary will normally ensure the fulfilment the President's duties in consultation with, and with the co-operation of, the Advisory Committee, until the time of the next General Meeting.

In the event of the termination between General Meetings of the office of the Secretary, the Treasurer/Membership Secretary, the Editor, or the Ladakh Liaison Officer, the Executive Committee may, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, co-opt a member of the Association to fulfil this role until the time of the next General Meeting.

11. International Conferences

The IALS will if possible hold a conference once every two years at a time and place to be determined by the Executive Committee subject to the advice of the Advisory Committee (See also *Extraordinary Items of Business*). An IALS General Meeting will take place at each conference (See *notes on General Meetings*).

The Executive Committee may appoint one or more Conference Convenors to manage the conference. The Convenors may in turn appoint local committees to assist with the tasks of conferences organisation. These local conference committees will normally dissolve once their work is completed.

The Conference Convenor shall, in co-operation with the Secretary, issue an official announcement of each biennial conference, with a call for papers, not less than nine months beforehand, stating its time, place and duration.

Proposals for research papers to be read at the Conferences shall be accepted at the discretion of the Conference Committee, whose members will either review such proposals themselves, or forward them for review to the Advisory Committee Association members with expertise in the relevant fields. Such reviewers will be expected, where necessary, to engage with the authors of the proposals to ensure that academic norms, e.g. in the matter of citation of written and oral sources, are followed.

Publication of Conference Proceedings is an objective of the Association, but cannot be guaranteed. Individual papers will be subject to peer review before acceptance.

12. General Meetings of the IALS

a) Definition

General Meetings of the IALS are the only context for the passing of Ordinary and Extraordinary Items of Business, as designated below.

General Meetings of the IALS will normally occur during the Association's Biennial Conference, and will be called by the Executive Committee. General Meetings are quorate when they have been announced to the membership at least 60 days in advance, and when they include both (i) at least half of the combined standing Executive and Advisory Committees, and (ii) one tenth of the members (including committee members) listed on the membership rolls, present in person.

An Extraordinary General Meeting may take place outside the context of the Biennial Conference, and be called by any member of the Association. Extraordinary General Meetings are quorate when they have been announced to the membership at least 60 days in advance, and when they include both (i) at least half of the combined standing Executive and Advisory Committees, and (ii) one tenth of the members (including committee members) listed on the membership rolls, present in person.

b) Voting at General Meetings

Proposing/seconding motions, voting on general motions, and nomination of candidates for committees at General Meetings of the IALS are open to all members of the Association. Apart from nominations for election to the Associations' committees (see para 9 above) all the

above may be done in person at the Meeting itself, by post or via the Internet. Internet or postal nominations, votes, and other letters of assent that are of accepted provenance will be treated as valid within the individual processes of the General Meeting (elections, votes, etc.), but do not form any part of the calculation of the Meeting's quorate status. If there are grounds for doubting the provenance of such correspondence, it may be rendered invalid on a case-by-case basis by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

c) Ordinary Business of the General Meeting

Ordinarily, General Meetings of the IALS will include the following:

- i) Ratification of the Association's accounts.
- ii) Ratification of any change proposed by the Executive Committee in the level of membership fees.
- iii) Election for any positions on the Executive Committee which are open (as a consequence of the resignation, expiry of term or death of the incumbent). The elections will be conducted according to the procedure laid down in para 9 above.
- iv) Election for the positions on the Advisory Committee which have fallen vacant. The elections will be conducted according to the procedure laid down in para 9 above.
- v) Choice of venue for subsequent Conferences. Choice of venue and Conference Convenor for the next conferences will be decided by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Advisory Committee, and ordinarily if possible announced and ratified at the General Meeting. Objections may be lodged, requiring a proposer and seconder: a vote of two-thirds of the membership (including correspondence votes) is required to overturn the Executive Committee's choice.

d) Extraordinary Items of Business

Extraordinary items of business must be announced to the general membership, or made publicly available, at least 30 days in advance. They include the following:

- i) Moves to a vote on proposed amendments or additions to the Constitution of the IALS. Such moves require a proposer and a seconder, and are passed by a two-thirds majority of the combined Executive and Advisory Committees, plus a simple majority of the votes at the General Meeting, including both those cast in person and those received electronically or by post.
- ii) Moves to a vote on the dissolution of the Association. A motion to dissolve the Association requires a proposer and a seconder, and is passed on a two-thirds vote. The Executive Committee would be responsible for the smooth dissolution of the Association, transfer of assets, closure of accounts and any other such matters necessary.

e) Votes of No-Confidence

Members of the Association have the right to propose a vote of no confidence, either in the standing Executive Committee or Advisory Committee, or in any individual or individuals therein. No-confidence motions may be submitted to the Secretary or President at any time, but must be made in writing, include detailed reasons for proposing the vote, and be countersigned by at least ten other members of the Association.

- i) If a fully valid proposal is received during a General Meeting, the Secretary must stop all other business and move to an immediate consideration of a vote. Votes of no confidence are passed by a two-thirds majority of those attending the General Meeting.

- ii) If a fully valid proposal is received outside a General Meeting, the Secretary must announce either an EGM or a postal vote to be held within three calendar months, including a copy of the written proposal. Members of the Association must be informed of the vote in writing within 30 days of receipt of the proposal. Votes of no confidence are passed by a two-thirds majority of the entire membership of the Association.

In either case, those that find themselves the object of such a proposal have the right to defend themselves, either in person at the relevant GM (see i above), or in writing in the Hon. Secretary's announcement of the vote (see ii above).

In the case of a successful vote of no confidence, the individual(s) or committee(s) concerned must resign their posts immediately (possibly requiring an immediate election if Association business is to continue). They may not stand for re-election for office for a further three years, but may be co-opted by the Executive Committee for the execution of specific tasks during this time.