

Constitution of the Irregular Writers Collective

As agreed at the Founding Meeting on 6 June 2018, Tunbridge Wells

Clause 1: Name

The name of the association is Irregular Writers Collective (hereafter referred to as 'the Collective').

Clause 2: Administration

An elected Committee is charged with the responsibility of administering and managing the affairs of the Collective in accordance with the clauses of this Constitution as set out below.

The first Committee will consist of the founding members of the Collective and will be appointed in any posts as agreed at the first General Meeting (the Founding Meeting).

Clause 3: Purpose

To help writers write and get published and to have fun along the way.

This may include, without limitation, publishing projects, organisation of events, mutual support.

Clause 4: Membership

1. Membership is open to all writers who live in the Tunbridge Wells area and who are willing to participate in the work of the Collective.
2. Members will be charged a membership fee as agreed at the relevant Annual General Meeting or by the Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.
3. Any member not paying the membership fee within two months of the due dates shall be deemed to have resigned from the Collective, unless a fees waiver has been agreed.
4. Members are expected to show respect to each other. An individual's membership may be suspended or terminated where conduct is considered by the Committee to be unacceptable or not in the best interests of the Collective. The Committee's decision in such cases is final.
5. On rare occasions Honorary Membership may be proposed and granted for longstanding and exceptional service to the Collective. Such members are exempt from any membership fees.
6. Associate Members may be admitted, who will have all the rights of Full Members except that they will not participate in our regular meetings and will not have a vote at the AGM. They will not pay a membership fee.
7. Any further membership rules will be specified in the Membership Bye Laws.

Clause 5: Committee

1. The Committee will be elected by the full members at the Annual General Meeting and will consist of a minimum of 5 members and will appoint among its members a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Secretary, plus any other members voted in, subject to a maximum as agreed at the previous Annual General Meeting.
2. Any full member may stand for election to the Committee providing they are officially nominated and seconded. If there are more candidates than the agreed number of Committee members, a secret ballot will be held. If there are fewer or an equal number of candidates, the candidates will be elected without challenge.
3. If a Committee member resigns before the Annual General Meeting, another member may be co-opted to fill the vacancy.
4. All members of the Committee will stand down at each AGM, but may stand for re-election by if they so wish.

Clause 6: Committee Meetings

1. At least two members of the Committee are needed to call a meeting. Where possible 14 days' notice should be given, unless the matters to be discussed are urgent and a shorter time period is agreed.
2. An agenda of items to be discussed should be prepared and distributed in advance.
3. The Chair will chair Committee meetings, but if the Chair is absent then a volunteer from the remaining elected committee members can be chosen.
4. For a decision to be valid, a majority vote from Committee members is required. In the event of an equal divide, the Chair will have an additional casting vote.
5. Minutes or notes of Committee meetings are to be taken and distributed to all Committee members. A copy should also be kept in the Collective's Minutes file and be available for any member to peruse on request.
6. Decisions taken by the Committee shall be relayed to the Collective at the earliest opportunity.

Clause 7: Funds

1. Any general funds shall be paid into accounts administered by the Treasurer, who will open any accounts and keep a record of all income and expenditure and produce reports as necessary.
2. Accounts are to be in the name of Irregular Writers Collective and all cheques drawn must be signed by any two signatories authorised by the Committee.
3. General funds of the Collective may only be used to further the objectives of the Collective, as approved by the Committee.
4. Any out-of-pocket expenses, or authorised expenditure, should only be reimbursed by the Treasurer on production of a signed Expenses Claim Form.
5. The annual financial year runs from the 1st of May to the 30th of April.

Clause 8: Annual General Meetings

1. The Annual General Meeting will take place in May, with the date to be agreed by the Committee and publicised.
2. Details of the AGM, its agenda and proposals must be sent to all members no later than one week prior to the meeting.
3. Nominations for the Committee must be made by a specified closing date, which will usually be at least two weeks in advance of the AGM. Further nominations will not be considered after this date. Exceptionally, late nominations will be accepted if the alternative would be to leave an essential committee post unfilled.
4. Every member of the Collective has the right to speak and vote at the AGM. Absent members may vote.
5. The Chair will chair the AGM or, if the Chair is absent, then another member of the Committee will preside.
6. Minutes should be taken of this meeting and made available to members on request.
7. The Chair, and where appropriate other postholders, will present their annual reports.
8. The Treasurer will present a report containing the annual statement of accounts and propose the budget for the coming year.
9. Any membership fees and any other financial matters for the forthcoming year will be reviewed.
10. Members will vote in the new Committee as specified in Clause 5.
11. Any other business, as raised by one or more members of the Collective, will be discussed.

Clause 9: Meetings of the Collective

1. Meetings of the Collective will take place on the dates that the Committee decides.
2. All members have the opportunity to fully participate, subject to any exclusions as defined in the programme.
3. Visitors may attend meetings by arrangement.

Clause 10: Extra-ordinary Meetings

1. An Extra-ordinary General Meeting may be called if at least 10 members request such a meeting.
2. 21 days' notice in writing must be given where possible, and the notice must state the business to be discussed.

Clause 11: Discipline and Complaints

1. The Members will abide by the all the bye-laws and Constitution of the Collective.
2. The Committee shall have the power to suspend or expel any Member whose actions are considered to be unconstitutional, to have breached the bye-laws or conflict with the best interests of the Collective.

3. Any complaints concerning either individual members or issues of the Collective should be made in writing to the Committee for investigation and proposed action.
4. An opportunity to meet with the Committee before any final decision is made should be offered on request within an agreed time limit, where possible not exceeding three weeks.

Clause 12: Termination of the Collective

In the event of the Irregular Writers Collective being unable to continue for any reason, the Committee and any existing members should meet to decide on termination and what to do with existing assets.

Clause 13: Liability

The Collective cannot be held responsible for any liability howsoever caused.

Clause 14 Amendments to Constitution

Amendments to this Constitution may only be made after discussion and agreement by the Committee and ratified by the membership of the Collective at the AGM

This Constitution was proposed by the Committee and adopted at the Founding Meeting on 6 June 2018