



Constitution of the Society for the History of Astronomy

Founded 29th June 2002

Sixth revision of the Constitution, adopted at the Annual General Meeting held at the Birmingham & Midland Institute on 29th October 2016

1. NAME

The society shall be named the Society for the History of Astronomy, and is hereafter referred to as the Society.

2. OBJECT & AIMS

(i) To promote an academic, educational and popular interest in the history of the science of astronomy and related subjects.

(ii) To encourage new research into the history of astronomy, especially amateur research at the local level, and to facilitate its collation, preservation, publication and dissemination both by conventional means and through the internet or such other new means as may subsequently become available.

(iii) To bring together those with a common interest in the subject, whether amateur or professional researcher or general enthusiast, and to organise activities for the benefit and interest of the members.

3. COUNCIL

(i) The general conduct and arrangement of business of the Society shall be in the hands of the elected Council of the Society (hereafter referred to as Council), composed of a Chairman*, a Vice Chairman*, a General Secretary, a Membership Secretary, a Treasurer, and not more than seven other Councillors. (* Chairman, Chair, Chairwoman or Chairperson as preferred by the elected Councillor.)

(ii) The Chairman, Vice Chairman, General Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer and general Councillors shall be elected/re-elected at each Annual General Meeting (hereafter referred to as the AGM). Nominations for Council elections must be submitted in writing to the General Secretary and received by the closing date announced, and email/postal votes cast in accordance with 4(iii) will be included in the ballot.

(iii) The elected Council shall have the right to appoint an Honorary President and up to two Honorary Vice Presidents, who shall have full rights to attend and vote at Council meetings. The Council shall also have power to delegate specific responsibilities and to co-opt additional Councillors, such co-opted Councillors being eligible to serve until the following AGM. Council may appoint sub-committees and additional officers as appropriate.

(iv) If any Chairman, Vice Chairman, General Secretary, Membership Secretary or Treasurer chooses to resign mid-term, or is unable to continue in office for personal or medical reasons, Council may appoint a new Councillor to fill the vacant office until the following AGM.

(v) Council shall meet as necessary, at least twice per year in person. Additional meetings, if needed, shall be by whatever communication medium is deemed appropriate (in person or by electronic means). Five of Council will constitute a quorum. Other Society members may attend, at the discretion of Council, as observers at those meetings held in person.

4. VOTING

(i) Only fully paid-up and Honorary members shall be entitled to the privileges and voting rights of the Society or to become Council members.

(ii) At all meetings of the Society a decision shall be reached by a simple majority of those attending, except under section 4(iii), where votes by either email (preferred) or post submitted and received no later than 7 days before the meeting will also be counted towards the decision.

(iii) Email or postal votes may be submitted by any member entitled to vote under 4(i) on matters regarding amendments to the Constitution under 8, for the election of Council, or in the event of a vote being called for dissolution of the Society under 10.

5. MEMBERSHIP

(i) Any person seeking Society membership shall, on the payment of the due subscription and subject to approval, be admitted to the Society. If approval is not granted, correspondence will not be entered into on the matter.

(ii) Exceptional disregard of the Society's interests by a member may result in Council ordering expulsion after consideration at a meeting where such a member is entitled to present a case. Council's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into on the matter.

(iii) Any person deemed by Council to have rendered valuable service to the Society, history or the science of astronomy may be granted Honorary Membership or Honorary Life membership by the Society at any AGM, such membership being subject to the Constitution of the Society as it applies to all members.

6. SUBSCRIPTIONS

(i) Each member (other than Honorary Members or Honorary Life Members referred to at 5(iii)) shall pay an annual subscription.

(ii) There are five classes of membership, as follows:

(a) Ordinary Member – standard membership, paying the full subscription.

(b) Concessionary Member – members under 18 years old, students in full time education or retired members may subscribe at a reduced rate. Proof of status will be required to qualify for Concessionary Membership.

(c) Family member – the members of one family living at a single address may join as a Family, entitled to one copy of any publications issued under Ordinary Membership, one vote, and the opportunity for all Family Members so joining to attend Society events, subject individually to any charges made to Ordinary Members.

(d) Institutional Member – an organisation, institution or company may join the Society as an Institutional Member, entitled to one copy of any publications issued under Ordinary Membership and the opportunity for one representative of that organisation, institution or company to attend Society events, subject to any charges made to Ordinary members. Institutional Membership does not include voting rights.

(e) Honorary Member – members invited by Council to enjoy free membership in recognition of service to the Society, history or the science of astronomy, whether for a limited period or for life.

(iii) Subscriptions shall be payable on the first day of January. Subscriptions are not refundable except in special circumstances at the discretion of Council. Subscriptions not paid by 31st March will be assumed to mean resignation. Fees for the membership classes described above will be agreed at the AGM.

(iv) Subscriptions shall be reviewed by Council, who may submit recommendations to a General Meeting (normally the AGM), which shall vote on whether to adopt these recommendations.

(v) At each AGM, the Treasurer shall submit an account and balance sheet for the past financial year, which shall be the period 1 October to 30 September immediately preceding the AGM date.

7. MEETINGS

(i) There shall normally be an Annual Conference, to be held in the Autumn as soon after 1 October as is practicable, at a suitable venue determined by Council. The AGM shall be incorporated within this Annual Conference. Admission to the AGM shall be free to all Society members. Other General Meetings and events may be organised by Council or sub-committees as required.

(ii) Visitors may attend any General Meeting upon writing their names in the attendance book. Those visiting more than once (unless formal guests of the Society) will be invited to apply for membership.

(iii) The Vice Chairman or the General Secretary as deputy shall chair meetings if the Chairman is unavailable.

8. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

(i) Any member may submit any proposed amendment to this Constitution to Council for their consideration. The amendment will be voted on at a General Meeting (normally the AGM). Prior notice of such an intention will be given at a previous General Meeting or by post/email. Members who are unable to attend such a meeting will be invited to cast a vote by email (preferred) or post, addressed to the General Secretary, to arrive no later than 7 days before the meeting.

9. GENERAL

All members shall act in the best interests of the Society. The Council accepts no responsibility for the property or person of anyone attending meetings or Society activities. Members are deemed to have accepted this Constitution in full and agree to abide by its rulings and the fair and appropriate decisions arrived at by Council in its light.

10. DISSOLUTION

If, upon the winding up or dissolution of the Society, there remain any assets whatsoever after the satisfaction of all outstanding debts and liabilities, such assets shall not be paid to or distributed to members of the Society, but shall be given or transferred to some other institution not formed for carrying on business for profit, and having objects similar to the objects of the Society to be determined by resolution of the Society at or before the time of dissolution or if and so far as effect cannot be given to the foregoing provision, then to some charitable object. This rule shall not altered in any respect unless the alteration is agreed at an AGM.

The Council for the Society for the History of Astronomy