

# Rules of Procedure

## International Forestry Students' Association

Approved at the 34th GA IFSS 2023

*These Rules of Procedure (RoP) clarify the internal regularities of IFSA. They are not part of IFSA's Statutes; they are read together with the Statutes and are subject to the provisions of the Statutes.*

*The GA decides upon the RoP according to the procedure set in the Statutes. The RoP comes into force through publication on the IFSA website.*

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## 1. IFSA members

As stated in the IFSA Statute § 4, IFSA has four kinds of membership:

- Ordinary members (Local Committees);
- Associate members (Individual person);
- Consulting members (Individual person);
- Honorary members (Individual person).

For convenience, two more types of members are introduced:

- LC members: Individuals who are part of an IFSA Local Committee and thus part of IFSA;
- Active IFSA members: LC members and Associate members.

Stated below are the requirements for each kind of IFSA membership.

### 1.1. Ordinary members

Ordinary members of IFSA must be student organisations that:

- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of IFSA;
- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of their respective university;
- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of similar institutions of internationally recognized tertiary level they are affiliated with
- Have natural persons as members.

### 1.2. Associate members

Associate members are natural persons or organisations that wish to be a member of IFSA without fulfilling all of the conditions to be an Ordinary Member but still act in accordance

with the Statutes and values of IFSA. A final decision on the admission of Associate members is at the discretion of the Council.

Associate members of IFSA must:

- Be natural persons or organisations that wish to be a member of IFSA, identify themselves with IFSA's goals and objectives and do not fulfil the prerequisites to be Ordinary members;
- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of their respective institution;
- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of similar institutions of internationally recognized tertiary level they are affiliated with

The membership of an Associate member will expire at the end of IFSA Term.

### 1.3. Consulting members

Consulting members are natural persons who must be appointed at an ordinary GA session for one of the following reasons:

1. They contribute their experience to IFSA;
2. They have contributed to IFSA as an Official.

A nomination supported by the majority in GA shall qualify the appointment of an individual. Consulting members are appointed for an initial period of three years. This appointment can be renewed if desired.

### 1.4. Honorary members

1. Honorary members are natural persons or organisations that IFSA wishes to honour because they have contributed to IFSA's work or provided support from outside of IFSA in significant ways for a long time.
2. They must be appointed at an ordinary GA session.
3. Honorary Members are generally not eligible to be ordinary members.
4. No more than three honorary members can be appointed per year.
5. After the appointment, honorary members are contacted and managed by the IFSA Supporter and Alumni Network.

### 1.5. LC Members

LC members are:

- Natural persons that are members of one or multiple Local Committees of IFSA;
- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of their respective university;
- Operate in accordance with the Statutes and values of similar institutions of internationally recognized university level they are affiliated with;

## 1.6. Active members

Active members of IFSA are:

- Natural persons
- LC members or Associate members
- Tertiary education students (all levels incl. PhD) or recent graduates (not more than 1 year after graduation)

## 1.7. Membership fee

### 1.7.1. Income levels

Annual membership fees have to be paid for the IFSA year to come. The fee for each member depends upon the country the member is from. Countries are organised into separate categories according to the GDP per capita compiled annually by the CIA World Factbook at the start of the previous IFSA year. The three categories are:

- Low-income countries (LICs): Country GDP per capita < World average GDP per capita;
- Medium-income countries (MICs): World average GDP per capita  $\leq$  Country GDP per capita < EU average GDP per capita;
- High-income countries (HICs): EU average GDP per capita < Country GDP per capita.

### 1.7.2. Ordinary members

The annual membership fees for ordinary members are as follows:

- a. LICs: 50 Euros,
- b. MICs: 100 Euros,
- c. HICs: 210 Euros.

### 1.7.3. Associate members

The annual membership fees for associate members are as follows:

- a. LICs: 5 Euros,
- b. MICs: 10 Euros,
- c. HICs: 20 Euros.

### 1.7.4. Exceptions

All LCs are offered their first IFSA year of membership for free. Upon a well-founded request, the Direction can reduce this fee for ordinary and associate members. Such a plea must be made at least 4 weeks prior to the GA.

## 1.8. Duties

IFSA Members must keep their respective Regional Representatives informed of their contact person, contact details and of major changes in their structure on a six-month basis.

## 1.9. Voting right

The right to vote in the GA of IFSA can be withdrawn from ordinary members by Direction or GA if they do not:

- a. Pay the membership fee;
- b. Respond to requests for information by the Board or Regional Representatives.

The right to vote may be reinstated at the discretion of the Direction once the ordinary member fulfils the requirements.

## 1.10. Expulsion of a member

Members are subjected to expulsion based on any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to pay their membership fees for three years;
2. Misconduct towards any member of the organisation;
3. Abusive use of the organisation's name.
4. Inactivity / no communication with the Board/RRs for three years (after unsuccessful active attempts to be reached by those)
5. Expressed desire to be expelled by the member
6. Exceptional other reason not stated above (must be approved by 100% of the Board)

Before expelling the member, an official email shall be sent to them with a warning and explanation of the reason(s) of the potential expulsion. If the member does not answer within four (4) calendar weeks or agrees with expulsion, the Board proceeds with the expulsion by issuing a formal expulsion certificate sent to the official email address of the member and stored in the membership database along with evidence of the previous step. In the case a member wishes to be expelled, they need to send a formal statement to the Board. This statement is then stored in the membership database together with the expulsion certificate that is issued in the same way.



## 2. IFSA Regions

The world is classified into Northern Africa, Southern Africa, Northern America, Latin America, Northern Europe, Southern Europe and Asia Pacific.

### 2.1. Definition of Regions

1. Northern and Southern Africa: The equator will be the boundary separating Northern and Southern Africa and countries lying on the boundary will decide which regions they prefer to belong to.
2. Asia Pacific: All countries on the geographical land of Asia and all countries on the geographical land of Oceania will belong to this region.
3. Northern and Southern Europe: The 50th parallel will be the boundary separating Northern and Southern Europe.
4. Northern America and Latin America: Northern America comprises Canada and the United States, and the rest of the Americas belong to the Latin America region.
5. Members will be consulted on their preference to join a certain region, but the final decision is made by Council.

### 2.2. Definition of Big Regions

Furthermore, regions can be grouped into big regions which consist of the following IFSA regions:

- Europe (Northern Europe + Southern Europe)
- Africa (Northern Africa + Southern Africa)
- America (Northern America + Latin America)
- Asia Pacific (Asia Pacific)

These big regions are of importance when it comes to Officials elections (see article 5.5).

## 3. IFSA Structure

### 3.1. Overview

- Board
  - Direction
    - President
    - Vice President
    - Treasurer
    - Executive Secretary
  - Council
    - External Councillor
    - Internal Councillor
    - Membership Councillor
- External Department
  - International Processes Commission (IPC)
  - Partners Commission (PAC)
- Internal Department
  - Capacity Development Commission (CDC)
  - Communication Commission (CC)
- Membership Department
  - Regional Representatives (*2 for each region*)

### 3.2. Definitions

#### 3.2.1. Department

Departments are structures consisting of Commissions or Regional Representatives and they are overseen by the appropriate Councillor.

#### 3.2.2. Commission

Commissions are executive bodies of IFSA established by the GA in any composition and for any tasks. They consist of Sub-Commissions, Commissioners and a Head of Commission who is responsible for the operation and internal coordination of the Commission.

#### 3.2.3. Sub-Commission

As a part of a Commission, Sub-Commissions focus on more specific tasks than the entire Commission. A Sub-Commission is operated by one or two Heads of Sub-Commissions and in addition to that can consist of several Commissioners.

Sub-Commissions are established at the GA and last for one IFSA Term, except for Sub-Commission described in the following sections.

### 3.2.4. Commissioner

Members of a Commission are referred to as commissioners and are not classed as IFSA Officials. Commissioners are an integral part of the (Sub)-Commission and collaborate with the Head of the Commission to fulfil their tasks and duties.

### 3.2.5. Task force

Task forces are executive bodies made for a specific task which can include Officials from different Departments and even non-Official IFSA members. The creation of task forces is subject to the approval of the board.

### 3.2.6. Partnership position

1. A partnership position involves IFSA and one of its professional partners in a joint undertaking to fulfil a specific aim. These can be full-time, paid positions that would allow IFSA to better serve its vision and mission.
2. The position is neither appointed nor elected at the GA, but rather a selection process is to be set up jointly by the IFSA Board and the professional partner, allowing them to decide on the position holder.
3. The Board, in coordination with the professional partner in question, shall write together the Terms of Reference for the partnership position. These shall be presented to the GA following the partnership position's establishment.
4. The partnership position counts as an Official for their attendance to IFSA meetings, meaning that they shall have their reserved place and do not count as a member of an Ordinary Member.

## 3.3. Board

### 3.3.1. Direction

#### 3.3.1.1. President

The President must:

1. Be the principal official representative of the Association;
2. Initiate, direct and supervise the work of the Direction;
3. Initiate and maintain contacts with external non-student organisations;
4. Initiate and maintain contacts with external student organisations.

#### 3.3.1.2. Vice President

The Vice President must:

1. Perform the duties of the President in their absence or when incapacitated. The Vice President will in this case receive official notice or authorization from the President; otherwise, they shall receive authorization from the Council;
2. Coordinate the organisation of internal activities;
3. Perform any other duties delegated by the President or the Direction;

### 3.3.1.3. Treasurer

The Treasurer must be able to communicate with the German authorities (have sufficient command of the German language).

The Treasurer must:

1. In consultation with other members of the Direction, initiate activities and contacts for raising funds for the Association;
2. Prepare for presentation to and approval of the GA an estimated budget for the IFSA year to come and a financial report on the previous IFSA year;
3. Prepare a financial report of the previous calendar year to be presented to the GA as well as at the Interim meeting. They are responsible for handling all affairs regarding the tax law and for staying in regular contact with the competent authorities.
4. Communicate with registration court and tax authorities;
5. Ensure all receipts and invoices of transaction records are copied and appropriately stored.

### 3.3.1.4. Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary must:

1. Assist and share tasks of internal and external communication in collaboration with the Vice President and the responsible member of the Council.
2. Mail, keep archives, update records and distribute information and other special tasks delegated and approved by the GA, the Direction or Council;
3. Confirm with the Treasurer that all financial transactions and any reimbursements are carried out in accordance with the decision of the Direction or Council and the terms stated in IFSA statutes.

## 3.3.2. Council

### 3.3.2.1. External Councillor

The External Councillor assists in coordinating IFSA's external partnerships and processes with the President, and oversees the International Processes Commission and Partners Commission.

### 3.3.2.2. Internal Councillor

The Internal Councillor focuses on overseeing the Communication and the Capacity Development Commissions, while ensuring there is as much communication and coordination among the Council members as possible. The Internal Councillor is responsible for ensuring that operations in the organisation are executed in accordance with the Rules of Procedures and Statutes

### 3.3.2.3. Membership Councillor

The Membership Councillor focuses on coordinating regional action and overseeing the Regional Representatives. The important task of the Membership Councillor is to represent the interests and needs of the Regions balances in the decisions taken by the Council.

## 3.4. External Department

The external department deals with external partnerships and processes, ensuring fruitful collaboration through joint activities, events and delegations. The external department also acts as a link between the International Processes Commission (IPC) and the Partnership Commission (PAC).

The Board has the right to initiate the establishment and Open Call for a new Official position in the External Department with the aim to start the communication with new partners (after an MoU or similar document has been signed), without the need to wait until the next General Assembly (GA).

### 3.4.1. International Processes Commission (IPC)

The International Processes Commission is in charge of external processes. It is managed by the Head of IPC who is responsible for the coordination and preparation of IFSA's contribution and delegations to forest-related political processes and United Nations (UN) functions. The commission is also a forum for the discussion and exchange of opinions on forest policy and conduit for forestry students to increase engagement with national policies. It consists of Sub-Commissions that support a dedicated process or a UN Agency.

### 3.4.2. Partners Commission (PAC)

The Partners Commission is in charge of coordinating and communicating with external partners. It is managed by the Head of the Partners Commission who is responsible for overseeing the Sub-Commissions, ensuring regular contact with the partner organisations and IFSA's involvement in partner events and delegations.

### 3.4.3. Duties of External Department Officials

As Officials in External Department work with partners, they have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Represent IFSA and act as a focal point to the assigned partner organisation;
2. Maintain regular contact with the IFSA President, the External Councillor and the partner organisation;
3. Work with both parties to find suitable arrangements for collaborative activities and encourage to capture those in Memorandum of Understanding;
4. Collaborate with Commissions or regions on activities relevant to partners that also involve those Commissions and/or regions;
5. Engage actively with the partner to create value-added opportunities for IFSA members;

6. Raise awareness of one organisation to the other.
7. Under no circumstances can a HoSC make a decision to engage IFSA without the approval of the IFSA President. If a HoSC makes such a decision they may be subject to dismissal.

## 3.5. Internal Department

The Internal Department comprises the Communication Commission and the Capacity Development Commission and it is responsible for operations within the organisation. This Department is managed by the Internal Councillor.

### 3.5.1. Communication Commission (CC)

The Communication Commission is in charge of coordinating IFSA's communication channels. The Head of the Communication Commission coordinates the Communication Commission which seeks to communicate all of IFSA's activities and opportunities to give the best experience for users through design, social media, and the website.

#### 3.5.1.1. Sub-Commissions

The following Sub-Commission are always part of the Communication Commission:

1. Design Sub-Commission
2. Publication Sub-Commission
3. Social Media Sub-Commission
4. Web Sub-Commission

### 3.5.2. Capacity Development Commission (CDC)

Capacity Development Commission, managed by the Head of CDC, seeks opportunities to develop the skills of IFSA Officials and members by organising training sessions and sharing other skill development opportunities, ideally alongside IFSA delegations and IFSA partner events. The Capacity Development Commission creates new learning content and opportunities for IFSA members through its Sub-Commissions.

## 3.6. Membership Department

The Membership Department acts as a link between the Regional Representatives as well as different regions. This department is managed by the Membership councillor.

### 3.6.1. Regional Representatives

The Regional Representatives (hereafter referred to as RR) are an official position in IFSA who have a broad overview of their region since they should be in the closest contact with the Local Committees from the region, being the communication link between the IFSA Officials and the regional members, and help to deal with any issues there might arise within the region.

### 3.6.1.1. Duties of Regional Representatives

The RR will perform such duties as the following to promote the aims of the Association in their region:

1. Encourage and promote activities such as seminars, forestry-related projects relevant to the region etc.;
2. Write reports on regional meetings in cooperation with the OC;
3. Assist membership candidates during application process;
4. Update member details throughout the year;
5. Coordinate engagement with regional partners and the rest of the IFSA regions.

## 4. Official positions and Commissioners

### 4.1. Eligibility

At the moment of running for an official position, the applicant should fulfil all the criteria for being an active member [\(see section 1.6\)](#). Moreover, the applicant must not have any track record of financial embezzlement or be convicted of a criminal act.

#### 4.1.1. Restrictions

1. The Board members should be from at least 2 different “big regions” as stated in Section [2.2](#) to ensure regional representation but not limit willing applicants too much.
2. It is not permitted for any individual to hold a position within Direction for more than two consecutive IFSA years
3. RRs should be members of an LC in their respective region for the majority of the IFSA term

### 4.2. Term

The active term of Officials lasts from the time of election or appointment until the next GA which is usually around one year.

### 4.3. Removal of Officials

If an official does not fulfil their mission, the Board can remove them from their position. The Board is eligible to expel an Official in the case of either:

- After 1 month of inactivity
  - While an Official is responsive but not actively involved in the department or commission duties
- After 2 weeks of unresponsiveness
  - While an Official is not being responsive or fulfilling the position's duties and responsibilities
- Unacceptable behaviour within any IFSA environment (in-person and online, local and international). This can include, but is not restricted to verbal abuse, repeated inappropriate behaviour or severe cases of discrimination. The decision whether behaviour is unacceptable is the responsibility of the Board and can (in the future) be supported by the Code of Conduct Committee.

The removal is possible only 7 days after sending a warning letter that states the reasons for the action.



## 4.4. Resignation of Officials

An official can send a resignation letter to the Board, who will grant the resignation automatically.

## 4.5. Changeover of Officials

All Official positions are required to submit a changeover document with the final Progress Report that includes:

1. Projects completed
2. Projects that should be continued
3. To-do list for starting the year
4. Suggestions for the position
5. Feedback about the position (optional)

During the changeover period, previous Officials should be available to the new position holder to ensure a proper transition. All Officials must have after the end of their term:

1. 1 month of active changeover period
2. 3 months of availability.

Upon the new Council's assessment of a successful changeover period, the Officials' Certificate will be issued 2 months after the end of the term.

For Board and HoC positions, previous Officials must fulfil an active changeover period of 3 months and availability for 6 months to ensure a proper transition.

# 5. Decision making

## 5.1. Board

### 5.1.1. Competencies

The Board has the following competencies:

- Selecting candidates for filling vacant positions;
- Making smaller changes in the RoP as they pertain to grammatical and spelling errors, formatting, and number mix-ups, without approval by the GA;
- Deciding on IFSA partnerships and approving Memorandums of Understanding;
- Taking care of administering the organisation.

The IFSA Board takes all the decisions related to the association that are not an exclusive prerogative of the GA or that cannot be postponed.

Decisions are to be documented in the IFSA Annual Report with the exception of decisions the Council views as sensitive.

### 5.1.2. Decision making procedure

The Board needs a quorum of at least four members for decisions. In the event that a decision cannot be reached in that way, the President shall have the casting vote.

### 5.1.3. Report of proceedings

Decisions of the Board have to be recorded in a book of decisions for purposes of proof. Decisions are to be documented in the IFSA Annual Report with the exception of decisions the Board views as sensitive. The same reporting procedures apply to Direction and Council decisions as well.

## 5.2. Direction

### 5.2.1. Competencies

In addition to the general Board competencies, the IFSA Direction has the following exclusive competencies:

1. Evaluate the appropriateness of proposals for the agenda according to the Statutes;
2. Approve IFSA expenses concerning the organisation which refers to all day to day decisions.

### 5.2.2. Decision making procedure

The Direction needs a quorum of at least three members of Direction for decisions. If the quorum is not reached, the vote of the Council, representing 1 vote, will decide. In the event that the Council cannot reach a decision, the President shall have the casting vote.

## 5.3. Council

The Council has the following tasks:

1. Judging the suitability of members and applicants for membership and admitting new members
2. Verifying the IFSA accounts and bookkeeping at the end of the calendar year and at the end of the Treasurer's term
3. Advising and supervising Departments

## 5.4. General Assembly

### 5.4.1. Introduction

The General Assembly (GA) is the deliberative organ of IFSA, consisting of all IFSA members. All powers not granted to other organs or bodies by IFSA's Statutes or RoP are vested in the GA.

### 5.4.2. Before the GA

Prior to the GA, the Board should prepare the following proposals for the upcoming year:

- Commissions Proposals

- Budget Proposal
- Proposal for changes in the Statues and RoP
- GA Agenda

The proposal should be shared with IFSA members at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the GA. This is to allow receiving feedback and comments from members.

IFSA members can submit new proposals up to two weeks before the GA.

In order to receive feedback from the members, the proposals need to be sent out for review, and an open call should be conducted for additional comments and suggestions. Once the proposals are finalised, they need to be vetted during the GA.

### 5.4.3. Structure of GA

#### 5.4.3.1. Composition

The GA is not public and is opened to the following members:

1. Active members
2. Consulting Members

Guests can be admitted to the GA.

#### 5.4.3.2. Eligible votes

All Ordinary members eligible to vote ([see 1.9](#)) have one vote in all decisions of the GA.

#### 5.4.3.3. Special GA Bodies

There will be two special bodies in any GA:

1. the Board of Assembly (BoA)
2. the Election Committee.

The BoA and Election Committee are nominated by the Board and then approved by the GA during the first voting. In addition to the BoA and Election Committee, the Board appoints 2 members for technical support, one in-person and one online participant which will also be approved by the GA during the first voting. The technical support ensures a good audio and video quality and oversees the consistent use of microphones during all GA sessions.

##### 5.4.3.3.1. Board of Assembly

1. The BoA is composed of a Chairperson, two Chairperson's assistants (one in person and one online), and two Keepers of the minutes.
2. The Chairperson and the Chairperson's assistant moderate the GA, facilitate the proceedings and maintain standards of proper conduct.
3. The Chairperson announces the voting results.
4. One Chairperson's assistant must be an online participant and ensure that the online audience can effectively participate in the GA.
5. The Keepers of minutes are responsible for taking the minutes of the GA.

6. The Chairperson is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the GA takes place according to the RoP and Statutes.
7. The Chairperson is ideally the President or a Direction member.

#### 5.4.3.3.2. Election Committee

1. The Election Committee is composed of 2 members
2. They manage the online voting platform, which includes:
  - a. Compiling the ballot for each voting session
  - b. Sending out the e-ballot to each of the eligible members
  - c. Calculate the election results

#### 5.4.4. Web page for GA

In order to have a fully hybrid GA there should be a website page for the GA, which should include:

1. Agenda
2. Proposed changes on Statute and RoP
3. Budget proposal
4. Commissions proposal
5. For each candidate
  - a. Motivation letter
  - b. Work plan (if applicable)
  - c. Application video
6. Recordings of sessions

#### 5.4.5. Format

The GA takes place as a fully hybrid event. This means that part of the participants are in person (at IFSS) while the others are joining online. The online participants should be given the same possibilities to engage in the GA as the in-person ones. In particular:

1. The vetting is hybrid. The candidate should be able to join online or be in person, and questions asked both online and in person.
2. The time of GA sessions should take into consideration the different time zones. The suggested time for the GA session is 13:00 UTC+0.
3. The voting takes place online, after the GA session, to enable the participation of all LCs.

#### 5.4.6. Agenda

The GA structure should follow a fixed agenda described below.

During session 1 of the GA the detailed agenda is approved, which potentially includes additional items and the time schedule for the different sessions.

Another agenda session can be added in case of exceptional circumstances that don't allow the completion of all GA-required tasks. Examples can be a tie during the last voting. In this scenario, the Board of Assembly develops the new agenda.

#### **5.4.6.1. Session 1**

The first session focuses on the ending IFSA Term and to set up the details (Agenda and GA Bodies) for the following sessions.

The agenda includes:

1. Opening of GA
2. Nomination BoA and Election Committee from IFSA Board
3. Invitation of guests to the GA from IFSA Board
4. Introduction to GA proceedings and voting systems
5. Proposal of detailed agenda from IFSA Board
6. Announce the number of Ordinary members entitled to vote
7. Presentation Minutes from the previous GA
8. Presentation of Annual Report
9. Presentation Strategy Progress Report
10. Presentation Financial report last IFSA Term and last calendar year
11. Announcement of the Official of the year and IFSA awards

#### **5.4.6.2. Voting 1**

After the session 1 the ballot includes at least the following items:

1. Board of Assembly
2. Election Committee
3. Detailed Agenda

#### **5.4.6.3. Session 2**

The second session focuses on the changes to RoP and general decisions about IFSA. The agenda includes:

1. Announce results of voting 1
2. Statute changes
3. RoP changes
4. IFSA Budget for the new IFSA Term
5. Establishment of Sub-Commissions
6. Nomination of Honorary and Consulting Members

#### **5.4.6.4. Voting 2**

After session 2 the ballot includes:

1. Statute changes
2. RoP changes
3. IFSA Budget

#### 4. Honorary and Consulting Members

##### 5.4.6.5. Session 3

Session 3 focuses on the elections. The agenda includes:

1. Announce results of voting 2
2. Vetting of the Direction
3. Vetting of the Council
4. Vetting of the Head of Commissions
5. Vetting of the IFSS OC

##### 5.4.6.6. Voting 3

After session 3 voting the ballot includes:

1. Direction
2. Council
3. Heads of Commissions
4. IFSS OC

##### 5.4.6.7. Session 4

Session 4 focuses on the new IFSA term. The agenda includes:

1. Discharge of previous Officials
2. Announce results voting 3
3. Plans next IFSA term
4. Closing the GA

#### 5.4.7. Voting

##### 5.4.7.1. Requirements

The voting at the GA happens online.

1. The voting platform should support secret voting (the administration cannot access results).
2. Each voting session should last for at least 48 hours, to ensure that every LC has the possibility to vote.

##### 5.4.7.2. Voting procedure

The default voting procedure for general GA decisions (eg. budget)

1. For each proposal there are two options: approve or reject
2. A proposal is approved if more than 50% of the votes are in favour
3. A result is valid only if the total number of voters is more than 25% of eligible voters (see the Statute)

It should always be possible to abstain from voting.

For changes in Statute and RoP, a proposal is approved if:

1. 75% votes approve the change
2. A result is valid only if the total number of voters is more than 30% of eligible voters

Voting procedures for elections and honorary member is described in [section 5.6](#)

## 5.4.8. Report of proceedings

### 5.4.8.1. Minutes

The Keepers of Minutes and are in charge of writing the Minutes of the General Assembly.

The GA minutes include:

1. Voting results: ballot text, number of votes of each option, outcome.
2. Summary of each agenda item
3. Summary of discussion happening during the GA (name and main points for each speech), except for the Vetting.
4. The documents presented at the GA (eg. Annual report, list of eligible members, budget, etc ...)
5. Timestamps of the recordings
6. Attached to the minutes, is the final version of:
  - a. Statutes
  - b. RoP
  - c. Budget
  - d. Commissions proposal

### 5.4.8.2. Recording

Every session of the GA should be live-streamed, and the recording made available immediately after the end of the sessions to all IFSA Members and sent out via email.

## 5.5. Regional Assemblies

The Regional Assembly is a decision-making body on the regional level formed by the Ordinary members of the respective region. Every region has its Regional Assembly. The Regional Assembly meets at least once a year, prior to the General Assembly. The Regional Assembly takes place in a hybrid format at the Regional Meeting of the respective region. If the Regional Meeting does not take place for any reason or is postponed after the General Assembly, the Regional Assembly takes place online prior to the General Assembly.

1. The Regional Assembly decides on the following topics:
  - a. Election of the Regional Representatives for the following term
  - b. Election of the Organising Committee of the Regional Meeting for the following term
2. The Regional Assembly is moderated by the Regional Representatives

3. The format is the same as the GA, described in [section 5.4.5](#)
4. A web page should be available, with the same structure as the GA, described in [section 5.4.4](#)
5. The voting procedure of the elections is described in [section 5.6](#)

## 5.5.1. Structure

### 5.5.1.1. Composition

The Regional Assembly is not public and is open to the following members:

1. Active members from the regions
2. Board

### 5.5.1.2. Eligible votes

All Ordinary Members of the respective region are eligible to vote and each of them have one vote in all decisions of the Regional Assembly.

## 5.5.2. Agenda

The Regional Assembly has only one session that should follow a fixed agenda described below:

1. Vetting Regional Representatives
2. Vetting Organising Committee of the Regional Meeting

This is followed by a voting with a ballot consisting of:

1. Regional Representatives
2. Organising Committee of the Regional Meeting

## 5.5.3. Report of proceedings

The Regional Representatives are responsible for the compilation of the report of proceedings and should include:

1. List of candidates
2. Details of voting
3. The results of the elections

This report should be made available to all members of the respective region and the Board no later than two weeks after the closing of the Regional Assembly.

## 5.6. Elections

All official position holders are either elected by the GA or the regions or chosen by the Board. In detail:

1. Board members and Heads of Commissions are elected by the General Assembly
2. Honorary and consulting members are elected by the General Assembly
3. Regional Representatives are elected by each Regional Assembly



4. Head of Sub-Commission are selected by the Board
5. Commissioners are appointed by the Board

### 5.6.1. Elections of Officials at GA

1. At the General Assembly the Officials for the Board and Heads of Commissions are elected in one election, therefore a total of 11 positions.
2. One candidate is allowed to run for up to two positions.
3. The direction has to be elected during the GA. In case there are no candidates for a direction position or no one is elected for a direction position the GA cannot be closed until the issue is resolved.

### 5.6.2. Elections of Regional Representatives

1. At the Regional Assembly each region elects two Regional Representatives
2. The term of the elected Regional Representatives start only after the GA

### 5.6.3. Selection of Head of Sub-Commissions

Head of Sub-Commissions are selected after the GA by the new Board, with the support of the Head of Commissions.

### 5.6.4. Appointment of Commissioners

1. Commissioners are appointed by the board following the suggestion of the relevant Head of Commission.
2. An open call can be published at the request of the Heads of Commissions for the recruitment of Commissioners on specific projects or tasks.

### 5.6.5. Application

#### 5.6.5.1. Open call

For all official positions, an open call should be published on the IFSA website at least 15 days before the election/selection.

#### 5.6.5.2. Application content

The applicants are required to submit:

1. A motivation letter
2. A motivation video
3. A one-year work plan that follows the provided template. This applies only for Board and Heads of Commission applicants
4. In case of multiple applications for the same open call the preferred position.

#### 5.6.5.3. Application deadline

Candidates for positions elected at the GA or Regional Assemblies can apply for their position at the latest 24 before the start of the session with vetting.

### 5.6.6. Vetting

For the vetting, each candidate has:

1. At least 3 minutes to summarise their application
2. At least 5 minutes of vetting time

### 5.6.7. Elections Voting Procedure

The elections voting uses a slightly customized version of the STAR voting system (more info at <https://www.starvoting.us>). This allows to better express the preference about candidates and also allows having candidates running for multiple positions in the same election and to enforce the constraint in region composition in the Board.

#### 5.6.7.1. Ballot

On the ballot for each position there are:

1. The candidate name and the scoring scale going from 0 to 5 and an abstain option, where 5 is the highest score and 0 the lowest.
2. The possibility to abstain for all candidates.

It is possible to give the same score to multiple candidates.

#### 5.6.7.2. Results

1. For each position, the ballots are processed in two steps:
  - a. Step 1. The two candidates with the highest average score are selected for the automatic run-off
  - b. Step 2. In the automatic run-off between the two best candidates, each ballot counts as one vote for the finalist. For each ballot
    - i. The finalist with the highest score in the ballot gets one preference more, regardless of the actual score of the finalists.
    - ii. In case of a draw (scores for both finalists are the same) or the voter abstained for one of the finalist, no candidate get the preference
  - c. The finalist with the highest number of preference wins
  - d. In case of a draw in the number of preferences, the candidate with the highest score wins.
2. If the average score of a candidate is less than 2, the candidate cannot be elected. If no candidate is elected for the position, there should be a subsequent open call to fill the position.

For the elections at the GA, the voting results need to take into account the regional diversity constraint and candidates running for multiple positions. In detail:

1. If all the winning candidates of the board are from the same big region, hence against the requirements stated in [section 4.1.1](#), the candidate from a different region with the smallest score difference to the first candidate for the same position

will be elected instead. This can also be stated as maximizing the overall score of the Board, while respecting the regional constraints.

If one candidate is the winner of multiple positions, they are elected for the preferred position (as stated in their application). Then the election results are again computed by excluding them from the ballot.

#### **5.6.8. Filling vacancies**

1. In case of any vacancy (eg. resignation or no candidate for a position at the GA) the Board shall make an open call to fill the vacancy.
2. The Board will select the successful candidate within 10 days of the deadline of the open call.
3. In case there are no suitable candidates, the open call will be extended into a rolling open call, with the Board selecting the first suitable candidate that applies.

## 6. Statutory meeting

### 6.1. IFSS

The International Forestry Students' Symposium (IFSS) is the annual symposium of IFSA to provide a platform for interaction and exchange of knowledge in forestry and related issues among forestry students from all over the world. It additionally serves as a platform for the official bodies of IFSA to meet and plan their activities for the year ahead.

The main purpose of the IFSS is to host the IFSA General Assembly, thus GA plenary sessions should be given priority over other activities.

#### 6.1.1. OC duties

1. As far as possible, the IFSS and the GA will be concurrently organised to save financial and other resources;
2. The IFSS will be organised by one or more ordinary member(s) elected by the GA and who has/have accepted the responsibility to host the program for a particular year;
3. The Organising Committee (hereafter referred to as OC) must accept that the symposium is being organised in the trust of IFSA and that the Direction may decide on sensitive matters such as sponsorship and invitation;
4. A preliminary program shall be submitted to the Board 12 weeks before the symposium begins to ensure sufficient GA time;
5. After the submission of the program, the Board needs to coordinate and agree with the OC on the timing of the Plenary Sessions and IFSA Workshops
6. The Direction has the power to discharge the elected OC if the proper organisation of the event cannot be guaranteed due to safety, financial reasons, or improper behaviour. In order to do so, there must be substantial proof provided, and the decision must be made no more than 6 months after the GA election took place;
7. The OC will submit a progress report including challenges to the Vice President every four months or more regularly on request by the Direction. The Direction shall endeavour to assist in addressing any challenges;
8. Any ordinary member(s) wishing to host an IFSS must make a proposal to GA at least two years in advance. Such a member will be required to make a presentation to the next GA including the proposed program and budget, participation fee and the number of participants expected. The GA, upon satisfaction, shall then decide accordingly;
9. The OC will submit a report on the symposium and a copy of the proceedings to the Board at most three months after the closure of the IFSS.
10. Two members per LC, excluding IFSA Officials, are invited to participate in the IFSS. According to the number of places available, the OC can authorise more than two members per LC in agreement with the IFSA Council;

11. Additionally, in collaborative communication with the IFSA Supporter and Alumni Network and the OC, a possibility for Alumni to participate should be found.

## 6.2. Regional Meetings

Regional Meetings are annual events organised by each official IFSA region. The aim of such an event is to strengthen the link between students from the same geographic area and to promote the development of new projects on a regional scale.

1. Each Regional Meeting shall be organised in collaboration with the RR of the Region and must be advertised through IFSA
2. Each official IFSA region is encouraged to organise an annual Regional Meeting. In such a case, at least one member from each LC of the Region must be invited
3. An IFSA workshop should be organised during the event to improve the work of IFSA in the Region and follow its development each year
4. The Regional Assembly should take place during the regional meeting

## 6.3. Interim

1. The Interim meeting is the midterm meeting of IFSA Officials during which they explain the difficulties met during the first part of their terms, try to find solutions to them and plan their upcoming work for the rest of the IFSA year. Discussions about general IFSA topics can also be facilitated;
2. A comprehensive and detailed report of the Interim meeting including all topics discussed and all decisions made shall be written and made available to ordinary and associate members;
3. Non-Official members of IFSA can attend the Interim meeting in agreement with the IFSA Direction.

## 6.4. Board meeting

1. The IFSA Board Meetings are the meetings of the Direction and Council and upon invitation other relevant IFSA members. The aims are to prepare the annual report of IFSA and the GA of the Association. Other important themes (strategy, tasks, personnel, workshops and governance etc.) may be discussed.
2. Decisions taken during the IFSA Board Meeting must be recorded in the minutes. A brief summary should be made available to all members.

## 6.5. Department meetings

1. In the event that there are enough funds, all the Heads of Sub-Commissions under a Commission (with the respective Head of Commission) and Regional Representatives, respectively, under the Department (with the respective Councillor) shall be expected to meet physically at least once in an IFSA year to discuss work plans and strategies. Such a meeting shall be scheduled at a time of the year where at least 50% of the Department members are present.

2. The Councillor shall be expected to lead the Department meeting with the help of the Heads of Commissions. In the event that the Councillor is unable to attend the meeting, the person will be requested to delegate another Board member or a Head of Commission (or Regional Representative in the case of the Membership Department that does not have Commissions) to chair the meeting;
3. The Department meetings shall be open to Commissioners (where applicable) upon a request to the Board through the Head of Commission and upon the availability of financial resources to facilitate such a Commissioner.

## 7. Finances

### 7.1. Bank Account

1. IFSA should have
  - a. a **bank** account
  - b. a PayPal account
2. The association's bank accounts will have the name "International Forestry Students's Association e.V."
3. The administration of the accounts is managed through an online portal of the respective bank service by the Treasurer.
4. Members of the Direction are signatories to the accounts and two of them at a time are competent to make cash withdrawals with general agreement by the majority of the Direction. All other business such as transactions or standing orders can be handled by the Treasurer. In case that the Treasurer is not available, a substitute from the Direction is elected by the Board.
5. Money contributed to the IFSA Development Fund shall be held in the IFSA e.V. general bank account, with funds being kept separate through bookkeeping.
6. Money contributed to the running of any Commission shall be held in the IFSA e.V. general bank account, with funds being kept separate through bookkeeping.
7. At least one member of the Council will audit the financial accounting
8. Additional financial accounts can be opened by IFSA, after the approval from the IFSA Board.

### 7.2. Annual Budget

The Annual Budget for the bank accounts should meet the requirements of the German Tax Law, and if applicable include the following categories:

1. Expenses:
  - a. General administration
  - b. Interim Fund
  - c. Fund for Regional Meetings
  - d. Fund for other meetings and activities
  - e. Development Fund;
  - f. Officials Fund
  - g. Contingency fund.
2. Income:
  - a. Ordinary membership fees
  - b. Associate membership fees
  - c. Donations and grants (if so stating what fund the money goes to)
  - d. Other income (source to be stated in the financial report).

### 7.3. Expenses

1. There are only two ways for IFSA to spend money:
  - a. Direct payment of product or services
  - b. Reimbursement of expenses made on behalf of IFSA, upon the submission of a reimbursement forms and the relevant receipts. Fund transfer before making an expense for IFSA is not allowed
2. All expenses made on behalf of IFSA must have prior written approval for a specified amount from the Direction.

### 7.4. Development Fund

1. The Development Fund is a part of the IFSA budget that is used to support both individual IFSA members in joining events and Local Committees in organising activities.
2. The money for the fund originates from the leftover Development Fund budget of the previous year as well as money which was allocated to the Fund from the overall annual budget. Further financial capacity can be gathered during fundraising activities such as an IFSA auction that takes place during the IFSS and other meetings, as well as by sponsorship grants and donations.
3. The Development Fund is an always running open call, with a deadline at the end of each month, after each batch of applications is evaluated and funded. In this way it is always possible to apply to the development fund.
4. The Applicants that will be supported by the fund are chosen based on a letter of motivation, the importance or relevance (and development potential) of the activity, the economic status of the applicant's home country and the membership status of the applicant.
5. It is only possible to apply for the Development Fund in advance of the planned activity. The applicant must ensure that the application can be reviewed in time before the start of the event that was applied for.
6. Each application is assessed by the Development Fund Committee, which is composed of 3 people, of which at least 1 Board member. The Development Fund Committee is nominated by the IFSA Board. Each application is independently reviewed by at least 2 evaluators. The score is given by each evaluator based on the listed evaluation criteria. The score given by each evaluator for each criterion is averaged to obtain a final score for the criteria
7. The final decision of fund allocation is made by the IFSA Direction, using the assessment of the application made by the Development Fund Committee
8. Precedence in allocating funds should be given to Low Income Countries



9. After the selection of the Development Fund's beneficiaries, the applicant has to fill out and sign the Development Fund agreement
10. The financial support can only be paid out as reimbursement after the event and the successful submission of both the Reimbursement form, corresponding receipts and all relevant output material