



ADOPTED CONSTITUTION

NDI IGBO READING

BERSKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

ADOPEd BY-LAWS TO GUIDE NDI IGBO READING BERKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

PREAMBLE:

NDI IGBO READING, UK is organised as a non-profit Association to foster the spirit of brotherhood, sisterhood, cooperation, and to promote greater social interaction, networking, economic prosperity and cultural heritage among the Igbo people from any of the Igbo states in Nigeria where Igbo are found, who are resident in Reading- Berkshire and its adjoining cities.

In pursuit of these goals, we the members of NDI IGBO READING, UK hereby adopt the following Bye-Laws to become binding on every member of our Association.

ARTICLE 1

1.0 NAME:

1. The Name of this organisation shall be known as **NDI IGBO READING**

ARTICLE 2

2.0 PURPOSE:

- 2.1 To promote the general welfare of members of the Association
- 2.2 To promote social and economic development of NDI IGBO Reading
- 2.3 To serve as communication link between NDI IGBO Reading, the various Igbo States, other State Governments and the people of Nigeria and its government in Nigeria.
- 2.4 To promote unity, understanding, respect and freedom of expression among members.
- 2.5 To provide members with a reliable source of information about opportunities within the various sectors in UK's economy, city, county, state and national government.
- 2.6 To provide accurate and comprehensive information for business opportunities for NDI IGBO in Reading and in Nigeria if the need arises.
- 2.7 To seek and encourage local investments and facilitate economic development within the Igbo state in Nigeria.
- 2.8 To carry out any other legal activities consistent with the goal of the Association.

ARTICLE 3

3.0 ASSOCIATION OFFICE

- 3.1 The principal office of the Association shall be in Reading-Berkshire or any other location as the General Membership from time to time may determine and as the business of the Association may require.

ARTICLE 4

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Any person who is Igbo by birth, adoption or marriage and lives in Reading or any adjoining towns.
- 4.2 Section 4.1 notwithstanding, a person must remain in good standing in order to qualify as a member as defined in section 4.3
- 4.3 Member in good standing:
A member of this Association shall be deemed to be in good standing if:
- (a) He/She is current in all annual and membership dues unless he/she qualifies as **Exempt Member** as defined in Section 4.4 of these Bylaws;
 - (b) He/She is current on all levies and financial obligations of the Association unless he/she qualifies as Exempt Member as defined in Section 4.4 of these Bylaws;
 - (c) He/she has not failed to attend three consecutive meetings of the General Membership. Non-attendance will be excused in cases of death in the family, sickness of family member or self, transfer or relocation of member outside Reading, travel outside the United Kingdom, natural disaster, or where a member is qualified as a minor under the definition of an Exempt Member in Section 4.4 of these Bylaws.
 - (d) He/she is not involved in Drug dealing, terrorism or criminal act as defined by United Kingdom law.
 - (e) He/she is not convicted by any court of competent jurisdiction in matters relating to section 4.3(d).
 - (e) If a member fails to meet any one of the criteria in Sections 4.3(a) – 4.3(e), that member shall lose all privileges as defined in Article 11, including the right to vote and/or be voted for, except that such a member can attend any meetings as an observer. To regain membership privileges, such member must clear his/herself with the law (in criminal matters). Other than criminal act, a fine of £50.00 must be paid, plus all dues and levies outstanding until such a time he or she ceases to be a member, and attend three (3) consecutive meetings. The secretary shall maintain a register of attendance which must be brought to all meetings of this Association.
- 4.4 **Exempt Member:** An Exempt Member is a member who is a minor (less than 18 years of age) or a person who is a full-time student who is less than 25 years old, provided one of his/her parents remains a Qualified Member of the Association as defined in Section 4.3 of these Bylaws. This notwithstanding, an exempt member must show proof of age to qualify as a minor, or a school record and an evidence of age to qualify as a full-time student. An Exempt Member:

- a) Shall be exempt from payment of registration fees, annual dues, levies and assessments, as may be required from time to time by the General Membership.
- b) Shall not be entitled to hold an office but may serve as a member of a Standing Committee or Ad hoc Committee if he/she is not a minor.
- c) An exempt member who is a minor shall not be entitled to vote or be voted for.

ARTICLE 5

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The structure of this organisation shall consist of the following:

The Officers (Executive council)

The General Membership

5.1 The Officers

The Officers of the Association shall comprise of:

- The Chairman
- The Vice Chairman
- The Secretary
- The Assistant Secretary
- Financial Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Officer
- The Provost

5.1.1 The Chairman

5.1.1(a) The Chairman shall be the chief executive of the Association and in this capacity, the Chairman shall be responsible to the Association and coordinate the entire activities of the Association. Chairman shall have the powers to call general and special meetings. The Chairman shall represent the Association at any level as occasion may call for. The Chairman shall preside over all meetings and all other officers shall be responsible to the Association through the Chairman.

5.1.1(b) The Chairman conducts and chairs all General Membership meetings, sets the agenda in consultation with the Exco, suspends and reopens debates, and calls for a vote as necessary.

5.1.1(c) The Chairman appoints members to act for any elected official who is absent. Such appointment terminates at the expiration of assigned duty or on the return of the elected official.

5.1.1(d) The Chairman also performs all other duties as directed by the General Membership. The Chairman reports to the General Membership.

5.1.2 The Vice Chairman

5.1.2(a) The vice Chairman shall assist the Chairman in the execution of his or her duties, preside over meetings when the Chairman is absent, and perform all the duties of

the Chairman any time the Chairman is absent.

5.1.2(b) In the event the office of the Chairman becomes vacant, or the Chairman becomes incapacitated, the Vice Chairman shall automatically assume the duties of the office of the Chairman of the Association, and a new Vice Chairman shall be elected by the General Membership under the Association's electoral procedure.

5.1.2(c) The Vice Chairman shall perform other activities as directed by the General Membership.

5.1.2(d) The Vice Chairman reports to the Chairman.

5.1.3 **The Secretary**

5.1.3(a) The Secretary records the minutes of the meetings of the Association.

5.1.3(b) The Secretary distributes the minutes of the last meeting prior to the next meeting and makes changes as directed by the General Membership.

5.1.3(c) The Secretary handles all correspondences of the Association as directed by the Chairman.

5.1.3(d) The Secretary serves as the Keeper of organisation files and records in addition to records kept by other officials.

5.1.3(e) The Secretary performs all other duties as directed by the General Membership.

5.1.3(f) The Secretary shall keep a record of all motion amendments to the By-Laws.

5.1.3(g) The secretary reports to the Chairman.

5.1.4 **The Assistant Secretary**

5.1.4(a) The Assistant Secretary shall assist the Secretary in all functions as requested by the Chairman.

5.1.4(b) The Assistant Secretary shall act as the secretary in the absence of the secretary.

5.1.4(c) The Assistant Secretary shall also perform all other duties as directed by the general Membership.

5.1.4(d) The Assistant Secretary reports to the Chairman.

5.1.5 **The Financial Secretary**

5.1.5(a) The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for collecting all Association funds, and all funds collected shall be handed to the Treasurer within a reasonable time of collection.

5.1.5(b) The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the financial records of the Association.

5.1.5(c) The Financial Secretary maintains the records of all financial transactions of the Association and prepares such records for dissemination to the General Membership.

5.1.5(d) Shall be responsible for all Association tax matters.

5.1.5(e) The Financial Secretary prepares and submits as needed all financial statements and, or, financial summaries of the Association.

5.1.5(f) The Financial Secretary performs all other duties as directed by the General Membership.

5.1.5(g) The Financial Secretary shall prepare payment voucher for all disbursements and issue receipts for all monies collected.

5.1.5(h) The Financial Secretary shall report to the Chairman.

5.1.6 **The Treasurer**

- 5.1.6(a) Shall be responsible for collecting and safekeeping of all Association funds including deposits and withdrawals to designated bank(s).
- 5.1.6(b) The Treasurer reports to the Chairman
- 5.1.6(c) The Treasurer shall also perform all other duties as directed by the General Membership.

5.1.7 The Public Relations Officer

- 5.1.7(a) Shall be responsible for publicising Association activities, both within and outside the Association in consultation with the Chairman.
- 5.1.7(b) Promotes favourable image of the Association for the media.
- 5.1.7(c) The public relations officer recruits members to the organisation.
- 5.1.7(d) Handles the publication of meetings and invitations to members and heads a group appointed to organise social events.
- 5.1.7(e) In cooperation with appointed committees, locates sites for social events.
- 5.1.7(f) Gives direction to places of social events.
- 5.1.7(g) Performs such other duties as directed by the General Membership.
- 5.1.7(h) Reports to the Chairman.

5.1.8 The Provost

- 5.1.8(a) Shall be responsible for the maintenance of peace, order and decorum in all meetings and annual conventions.
- 5.1.8(b) Reports to the Chairman.

5.2 The Executive Council (EXCO)

- 5.2.1 The management and control of affairs, business, and property of the Association shall be vested in its EXCO.
- 5.2.2 The Executive Council EXCO is made up of **all** the elected Officers, and Chairpersons of any Standing Committee (if any).
- 5.2.3 The members of the Executive Council shall elect a chairperson from the general membership to head a standing committee if need be.
- 5.2.4 The Executive Council may propose long-term goals for discussion and implementation.
- 5.2.5 The Executive Council shall have the power to call a general meeting of the Association if the Chairman fails to convene a general meeting on two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings.
- 5.2.6 The Executive Council shall have a responsibility to deal with other matters as requested by the General Membership.

5.3 The General Membership

The General Membership shall include all members of NDI IGBO READING, UK, as embodied and defined in these By-Laws.

ARTICLE 6

6.0 TENURE AND ELECTION

6.1 The Officers:

- 6.1.1 The term of each office shall be for 2 (**two**) calendar years.
- 6.1.2 No elected officer of the Association shall be elected to the same office for more than **two** consecutive terms. This notwithstanding, a member who has served two consecutive terms in an elected office shall be eligible for election after a break of one term
- 6.1.3 Only members in good standing as defined in Article 4.3 may vote and/or be voted for an office.
- 6.1.4 All officers shall be elected by simple majority of members present at regularly scheduled meetings; in case of tie vote, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote.
- 6.1.5 Voting may be by secret ballot, voice count, open write-in, raise of hands, or as may be decided by the General Membership.

6.2 The Standing Committee:

- 6.2.1 Standing committees may be formed to deal with special tasks, normally in line with special expertise and professional competence. The term of each member of a committee shall be for a maximum of two years.
- 6.2.2 Only members in good standing as defined in Article 4, Section 4.4 may vote and/or be voted for membership in a standing committee.

6.3 Election of officers and committee members shall be conducted solely at regularly scheduled and well-publicized general membership meetings.

6.4 Election of Officers and Committee members shall be by a simple majority vote of members present at regularly scheduled and well-publicized general membership meetings.

ARTICLE 7

7.0 AUDIT

- 7.1 The financial year of the Association shall be the calendar year.
- 7.2 The Executive Council shall determine the financial institution where the Association funds shall be held
- 7.3 The Executive Council may determine types of accounts to be opened in the interest of the Association as it sees fit.
- 7.4 All funds received shall be deposited within 5 working days of receipt of such funds.
- 7.5 Association funds shall in no case be mixed with personal fund.
- 7.6 All cheques in favour of the Association shall be made payable to "NDI IGBO READING, UK".
- 7.7 All cheques, wires and transfers made for withdrawal of Association funds must be signed by any two of the following officers:

The Chairman or the Vice Chairman

The Secretary
The Treasurer

7.8 **Use of Association Funds:**

- 7.9 No member shall borrow funds or enter into a credit obligation or contract on behalf of the Association in excess of **£100** without prior approval by the Executives council (Exco).
- 7.10 An annual audit of Association funds will be performed by the Audit adhoc Committee.
- 7.11 The result of the audit including its findings shall be submitted to the General Membership.
- 7.12 The penalty for misappropriation of Association funds may include suspension or outright dismissal from the Association. The General Membership shall take steps, including prosecution as it deems fit to recover part or the entire misappropriated fund.

ARTICLE 8

8.0 RESIGNATION AND VACANCY

- 8.1 Any officer or member of a standing committee may resign his or her position in writing to the General Membership through the Chairman.
- 8.2 If the position of an officer or chairperson of a committee becomes vacant by resignation or for any reason, the General Membership shall elect a member for that position.
- 8.3 Resignation shall not relieve the officer or member of a committee of accountability for wrongful act committed while in office.
- 8.4 Any officer or member of a standing committee can be relieved of his/her duty by the General Membership for wrongful act committed while in office after full investigation.

ARTICLE 9

9.0 DUES, FEES, AND ASSESSMENTS

- 9.1 All members of the Association, with the exception of **Exempt Members** as defined in Article 4, Section 4 of these Bylaws, may be subject to payment of dues, fees, assessments, and levies, as may be determined from time to time by the General Membership.
- 9.2 The registration fee shall be **£5.00** per member, or as determined annually by the General Membership.
- 9.3 Annual membership dues shall be **£60.00 (£10 per meeting)** per member, or as determined annually by the General Membership.

- 9.4 Annual dues become due and payable on the meeting day which is held 6 times a year, and become delinquent if not paid by the third meeting of the year.
- 9.5 All other assessments must be paid within the period specified by the Association.
- 9.6 A voluntary donation of any amount to the Association is acceptable.
- 9.7 All levies must be voted on and approved by a simple majority of the General Membership present at regularly scheduled meetings.
- 9.8 All payments must be receipted to the individual from whom the money is collected.
- 9.9 All fees, dues, assessments, and levies, paid to the Association are non-refundable

ARTICLE 10

10. MEETINGS

- 10.1 General meetings of the Association shall be held on the **3rd Saturdays of every two months**, which may be adjusted from time to time as may be determined by General Membership.
- 10.2 General meetings of the Association may be held in a physical location in **Berkshire** or by a teleconference by phone or any other modern technology as determined by the general meeting.
- 10.3 Except for special and emergency meetings, the Chairman or his/her designee shall provide notices for general meetings at least one week in advance.
- 10.4 General meeting time shall be determined by the general membership
- 10.5 Each general meeting will last for no more than three hours. This notwithstanding, the Chairman shall have the discretion to extend this period for no more than additional one (1) hour as may be required from time to time.
- 10.6 A single member supported by at least one other member may move for an adjournment of a general meeting. The meeting will stand adjourned if the motion is supported by a simple majority of members present.
- 10.7 Ten (ten) people, one of who must be a member of the Executive (elected officials) must be present to constitute a Quorum for general membership meetings.
- 10.8 A standard of decorum is to be governed by respect for one another. Under no circumstances should there be a use of offensive, personal, suggestive or directed words against any member. No member shall fight or engage in harmful acts or collusion with others against any member.

- 10.9 Any misconduct by any member shall be addressed by the General Membership or by an ad hoc committee appointed by the General Membership, which address may include sanctions by the General Membership.
- 10.10 The Chairman shall have the power to call for general and special meetings. The Executive Council may call for general meetings if the Chairman fails to call two consecutively scheduled general meetings.

ARTICLE 11

11.0 PRIVILEGES

- 11.1 Only members in good standing as defined in Article 4, of these By-Laws shall be entitled to the privileges of the Association as enumerated below.
- 11.2 **Marriage:** The sum of **£150.00** shall be donated to any newly wedded couple. The General Membership shall have the right to adjust the amount from time to time as it may see fit. The member who is preparing for his/her wedding must inform the association in person in a scheduled meeting with a token (e.g. hot drink or kola) in line with Igbo tradition and custom before attention will be paid to the invitation.

If requested by a wedding member, members shall aid in wedding preparations.

- 11.3 **Childbirth:** The sum of **£100.00** shall be donated to the parent-member(s) on each occasion. The parent member must inform the association in person in a scheduled meeting with a token (e.g. hot drink or kola) in line with Igbo tradition and custom before the birth will be acknowledged by the association.

The General membership shall have the right to adjust the amount from time to time as it may see fit.

The association shall appoint 2 to 3 persons to visit the member who had a new baby on behalf of the association. Members are also encouraged to visit on their own and show solidarity.

- 11.4 **Hospitalisation:** The Chairman shall delegate for a heart-warming gift, not exceeding the sum of **£20.00** in cost, to be delivered to a member who is hospitalised for a continuous period of one week or more. The General membership shall have the right to adjust the amount from time to time as it may see fit.

- 11.4.1 The Chairman shall delegate for an official hospital visit of the hospitalised member by a member of the Association.

- 11.4.2 Where practical, every member is encouraged to visit the hospitalised member.

- 11.5 **Deceased Member:** The sum of **£500.00** (Five hundred pounds) shall be donated to the next of kin or immediate family of a deceased member who does not qualify as Exempt Member as defined in Article 4, Section 4; and who is in good standing as described in

Article 4 section 3 of these By-laws. In the tradition of NDI IGBO, the Chairman shall summon the gathering of the Association within the jurisdiction of the deceased member at the residence of the deceased member or next of kin. The immediate family member(s) of the deceased member will decide what to do with the body of the deceased member and not the Association.

- 11.6 **Death of Exempt Member and or Biological Child Of Any Member:** The sum of **£200.00** (two hundred pounds) shall be donated to the parents of a deceased Exempt Member. In the tradition of NDI IGBO, the Chairman shall summon the gathering Association within the jurisdiction of the deceased exempt member at the residence of the deceased exempt member's parents or next of kin. The immediate family member(s) of the deceased exempt member will decide what to do with the body of the deceased exempt member and not the Association.
- The Chairman shall call for an emergency meeting of the Association upon the death of any member or member's child.
- 11.7 **The Death Of A Member's Biological Parent:** The sum of **£200.00** (two hundred pounds) shall be donated to the member who has lost a biological parent if the member is in good standing as described in Article 4.3. Association and members shall pay condolence visit or send a condolence message to the bereaved member.
- 11.8 The Association shall determine if further assistance is necessary and appropriate in case of death of a member, death of a member's child. In case additional funds are required, members may be required to contribute additional funds to assist bereaved family members.
- 11.9 **Dispute among members:** Members are encouraged to resolve their disputes among family circles before contacting the organisation.
- 11.10 The Association shall accept settling disputes among members only and if such members agree to accept/or abide by the decision of the Association.
- 11.11 Any dispute accepted by the Association shall be referred to the Executive Council for resolution.
- 11.12 Members are encouraged to resolve their disputes without seeking a court action.
- 11.13 **Patronization Program:** Members are encouraged to patronise other members' businesses and services.
- 11.14. **Child baptism/dedication:** Members are encouraged to attend other member's child dedication/baptism or any other social event when invited.

ARTICLE 12

12. INDEMNIFICATION

Each of the officers and members of committees who renders services for the Association shall be, and is hereby, indemnified and held harmless by the Association from and against any and all liabilities, claims, losses, demands, and expenses whatsoever arising out of or by reason of any negligent or wrongful acts or misconduct committed by him/her, or by any person under his/her direct authority, supervision, and control, while rendering services on behalf of the Association, provided, however, the Association shall not be so liable with respect to any matter in which such person has been guilty of wilful misconduct, fraud or material misrepresentation to the Association, its Executive Council and any other person.

ARTICLE 15

13.0 AMENDMENTS OF THESE BY-LAWS

- 13.1 The General Membership shall have the exclusive powers to amend, add, alter, or repeal these By-laws. The General Membership by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present at any regularly scheduled general membership meeting at which a quorum is present, may alter, amend, or repeal any section or clause of these Bylaws, and any Bylaw or alteration, amendment, or repeal so made may be further amended, altered, or repealed by the General Membership.
- 13.2 Amendment, alteration, repeal or addition to these Bylaws shall not be effective without:
- a. submission of a motion at a regularly scheduled general meeting stating the section or clause of these Bylaws to be amended, altered, repealed, or an addition to be made to these By-Laws;
 - b. publication of the motion so submitted for at least one month in advance of the date of discussion and adoption of the proposed amendment, alteration, repeal, or addition to these Bylaws; and
 - c. adoption of the proposed amendment, alteration, repeal, or addition to these Bylaws by a vote of two-third (2/3) of the majority of members present at a regularly scheduled general membership meeting.

THESE BY-LAWS ARE HEREBY APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 20th MAY 2017 BY THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP AS THE LAWS OF NDI IGBO READING, UK.

Signed by: _____
Organizing Member

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