

DPI By-Laws

According to the DPI constitution, the by-laws are to be more detailed rules and regulations on the procedures to be followed in the organization. It is the responsibility of the World Council to adopt and amend the by laws. In keeping with this, the by laws will provide clarification and direction on areas only generally described in the constitution as well as provide additional policy and procedural direction. More detailed documents cover certain areas like personnel policy and rules of procedure.

Purpose of Disabled Peoples' International

The overall philosophy of DPI is spelled out clearly in the constitution, manifesto, Singapore declaration, and other documents. The by laws provide a clear mission statement.

The purpose of DPI is to promote the human rights of disabled people through full participation, equalization of opportunity, and development.

Membership

While the national assembly structures and organizational models will vary from country to country the following principles apply to all:

- Must be cross-disability, that is provide the opportunity for all disabled people to participate.
- Must provide an organizational framework that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, all organizations of disabled persons supporting the philosophy and purpose of DPI.
- Are not limited to countries that are members of the United Nations. In any country, an organization of disabled persons promoting the rights of disabled persons can qualify for membership.
- Must be national in scope by constitution. If it is not national it must have an action plan for organizational development and a procedure for grassroots participation for all areas of the country where the organization is being developed.
- Must make a report regarding its qualification for membership to the DPI headquarters prior to each world assembly. A forum to be developed by the office.

Membership Applications

Membership Applications shall be submitted to the regional office or chairperson and only after decision by the regional executive or council be submitted to the World Council for adoption. Applications must include a copy of the constitution, a list of governing body members, and a description of adherence to the membership principles and purpose of DPI. Each region must submit an updated list of addresses for its National Assemblies to the head office annually.

Membership Review and Disciplinary Procedures

The overall intention would be to assist a national assembly to fulfill the principles of membership rather than to find reasons for exclusion. If a national assembly does not abide by the constitution and by-laws, the World Council shall appoint a committee of three people, including regional representation, to review their membership based on the above principles. Every effort will be made to assist the organization to develop an action plan with help from the development program. In the event this is not successful a recommendation for disciplinary action or expulsion may be made at the next World Council meeting.

Models of good practice, that is National Assemblies that have been effective should be shared at the regional and national levels through training programs, newsletters, and national reports to encourage and assist other National Assemblies to implement these principles.

Job Description of National Assembly Representative

- To provide leadership to their national assembly delegation at a regional or world assembly.
- To be well informed on issues of concern to the national assembly and be in good standing with the national assembly.
- If elected, to carry out their responsibilities on the regional and/or world assembly
- To ensure that the national assembly is kept informed of regional and/or World Council activities
- To ensure consultation with their national assembly concerning issues to be addressed at the regional and/or World Council
- To provide leadership in their country, to promote DPI to members of the national assembly, to assist governments

on issues of domestic and foreign policy, and work with development agencies

- To assist with fundraising initiatives for the national assembly to participate in DPI activities
- To make representation to DPI a priority for time commitment

World Council

World Council members are elected for a four year term. The authority of the World Council is clearly defined in article 11 of the constitution. The decision making process is based on a consensus model. Where this is not possible rules and procedures were adopted in 1987 (see document Rules and Procedures).

World Council members should provide models of good leadership by consulting regional structures, reporting on World Council activities, ensuring effective communication with the regions, being informed on international disability issues, and carrying out their duties as assigned at the World Assembly.

Disciplinary Procedure of World Council Members

Disciplinary measures shall be initiated only if there is evidence of misconduct that is clearly in conflict with DPI philosophy, policy, or procedure. Action will also be taken if a World Council member is found to have misappropriated funds.

The World Council shall establish a disciplinary committee of three people including regional representation. The committee will receive input from the national assembly and the regional council. The committee will make recommendations for disciplinary action at the next World Council meeting.

Responsibilities of Executive Officers

Chairperson

To provide effective leadership for all of DPI by ensuring the democratic process of decision making and implementing the vision established at the World Assembly. To ensure representation at meetings of the United Nations or other international organizations. To chair meetings of the World Council and the executive, as well as providing leadership to these bodies in carrying out their work.

Deputy Chairperson (1)

To be responsible for the promotion of human rights for disabled people all over the world. To perform the duties of Chairperson when necessary.

Deputy Chairperson (2)

To be responsible for the development functions in the organization, including the development program, inclusion of under-represented groups, and the effective functioning of DPI committees.

Secretary

To assist in planning meetings and developing agenda items. To ensure that minutes are kept and distributed. To report on personnel matters to the executive and act as a focal point for staff grievances.

Treasurer

To be responsible for financial reports to the executive and the World Council. Ensure effective financial procedures are established and implemented. Oversee the development of fundraising strategies.

Information Officer

This person would be selected from the regional representatives by the World Council. This person would be responsible for ensuring effective communication policies and procedures are established and implemented. Other responsibilities include overseeing the newsletter, implementing policies concerning alternate media, translation, and interpretation.

Past Chairperson

In order to facilitate continuity the past chairperson will continue to be a member of the executive.

Regional Representatives

Are responsible for ensuring effective communication between the executive (World Council) and the regions, explain and promote the decisions of the World Council and the executive at the regional level. They also ensure regional input in the decision making process.

Election Procedures

In accordance with article 13 of the constitution, the World Assembly shall elect a nominations committee with one representative from each region to serve a four-year term. To prepare for the first world assembly the executive officers will fulfill this function. A list of the World Council as elected by each region should be printed in Disability International three months before each World Assembly, so that National Assemblies can send their recommendations to the nominating committee to assist them in making their report to the World Council.

DPI Committees

The purpose of appointing a committee is to carry out the work of the World Council. DPI standing committees will only be established where a clear rationale, mandate, structure, action plan, and financial plan has been put in place. According to the constitution this is the responsibility of the World Council Committee members, and should be selected for their expertise not on the basis of representation. The World Council may seek advice from the regions; but ultimately it is their responsibility to appoint committee members.

The World Council may appoint a task force or working group to carry out specific activities or prepare recommendations for a standing committee. They shall report at the next World Council meeting and be dissolved at that time.

The World Council may recommend to the World Assembly that a commission be established in specific areas identified by the World Council. A commission would have more responsibility for management than a committee. All commissions, task forces and committees are accountable to the World Council and the executive between meetings of the World Council. All committees and commissions shall be reviewed for their relevance and need every four years at the world assembly.

Criteria for establishing a task force

1. To carry out a specific time-limited task that requires specialized expertise or knowledge;
2. Availability of funds to carry out their work or an action plan to acquire funds;
3. Consist of no more than 3-5 people. They may consult with other people when carrying out their work;
4. Members of a task force should be selected on the basis of expertise, commitment, availability of time;
5. The chairperson of a task force is responsible for ensuring work is finished on time.

Criteria for Establishing a Standing Committee

1. Where a task force has provided a rationale for ongoing structure;
2. To address issues of an ongoing nature that require more attention than can be provided by the executive officers;
3. To bring in expertise on certain ongoing issues;
4. A clear feasibility plan has been developed for the committee to carry out its work;
5. There shall be no more than seven members on any committee. A broader network may be established for participation and information sharing, but for the decision making process the committee shall be limited to seven people.

Criteria for Establishing Commissions

1. To deal with issues that require long term commitment and are of a technical nature;
2. To deal with issues that require funding which is difficult to acquire through existing structures;
3. To provide a mechanism for collaboration with other organizations such as the human rights model;
4. All commissions are responsible for raising their own funding. Commissions shall be accountable to the World Council.

Staffing

1. The overall role of staff is to carry out the directives of the World Council. The World Council is responsible for hiring the executive director and setting the job description;
2. The executive director is responsible for hiring other staff in accordance with job descriptions and budgetary guidelines adopted by the World Council or the executive officers;
3. The executive director shall be a person with a disability;
4. The executive director and regional directors shall be hired on a term position of no more than four years. The term will automatically terminate at that time, but may be renewed for additional terms;
5. The management style of DPI offices shall reflect the philosophy of participation but must also ensure efficient management;

6. The executive director and the regional counterparts manage the offices and staff, but they do not represent the organization;
7. The executive director may be fired if there is evidence of mismanagement of funds or if they are unable to effectively manage the office or its staff. If performance criteria previously established are not met, and if they become involved in excessive politicking with World Council members;
8. Regional staff shall generally abide by the personnel policies and procedures established by the World Council except in the areas where the regional council has established different procedures. These changes shall be reported to the World Council.

Financial and Budgetary Matters

(for additional information please refer to the DPI personnel policy)

According to the constitution each national assembly is responsible to raise funds for their participation in DPI activities. Budgetary priorities are the work of the executive officers, DPI headquarters staff, and program activities established by the World Council

Each region is responsible for acquiring and managing its own funds. When assistance is provided to the regions it shall be in keeping with clearly established procedures and a written agreement outlining project activities and reporting procedures.

Volunteers working on behalf of DPI shall be reimbursed for their costs. Per diem rates are to be set by the executive officers.