

# International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) Statutes

Updated and approved in Kyoto, Japan  
September 11, 1993

Reviewers Please Note: All items appearing within the body of the text that are underlined are to be deleted. Those items (other than headers like **1. Article 1** and **Name**) that appear in **boldface type** are to be **added**.

## 1. ARTICLE 1

### Name

#### 1.1. *The Name of the Association*

The name of the Association shall be International Medical Informatics Association (hereafter IMIA).

#### 1.2. *Legal Form and Location*

IMIA shall be organized under Swiss law in the form of an association, as defined in the Swiss Civil Code, article 60.

The seat of the association shall be located in the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland. Its first address shall be in the premises of the International Federation for Information Processing (hereafter IFIP) at 16, Place Longemalle, 1204 Geneva.

#### 1.3. *Relation with IFIP*

IFIP is an association organized under Swiss law located in Geneva. Before its formal constitution, IMIA was active as a Special Interest Group of IFIP.

In agreement with IFIP, IMIA adopts the present Statutes and shall continue to cooperate with IFIP as an Affiliate Member of IFIP.

#### 1.4. *Objectives and Purposes*

Since 1978, a group of professionals has been active within the framework of IFIP and under the name of IMIA, with the objective of serving the specific

needs of the application of information technology in the field of health care and biomedical research.

IMIA, under the form of a Swiss Association shall continue to pursue this activity. In particular, the basic aims of IMIA shall be:

- a) to promote informatics in health care and biomedical research;
- b) to advance international cooperation;
- c) to stimulate research, development and routine application;
- d) **to move informatics from theory into practice in a full range of settings, from physician's office to acute and long term care;**
- e) to further the dissemination and exchange of knowledge, information and technology;
- f) to promote education and responsible behavior;
- g) to seek and maintain formal channels of communication with any relevant professional or governmental organization.

1.5. *Language*

English shall be IMIA's working language.

2. **ARTICLE 2**

**Membership**

2.1. *National IMIA Members*

In each country, one society or a group of societies or an appropriate body which is representative of the national activities within the field of medical informatics, may become the National Member.

The legal status of a National Member shall allow its representative to vote on all matters of concern to IMIA and the National Member; proxies shall not be restricted in the execution of decisions within IMIA.

When no appropriate body can be identified in a country, and that country is represented in IFIP by a Full Member, then the IFIP Full Member of that country upon request of IMIA may assume all responsibilities of an IMIA National Member, until such time that an appropriate body in that country is identified and is admitted as a National Member.

2.2. *Regional IMIA Members*

Where a functional Regional Group exists, it may be accepted by the IMIA General Assembly as a Regional Member.

The legal status of a Regional Member shall allow its is allowed to elect a representative to act as a Liaison Officer to the IMIA Board. vote on all matters of concern to IMIA and the Regional Member shall not be restricted in the execution of decisions within IMIA.

2.3. *Associate Members*

The Chairpersons of Special Interest Groups, Scientific or Technical Committees or Working Groups shall be Associate Members for the duration of their terms of office as chairpersons.

2.4. *Affiliate IMIA Members*

Any international organization, professional or governmental, professionally engaged within the field covered by IMIA or closely related fields, may become an Affiliate Member.

2.5. *Honorary Fellows*

Honorary fellows are persons who have earned exceptional merit in furthering the aims and interests of the IMIA. Honorary fellowship is conferred for life.

2.6. *Institutional Members*

Any institution, company, hospital or other organization working in the field covered by IMIA or closely related fields may become an Institutional Member.

3. **ARTICLE 3**

**Admission and Termination of Membership**

3.1. *Admission*

The General Assembly shall decide on the admission of National Members, Affiliate Members, **Honorary Fellows** and Institutional Members upon recommendation of the Admissions Committee. All admissions must be accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the IMIA General Assembly.

### 3.2. *Observers*

Representatives from countries which are not Members of IMIA, and who are engaged in or planning significant medical informatics activities, may, by a majority vote of the General Assembly, be accepted as Observers at IMIA meetings for a maximum period of three years.

### 3.3. *Application for Membership from a Country Already Represented*

If an application is received from a country already represented by a Full Member, the Admissions Committee shall attempt to solve the difficulties by contacting the organizations involved. If the negotiations are not successful, the Committee shall prepare a report to the General Assembly recommending one of the following alternatives:

- a) to reject the new application,
- b) to propose to the General Assembly that the applying organization is more representative than the existing Full Member,
- c) to suggest to the organization a mechanism for merging their interests and then to re-examine the matter one year later.

The General Assembly shall then decide on the Membership arrangements for the country concerned.

### 3.4. *Corresponding IMIA Members*

If a country has an appropriate body eligible for National IMIA Membership, it may apply for Corresponding IMIA Membership for the time of the application process. It may retain this name until approval of the National Membership, or when this fails, up to a maximum period of three years.

### 3.5. *Correspondents*

Individuals acting residing in a country that does not have an appropriate body eligible for National IMIA Membership may apply to become a Correspondent for a maximum period of three years.

### 3.6. *Termination*

A Member may withdraw from IMIA at the end of any calendar year, provided he gives timely notice in writing to the President of the Board. If a Member has not paid the fees for the two preceding years, the question of

terminating the Membership has to be brought to the General Assembly by the Board.

#### 4. ARTICLE 4

##### 4.1. *Operation*

The governing and advisory bodies of the IMIA shall be:

- a) the General Assembly (GA),
- b) the IMIA Board,
- c) the Executive Committee,
- d) Standing and Ad Hoc Advisory Committees.

The scientific activities of IMIA will be channelled through:

- a) Special Interest Groups,
- b) Scientific and Technical Committees,
- c) Working Groups.

IMIA does not take into any account the political **or** social or economic aspects of its Member organizations, because IMIA is totally dedicated to the transfer of scientific and technical information and experience.

##### 4.2. *The General Assembly*

###### 4.2.1. *Composition*

The General Assembly shall be composed of one representative or an alternate from each National and Regional Member, the Affiliate and Associate Members, the Honorary Fellows, the Institutional Members and a representative of IFIP.

The President has the right to appoint a permanent alternate during his term of office.

Members of the IMIA General Assembly should be encouraged to appoint a representative for a period of three years.

###### 4.2.2. *Voting Rights*

Only National and Regional Members of IMIA have full voting rights in the

General Assembly and they have only one vote, irrespective of the number of representatives. Only Members who have paid the fees up to the preceding year have the right to vote.

**All other Members have the voting rights on all matters except when it comes to decisions that the General Assembly cannot delegate to the Board as stated in section 4.2.4. of these Statutes.**

The General Assembly shall be able to conduct business if at least half of the National Members are present or represented by proxy. **On a particular issue addressed by the General Assembly, a National Member may waive his voting right; however, the abstention shall be noted and the National Member shall be counted for the quorum.**

#### 4.2.3. *Quorum*

If a quorum is not achieved, the General Assembly shall be convened **again** within six months and only after such a time that all Members can be notified at least one month in advance. This General Assembly shall operate without any quorum restriction. In the meantime, the Board shall conduct the business of the Association.

Decisions of the General Assembly shall be taken by a simple majority of those Members present or represented by proxy who have the right to vote, unless provided otherwise in these Statutes.

In a case where a two-thirds majority of all National Members is required and there are less than two-thirds of those Members present or represented by proxy, the General Assembly shall be convened within six months for the same purpose, and at this meeting a majority of two-thirds of the National Members present or represented by proxy shall be required. Such a General Assembly shall be convened only after a time such that all Members can be notified at least a month in advance. This notification shall state precisely the questions at issue to which the special vote conditions, specified above, shall be applicable.

#### 4.2.4. *Authority*

Within IMIA, the General Assembly shall be the supreme authority. The General Assembly shall determine fundamental policy, adopt the program of activity, hear and approve reports of any subordinate body it may have established, decide on admission and exclusion of Members, elect Officers and

Trustees, adopt the budget, review the expenditures, accept the audit reports and adopt official documents.

Of these responsibilities, the following cannot be delegated to the Board:

- a) changes of the IMIA statutes,
- b) the admission and exclusion of Members,
- c) the election of Officers,
- d) the adoption of the budget.

The General Assembly is responsible for the implementation of the program of IMIA.

The General Assembly may create Advisory Committees, Scientific and Technical Committees, Special Interest Groups and Working Groups.

#### 4.2.5. *Meetings*

The General Assembly shall meet at least once a year.

The General Assembly shall decide on the dates and places of its meetings. Furthermore, the General Assembly may be convened at any time if the President deems it necessary. It may also be convened at the request of the Board or the Executive Committee or of at least one-fifth of the National Members who are eligible to vote. In these cases, the meeting shall be convened within six months.

#### 4.2.6. *Notice of the Meeting*

The secretary shall give not less than three months' notice of any General Assembly meeting, enclosing a statement of the purposes of the meeting. A Member may have a matter included on the agenda for a general meeting provided the request is received in writing five months in advance of the meeting and has the support of at least one other **National Member**.

#### 4.2.7. *Waiver of Notice*

No business other than that included in the agenda for the meeting shall be transacted at any such meeting except if by a two-thirds majority vote, the meeting waives this restriction.

#### 4.2.8. *Minutes of the General Assembly*

The minutes of one meeting of the General Assembly as submitted by the secretary shall be approved by the General Assembly at its next meeting.

## 5. ARTICLE 5

### 5.1. *Board*

#### 5.1.1. *Composition*

The Board shall be composed of the President (who will act as chairman), the elected Vice-President, the President-Elect, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Trustees, and the Past-President during the year following the end of his/her term. All shall be elected by the General Assembly from among its National Members. There shall be **five Vice-Presidents each one responsible for one specific part of IMIA activities.** at least one and not more than five Trustees.

In addition, each Regional Member has the right to nominate a Vice-President Liaison Officer to the Board.

One year before the end of term for the President, the new President can be elected and during that year have the title President Elect. The outgoing President will be Member of the Board for one year **after the term of office** and the title will be Past-President.

#### 5.1.2. *Term of the Members of the Board*

The term of office shall be three years. If a person who was elected to the Board resigns or dies while in office, the General Assembly may elect a successor for the unexpired portion of the term.

Board Members can be discharged for a misdemeanor by a two-thirds majority vote of National and Regional Members of the General Assembly present or represented by proxy.

A Board Member who has not attended two consecutive Board Meetings may be deemed to have resigned and a successor may be elected.

#### 5.1.3. *Authority*

The authority of the Board shall be to administer and to make decisions for IMIA, with the exception of those decisions specially reserved for the General Assembly as defined in 4.2.4. The Board will review and revise program and

budget, if needed, between General Assembly meetings. The General Assembly Meeting may delegate to the Board a decision which normally falls within the competence of the General Assembly except for those decisions defined in 4.2.4.

5.1.4. *Quorum and Majority*

The Board shall be able to conduct business if at least half of its Members are present. Decisions of the Board shall be made by a simple majority of the Members present. The chairman has an additional vote which may be used to break a tie vote.

5.1.5. *Meetings*

The Board shall decide on the dates and places of its meetings. It may convene at any time the President deems necessary; it shall also convene within two months, following the request of a majority of its Members.

5.1.6. *Minutes*

**The Board will approve the minutes of each Board meeting at its next Board meeting.**

5.2. *Executive Committee*

5.2.1. *Composition and Election*

The President, the elected Vice-President, **the President-Elect**, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the outgoing President **the Immediate Past-President** during the year following the end of his term shall form the Executive Committee of IMIA. These persons shall be the Officers of IMIA.

The term of an Officer is three years. An Officer may not be elected to the identical office for more than two consecutive terms. Incomplete terms shall not count.

If an Officer resigns or dies while in office, a successor shall be elected for the unexpired portion of the term. In case of emergency, the Board shall be entitled to elect a temporary successor for the period until the next General Assembly **meets again**.

A Member of the Executive Committee can be discharged for misdemeanor

by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly Members present or represented by proxy.

5.2.2. *Authority*

The Executive Committee conducts the day-to-day operations of IMIA.

The President shall convene and conduct the General Assembly, the Board and the Executive Committee. During the absence or incapacity of the President, the elected Vice-President **the President-Elect** shall act in his stead in all matters. In the case that he too is absent, the Officer longest in office shall act in his stead.

5.2.3. *Meetings*

The Executive Committee shall decide on the dates and places of its meetings. The Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings shall be approved by the President **Executive Committee**.

5.3. *Standing and Ad Hoc Advisory Committees*

These Committees advise the General Assembly in policy matters that require detailed analysis. The term of office of Committee Members is not more than three years. These Committees are composed of **one to two or three** Members elected from the National Membership.

5.4. *Special Interest Groups*

A Special Interest Group (SIG) is established by the General Assembly upon the submission of a relevant proposal containing: scope, aims and composition.

A Special Interest Group differs from a Working Group in the sense that it is not required to achieve a concrete goal within a restricted period of time. Rather, it is the expression of the continuous interest of IMIA in certain areas or activities falling within the scope of IMIA. In selecting Members both expertise and international distribution shall be considered. The scope of a Special Interest Group shall be attached to these Statutes, **in the form of specific Bylaws for the SIG.**

The Chairman of a Special Interest Group is elected by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Board. The Members of a Special Interest

Group are appointed by the IMIA President upon recommendation of the National Members or by the Special Interest Group Chairman, who shall **in advance** consult the National IMIA Representative for the appropriate country.

Membership is restricted to those persons who are from a Member country of IMIA.

The Chairman of a Special Interest Group may designate a Vice-Chairman (SIG/VC) and a Secretary from the Committee Membership, **with the approval of the SIG Membership**. The term of office of all Committee Officers shall be three years and may be renewed only once **will be reviewed by the General Assembly every three years**.

The Special Interest Group can organize the work in "internal" Working Groups (SIG/WG). The Chairman of a SIG Working Group is appointed by the SIG Chairman.

Termination of a Special Interest Group can be made only by the General Assembly after notice from a national representative, **the Chairman of the SIG** or the IMIA Board.

#### 5.5. *Working Groups*

A Working Group is established by the General Assembly upon the submission of the proposed scope of the Working Group and shall deliver whatever result is decided at a specific time. A Working Group consists of experts selected and assigned, without consideration of nationality, to work in a specified area.

The Chairman of a Working Group is elected by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Executive Committee.

The term of office of the Chairman is three years.

The term of office for the Members is three years but can be renewed several times.

**The term of office of the Chairman and the Members is three years but can be renewed several times.**

The Members of a Working Group are appointed by the IMIA President

upon recommendation of the National Members and the Working Group Chairman.

Membership is not restricted to IMIA Member countries.

The Chairman of the Working Group may designate a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary with the approval of the Working Group Membership. The term of a Working Group shall be three years but may be renewed a further year.

The Chairman of the Working Group shall report to the General Assembly once a year and to the Board or the Executive Committee once a year between the General Assembly meetings. If no report has been delivered in one calendar year the Working Group shall automatically be dissolved.

Publication by a Working Group may be made only after authorization of the Publications Committee. After approval the publication becomes an official IMIA publication.

## 6. **ARTICLE 6**

### **Finances**

The Association shall be financed by dues from National, Corresponding and Institutional Members, by royalties from publications, interest on funds, contributions and surpluses from events such as congresses, conferences and symposia, including funds arising from activities of subordinate bodies. The General Assembly shall decide on the scale of annual dues for National, Corresponding and Institutional Members. It may accept donations and subsidies.

The IMIA Treasurer on behalf of the Executive Committee submits the annual budget to the IMIA General Assembly, having collected and reviewed the budgets of all subordinate bodies. The General Assembly adopts the budget for the next year with a simple majority vote of all National Members present or represented by proxy.

In case of rejection of an IMIA budget, the IMIA General Assembly shall decide upon limits within which the Treasurer can draw up a revised budget which is to be adopted at the subsequent IMIA Board meeting. When IMIA has to be operated temporarily without an approved budget, the regular expenditures may be continued, but no new commitments shall be made unless explicit approval of the IMIA General Assembly has been obtained.

The IMIA books shall be audited **once a year** by an Audit Committee, and a **report given to the General Assembly**.

The Treasurer reviews for the IMIA Board the financial outcome of the preceding year as comprehensively as possible. His subsequent report to the General Assembly is to be accompanied by a statement of the Audit Committee.

Each National Member pays annual dues in the currency in which the IMIA books are kept. The amounts to be paid by each Member and the procedure of payment is determined by the General Assembly and may be revised annually.

If the annual dues are increased by more than 80%, every Member has the right to immediately withdraw its Membership.

## 7. **ARTICLE 7**

### **Commitments**

Any document committing IMIA, except in the case of special proxies, shall be signed by a Member of the Executive Committee who does not have to justify his position of authority.

**All legal actions, whether IMIA is the plaintiff or the defendant, shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee, represented by the President or one of its Members designated for this purpose.**

## 8. **ARTICLE 8**

### **Statutes and Amendments**

All proposals for modification of these Statutes or dissolution of the Association must be submitted by at least one National Member. Any such proposal shall be brought to the notice of all Members of the Association at least one month in advance of **the meeting of** the General Assembly at which it will be discussed. Approval of such proposals shall require a two-thirds majority of all National Members. In the case of dissolution, the Association shall decide by the same majority on the method of liquidation of the Association and the disposal of its assets.

**In case of the dissolution of the Association, its assets will be transferred to**

**an Institution pursuing the same basic aims. In no case will those assets be returned to Members or to Donees of the Association, and in no case will they be utilised wholly, in part, or in any way to the financial gain of the Association.**

These rules shall also apply to proposals for modification of Articles in the Statutes which provide that a decision of the General Assembly requires a qualified **two-thirds** majority vote.