



INTERNATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR
ANIMAL
ASSISTED
THERAPY

Constitution of the "International Society for Animal Assisted Therapy"

c/o Secretariat ISAAT

General remarks:

- (1) The logo of the Society shall be protected by copyright.
- (2) Electronic transmissions (e-mails, fax etc.) are also considered „written“ for the purposes of this Constitution.
- (3) The official language of Constitution, Bylaws, correspondence and negotiations shall be English.

Article 1 - Name, headquarters, fields of activity and legal form of the Society

- (1) The name of the Society shall be: International Society for Animal Assisted Therapy (herein referred to as ISAAT), a Society for recognition and advancement of the therapeutic, pedagogical and salutogenetic effects of human-animal interactions and relationships.
- (2) The office of the Society is located at the secretariat. For taxation and registration purposes the headquarters of the Society may be determined by the board to be any city/country from which a board member comes. The Society's activities are carried out globally as well as regionally by its regional divisions (Europe, North and South America, Asia and Pacific Rim, Middle East and Africa)
- (3) The Society shall strive to be recognized as a non-profit organization, according to fiscal law in the country of its headquarters. Members shall receive no payment from the funds of the Society.

Article 2 - Objectives of the Society

The objectives of the Society are:

1. Quality control of institutions (public and private) and societies which offer continuing education/training in animal-assisted therapy, animal-assisted pedagogy and animal-assisted activities (in German language: Fördermassnahmen) through approval.
 2. To promote official recognition of
 - a) Animal assisted therapy as a viable therapeutic intervention
 - b) Animal assisted pedagogy as a valuable method, and
 - c) Animal assisted activities as valuable special methods, especially with regard to salutogenesis
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3. To promote official recognition of persons who have completed such continuing education/training from accredited institutions and societies either as animal assisted therapists/counsellors, animal assisted pedagogues or specialists in animal assisted activities (in German language: Fachpersonen für tiergestützte Fördermassnahmen).
4. The support of all activities, which contribute to reaching the objectives of the Society.

Article 3 – Activities to fulfill the objectives of the Society

The objectives of the Society shall be fulfilled by non-materialistic and materialistic means.

(1) The non-materialistic means are:

1. Establishment of (minimum) criteria for the topical content and duration of continuing education/training programmes in the fields of animal-assisted therapy, animal-assisted pedagogy and animal-assisted activities for approval by the Society
2. Establishment of (minimum) criteria for the instructors in such programmes
3. Establishment of (minimum) criteria for admission to study in such continuing education/training programmes which are area-specific (therapy, pedagogy, specialist for animal-assisted activities)
4. Establishment of and referral to an external **Accreditation Board**, whose members are designated by the Society and are experts in various fields of the interdisciplinary curriculum
5. Allowing ISAAT membership to those institutions and societies which have been approved by the Accreditation Board and recommended for Full membership
6. The drafting of proposals for the recognition of said interventions and methods and negotiations with the relevant authorities, associations of other professions and social/health insurance organizations.

(2) The necessary financial means for the activities mentioned above shall be raised in the following ways:

1. Annual membership dues (of institutions and societies)
2. Application fees for consideration by the Accreditation Board
3. Allocation of funds by supporting bodies, subsidies
4. Donations, bequests and other kinds of allocation
5. Fees for participation at events
6. Income from enterprises of the Society allowed by the relevant regulations, and interest on capital funds.

With all means the Society is required to exclusively fulfill its non-profit objectives and to carry out only activities without which the objectives cannot be reached. These activities may not compete with those of tax paying companies in the same or a similar area on a larger scale than unavoidable for reaching the Society's objectives. Any profit from any of these activities must be used exclusively and within a reasonable time period to support of the non-profit objectives of the Society. The members of the Society shall not have a share in the profits and shall receive no payment from the funds of the Society unless in connection with a commission by the Society. The same holds when a member departs from the Society,

and for dissolution or annulment of the Society. No individual may be reimbursed for expenses which are unrelated to the Society's goals or excessively high.

Article 4 - Membership

The members of the Society shall be:

1. Full Members:

Institutions (public and private) and societies, with continuing education/ training programmes in animal-assisted therapy, animal-assisted pedagogy and/or animal-assisted activities and which have been recommended for such by the Accreditation Board of ISAAT, and approved as such by the ISAAT-Board.

2. Associate Members:

Other societies made up of the alumni and/or instructors of ISAAT-Full Member institutions and societies, of the Founding Members, and of university degree programs in human-animal relations

3. Honorary Members:

Persons who have contributed substantially to the fields of animal-assisted therapy/pedagogy/activities or to the founding or activities of ISAAT.

4. Founding Members:

Institutions and societies, which planned the founding of ISAAT and prepared the founding Constitution. These are: the Gesellschaft für Tiergestützte Therapie und Aktivitäten (Society for Animal-Assisted Therapy and Activities, GTTA, Switzerland); the Institut für angewandte Ethologie und Tierpsychologie (Institute for applied Ethology and Animal Psychology, I.E.T./I.E.A.P., Switzerland); the Institut für soziales Lernen mit Tieren (Institute for Social Learning with Animals, Germany). Recherche en Education et Thérapie Assistées par l'Animal (RETAA, Luxembourg), Human Animal Bond Laboratory, Azabu University Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine, Japan.

Article 5 – Admission

- (1) Apart from the Founding Members, institutions (public and private) and societies must apply membership in writing. The ISAAT-Board shall then provide a formal application form, accompanied by an invoice for the approval-application fee, which upon completion, return and payment, will forward the application to the Accreditation Board. The Accreditation Board will make its recommendation to the ISAAT-Board, upon which the ISAAT-Board will act.
- (2) If an application is turned down, the applicant will be given constructive criticism on how to improve chances of approval in case of a re-application. In the case of an appeal by an applicant, the General Assembly makes the final decision.
- (3) The ISAAT-Board may nominate individual persons as Honorary Members to the General Assembly, which decides on the matter.

Article 6 – Review of Qualifications of Current Members

- (1) At least every 5 years upon admission, the ISAAT-Board is required to review the qualifications of member institutions and societies, to ensure that they are fulfilling the current criteria for membership. Member institutions and societies are required to provide the necessary information on a form sent to them by the ISAAT-Board. When in doubt, the ISAAT-Board must refer the case to the Accreditation Board and a re-certification fee must be levied.
- (2) This procedure is required for Full, Associate and Founding Members; if the Founding Members have an ISAAT-accredited training program, also for the Founding Members. In the case of an appeal by the member, the General Assembly decides on the matter as under 5(2).

Article 7 – Termination of Membership

- (1) Withdrawal of membership is only possible per December 31 each year. The member shall notify the ISAAT-Board (to the attention of the President) of its withdrawal in writing at least two months prior to that. If the notification is late it shall not become effective before the next withdrawal date. The date of arrival of the notification is decisive for being on time.
- (2) The Board shall cancel membership when a member is arrears of dues for more than six months and after a written reminder with a 30-day extension. The liability for the payment continues to exist until transferred.
- (3) The Board may expel a member from the Society if that member neglects grossly the duties of members or the Bylaws of the Society, or if the member fails to become re-certified every five years. In the case of an appeal by the member, the General Assembly makes the final decision.
- (4) The Board may propose a motion to discontinue honorary membership of a person for reasons mentioned in paragraph (3). The decision shall be made by the General Assembly.

Article 8 – Rights and Duties of the Members

- (1) All members are obliged to support the interests of the Society to the best of their ability and to refrain from activities harmful to the reputation and the objectives of the Society. They must observe the Constitution, the Bylaws and the decisions of the Society, which will be provided in writing to their headquarters/secretariats as required. The Full, Associate and Founding Members are required to pay the annual membership fee prescribed by the General Assembly on time.
- (2) Each Full and each Founding Member has two votes in the General Assembly (each Associate Member has one vote), must designate its voting member(s) in attendance in writing, and may designate a representative of another Full, Associate or Founding Member as its voting agent (voting by proxy). A single individual in attendance may not cast more than 4 votes (two of his/her own member organization and two as proxy for one other member organization). Honorary Members have no vote.
- (3) **Only** Full Members of ISAAT, may state in their public information and on their certificates/diplomas for graduates of their programmes that: „This course (or program) was examined and approved by the International Society for Animal-Assisted Therapy and is offered according to its standards.“ and **only** that text. Other Members may **only** mention their

membership category in ISAAT in public information and in a manner that does **not** imply ISAAT approval of their training/education programmes, but **not** on their certificates/diplomas for programme completion.

- (4) Only delegates of the Full, Associate and Founding Members, as well as the Honorary members, may be elected as ISAAT-Board members.
- (5) Only the Board members and max. 2 representatives of the Full, Associate and Founding Members, as well as Honorary Members, will be invited to the **General Assembly**. Board members, representing a member institution or society, may cast up to two votes for that member (her/his own and one proxy vote), respectively four votes, if she/he is also representing a second member.
- (6) Full members should attend at least one General Assembly within two years. Attendance via Skype is possible. Without any General Assembly attendance over a 5-year period, Full members will be removed from membership at the next possible date.
- (7) All members of the member institutions and societies may be invited to attend special events of the Society.

Article 9 – Organs of the Society and Auditors

The official bodies of the Society are the General Assembly (Articles 10 and 11), the ISAAT-Board (Articles 12-14), the Curricula Commission (Article 15), the Accreditation Board (Article 16), and the Auditors (Article 17).

Article 10 – General Assembly

- (1) The regular General Assembly takes place once each year. The business year is identical with the calendar year.
- (2) An Extraordinary General Assembly has to take place within eight weeks if the Board or the regular General Assembly makes that decision, or if at least one half of the members eligible to vote propose such a motion with reasons in writing, or if the Auditors demand it.
- (3) The members (Full, Associate, Founding and Honorary) are to be invited in writing to the regular as well to any Extraordinary General Assembly at least four weeks in advance. The General Assembly shall be called by the President indicating the proposed agenda and pointing out that if no quorum is reached, a second Assembly will take place 15 minutes later with a quorum formed by the members present.
- (4) Motions for the General Assembly shall be submitted in writing to the ISAAT-Board at least 14 days in advance and shall be included in the agenda by the Board. The definitive agenda shall be sent to the Members before the Assembly.
- (5) Decisions shall be made only on the items on the agenda with the exception of any motion calling for an Extraordinary General Assembly. Decisions shall not be made on items under the agenda point “Any other business”.
- (6) The General Assembly has a quorum if half of the delegates eligible to vote are present or represented by proxy (see Article 8.2). If the General Assembly does not have a quorum at the fixed date and time, a secondary General Assembly shall take place 15 minutes later with the same agenda and is empowered to vote regardless the number of delegates present.
- (7) The election of Officers and all decisions shall be determined by simple majority, whereas in the case of parity, the President has one extra vote. Decisions on amendments to the Constitution, the Bylaws, or on the dissolution of the Society require a two-thirds majority of valid votes cast.

- (8) The President shall chair the General Assembly, in case of her/his absence, the Vice-President. If the Vice-President is also absent, the member of the ISAAT-Board present with highest seniority shall chair.
- (9) Members, who are unable to attend the AGM in person may participate via live voice/video-communication and have the same voting rights as if present in person. The board will attempt to provide the possibility for such means of virtual attendance and chose the meeting venue accordingly, but cannot be held liable for any unforeseeable problems with the communication during the AGM. Anonymous votes cannot be handled via this way of communication, but virtually attending members may waive their right to anonymity or vote via an immediate email to the president or secretary.
- (10) Choice of venue for the ISAAT-AGM. The board decides on the time and place of the AGM. Members may apply to host the AGM with a written communication to the president. The possibility of participation via live voice/video-communication must exist.

Article 11 – Duties of the General Assembly

The following duties are the responsibility of the General Assembly:

1. Acceptance and approval of the President's report
2. Acceptance and approval of the Treasurer's report
3. Acceptance and approval of the Auditor's report
4. Exoneration of the ISAAT-Board
5. Setting the budget for the forthcoming year
6. Determining the annual membership dues for Full, Associate, and Founding Members.
7. Election, appointment and removal from office of the President, the other members of the ISAAT-Board and the Auditors. The handing over of functions takes place at the beginning of the next business year, in the case of removal from office and election of a replacement, immediately.
8. Confirmation of the Accreditation Board and the Curricula Commission upon the recommendation of the ISAAT-Board.
9. Awarding and discontinuation of Honorary Membership.
10. Determining the Bylaws, amending the Constitution and dissolution of the Society.
11. Deliberation and passing of resolutions on all agenda items with exception of items under „Any other business“.

Article 12 – The ISAAT-Board

- (1) The ISAAT-Board shall be the administrative body as defined by the civil law for societies. Members of the Board shall be persons having adequate expertise in the said fields and either members of the member institutions or societies, or Honorary Members of ISAAT, who are willing and able to conduct the business of the Society in an orderly fashion. The Board consists of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and one member-at-large.
- (2) The Board shall be allowed to co-opt a qualified person if a member leaves the Board before her/his term is up. A substitute for the member who left office shall be elected by the next General Assembly for the remaining term of office.
- (3) The term of office shall be two years. The Board shall remain in power and function until the election of a new Board. Re-election of officers is allowed.

- (4) Board meetings shall be called in advance and in writing by the President or the Vice-President when the President is unable to do so, as matters require.
- (5) The Board has a quorum if all members were called and at least half of the Board is present.
- (6) The President shall chair the Board meeting, substituted by the Vice-President, if the former is unavailable.
- (7) Decisions shall be made by simple majority; in case of parity of votes, the chair has two votes.
- (8) Aside from death and expiration of the term (Paragraph 3), the functioning of a Board member can be ended by removal (Article 11 paragraph 7), resignation (Paragraph 9) and termination of her/his society's membership in Society (Article 7).
- (9) Board members can declare in writing their resignation at any time. The declaration of resignation shall be addressed to the Board c/o the President; in the case of resignation of all Board members, to the General Assembly. An appointed substitute within the Board shall take over *ad interim* the responsibilities of the departing member until the election of a successor.
- (10) The liability of the Board members to the Society shall be governed by the respective civil law.

Article 13 – Duties of the ISAAT-Board

The Board shall run the daily business of the Society. It must assume all duties, which are not assigned to other bodies of the Society by the Constitution. Especially the following matters are within the sphere of the Board's activity:

1. Drafting of the annual activities report and the annual financial report. The General Assembly shall be informed about the financial situation of the Society.
2. Proposing the budget for the forthcoming year
3. Preparation of the General Assembly
4. Preparation and timely (together with the invitation to the General Assembly) distribution of proposed changes to the Constitution and/or Bylaws.
5. Administration of the means of the Society
6. Nominations to the Accreditation Board
7. Nominations to the Curricula Commission
8. Admission to, exclusion from and termination of membership in the Society, based upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Board.
In the case of an appeal by the Society/institution in question, the General Assembly makes the final decision.
9. Hiring and dismissing employees of the Society.

Article 14 – Duties of the ISAAT-Board members

- (1) The President is the highest officer of the Society. She/he shall represent the Society outwardly and when unable to do so, the Vice-President is so empowered. She/he presides over the General Assembly and the ISAAT-Board and calls at least one Board meeting annually, but with a sufficient number to conduct the business of the Society in an orderly fashion. Decisions by the Board may be made by electronic circular communication to all Board members. In urgent matters, the President has the right to act independently on her/his own responsibility - even on matters, which are in the competence of the General

- Assembly or the full ISAAT-Board. Such actions must be approved by the relevant body as soon as possible afterwards. The President is to be held personally responsible if that body does not agree with her/his action.
- (2) The Secretary shall assist the President in handling all affairs of the Society. She/he shall make an accurate record of the minutes of the General Assembly and the ISAAT-Board meetings for distribution and later approval. If required by civil law, the Secretary shall inform the appropriate authorities of changes in Board membership, including name, address, function, and term of office.
 - (3) The Treasurer shall be responsible for administering the finances of the Society according to the approved budget and other rules. She/he shall supervise the financial situation by current record of income and expenses and shall present a checkable balance sheet yearly and a summary of the overall financial situation of the Society (capital and debts) to the Board at the end of the business year. The Treasurer shall report the annual statement of accounts and the financial situation to the General Assembly.
 - (4) Written documents and announcements of the Society, especially documents committing the Society outwardly, shall be signed by the President and the Secretary, in the case of financial matters by the President and the Treasurer.
 - (5) In absence of the President, the Vice-President may sign for the President.

Article 15 – The Curricula Commission

- (1) The ISAAT-Board shall nominate five (5) persons from the member institutions and organizations to serve on the Curricula Commission for terms of two years, renewable for up to three terms. With exception of the first Commission, the General Assembly must confirm nominations to the Commission by the Board.
- (2) The Curricula Commission shall recommend to the ISAAT Board for approval, which in turn shall instruct the Accreditation Board, criteria for:
 - a) the topical content and duration of continuing education/training programmes in the fields of animal-assisted therapy, animal-assisted pedagogy and animal-assisted activities;
 - b) the rules regulating the course of studies and of examinations;
 - c) the instructors in such programmes; and
 - d) admission to study in such programmes at the appropriate level.

Article 16 – The Accreditation Board

- (1) The ISAAT-Board shall invite individuals of impeccable character and reputation to become members of the Accreditation Board and to represent the various fields covered in the curricula specified by ISAAT as essential to the field. The General Assembly must confirm their nomination by the Board. Their duty will be to judge the content, duration, teaching quality and student admission requirements as set by ISAAT, but independently of the Society.
- (2) They will be remunerated by the Society for their efforts, with costs to be covered by the accreditation-application fees supplied by the applicants, resp. re-certification fees of current members every five years.
- (3) Their assessment (signed by the chair and one further Accreditation Board member) is to be made in writing, may – at the discretion of the ISAAT Board – be forwarded in total or in part – to the applicant, and is the basis for the ISAAT-

- Board's decision on the acceptance or rejection of an application for membership.
- (4) Term of membership on the Accreditation Board is two years, with renewal possible for up to three terms.

Article 17 – The Auditors

- (1) Two Auditors shall be elected by the General Assembly for the duration of two years. They may not be members of the ISAAT-Board and must conduct their duties independently and impartially. They need not to be members of a Society member. Re-election is allowed.
- (2) The Auditors shall check the expenditure of means against receipts and according to the objectives set down in the Constitution, and undertake the revision of the financial report within four weeks after compilation. They shall report the results of their examination to the General Assembly. The ISAAT-Board shall assist the Auditors during their inquiry.
- (3) Further rules as laid down in Article 12 Paragraphs 3, 9 and 10 are also applicable to the Auditors.
- (4) The General Assembly shall decide when a professional auditor is required in accordance with civil law and select that company.

Article 18 – Regional Divisions of the Society

- (1) The Regional Divisions of ISAAT are responsible for coordinating membership and activities within their region along the criterion set by ISAAT.
- (2) The European Society for Animal Assisted Therapy (ESAAT) can be the Regional Division of ISAAT for Europe. In time with the addition of new Full members other Regional Divisions will be established; but until that time, their needs will be addressed by the Board of ISAAT.
- (3) At least one representative of a Full member of each Regional Division of ISAAT must attend the General Assembly each year.

Article 19 – Dissolution of the Society

- (1) The decision on the dissolution of the Society shall be made only at an Extraordinary General Assembly called for that purpose. The decision must be carried by a two-thirds majority of the valid votes. After this a person shall be elected for closing the business of the Society who need not be a representative of a Member of the Society.
- (2) That person shall notify in writing the appropriate civil authorities in the country of the Society's headquarters/secretariat of the dissolution of the Society and shall publish the voluntary dissolution in an official gazette if this is legally required.
- (3) In the case of dissolution of the Society, any existing financial means of the Society shall not be returned to, or used to benefit the Members, but shall be used exclusively and completely for the public good in the sense of a contribution to a related international organization. The means shall be transferred to a specific, non-profit legal entity recognized by tax laws as such, whose statutory and real purpose comes closest to the objectives of the Society (Article 2). The last Board shall make this decision by majority vote as described above, and the person elected to close down the Society's business shall enact this transfer.

Constitution approved and accepted on 11 November 2006, CH-8057 Zurich, by:

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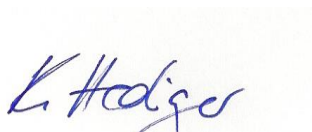
Including revisions approved unanimously by the electronically called/held extraordinary General Assembly on 12 November 2007.

Including a minor revision approved unanimously at the General Assembly held on 3 February 2008.

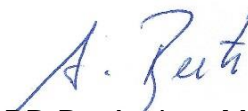
Including amendments 10.9 and 10.10 approved by the General Assembly on May, 25, 2014.

Including amendments approved unanimously by the General Assembly on October, 22, 2017.

22 October 2017



Dr. Karin Hediger
Secretary of ISAAT



PD Dr. Andrea M. Beetz
President of ISAAT