



UNICollaboration: The International Organisation of Telecollaboration and Virtual Exchange

Statutes and Regulations

Introduction

These statutes have been elaborated to govern the affairs of UNICollaboration: The International Organisation of Telecollaboration and Virtual Exchange. This is a non-profit Organisation.

In this document, the terms 'telecollaboration' and 'virtual exchange' are used to refer to the multiple ways in which groups of students are engaged for educational purposes in online intercultural interaction and collaboration with partner classes from other cultural contexts or geographical locations under the guidance of educators and/or expert facilitators.

The Organisation shall be called UNICollaboration: The International Organisation of Telecollaboration and Virtual Exchange. The location of the administrative and financial headquarters of the Organisation are at the University of León, Spain. The Organisation is registered as a not-for-profit Organisation in the state of Spain.

Article 1: AIMS

The aims of the Organisation are:

1. To promote the development and integration of telecollaborative research and practice across all disciplines and subject areas in university education by:
 - holding a regular conference on telecollaboration and virtual exchange in university education;
 - issuing a regular publication on telecollaborative research across academic disciplines;
 - running social network sites to promote telecollaborative activity and the Organisation;
 - organising regional training workshops and online training events in telecollaborative practice and research;
 - providing training and support for doctoral and post-doctoral research in telecollaboration and virtual exchange through professional development events;

- maintaining and promoting the Organisation’s online platform as a central hub for telecollaborative practice.

2. To actively engage in awareness raising of Telecollaboration and Virtual Exchange at institutional and policy making level by:

- supporting members interested in preparing project proposals and starting telecollaborative initiatives;
- establishing contact and collaborating with other academic Organisations related to mobility, education etc.;
- coordinating common policies and approaches to developing telecollaboration and virtual exchange with other networks and organisations across the globe;
- pursuing constructive dialogue with policy making bodies at national and international level.

ARTICLE 2: MEMBERS

2.1 Types of Members

The Organisation will have various types of membership.

Individual members shall consist of all interested individuals who pay the membership fees of the Organisation. Members shall be entitled to one vote in any General Meeting, Business Meeting or members’ referendum.

Institutional members shall consist of private and public non-profit institutions and agencies that pay the institutional membership fee. An institutional membership will allow for four members to be active in the organisation and have access to members’ facilities and privileges.

Commercial members shall consist of publishers or other commercial organisations that pay the commercial membership fee and shall be entitled to one vote in any members’ meeting or referendum.

Honorary Members shall consist of individuals which the Organisation’s Executive Board wishes to acknowledge for their long-standing and significant contributions to telecollaboration and the Organisation.

2.2 Membership Fees

The annual membership fees for each category of membership shall be in amounts established from time to time by the Executive Board. For the purposes of the first two years of the Organisation, the annual membership fees will be as follows:

Individual members: 40€

Student members: 25€

Institutional members: 140€

Commercial members: 200€

Honorary members are exempt from membership fees in perpetuity.

2.3 Voting Rights

A member in good standing is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. A member in good standing is one who has paid all required fees and dues and is not suspended as of the date of the meeting or referendum. An institutional member may have up to four active individual members

ARTICLE 3: MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

3.1 General Meeting

The Organisation will hold a General Meeting at least once every two years for all its members in such time as the Executive Board shall designate. This meeting will coincide with the Organisation's conferences whenever possible. The General Meeting may recommend new actions and policies, and review, modify, or rescind actions and policies previously established by the Executive Board. The Executive Board will submit to the members a summary of major actions undertaken since the last General Meeting and shall present issues for discussion at the members' General Meeting.

Other matters which will be dealt with by the General Meeting include:

- approval of the minutes of the previous AGM
- matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda
- approval of the Treasurer's Report
- approval of the Secretary's Report
- any amendments to the statutes and by-laws

3.2 Special Meetings

Special meetings of the members may be called by the President, three members of the Executive Board, or a majority vote in an online referendum, in which at least 1/3 of the members participate.

3.3 Quorum

At a meeting of members, a quorum shall consist of 30% of voting members, whether participating in person or by electronic means as approved by the Board. However, no action may be approved without the vote of at least a majority of the number of members required for a quorum.

Article 4: EXECUTIVE BOARD, COORDINATORS AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ORGANISATION

4.1 Management of the Organisation

The Executive Board will conduct the business of the Organisation, including the establishment of fees for membership, publications, and symposia, subject to the general direction of the members as decided in General Assemblies.

4.2 Members of the Executive Board

Voting Officers:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Liaison Officer
- First Research Coordinator
- Second Research Coordinator
- First Publications Coordinator
- Second Publications Coordinator
- First Training Coordinator
- Second Training Coordinator
- First Communications Officer
- Second Communications Officer

For the purposes of encouraging the participation of members in the activities of the Research, Publications and Training groups, the coordinators of each group will actively seek to include Organisation members in the activities of each working group.

4.3 Functions of the Executive Board

Each member of the Executive Board assumes specific responsibilities during their term in office. Each member is expected to report on progress and developments in their specific area at each meeting of the Executive Board and at each General Meeting.

The President is the Organisation's chief Executive officer. He or she will supervise and direct all of the Organisation's business and affairs and will preside at all meetings of the Executive Board. The President may execute any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments that the Board authorizes to be executed. The President is also responsible for

representing the Organisation at institutional and organisational level and for actively promoting the activity of telecollaboration and virtual exchange in university education.

The Vice-President will support the President in all the activities described above. When the President is unavailable, the Vice President will serve as acting President, as appropriate to the circumstances and as directed by the Executive Board.

The Secretary is responsible for taking the minutes of meetings and sharing these minutes and all major decisions taken with the Executive Board and with the Organisation's membership. The secretary is also responsible for administering the Organisation's accounts and reporting to the Executive Board on the state of the Organisation's finances. Furthermore, they will maintain custody of the Organisation's records and serve as the "institutional memory" for the Organisation, and maintain an easily readable written record of decisions made, and policies currently in force.

First and Second Communications Officer will be responsible for the maintenance and development of the Organisation's online platform as well as any social network sites or tools used by the Organisation.

First and Second Research Coordinators are responsible for identifying and undertaking research initiatives on behalf of the Organisation. Such initiatives may involve identifying and reporting on sources of research funding, organising research workshops etc. The Coordinators will actively disseminate information related to telecollaborative research initiatives and funding on the Organisation's website and social networks and will report on their activities at the General Meeting.

First and Second Publications Coordinators are responsible for the Organisation's journal and for promoting the journal and other publication initiatives and opportunities for members of the Organisation. The Coordinators will actively disseminate information related to telecollaborative publication initiatives and funding on the Organisation's website and social networks and will report on their activities at the General Meeting. The Coordinators will also actively promote UNICollaboration.eu and encourage activity in its forums and databanks.

First and Second Training Coordinators are responsible for identifying and organising training events and initiatives related to telecollaboration and also for actively organising telecollaborative training events in order to promote the activity among those who are not familiar with the field. The Training Coordinators may run training events themselves or may identify and work in liaison with others to organise such events.

The Liaison Officer is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Organisation with those of other academic organisations and networks. He or she is also responsible for establishing links and collaboration with other organisations which may be of benefit to the Organisation's members or which may support the achievement of the Organisation's aims.

4.4 Actions of the Executive Board

The Executive Board will try to act by consensus. However, if a consensus is not available, the vote of a majority of Board members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present is enough to constitute the act of the Board, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by some other provision of these Bylaws. A Board member who is present at a meeting and abstains from a vote is considered to be present and voting for the purpose of determining the Board's decision. Presence can be established through electronic conferencing or face-to-face meetings.

4.5 Quorum

A majority of the number of the voting members of the Executive Board constitutes a quorum for transacting business at any Board meeting. The Members present at a duly called or held meeting at which a quorum is present may continue to transact business, even if enough members leave so that less than a quorum remains. However, no action may be approved without the vote of at least a majority of the number of members required for a quorum.

4.6 Succession of Executive Board

The Executive Board will be re-elected in a staggered manner in order to ensure a balance between continuity and renewal:

All Executive Board officers will hold their positions for four years, except the following officers will step down in 2018 following a two-year term:

President, Vice-President, First Research Coordinator, First Publications Officer, First Training Officer and Liaison Officer.

It is possible for members of the existing Board who have held one position (e.g. training Coordinator) to put forward their candidature for a different position (e.g. vice-president or publications Coordinator) in the following term.

4.6.1 Nominating of the Executive Board members

The qualifications and procedures for nominating the Executive Board candidates include:

1. Candidates for the Executive Board must have been paid-up members of the Organisation for at least two consecutive years.

2. At least three months before the elections, the Organisation's secretary will send an email message to the membership explaining the nomination process and soliciting nominations.
3. Candidates must be nominated by two Organisation members - excluding self-nomination.
4. At the time of nomination, nominees will submit a candidate's statement of no more than 300 words to the Organisation secretary.
5. The Organisation secretary will send out an electronic ballot with information about the eligible and willing nominees. Members will be given at least 2 weeks to vote.
6. Because Executive Board members serve on the Board for a period of four years, nominees will be informed at the time of their nomination that they must commit to attending all Executive Board meetings during their tenure on the Board, either physically or virtually.

4.6.1 Nominating of the President and Vice-President

1. Candidates for the position of President and Vice-President must have been members of the Executive Board for the previous two consecutive years and should nominate themselves for the positions.
2. At least three months before the elections, the Organisation's secretary will send an email message to the membership explaining the nomination process and soliciting nominations.
3. At the time of nomination, nominees will submit a candidate's statement of no more than 300 words to the Organisation secretary.
4. The Organisation secretary will send out an electronic ballot with information about the eligible and willing nominees.

4.6.2 Removal from Office

Any Board member may be removed from office by the Board at a Board meeting only with good cause. Removing a Board member will be without prejudice to the member's contractual rights, if any. Removal must be approved by five or more voting members present at an Executive Board meeting. Failure to maintain proper membership in the Organisation, failure to attend Board meetings without proper notification, and/or failure to fulfil major responsibilities are grounds for removal, as are professional ethics violations, as generally understood in the university environment, criminal activity, or working against the Organisation's delineated goals or established programs.

Article 5: FINANCES

The activities of the Organisation shall be largely financed through an annual subscription paid by members. The amount of the subscription shall be determined by the Executive Board and approved by the General Meeting.

All subscriptions, benefactions, other income, or possible profits shall be used exclusively for purposes consonant with the Organisation's aims and objectives.

In so far as possible, all costs incurred within the context of their work for the Organisation incurred by members of the Executive Board and organisers of the Organisation's events will be covered by the Organisation.