

Constitution of the World Association of Membrane Societies

The World Association of Membrane Societies (WA-MS) is a collaborative framework between three founding societies, the European Membrane Society (EMS), the Aseanian Membrane Society (AMS), and the North American Membrane Society (NAMS), and national/regional member societies. The World Association of Membrane Societies has a global scope and will be active in the field of membrane science and technology, by enhancing cooperation between its member societies.

The World Association of Membrane Societies is an international non-profit organization (French: association internationale sans but lucratif; Dutch: Internationale vereniging zonder winstoogmerk).

The constitution of the Association shall be governed by Belgian law of 27 June 1921 modified by law of 2 May 2002.

Article 1. General

The name of the organization shall be World Association of Membrane Societies (abbreviated: WA-MS).

The Association provides a forum for formal and informal discussions among scientists, engineers, academia and end users, as represented by the member societies of the Association. The activities of the Association shall be organized by Working Parties on behalf of the Association as described in Article 5 of this Constitution. The World Association of Membrane Societies shall not engage in any political or religious activity. Furthermore, it shall not discriminate, in its activity or among its members, on the basis of politics, race, religion or ideology.

Article 2. Objectives of the Association

The objectives of the World Association of Membrane Societies are in meeting global societal needs related to water, energy, resources, food, chemical and pharmaceutical production and environment and health service through enhancing membrane use, in helping membrane industries to create diverse business opportunities, and in enhancing international collaboration among membrane researchers, educators and entrepreneurs (including the organization of the International Conference on Membranes and Membrane Processes (ICOM) by the founding members of the World Association of Membrane Societies).

Article 3. Membership of the Association

The founding members of the World Association of Membrane Societies are:

- the North American Membrane Society - NAMS;
- the European Membrane Society - EMS;
- the Aseanian Membrane Society – AMS;

Other national or regional membrane associations can join the World Association of Membrane Societies, provided that they are accepted by the Board or Council of each founding society. Member societies should have a threshold of 100 members to join, and be active in the broad field of membrane science and technology. Societies representing a country or region already covered by founding members or other members can join as separate members as well. Societies representing different countries should provide their geographical coverage to the council.

Member societies can leave the World Association of Membrane Societies at any time by means of a simple notification to the President of the World Association of Membrane Societies, done by the society's President.

Article 4. Organization of the ICOM conference

The organization of the International Conference on Membranes and Membrane Processes (ICOM) will continue to be the responsibility of the founding societies EMS, NAMS, and AMS. ICOM is organized every three years, in a carousel between EMS, NAMS, and AMS. NAMS will do so in 2017, EMS in 2020 and AMS in 2023. This 9-years cycle is repetitive. The organizing society has the freedom to collaborate with other societies (founding societies or non-founding societies) in the organization of ICOM, but always keeps the final responsibility.

Changes in the organization of the ICOM conferences are in principle not allowed, even though the Steering Committee of WA-MS can propose changes in timing or any other aspect of the organization. This requires a formal approval of each founding member of WA-MS.

Article 5. Operation of the Association

(a) The Association will be led by a Steering Committee composed of duly accredited delegates of the founding member societies. Each founding member shall have six delegates, which includes the President, secretary and treasurer, or one of the Vice-Presidents. These delegates have the duty to initiate the activities of the Association, and to ensure the functioning of the Association in meeting its objectives as defined in Article 2. Delegates are not employees of WA-MS and are not remunerated. Delegates can be represented during meetings by a chosen colleague, who should be a member of the society that appointed the delegate; this representation should be confirmed in writing.

The Steering Committee will meet every year in person or in virtual form during the General Assembly. Additional meetings may also be called. Prior to the yearly General Assembly, the Secretary of WA-MS provides all members of the Steering Committee with a list of members of the Association; this list will be attached to the minutes of the General Assembly.

Appointment of delegates in the Steering Committee will be done by the individual founding societies. Delegates should be competent in the field of membranes, but there is no further restriction related to membership or affiliation. The founding societies may set up their own regulations for appointing delegates, and have full freedom to decide on this. Delegates are not required to be elected board members of individual societies. The names of the delegates should be submitted to the World Association of Membrane Societies at least 30 days before becoming effective. The normal term of office of delegates is three years, i.e., from a given ICOM conference to the next one. Delegates may however be replaced at any moment by the assigning society, should the need to do this arise.

(b) The president, secretary, and treasurer of the World Association of Membrane Societies are appointed by the society that has the responsibility for hosting the General Assembly. Two Vice-Presidents are appointed by another two founding societies. The individual societies do this using their own regulations, on which they have full freedom to decide. The President represents the World Association of Membrane Societies in all activities and interactions; he can be replaced in this duty by one of the Vice-Presidents. The President presides the General Assembly and all other regular meetings; he/she can be represented by another member of the Steering Committee if needed. The President of the World Association of Membrane Societies is not necessarily one of the Presidents of the founding societies, but keeps a close contact with these Presidents, and with the Presidents or representatives of all other member societies. The Secretary of the Association is responsible for preparing minutes of the Council meetings, and distributing these to the member societies. He/she prepares the agenda for meetings, in collaboration with the President, and oversees the organization of the meetings. The treasurer of the Association is formally responsible for the account of the Association.

The founding President will be Bart Van der Bruggen (Belgium); the founding Secretary will be Cristiana Boi (Italy); and the founding Treasurer will be Wojciech Kujawski (Poland).

(c) The activities of the Association will be carried out in Working Parties, initiated by the Steering Committee. All members can participate in these working groups. Members of the World Association of Membrane Societies may have one formal representative in each working group, but there is no restriction on participation in the meetings of the working groups.

Working Parties have specific objectives, defined by the Steering Committee. The establishment of a new Working Party should be approved by the founding societies. The Working Parties operate independent of the Steering Committee.

Every Working Party meets at least once per year in person or virtually, by preference during the meeting when the General Assembly takes place. Additional meetings are decided by the individual Working Parties.

Decisions and reports prepared by a Working Party should be confirmed by the Steering Committee and published as part of the report of the General Assembly where they are discussed.

Article 6. General Assembly

The General Assembly of the World Association of Membrane Societies shall be held once a year. This meeting shall take place during the ICOM conference in the years when it is organized; in the following year it is organized by the society that will organize the next ICOM meeting, and in the second year after ICOM it is to be organized by the society that organized the preceding ICOM meeting. This yields a 9-years cycle in which each founding society hosts 3 of the yearly meetings in a row.

There is no quorum for the General Assembly.

Minutes shall be kept and passed General Assembly meetings, and signed by the President and the secretary.

Article 7. Resources

The World Association of Membrane Societies will not charge membership fees.

Article 8. Registered office

The Association's registered office is located at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven), Celestijnenlaan 200F, B-3001 Leuven, Belgium. The registered office may be transferred to any other place in Belgium by simple resolution of the Council published within a month to the annexes of the Moniteur Belge (Belgian official journal).

Article 9. Modifications

The Constitution of the World Association of Membrane Societies may be amended, repealed or altered, in whole or in part, by an agreement signed by all founding societies.

The amendments to the constitution shall be effective after being approved by the Ministry of Justice and published to the annexes of the Moniteur Belge.

Article 10. Termination

The dissolution of the Association can only be decided during a General Assembly convened especially for that purpose. The General Assembly will designate one or several appointees charged with liquidating the assets of the Association. The General Assembly will assign the net assets to the member societies.