



Circular 7/ 2019
16 April 2019

To: Presidents, CIRs and Standing Committee Conveners and Members
From: GWI Board of Officers
Subject: Conference Information and Deadlines – proposed Amendments to the Constitution



A series of Circulars will be sent out in the run up to the Conference whenever there is material requiring action by national presidents and CIRs. Announcements of interest to the wider membership will continue to be posted through the other avenues, so you may receive some information twice. The information will also be posted regularly on the GWI website, www.graduatewomen.org, and circulated through GWI communication networks.

The GWI Board has spent a considerable amount of time reflecting on how the Constitution can best support GWI in carrying out its mission and supporting its National Federations and Associations.

Therefore, the GWI Board is submitting the following three Constitutional Resolutions to be approved at the General Assembly.

Please submit detailed documentation for your proposed constitution resolutions to the GWI office at info@graduatewomen.org by 31 May 2019. Include your NFA name, contact person, position and email; proposed and exact original constitutional text; and rationale for the amendment.

Board Constitutional Resolutions:

1. CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTION – RESTRICTED FUNDS

Proposed by the GWI Board of Officers on the recommendation of the GWI Finance Committee.

The 33rd GWI General Assembly resolves that:

Restricted Funds cannot be used for any other purpose than that specified unless approved by a two thirds majority of the Board of Officers and the Finance Committee.

Supporting Statement

Over time, restricted funds have been created to be used for a specific purpose only. The three current restricted funds, Hegg Hoffet, Bina Roy Partners in Development, and Fellowships and Grants are accounted for and shown separately in the monthly reports. However, only the Hegg Hoffet fund is on a separate bank account. It is too costly to open separate bank accounts for each restricted fund. The Caroline Spurgeon Centenary fellowship, which will be awarded at the AGM in 2019, is also in a separate bank account.



During the 2013 - 2016 triennium, funds were transferred from restricted funds and used to cover general expenses. This remit is designed to ensure that this does not happen in the future except in exceptional circumstances where the financial viability of the organisation is under threat.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTION – JOINT COUNTRY MEMBERSHIP

Proposed by the GWI Board of Officers

The 33rd GWI General Assembly resolves that:

Graduate Women in two or more countries unable to meet the numbers requirement for membership may apply to join together for membership as a single federation or association. Such a federation or association shall comprise at least 20 members and shall have the same status, rights and obligations as all national federations and associations.

Supporting Statement

This is simply a correction to clause 3 as a consequence of the GWI Constitution 2016 Article II MEMBERSHIP clause 1, being approved at the 32nd GA which states that a national federation or association of graduate women comprising of twenty (20) individual members who fulfil the membership requirements in Article III may become a member of GWI as provided in Article II.4.

NFAs are reminded that the GWI Constitution 2016 Article II MEMBERSHIP clause 1 was approved unanimously in 2016 with the proviso that existing affiliates whose membership is less than forty (40) at the time of passing the motion clause shall have a period of five (5) - years thereafter, in which to meet the required number of members (40). The 2016- 2019 Board of Officers considers this to be an aspirational goal and will not penalise NFAs that have made genuine efforts to meet the member numbers within the time period specified.

3. CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTION - LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP IF ANNUAL DUES NOT FULLY PAID UP.

Proposed by the GWI Board of Officers

The 33rd GWI General Assembly resolves that:

A National Federation or Association will not lose its membership if it is in arrears providing that it has paid at least 50% of its annual dues by 31 March each year and an agreed promissory note and payment plan has been put in place for the remaining unpaid dues. This plan is to be negotiated with the Board of Officers who will inform the Finance Committee. Members of these NFAs will be able to stand for office and continue to participate in an in-person or electronic vote of the General Assembly.

The NFA must agree in writing to:

- 1. pay the arrears in agreed instalments within two years**
- 2. make the arrears payments on agreed dates**

Failure to meet the requirements will result in immediate loss of membership.



Supporting Statement:

The Board acknowledges that NFAs can experience exceptional circumstances and financial hardship from time to time which makes it difficult, if not impossible for them to meet their commitment to the payment of the GWI annual dues. This situation does not mean that NFAs have any less commitment to the vision and mission of GWI and should not prevent them from continuing to participate fully in the business of the organisation.

The introduction of a negotiated, payment plan provision and promissory note will give financially strained NFAs the 'breathing space' to restructure and review their internal affairs to enable them to meet their financial commitment to GWI. The duration of the agreed payment plan will be negotiated with the Board of Officers but will not be greater than two years.

Please submit any questions to Rae Duff, GWI Vice President, Legal and Governance, at email address randsduff@xtra.co.nz.

Sincerely,

GWI Board

**Deadline for the Submission of Amendments to the GWI Constitution
31 May 2019**