



ICORN international cities of refuge network

ICORN statutes

§ 1 Name

The name of the organisation is The International Cities of Refuge Network, hereafter called ICORN.

§ 2 Purpose

ICORN is a membership organisation that assists members offering persecuted writers a safe place to stay and work for an agreed period. The term 'writer' includes, but is not limited to: novelists, non-fiction writers, playwrights, poets, editors, translators, publishers, journalists and cartoonists.

The Network, its definitions, and its relations to its partners are outlined in the following documents:

The ICORN Charter

The present ICORN Statutes.

The Membership Agreement between ICORN and its members

The contract between ICORN and the WiPC of International PEN

The contract between ICORN and Sølvsberget, Stavanger Cultural Centre

§ 3 Members

1. Any city (municipality), region or other relevant body with legal personality that wants to become a member of ICORN must accept the conditions in the Membership Agreement referred to in §2. To apply for membership to ICORN an application for membership must be put forward to the ICORN Administration Centre. Valid applications are to be put forward to the Board, which accepts or rejects it. On acceptance, the applying body becomes a member by signing the Membership Agreement and paying the membership fee.

The liability of each member is limited to the amount of the membership fee and the financial responsibilities towards the guest writers as laid down in the membership agreement.

2. Termination of membership. Any member that does not fulfil the duties in the Membership Agreement may be excluded from the network's services by the next General Assembly. A member may terminate its membership by giving written notice to the Board. The membership terminates 6 (six) months after the Board has received and accepted the notice. If the resigning member has a writer in residence (placed by ICORN) the member must fulfil its obligations towards the writer until the end of the writer's placement term as agreed in the Membership Agreement.

§ 4 Meetings

ICORN holds regular membership meetings. The General Assembly meets every second year. The General Assembly is ICORN's highest authority. The first regular General Assembly is held in 2010.

§ 5 The General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly is called by the Board with at least 4 (four) months notice to the members. Items proposed to be dealt with by the GA must be sent to the Board no later than 2 (two) months before the GA. Items proposed by a member and received by the Board at least 2 (two) months in advance of the General Assembly must be included in the agenda. An agenda for the GA must be sent to all members at least 1 (one) month before the GA. The General Assembly shall be held no later than 30th June every second year.

The General Assembly comprises all members. Each member must appoint a physical person to represent it at meetings of the general assembly. Each member of ICORN has one vote at the GA. Members must have paid the membership fee for the current year before the GA to be able to vote. A quorum is reached with the number of members present. To make changes concerning §§ 12 and 13 a quorum is reached when 2/3 of the members are present.

Members may delegate their representation and vote at the General Assembly to another member. No member may hold more than one proxy.

§ 6 The tasks of the General Assembly

The following issues shall be attended to by the General Assembly:

1. A biennial report from the chair of the Board including the accounts after audit
2. The budget
3. Annual membership fees
4. The statutes of ICORN
5. Items proposed
6. Strategic plan
7. Election of chair, vice chair, members of the Board, Election Committee, auditors

The General Assembly may decide to attend to items not included in the agenda.

§ 7 Voting procedure at the General Assembly

Decisions of the General Assembly, except those that concern §12 and § 13, require the support of a single majority of the votes cast. Abstentions are counted as votes not cast. Secrecy of the vote is a right if a member asks for it.

Elections

Three separate ballots are used to elect the chair, vice-chair, and other members of the Board. The first ballot concerns the office of board member, the second concerns the office of chair and the third ballot concerns the office of vice-chair. The candidate who gets the most votes will be considered elected. If two candidates get the same amount of votes the decision is made by drawing lots.

An election committee, constituted by three members, suggests board members to the General Assembly.

§ 8 Extraordinary General Assembly

Extraordinary General Assembly is held when the board or 30% of the members demand it. Extraordinary General Assembly is called and organised by the Board.

§ 9 The board

1. ICORN is lead by a board that is elected by the General Assembly and heads ICORN between General Assemblies. The Board reports to the General Assembly. The Board is ICORN's highest authority between General Assemblies. The Board has minimum 5 (five), maximum 7 (seven) members. Any representative of any member of ICORN may be suggested to and elected member of the Board. Each member may only have one representative elected to the Board. The Board shall be composed in a manner that makes reasonable consideration of the nationalities of ICORN members. Board members are elected for 4 years and may be re-elected. The office of board member is without payment or remuneration.
2. The Board constitutes a quorum when four of its members are present. If neither the chair nor the vice-chair is present, a quorum is reached when five board members are present. In an event of an equal number of votes, the chair has the casting vote.
3. The Board can delegate certain powers to sub-committees or other relevant bodies. The board reserves the power to take all decisions when it comes to acts that constitute a legal undertaking for the organisation. Deeds that are binding upon the organisation, other than those relating to day-to-day management, shall be signed by the chair of the Board and one other board member or by the Director within the scope of attribution.
4. The Board may invite whom it finds necessary to attend board meetings. A representative of International PEN and Sølvsberget Cultural Centre may attend ICORN board meetings with the right to speak and suggest agenda items. One representative of the writers who are or have been guest writers in an ICORN city may attend ICORN board meetings with the right to speak and suggest agenda items. It is up to the mentioned bodies and groups to nominate and elect such a representative.
5. An Administration Centre is responsible for the day-to-day running of ICORN. The Administration Centre is headed by a director appointed by the board. The director reports to the Board and may be dismissed by the board.
6. The Board can decide on policies for ICORN's activities. The Board approves organisation and policies of the Administration Centre. Detailed instructions on roles and responsibilities emerge from ICORN's policy documents.
7. The board meets at least twice each year. Board meetings may be held by telephone- or videoconference.
8. The board may adopt internal rules for its conduct and meetings compatible with these statutes.

§ 10 Administration Centre location

The Administration Centre of ICORN shall be located in Stavanger, Norway. The legal domicile of ICORN is Stavanger, Norway and any legal dispute concerning ICORN shall be brought before a Norwegian court of law.

§ 11 Legal entity (juridical person / legal person)

ICORN is a self-owned and independent legal entity with the impersonal and limited liability for debt.

The board members as well as the director are liable for the performance of their office, according to mandate given by the GA.

§ 12 Changing of the Statutes

1. Changes of the statutes can take place at any General Assembly where such a proposal is included in the agenda.
2. In order to be accepted, a two-thirds majority at this assembly must approve the changes.

§ 13 Dissolution

1. Dissolution of the ICORN can take place at any General Assembly where such a proposal is included in the agenda.
2. In order to be accepted, a three-quarters majority at this assembly must approve the changes.
3. In the event of dissolution of ICORN, ICORN's assets shall be divided in accordance with the purpose of the association. This is done by the final General Assembly.

§ 14 Taking effect

These statutes take effect 01.01.10. The first official General Assembly of ICORN is to be held no later than June 30, 2010. The members of the first board, elected in 2009, are elected with a mandate of one year, or until the first official GA, when they may be re-elected.