

**CONSTITUTION OF  
BIOLOGICAL PSYCHIATRY AUSTRALIA INC.**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

Section 1. The name of the Society shall be Biological Psychiatry Australia (herein "The Society").

**ARTICLE II**

**OBJECT**

Section 1. The object of the Society shall be to promote the study of all aspects of biology that relates to the underlying pathogenesis or treatment of psychiatric diseases.

**ARTICLE III**

**MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Any person actively interested in the purposes of the Society, whose application is accepted by the Membership Committee, may become a member by payment to the Treasurer of such a subscription as is specified by the Society.

Section 2. Any company, corporation or other organization may, with the approval of the Executive Committee, become a Corporate Member, on payment to the Treasurer of such a subscription as is specified by the Society.

Section 3. Honorary Life Membership of the Society may be granted to a person pre-eminent in Research and/or a person who has rendered conspicuous service to the Society. A nomination for Honorary Life Membership shall be sponsored by three members of the Society, and shall be accompanied by a supporting citation. Election of the candidate shall be by the full Executive Committee. Honorary Life Members shall pay no subscription to the Society, but shall be bound by the Articles and Rules of the Society and be entitled to voting privileges.

**ARTICLE IV**

**OFFICERS**

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, five Councillors and an elected Early Career Research Network (ECRN) Representative; these ten shall be members of the Executive Committee which shall have general charge of the affairs of the Society.

Section 2. The period between elections of the Executive Committee shall be called a 'term'. A term shall not be less than three years and not more than three years and three months except for the ECRN Representative whose term will be not be

less than one year and not more than one year and three months. A term will commence at the National Meetings of the Society, unless the period between two successive National Meetings lies outside the limits stated in this Section.

Section 3.

- (a) The President shall serve for a maximum of 1 term. In the event that the Office of President shall become vacant, the Vice-President shall succeed to the Presidency for the remainder of the unexpired term and will succeed in the following term in accordance with the provisions of Section 3(a) of this Article. Having served as President for the maximum term, a person shall be ineligible for re-election as an Officer Bearer within the Society.
- (b) The Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Councillors shall each be elected for one term and shall each be eligible for re-election for not more than 2 terms consecutively in the same position.
- (c) The ECRN Representative, except under exceptional circumstances, will only be eligible to serve for one term.

Section 4. Nomination for each office can be made by self nomination by any financial full member.

Section 5. The election of officers shall be by closed ballots solicited from the whole membership. The person for whom the largest number of votes is cast with respect to each position shall be declared elected. In the event of a tied ballot the result of the election will be decided by a name draw at the Annual General Meeting.

Section 6. If any vacancy other than that of President occurs in the Executive Committee, the remaining members of the Executive Committee shall, by a majority vote, appoint a member of the Society to fill that office for the duration of the unexpired term.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Section 1. The duties of the Officers and Councillors of the Society shall be as follows:

1. The President

- (a) To have general administrative charge of the affairs of the Society.
- (b) To preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee.
- (c) To preside over all business meetings of the Society.
- (d) To Chair the Organizing Committee of the National Meetings of the Society.

- (e) To be a member, ex-officio, of all committees.
- (f) To appoint or nominate representatives of the Society.

## 2. The Vice-President

- (a) To act in place of the President when the President is not present or is unable to discharge his duties as specified in paragraph 1 of this Section.

## 3. The Secretary

- (a) To keep minutes of all meetings.
- (b) To keep membership files.
- (c) To attend to correspondence and notices of the Society.
- (d) To keep a dossier of precedents and procedures, and to inform Executive Committee Members, Committee Chairmen and Meeting and Program Chairmen of such precedents.
- (e) To be a member, ex-officio, of all committees.

## 4. The Treasurer

- (a) To keep exact records of all the finances of the Society.
- (b) To maintain a bank account, and otherwise manage the financial affairs of the Society, on behalf of the Society, subject to approval of the Executive Committee.
- (c) To send out bills and collect the subscriptions of the Society.
- (d) To pay those bills of the Society whose payment has been approved by a member who has been specifically authorized by the Executive Committee.
- (e) To submit a budget for the approval of the Executive Committee.

## 5. The Councillors and Student Representative

- (a) To have general charge of the affairs of the Society, determining all policies and procedures not otherwise specified in the Constitution and Rules of the Society.
- (b) To consider and act upon reports to the executive Committee.
- (c) To make review the annual budget and authorize a member or members to approve expenditures under each item of the budget.
- (d) To act as Trustees of all funds and properties of the Society or to nominate no fewer than three members of the Society to act as trustees of any funds or property specified by the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

Section 1. An amendment to or annulment of the whole or any part of this Constitution may be formally proposed either by the Executive Committee, or by any financial member of the Society if they can gain the support of 9 other financial members. If approved by at least two thirds of the financial members after a postal (electronic or paper) ballot of the Society, the amendment or annulment will be made to the existing Constitution.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **INCOME AND PROPERTY**

Section 1. The income and property of the Society whensoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objectives of the Society and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the members or relatives of members of the Society, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith of remuneration to any officer or servant of the Society or to any members of the Society in return for services rendered or goods supplied to the Society or reasonable and proper rental for premises let by any member to the Society.

Section 2. Unless otherwise required by law, in the event of dissolution of this Society, the assets shall be distributed to such scientific organizations as the Executive Committee may determine, such scientific organizations having objectives similar to the Society and which prohibit the distribution of their income and property among their members.

## **RULE I**

Section 1. The annual membership subscription shall be set by the Executive Committee and will reflect changes in the costs of ensuring the Society is financially viable. Members who pay the subscription after the annual deadline may be subject to late payment fees. The Committee, at its discretion, may consider variable annual subscriptions (e.g. student, corporate or retired membership).

Section 2. Bills for annual membership subscriptions shall be sent during May/June in the year to which they apply, requesting payment no later than June 30. Members still in arrears at the end of the financial year (June 30) will be dropped from the membership list.

Section 3. Members desiring to terminate their membership in good standing shall submit resignations to reach the Treasurer not later than June 30 of the last year of membership.

Section 4. Any person who joins the Society after July 1 but within the financial year will only be entitled to member benefits from the time payment is received.

Section 5. All of the publications of the Society issued during any calendar year for free distribution to the members shall be distributed to each member of the Society who pays the subscription for that year insofar as copies of the publications are available at the time of the payment.

## **RULE II**

### **MEETINGS**

Section 1. Meetings shall be held at such times and places as designated by the Executive Committee. Notices of all meetings of the Society shall be distributed to the membership a reasonable time in advance.

Section 2. A business meeting shall be held in connection with every National Meeting of the Society. Due notice of this meeting shall be given to the membership.

Section 3. At all meetings of members for the transaction of business, a quorum shall consist of one sixth of the members or twenty five members, whichever shall be less, present in person, except as otherwise provided by law.

Section 4. Voting at business meetings on matters which may subsequently have to be submitted to the whole membership shall be by secret ballot.

## **RULE III**

### **COMMITTEES**

Section 1. The committees of the Society can consist of: (a) Standing Committees and (b) Temporary Committees.

Section 2. Standing Committees shall be those whose functions are of a more permanent nature, and shall be listed in the Rules, Section 6, below. These Committees shall report and, if necessary, make recommendations to the Executive Committee. While the investigative competences of the Standing Committees are unlimited, they are not to take actions involving the Society funds or prestige, nor use the Society name to solicit funds, nor commit the membership or the officers of the Society to a course of action without the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Each Standing Committee shall have three members with rolling tenure such that one of the three positions becomes vacant at the end of each term as previously defined in Article IV, Section 2. Members of Standing Committees shall each serve for three terms and shall be eligible for re-election but shall not serve for more than six consecutive terms. The longest serving member of each Standing

Committee shall be Chairman. In the case of the formation of a new Standing Committee the initial members shall be elected for three terms, two terms and one term, respectively.

Section 4. In the case of a vacancy on any Standing Committee, the remaining members of the Committee may, by a majority vote, appoint another member to fill the unexpired term.

Section 5. Standing Committees may appoint sub-committees to assist them when necessary.

Section 6. Standing and Temporary Committees of the Society shall be form as required by Executive Committee.

- (a) The Annual Conference will be organised with the vision of providing a strong and consistent scientific agenda and as such will involve members of the BPA Committee. The practical organisation of the Conference will be by the Conference Organising Committee (COC). The scientific content of the Conference will be finalised after consultation with a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC will include experts in the spread of disciplines that fall within the interests of the Society. Membership on the COC and SAC will not be mutually exclusive.

Section 7. Committees whose functions are of only a limited nature shall be classed as Temporary Committees. The President may appoint such Committees on the advice of the Executive Committee. Any such Committee shall cease to exist immediately following the acceptance of its final report by the Executive Committee.

## **RULE IV**

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

Section 1.

- (a) Six months before the expiry of a term, the Secretary shall send to the membership the list of nominations proposed by the Nominations Committee for all the positions for which vacancies will occur. For each of those positions the Secretary shall invite additional nominations to be submitted over the signatures of two members not later than four months before the expiry of the term.
- (b) Three months before the expiry of the term, the Secretary shall distribute a ballot paper to each member of the Society. The final date for the return of completed ballots shall be not later than two months before the expiry of the term. The results of the ballot shall be distributed to all members of the Society.
- (c) As far as possible, the distribution of election and subscription notices shall be co-ordinated with the mailing of information for the National Meetings of the Society.

## Biological Psychiatry Australia Membership Criteria

The mission of Biological Psychiatry Australia is to nurture high quality research within Australia that will inform on the cause or lead to improved treatments of psychiatric disorders. In line with this mission the governance of BPA should be by those who are committed to research with relevance to understanding the cause or improving the treat of psychiatric disorders. To that end there will be three levels of membership to BPA which are:

**FULL MEMBERSHIP:** available to all researchers who have an established tract record in the field as testified by at least 3 publications judge relevant to the area of biological psychiatry by the BPA Membership Committee. Full members will have full voting rights.

**STUDENT MEMBERSHIP:** available to students engaged in a course of study relevant to the goals and aspirations of BPA. Application for student membership will need to be accompanied by a letter of support from a supervisor or a full member of BPA. Student members vote to elect the Student Representative on Executive Committee.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP:** available to anyone employed in an area of relevance to the activities of BPA but who are not involved in active research. Associate membership will not have voting rights.

**CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP** will be available to organisations to who are engaged in an area of activity that is of relevance to the activities of BPA. Corporate membership will not have voting rights.

Membership fees will be set on an annual basis by the Executive Committee of BPA.