

CONSTITUTION

GUILD OF AGRICULTURAL JOURNALISTS OF IRELAND



MAY 2018

1. The name shall be the Guild of Agricultural Journalists of Ireland.
2. The term agricultural journalist, wherever it is used in connection with the Guild, means a person who is engaged in editing, writing, broadcasting by radio, television or online, filming, photographing, economics or marketing in the industries of farming, horticulture, forestry, fisheries, food production, or in journalism concerned with the affairs of the countryside and rural living.
3. The aims of the Guild shall be to promote and maintain the highest standards of agricultural journalism, to encourage a free exchange of ideas within the profession and to stimulate expansion and development within the field of agricultural journalism. Along with this, it will be the aim of the Guild to maintain and expand contacts on the international scene, to improve the knowledge and scope of its members and associates.
4. The Guild shall have Northern and Southern regions, and a central co-ordinating committee. The Northern Section represents members primarily living and working in Northern Ireland; the Southern Section represents members primarily living and working in the Republic of Ireland. The all-island structure facilitates All-Ireland membership of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ). At local level each region shall function with its own Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee. Each Chairman shall ex-officio be a vice-chairman of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists of Ireland. The regional committee shall have full autonomy within its own region and full control of its funds after making a contribution to the funds of the Central Committee. They shall act in accordance with the Constitution of the Guild.

All matters of policy shall be agreed by the Central Committee of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists of Ireland and each region shall have equal opportunity of representation.

5. The Central Committee shall consist of the President of the Guild, who shall be Chairman, the regional Chairmen, who shall be Vice-Chairmen, and four committee members, who shall be the Secretaries and Treasurers of the regional committees. The Central Committee shall meet yearly at the AGM. A budget shall be contained in a central fund managed by the Central Committee. The contribution to it by the two regions for IFAJ membership and costs shall be weighted according to membership.
6. The responsibilities of the President shall be to preside over all matters concerning the full membership of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists of Ireland. The positions for President and International Executive Delegate shall alternate every three years between North and South.

7. A Candidate for election to membership of the Guild must be proposed in writing, and seconded by existing members. The proposers shall satisfy themselves that the candidate possesses the necessary qualifications for the class of membership for which he/she is proposed.

The candidate must complete, and sign the application form supplied to him/her and comply with any other requirements of the regional committees, for the time being in office, and agree with any other requirements of the regional committees, for the time being in office, and agree to accept the decision of the committee upon his/her application, and to abide, if admitted, by the rules of the Guild.

Each application will be referred to the Committee of the region in which the member lives. Each regional committee will have full autonomy in the election of members within its region.

8. Full membership is open to those who are over 18 years of age and currently agricultural journalists, as defined in paragraph 2. Any members ceasing to hold these qualifications can be re-classified or have their membership terminated by the Committee (following a review by the Committee) at any time provided ten days notice in writing is given to the member. Full members may be entitled to apply for an IFAJ Press Card, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings, and to hold office as President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, national delegate, or international executive delegate.

9. Apart from full membership, the Guild may elect associates, under the same conditions of application as apply to membership. Associates may attend meetings but are not entitled to vote, or hold office within the Guild.

Associates will be those whose primary income is not derived from agricultural journalism as defined in paragraph 2.

Associates may also consist of individuals involved in the agricultural field, and whom the regional committees deem desirable to be associated with the Guild, or corporate entities (defined to include any form of company, public or private, limited or unlimited, group, association or partnership) with whom the Guild regional committees deem association to be desirable and such corporate entity must nominate a person to represent the said corporate entity.

10. Elected candidates shall be admitted on payment of the current annual subscription. An elected candidate shall not be entitled to any of the rights or privileges of membership or associateship, until such fees have been paid.
11. Persons whose membership has been terminated may apply for re-admission; and the regional committee, if it decides to re-admit, may impose such conditions of re-admission as it may deem appropriate.
12. Honorary membership, at the discretion of the Guild, and in exceptional circumstances, may be conferred on persons in recognition of special services to agricultural journalism.

13. The amount of the annual subscription shall be determined by a general meeting of the members in each region. Annual subscriptions shall be payable on the 1st January in any year and these and any entrance fee in operation shall be payable to the treasurer of the regional committee.

If any member or associate fails to pay his/her subscription within three months after it is due, the Treasurer shall by letter draw his/her attention to the fact; and if the subscription in arrears is not paid within 28 days from the date of such letter or within such further time as the regional committee may grant, such member or associate may, by a resolution of the Committee, be excluded from the Guild, and shall thereupon cease to be a member or associate.

14. A member or associate may retire from the Guild by sending in his/her resignation in writing to the Secretary of the relevant region (Southern or Northern Section).

15. The Guild will retain a Membership Contact Database of every member and associate – one for the Southern Section and one for the Northern Section. This will include information completed by each individual on the Membership Application form. Applicants for membership of the Guild accept that this personal data, including name, employer, role, email and contact details will be stored by the Guild for the duration that the membership is valid. The Membership Contact Database contains key information which demonstrates eligibility to be a member of the Guild; and is necessary for the purposes of communicating with members with information of legitimate interest, in relation to the Guild of Agricultural Journalists, the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ), the European Network of Agricultural Journalists (ENAJ) or associated interests. Such information may be sent to members by the regional Guild Secretary or Committee members either directly or using third party mailing software. The Membership Contact Database will not be shared with external third parties for non Guild related activities. Individual members who wish to opt out of their Guild membership and have their details removed from the Guild Membership Contact Database can do so at any time by contacting the Secretary of the relevant region (Southern or Northern Section).

16. Every letter or notice relating to any matter concerning the Guild, which shall be sent by the Secretary, or by the Committee to a member using the contact details furnished by such member, shall be deemed to have been properly sent, and he/she shall be deemed to have sufficient notice of the contents of such letter or notice. Any member who shall change his/her contact details, and/or his/her place of employment shall immediately give notice thereof in writing to the Secretary of the relevant region (Southern or Northern Section).

17. If it shall appear to either regional Committee or shall be represented to it by a requisition in writing signed by two or more members that there is reason to believe that a member or associate has been guilty of conduct which, in the absence of satisfactory explanation, seems or appears to render him/her unfit to remain a member or associate, the Committee shall consider the matter.

If decided that there is reasonable ground for further investigation there shall be sent to such member or associate in writing a statement of the conduct imputed to him. The said member or associate shall be given the opportunity of an explanation, in writing or by personal appearance, before the Regional Committee as he/she may elect; and, pending such explanation the Committee may suspend him from membership or associateship.

18. The Annual General Meetings of the regions shall be held as soon as possible after 1st January in each year at such time and place as the committees shall determine. The Annual General Meeting of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists of Ireland shall be held or have date confirmed and announced no later than May 31st in each year.

Notice of every Annual General Meeting shall be sent at least 14 clear days before the day to each member and associate of the region or of the Guild where appropriate.

18.1 The business of a Regional Annual General Meeting shall be :

- a. Election of President-Elect and International Executive Delegate – Elect subject to paragraph 6, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Delegates and Members of the Committee.
- b. Reception of the annual report and accounts and, at the discretion of the Chairman, any other matter of importance to the work and principles of the Guild.
- c. Order of proceedings at Annual General Meetings shall be :
 - I. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and of any intermediate special general meetings shall be submitted.
 - II. Annual Report (submission and acceptance).
 - III. The Accounts, signed (submission and adoption).
 - IV. Any business introduced by the Committee and other business deemed by the Chairman to be consistent with the work and principles of the Guild shall be submitted.
 - V. Should an Annual General Meeting be adjourned for any other purpose than that of election to fill any vacancies, the business to be transacted at the adjourned meeting shall be specified before such adjournment takes place and shall be entered on the Minutes. No business shall be transacted to such adjourned meetings which shall not have been so specified and entered.

18.2 The Business of the Annual General Meeting of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists of Ireland shall be :

- (a) Election of President and International Executive Delegate subject to paragraph 6.
- (b) Conduct the business and proceedings as outlined in 18.1 (b) and (c) above.

18.3 Notice of the motion for any alteration to or repeal of any rule must be in the hands of the Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting of the Guild of Agricultural Journalist of Ireland. The Secretary shall circulate such notices at least seven clear days before the date of the Annual General Meeting.

19. A special general meeting of the members may at any time be called by a regional or central committee or by notice in writing to the secretary, such notice to be signed by one-third of the members of the region or of the Guild, where applicable, who shall state in the notice the object for which such meeting is to be called.

Notice in writing must be given to the Secretary for holding any such meeting, of any motion to be moved at such meeting,

Notice of every Special General Meeting, specifying the object of it and on whose requisition it is called, shall be sent to each member by the Secretary seven clear days at least before the day for holding the meeting.

The time and place of such Special General Meeting shall be determined by the Committee.

20. In case any irregularity shall occur in the convening or holding of any General Meeting, or in any election or other proceedings taking place at any such meeting, and the same shall not be publicly objected to at such meeting, all proceedings of such meetings shall be of the same force and validity as if no such irregularity had occurred; but if any irregularity shall be publicly objected to, the meeting shall decide thereon, and such decision shall be final and conclusive.

21. The Regional Committee shall consist of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and six other members, and shall be competent to act until reduced by any means below the number of four.

On the day of the Annual General Meeting in each year, the two members of the Committee who have been longest in office can offer themselves for re-election.

The Committee may make, vary and rescind regulations of its meetings and proceedings, and for the appointment of committees, and generally, for the management of the affairs for the Guild, subject to the rules for the time being in force.

Minutes of the proceedings of every meeting of the Committee shall be taken by the Secretary, or, in his/her absence, by some person appointed by the Chairman, which minutes shall afterwards be retained for record, to be kept for that purpose, and approved by the Chairman of that or the next succeeding meeting.

The Committee may remove any Committee member based on majority vote of the Committee, for any reasonable cause.

The Committee may engage in such activities and incur such expenses on behalf of the Guild as will help forward the objects for which the Guild is established, but the Committee shall not have the power to pledge the credit of members of the Guild beyond the amount of their annual subscriptions. The Treasurer shall present a financial statement at each Committee meeting and shall submit a full report and bank statement in advance of the AGM.

Four members of any of the Committees shall form a quorum.