

SPEAK COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PROJECT

DRAFT CONSTITUTION PRESENTED FOR ADOPTION AT ITS 1ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PREAMBLE

In the face of daily hardships, oppressed communities are constantly striving to better their lives.

And whereas the commercial media does not express the problems, views and interests of our people, there is a need for alternative media to promote the achievement of our aspirations.

Now therefore the community newspaper project is established.

1. NAME

The name of the project shall be the SPEAK-COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PROJECT, herein after referred to as the "Project".

2. AIMS AND OBJECTS

- 2.1. To manage, produce and distribute the non-profit community based newspaper, SPEAK.
- 2.2. To articulate the needs, wishes and aspirations of the oppressed.
- 2.3. To assist in developing and strengthening a unity within and between communities.
- 2.4. To promote the concept of alternative media.

3. POWERS

- 3.1. The Project shall have all the powers necessary to achieve its objects as specified. These powers shall be exercised by the General Council or any body or person to which and whom the General Council delegates such powers.
- 3.2. The Project shall have the power to engage employees to perform duties specific to it, and on terms and conditions decided by it.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1. There shall be two categories of members.
 - 4.1.1. Ordinary members which shall be organisations which represent the views and aspirations of oppressed and freedom loving people.
 - 4.1.2. Associate members which shall be individuals who identify with the aims and objects of the project, who shall not be entitled to vote at General Council meetings.
- 4.2. Termination of membership
The General Council shall be entitled to terminate the membership of any member on the grounds that such member is acting in a manner which conflicts with the objects or interests of the project, provided that the decision is supported by two-thirds of the General Council members present and voting.

5. COMPOSITION OF THE PROJECT

- 5.1. The project shall consist of the following structures:
 - 5.1.1. General Council
 - 5.1.2. Executive
 - 5.1.3. Working Committee
- 5.2. The General Council
 - 5.2.1. Composition of the General Council
 - 5.2.1.1. The General Council shall consist of the members as defined in the membership clause 4.1.
 - 5.2.1.2. Application for membership to the project shall be

considered by the General Council at an Annual or Special General Council Meeting.

5.2.2. Functions and Powers of the General Council

- 5.2.2.1. The General Council shall determine the policies and direction of the project.
- 5.2.2.2. It shall elect the Executive.
- 5.2.2.3. It shall have the right to ratify all decisions taken by the Executive.
- 5.2.2.4. It shall have the right to inspect the records of the project.
- 5.2.2.5. It shall ratify the employment or dismissal of employees of the project.

5.2.3. Meetings of the General Council

5.2.3.1. Ordinary General Council Meetings

- (i) The General Council shall meet at least once after every three issues of SPEAK to consider and evaluate its content, production and distribution, and to conduct any other business.
- (ii) A quorum shall be constituted if half the voting members are present.
- (iii) A meeting adjourned because of lack of quorum shall constitute a quorum at the next meeting.

5.2.3.2. Annual General Council Meetings

- (i) Such a meeting shall be held once a year.
- (ii) Its function shall be to:
 - (a) Elect the Executive .
 - (b) Consider the annual reports of the Executive.
 - (c) Consider additions or amendments to the constitution, or policies of the Project.
 - (d) Consider any other matter decided by the General Council.
- (iii) A quorum shall be constituted if at least two thirds of voting members are present.
- (iv) A meeting adjourned because of lack of quorum shall constitute a quorum at the next meeting convened for such purpose.

5.2.3.3. Special General Council Meetings

- (i) Such meetings shall be held as decided by the General Council or the Executive for the purposes of
 - (a) Additions or amendments to the constitution or policies of the Project.
 - (b) Consideration of applications and termination of membership to the project.
 - (c) Quorum shall be the same as for Annual General Council Meetings.

5.3. The Executive

5.3.1. Composition of the Executive

5.3.1.1. The Executive, which shall be elected by the General Council at an Annual General Meeting shall consist of:

- (i) Chairperson
- (ii) Treasurer
- (iii) Five ordinary members
- (iv) Full-time organiser(s).

5.3.1.2. The Executive members shall be eligible for re-election.

5.3.2. Functions and Powers of the Executive

- 5.3.2.1. It shall control the Project on a day to day basis.
- 5.3.2.2. It shall ensure that all decisions taken by the General Council are carried out.
- 5.3.2.3. It shall at all times be responsible to the General Council.
- 5.3.2.4. It shall keep proper financial and other records of all activities of the Project.
- 5.3.2.5. It shall control and supervise the use of the assets of the Project.
- 5.3.2.6. It shall employ or dismiss staff.
- 5.3.2.7. It shall ratify members of the Working Committee.
- 5.3.2.8. The chairperson of the Executive, or in his/her absence, another member of the Executive decided by the Executive, shall chair the General Council Meetings.

5.3.3. Meetings of the Executive

- 5.3.3.1. The Executive shall meet at least once a month and when necessary.
- 5.3.3.2. A quorum shall be constituted if at least half of the Executive members are present.
- 5.3.3.3. A meeting adjourned because of lack of quorum shall constitute a quorum at the next meeting.

5.4. Working Committee

5.4.1. Composition of the Working Committee

- 5.4.1.1. The Working Committee may consist of:
 - (i) Executive members
 - (ii) Bona fide members of member organisations
 - (iii) Associate members.

5.4.2. Functions and Powers of the Working Committee

- 5.4.2.1. It shall be responsible for the production of the newspaper.
- 5.4.2.2. It shall assist employers of the project in executing their functions.
- 5.4.2.3. It shall form committees necessary for the execution of the tasks of the project, subject to ratification by the Executive.
- 5.4.2.4. It shall be accountable to the Executive.

5.4.3. Meetings of the Working Committee

- 5.4.3.1. The Working Committee shall meet when necessary.
- 5.4.3.2. Meetings shall be convened by the organiser(s).

6. DECISIONS

6.1. Decisions about

- 6.1.1. additions or amendments to the constitution
 - 6.1.2. application and termination of membership to the project
- shall be carried by two thirds of the General Council members present, and voting.

6.2. All other decisions of the General Council, Executive, and Working Committee shall be taken by a simple majority.

6.3. The chairperson of the Executive shall have a deliberation and a casting vote.

7. FINANCE

7.1. The Executive shall open and operate a banking account in the name of the Project.

7.2. The Treasurer and two other designated members of the Executive shall be signatories to the account.

7.3. The Treasurer shall keep proper financial records of the Project.

7.4. Financial statements shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting or as requested by the General Council.

8. LEGAL STATUS

The Project shall have the legal capacity to sue or be sued in its own name.

9. DISSOLUTION

The Project shall be dissolved on the agreement of two thirds of voting members at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting. Upon dissolution the assets of the project shall be given to an organisation with similar aims and objects as determined by the General Council.

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