# International Council on English Braille

# 2024 Bylaws Committee Report

President Judy Dixon and the Executive Committee appointed Mary Schnackenberg (New Zealand) to chair the Bylaws Committee for the 2020-2024 term. Other members of the Bylaws Committee are Paul Brown (New Zealand), Christo de Klerk (South Africa), Judy Dixon (President ex officio), Jen Goulden (Canada), Ntshavheni Netshituni (South Africa), and Ilka Stäglin (Ireland).

During the 2016-2020 term, some amendments were suggested for the Constitution. These amendments were not distributed to Full Members 60 days prior to the start of the 2020 General Assembly on 18 October 2020, in accordance with Article 9.3. Therefore, they could not be adopted. The General Assembly asked the Executive Committee to organise an email vote among the 2020 Assembly delegates. A listserv was set up, the email vote was held and the Constitution dated 30 November 2020 was adopted.

In the current term, we worked first on the Constitution. Separately we have distributed two documents for discussion at the General Assembly. ICEB Constitution Proposed with Comments May 2024 lists the proposed amendments with the rationale. ICEB Constitution Proposed Without Comments May 2024 is a version which looks like the Constitution if it were adopted as proposed.

In accordance with Article 9.3, the Bylaws Committee recommended these amendments to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee adopted the proposed amendments at its meeting on 12 February 2024. The Constitution with the proposed amendments was sent out to the Executive Committee with a request that Full Member representatives share the file with their braille authorities. Feedback was requested and we received one comment by the due date of 15 March. The suggestion was that we consider including a definition of the word "Country" in the Constitution. We are referring the comment to the incoming Executive Committee for consideration in the next term.

The 26 proposed amendments bring consistency in the numbering of the Articles and the language used. Two new sub articles deal with Cessation of Full Membership and the Right of Appeal Against Cessation of Full Membership. Another sub article gives the Executive Committee the power to meet face-to-face under exceptional circumstances between meetings of the General Assembly in addition to the Mid-Term Executive Committee meeting. Finally we recommend a deletion of one sub article in Article 8 which is about finances. We recommend this be moved to the Bylaws so treasurers working with ICEB Committees can change processes depending on what will work with different banks in the different countries of ICEB.

We look forward to discussion of the proposed amendments to the Constitution at the General Assembly on 27 May 2024.

Turning to the Bylaws, these are circulated for information to Full Members. The Executive Committee is authorised to amend the Bylaws to keep current the processes that ICEB follows as times and technologies change. The Bylaws Committee must give 30 days' notice to the Executive Committee of any proposed amendments.

During the term we changed the order of the clauses in the Bylaws to line up with the numbering of the Articles in the Constitution. Readers of the Constitution should find it easier to jump to the relevant provisions in the Bylaws. We also changed the language in the Bylaws to line up with the proposed amendments to the Constitution.

ICEB was approached by two countries about their becoming new Full Members. That caused us to look carefully at the Constitution and the Bylaws. We found the Bylaws needed some attention to guide us in working with potential members who could not afford the ICEB Membership Fees.

In Clause 4 Membership, a new sub clause says that Full Membership commences once a formal written acknowledgement has been received of the acceptance by the new Full Member of the terms of their ICEB membership.

In Clause 8 Finances are some additions and amendments about Membership Fees. Clause 8.3.2 and 8.3.3 guide the Executive Committee with a process to follow when a potential new Full Member cannot afford the full membership fee. We sincerely appreciated help from the World Blind Union in this regard.

A new Clause 8.5 deals with how to manage the costs of the officers who are not representatives of Full Members when ICEB does not have sufficient funds to pay for all three officers to attend face to face meetings. Specifically these officers are the President, the Immediate Past President and the Code Maintenance Officer.

Constitutions and Bylaws require detail work and time. Members of the Bylaws Committee and the Executive Committee have provided thoughtful input into the deliberations and precise wording during this term for which they are sincerely thanked.

Mary Schnackenberg

Chair Bylaws Committee

23 April 2024