

# **RSE Bylaws**

**(Proposal December 2012; Revised January 12 and April 11, 2013)**

## **A. Membership**

1. In accordance with the Constitution membership is open to any individual subscribing to its aims and interested in promoting the purposes of the Rhetoric Society of Europe.
2. Applications to become a member must be addressed to the President of the society or a membership officer. Upon receipt of the application membership must be granted within four weeks or else a written response outlining the reasons for a rejection must be made available to the applicant. Membership rejections must be reported to the General Assembly at its next meeting.
3. Membership applications may not be rejected based on the location, place of work, nationality, academic specialty, gender of the applicant or similar reasons.
4. Membership in the society may be distinguished between different classes. Among these are: regular membership with full financial dues and voting rights, student membership with reduced financial dues and full voting rights, and honorary memberships with no financial dues and no voting rights. Invitation to become an honorary member may be extended by the executive board with supermajority (2/3 of vote) to a person that has significantly fostered the purposes of the society.

## **B. General Assembly**

1. The General Assembly convenes at least every two years and by special request as outlined in the constitution.

2. The President of the society presides over the General Assembly unless otherwise noted. All members of the society have the right to participate in, vote, and speak at the General Assembly. The speaking rights at the General Assembly are regulated by the President or a specially appointed officer.

3. For the duration of the election of the new members of the Executive Board, the President hands the rights and duties of presiding over the General Assembly over to an Election Officer who is elected for this purpose by the General Assembly and who may not be part of the Executive Board and may not run in the election. As soon as the newly completed Executive Board has elected or reelected the next President, the Election Officer resigns and the President presides over the rest of the General Assembly.

4. If the President wants to take a partisan position in a discussion during the General Assembly or otherwise believes that there might be a conflict of interest, the President may hand the rights and duties of presiding over the General Assembly over to one of the other members of the Executive Board for the duration of the period in question.

5. The agenda of the General Assembly is determined by the President in cooperation with the Executive board, as well as by proposals from members of the society as prescribed by the constitution. The President must make the tentative agenda available to all members at least four weeks before the General Assembly. Additional agenda items may be added by the president, the simple majority of the Executive Board or the simple majority of the members present or represented at the beginning of the General Assembly. Items that have been added thus may not lead to or involve votes or binding decisions. The president may in agreement with the simple majority of the Executive Board change the order of the items on the agenda.

6. The General Assembly holds the exclusive rights that are outlined in the constitution, Article 7, Section H. Additionally the General Assembly may decide by simple majority to add other exclusive powers to the list of items enumerated in that section. The General Assembly reserves the right to collect an annual fee from its members. To this purpose the Executive Board proposes a fee structure to the General Assembly at its biannual meeting, which the General Assembly can amend and approve. The proposal must be made available to the members of the society together with the tentative agenda at least four weeks in advance. Decisions about membership fees require a simple majority of votes. The fees are reconsidered during each biannual meeting of the General Assembly.

7. The Treasurer provides the members with a written report about the finances of the RSE not later than 2 weeks before the General Assembly. The Treasurer - or a replacer from the Executive Board - presents the accounts during the General Assembly. The General Assembly gives the discharge to the Treasurer and the Executive Board.

### **C. Executive Board**

1. In accordance with the constitution the Executive Board consists of twelve members from diverse national and academic backgrounds that are elected by the General Assembly.

2. The President announces upcoming vacancies in the Executive Board to the members at least eight weeks before the election. If possible the President indicates if the Executive Board member currently holding the position is permitted to and willing to run for a second term.

3. Candidates for the Executive Board of the society must be members in good standing of the society at the time of their election.

4. Candidates of the Executive Board may be nominated by: a) The President, or b) a member of the Executive Board, or c) a member of the Advisory Board, or d) ten members of the society or 5% of members of the society whichever number is greater. The president shall determine in advance of the election if the nominees are willing to stand. All regular nominations must be made at least four weeks before the election and must be made available to the members with the invitation to the General Assembly. If fewer candidates have been nominated than are necessary for the amount of openings, then the President opens nominations at the beginning of the General Assembly. In this case any member physically present at the Assembly has the right to nominate a candidate that is also physically present.

5. If the amount of candidates is larger than double the amount of vacancies, then the election will be held in two rounds. The first round reduces the candidate pool to a number that equals double the amount of vacancies. During the first round each member casts votes in favor of up to three candidates. The election must be held by secret ballot if at least one member of the General Assembly requests it. The candidates enter the pool in the order of the amount of votes they receive. If two or more candidates receive the same amount of votes that would be necessary to qualify for the pool then all candidates with this amount of votes qualify. All candidates that are qualified for the second round of elections have the right to give a brief oral introduction of themselves and their aims before the second round of elections. During the second round of elections each member casts votes in favor of up to three candidates. Candidates are elected to the vacant positions by relative majority. If candidates tie for the last vacant position the election for this position will be repeated with one vote per member until all positions have been determined.

6. If the amount of candidates is smaller or equal to double the amount of vacancies then the election proceeds directly to the final round of votes. Each member casts votes in favor of up to three candidates. Candidates are elected to the vacant positions by relative majority. If candidates tie for the last vacant position the

election for this position will be repeated with one vote per member until all positions have been determined.

7. As soon as the vacant positions of the Executive Board have been filled the General Assembly goes into short recess to allow the Executive Board to elect officers from its midst. As soon as the officers are elected the General Assembly continues under the new presidency.

#### **D. Officers**

1. The Executive Board elects a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer, a Secretary, a Journal Editor, and other officers as needed from its midst. All officers must be confirmed following the election of new Executive Board members at the biannual General Assembly. Officers may be reelected for as long as they are members of the Executive Board.

2. At the beginning of the election the Executive board elects an Election Officer from among its members who may not currently be an Officer of the Executive Boards or run for one of the Officer positions. The Election Officer presides over the election of the Officers and takes minutes of the election or determines a person to take the minutes of the election.

3. Any member of the board with the exception of the Election Officer has the right to nominate candidates for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Journal Editor, and other offices. The officers are elected in the order above. No person may hold more than one office. Each election is held separately. Officers are elected by absolute majority of votes cast. If more than two candidates run for a position and no candidate receives an absolute majority in the first round then a run off between the two candidates with the most votes is held. All votes must be held by secret ballot if at least one member of the Executive Board requests it. The position of the Journal Editor must be confirmed by the General Assembly by simple majority. The

president may appoint minor officers for duties such as editing the newsletter. These minor officers do not have to be members of the Executive Board and do not become board members by virtue of their office. The Executive Board has the right to determine additional officers that it elects from its midst.

### **E. Advisory Board**

1. In accordance with the constitution, the Advisory Board provides the Executive Board with advice on the long-term strategies of the association as well as any other kind of counseling the Executive Board may seek from the Advisory Board.

2. The Advisory Board consists of ten members. Upon vacancy of a Advisory Board member position the Executive Board elects by supermajority (2/3 of votes) a new Advisory Board member, carefully taking into account the desire to attract high profile rhetorical scholars to its board and to reflect the national, cultural and academic diversity of the society. Former service to the society as a member of the Executive Board shall be favorably taken into account when determining candidates for a vacant Advisory Board seat.

3. If the Executive Board finds that one of the members of the Advisory Boards acts to the significant detriment of the Society, the Executive Board may revoke the Advisory Board membership of that person with a supermajority (2/3) of the votes cast. The revoking must be justified to the members of the society by the President at the next General Assembly.

### **F. Other**

The bylaws of the society are adopted and amended by a supermajority (2/3) of the members of the society present or represented at the General Assembly. Any request to amend the bylaws must be announced at least four weeks before the General Assembly.