

Constitution of the New Zealand Association for the Study of Religions (NZASR)

as adopted by the general meeting of the NZASR in Queenstown on 8 June 2007

Article 1. Name and incorporation

- i) The name of the association is the New Zealand Association for the Study of Religions.
- ii) The official acronym is NZASR.
- iii) The association shall be legally incorporated in New Zealand. In the event of disputes arising concerning these statutes and their application informal mediation shall be sought. In the event that attempts at mediation should fail, all disputes and legal actions which might arise, shall as a last resort, to the exclusion of all other official bodies and insofar as admissible by law, be adjudicated exclusively by the judge entitled to adjudicate in the subject of dispute in the High Court of New Zealand.

Article 2. Objective

- i) The objective of the NZASR shall be to promote the academic study of religions by all scholars normally resident in New Zealand whose research has a bearing on the subject.
- ii) The objective of the NZASR shall be pursued by the usual means of scholarly activity such as the arrangement of conferences, symposia or colloquia, the encouragement of scholarly publications, the exchange of information through electronic or other means, and such other activities as the association or its elected officers shall from time to time determine.

Article 3. Affiliation

- i) The NZASR is a member association of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR).

Article 4. Membership

- i) Membership of the NZASR shall be open to all who share its objective. Membership may take the form of ordinary membership, associate membership and honorary membership.
- ii) Applications for membership shall be addressed to the executive committee of the NZASR which shall have the right to approve or reject such applications.
- iii) The membership of any individual may be terminated by decision of the General Meeting for good and sufficient reason and after an opportunity for representations to the contrary has been extended.
- iv) Ordinary and associate members shall pay an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be determined from time to time by the General Meeting. The rights and privileges of ordinary and associate membership depend on payment of the membership subscription in advance for the membership period in question.
- v) Associate membership without voting rights or rights to office can be granted to students enrolled at any New Zealand University with an academic interest in the study of religions.
- vi) Honorary membership may be granted to individuals by the General Meeting in exceptional cases with the same rights and privileges as ordinary membership.

Article 5. General Meeting

- i) The governing body of the NZASR shall be the General Meeting of its members, presided over by the current president.
- ii) The General Meeting shall be convened at least once every two years, and whenever possible shall take place in the context of an academic conference organised by the NZASR.
- iii) Notice of a meeting of the General Meeting shall be given in advance by the secretary through a widely available form of communication such as a printed bulletin or an electronic medium. Where the period of notice is less than 30 days notice must be sent to all members individually in writing.
- iv) The agenda for the meeting of the General Meeting shall be published in advance when the meeting is called. At the decision of the executive committee, or if at least ten members in good standing submit this preference in writing, any issue can be referred for decision to a postal and/or electronic ballot which shall be conducted by the secretary.
- v) The minimum number of voting members required for a meeting of the General Meeting (quorum) shall be ten, of whom at least three shall be members of the current executive committee. If the quorum is not achieved, a further meeting shall be called at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

vi) Those entitled to vote during the General Meeting are honorary members and ordinary members who have paid their subscription for the year in which the General Meeting takes place. Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of members with voting rights present at a meeting, except for changes to the constitution or a motion to dissolve the association which shall require a two thirds majority.

vii) Specific rules of procedure may be adopted by the General Meeting itself. In the absence of such rules concerning any procedural matters which arise or in the event of dispute concerning their interpretation during the course of a validly convened meeting, the decisions of the president on procedural questions relating to the conduct of the meeting in question is final. The General Meeting may at the same meeting appoint a procedures committee to consider rules of procedure in detail and make recommendations to a future meeting of the General Meeting.

Article 6. Executive committee and officers

i) The business of the NZASR shall be conducted by an executive committee consisting of (a) designated officers who shall be elected at the General Meeting, and (b) further members who may be co-opted onto the committee by the designated officers from time to time.

ii) The following shall be elected to designated offices: a president, a president-elect and a secretary. The executive committee may assign additional functions to its members on an ad hoc basis. The conduct of elections and the periods of office are determined in Article 7.

iii) The NZASR may be represented formally by any of the designated officers in accordance with their specified function or as otherwise delegated by the president or by decision of the executive committee. Voting rights on the International Committee of the IAHR will be assumed by the president and the secretary or other delegated members, taking account of the rules of the IAHR.

iv) The president and the secretary shall present an oral or written report at each meeting of the General Meeting. The president in office conducts the General Meeting of the NZASR and the meetings of the executive committee. These functions may be delegated by the president, or in the event of serious illness or similar incapacitation by the executive committee, to one of the members.

v) Specific rules of procedure may be adopted by the executive committee itself. In the absence of such rules concerning any procedural matters which arise or in the event of dispute concerning their interpretation during the course of a validly convened meeting, the decisions of the president on procedural questions relating to the conduct of the meeting in question is final. The executive committee may at the same meeting appoint a procedures committee to consider rules of procedure in detail and make recommendations to a future meeting of the executive committee.

Article 7. Conduct of elections and periods of office

i) The term of office of the president shall expire at the next General Meeting following the General Meeting at which they take office.

ii) The secretary shall be elected for a period of three years.

iii) An officer may be re-elected, except that no member shall serve in the same office for more than two successive terms, except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of a two thirds majority of the General Meeting.

iv) Other members of the committee shall normally serve the same period as the president, save that there shall be no restriction serving successive terms.

Article 8. Amendments

i) Amendments to this constitution may be made by two thirds majority of the General Meeting. Details of proposed amendments must be given to the members in advance and not later than the notice for the convening of the General Meeting. Amendments shall come into force immediately after the conclusion of the meeting at which they are carried.

Article 9. Dissolution

i) The NZASR can be dissolved only at the recommendation of the executive committee and by decision of the General Meeting for which a two thirds majority is required. In the event of dissolution such assets as remain after the settling of all liabilities shall be transferred to the IAHR if in existence or to such other body as has the closest affinity to the objective of the NZASR.