

Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium
CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
Adopted by the Consortium of States July 12, 1997
Amended June 10, 2005 and June 6, 2007

Article 1: Name and Purpose

- Section A: The name of this organization shall be the Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium.
- Section B: The purposes for which this Consortium of Agriculture in the Classroom (AIRC) Programs formed include the following:
1. To assume and maintain an active national role in promoting agricultural literacy programs.
 2. To provide input into the selection process of the AIRC National Program Leader at the United States Department of Agriculture and work closely with the National AIRC Program Office.
 3. Provide leadership and a professional network for state Agriculture in the Classroom Programs.
 4. Work to insure continuity of the Agriculture in the Classroom Program.
 5. Identify funding sources for agriculture programs that would meet Consortium objectives.
 6. Work in cooperation with other national agricultural leadership and/or literacy programs to achieve common goals and objectives.

Article 2: Membership

- Section A: Each USDA recognized, state sanctioned Agriculture in the Classroom program will select one person and a designated alternate to represent their state, District or U.S. Insular area as a voting member of the Consortium.
1. A state in good standing is defined as one that has paid dues and submitted the state report by the annual published deadlines.
- Section B: The Consortium will recognize four United States Agriculture in the Classroom Regions:
1. Western Region: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau.
 2. Central Region: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.
 3. Eastern Region: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, District of Columbia.
 4. Southern Region: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States.

Section C: Consortium Executive Committee

1. Each region will select two Consortium members from their region to serve on the Consortium Executive Committee. Each regional representative will have one vote on the Consortium Executive Committee.
2. Executive Committee members will be voted in by the members of their respective regions annually at the annual Consortium meeting.

Article 3: Officers

Section A: The officers of this organization shall consist of the President of the Executive Committee, the President-Elect, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Past President.

Article 4: Dues

Section A: Dues shall be set by the Consortium and paid annually.

Section B: Only members that have paid their dues will have a vote during any Consortium meeting and access to any Consortium benefits including grants.

Article 5: Meetings

Section A: The Executive Committee will meet at least annually.

Section B: The Consortium membership will meet at least annually.

Article 6: Amendments

Section A: This Constitution may be amended or changed at any Consortium business meeting by a two-thirds vote of at least 50 percent of the total Consortium membership.

Section B: Any proposed amendment must be submitted to the Consortium Membership at least 30 days, in writing, prior to the meeting at which the voting will take place.

Article 7: Bylaws

Section A: Bylaws will be added as needed to govern this organization.

Section B: Bylaws can be added or amended at any Consortium business meeting by a majority vote of at least 50 percent of the total Consortium membership.

BYLAWS

Article 1: Basic Policies

- Section A: The organization shall be non-commercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.
- Section B: The name of the organization or the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used to endorse or promote a commercial concern or in connection with any partisan interest or for any purpose not appropriately related to promotion or purposes of the organization.
- Section C: The organization shall not -- directly or indirectly -- participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.
- Section D: Upon the dissolution of this organization, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the organization, the remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more nonprofit funds, foundations, or organizations which have established their tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as agreed upon by the Consortium membership.

Article 2: Membership and Dues

- Section A: Membership is defined in the Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium Constitution in Article 2, Section A. Membership in the organization shall be made available without regard to race, color, creed or national origin.
- Section B: Members will be invoiced annually.
- Section C: Annual dues shall be paid by member states. Any changes in dues will be recommended by the Consortium Executive Committee and voted on by full membership at the next Annual Meeting.

Article 3: Officer Duties and Responsibilities

- Section A: President-Elect and President of the Executive Committee
1. The President-Elect of the Executive Committee will be selected by the State Consortium representatives annually. The President-Elect will serve for one year, and then become the President the following year.
 2. The President will serve for one year and then serve for one year as the past-president.
 3. Any Consortium Representative will be eligible for the Office of the President-Elect and can be nominated during the Annual Consortium Meeting. Votes will be tallied by a written ballot, and the nominee with the most votes will become the President-Elect of the Executive Committee.
 4. Duties of the President:
 - a. conduct meetings and business of the Consortium.
 - b. serve as the contact between the USDA National Director and the Consortium.
 - c. serve as the contact between the agricultural industry and the Consortium.

5. Duties of the President-Elect:

- a. conduct meetings in the absence of the President.
- b. assist the President and accept duties as assigned.

Section B: Secretary

1. The Secretary will be elected from the Executive Committee by the Executive Committee.
2. The duties of the Secretary shall be to:
 - a. keep accurate minutes.
 - b. carry out necessary correspondence.
 - c. call meetings to order in the absence of the President or President-Elect.
 - d. maintain a current copy of the constitution.
 - e. count votes.

Section C: Treasurer

1. The Treasurer will be elected from the Executive Committee by the Executive Committee.
2. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to:
 - a. act as the custodian of the Consortium funds.
 - b. invoice states and collect dues.
 - c. keep accurate financial records.
 - d. serve as Chairman for the financial committee.
 - e. keep an accurate list of Consortium members.
 - f. file IRS documents as needed

Section D: Past President of the Executive Committee

1. The Past President continues as a member of the Executive Committee for one year, to provide guidance and assist the active Executive Committee President.
2. The Past President will have one vote on the Executive Committee.

Section E: Regional Representatives of the Consortium

1. Each Region shall have 2 representatives to the Consortium Executive Committee. Representatives will serve a two year term and will be elected to staggered terms of office. The Secretary and the Treasurer of the Consortium will be regional representatives of the Consortium.
2. The duties of the Regional Representative shall be to:
 - a. represent regional interests at Executive Committee meetings, and act as a liaison in communication between members of the region and the Executive Committee.
 - b. attend (when possible) meetings of the Consortium, and the Consortium Executive Committee.
 - c. plan, Facilitate, and Host regional meetings of the Consortium annually.
 - d. assist the officers of the Consortium in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Consortium.

Section F: Term of Office

1. No officer will serve more than three consecutive terms.
2. Regional Representatives will be voted upon by their regions and will be subject to their regional rules for selection.

Section G: Officer Vacancy and Resignation

1. The President-Elect of the Consortium will serve on the Executive Committee for 3 years. The first year as the President-Elect (defector vice president), the second year as the President and the third year as the Past President. If at any time during his/her term of office he or she must resign, the Executive Committee must receive his or her resignation two months prior to their departure.
2. If any officer or Regional Representative of the Consortium Executive Committee cannot complete his or her term of office, he/she must submit his/her resignation to the President in writing prior to their departure.
3. If the President cannot complete his or her term of office, he or she must submit a resignation to the President-Elect two months prior to his or her departure.

Section H: Officer and Executive Committee Replacements

1. President-Elect: A nomination form will be sent out to each state Consortium member to submit nominations at least 60 days before the Annual Meeting. A list of candidates will be available at least 30 days before the Annual Meeting and sent to the members.
2. President: The President-Elect will become the President and nominees and balloting will be conducted to elect a new President-Elect.
3. Secretary and Treasurer of the Executive Committee: Since these officers are elected by the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee will conduct another election to determine the member who will hold the vacated office.
4. Regional Representatives of the Executive Committee: If a regional representative is unable to fill the term of office, the office will remain vacated until the next annual meeting, when a new representative will be elected to fill the remainder of the term.

Section I: Eligibility for Grants

1. As member of the Consortium Executive Committee, primary interest will be in developing the National AITC Program.
2. Service in Leadership Roles should not grant the impression of favoritism when being considered for grants and awards. Therefore any Consortium Regional Representative may apply for various grants administered by the consortium but the regional representative may not personally financially benefit from involvement in said grant.
3. The President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President are not eligible to apply for the ACE grant during their term of service.
4. A state must be in good standing to be eligible for grants which includes paying dues and submitting a state report by the published deadlines. Exceptions will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Consortium Executive Committee.

Section J: Professional Services

1. The Consortium Executive Committee may hire professional services to assist them in administering specific programs.
2. Any person/entity who is hired to administer a specific program on behalf of the consortium is ineligible to apply for any grant they administer.
3. The Consortium Executive Committee will review professional services annually to insure adequate administration.

Article 4: Nominations

Section A: Nominations for President-Elect will be taken annually at least 60 days before the Annual Meeting.

Article 5: Elections

Section A: The election of the President-Elect and Executive Committee Members will be conducted at the Annual Meeting.

Section B: A list of nominees will be mailed 30 days prior to the annual meeting to each state in the Consortium.

Article 6: Meetings of the Consortium

Section A: Annual Meeting

1. When at all possible the Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference; however, the Annual Meeting may be convened at anytime during the year as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee upon 60 days notice to the Consortium voting membership.
2. The privileges of making motions, debating, and/or voting at the Annual Meeting shall be limited to Consortium Members or their designated alternate upon evidence or receipt of payment of dues.

Section B: Consortium Executive Committee Meetings

1. When possible members of the Consortium Executive Committee will meet in Washington D.C. for a fall and spring meeting.
2. The Fall meeting will, when possible, be hosted by the USDA, and the consortium executive committee (President, President-Elect, Past President, Regional Representatives) along with Committee Chairs (as recommended by the Executive Committee) will be invited.
3. The Spring meeting will be hosted by the Consortium, and the Executive Committee will attend along with other members of the Consortium and guests as invited by the Executive Committee.

Article 7: Fiscal Year and Audit

Section A: The fiscal year for the Consortium shall be from August 1 to July 31, inclusive.

Section B: The books and financial records of the Consortium will be internally audited at the close of the fiscal year and at any other time deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.

Article 8: Parliamentary Authority

Section A: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Consortium in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws.

Section B: Upon adoption of this Constitution, in its first year, each region will select their two Regional Representatives and they will designate one to serve a two year term and the other a one year term.

Article 9: Committees of the Consortium

Section A: Committees of the Consortium will be appointed by the President with approval of the Executive Committee. Standing Committees include Outreach and Public Relations, Adhoc committees can be named by the President. Members of the Committee will reflect a geographic balance when possible.

Section B: Outreach Committee

1. The purpose of this committee will be to assist the Consortium with maintaining contact with Congressional leaders.
2. Members of the Consortium and the Outreach Committee will assist Congressional leaders by providing accurate and timely information on AITC programs.

Section C: Public Relations Committee

1. The purpose of this committee will be to assist the Consortium with promoting the AITC program in various media sources.
2. Members of this committee will assist the Executive Committee in promoting AITC programs across the nation and in specific regions.

Article 10: Partners of the AITC Consortium

Section A: The purpose of the Partners of the AITC Consortium will be to serve in an advisory capacity as part of the Agriculture in the Classroom network. Entities involved with Agriculture in the Classroom and who promote agricultural literacy may be Partners of the AITC Consortium. These entities will include, but not be limited to non-profit organizations, agribusinesses and individuals.

Section B: Nominations to Partners will be submitted to the Consortium membership at its annual meeting and will be approved through majority vote of the Consortium.

Section C: Representatives from the entities serving on Partners will not have voting privileges; however, they are invited to attend the annual Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium meeting to offer guidance and advice as part of the total Ag in the Classroom network.

Section D: Members of Partners will not be required to pay dues, but they are encouraged to be contributors to the Consortium or to the annual Agriculture in the Classroom conference.

Section E: Partners of the AITC Consortium will be reviewed annually at the Consortium meeting for continued membership as Partners.