



THE WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR LASER THERAPY

BYLAWS AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION (Revision 4)

Article 1: Name and Terminology

- The name of the Association is “The World Association for Laser Therapy” (WALT).
- The term “Laser Therapy” is taken to encompass all forms of treatment mediated by the photobiomodulating effects of light occurring without thermal effects on irradiated tissue.

Article 2: Aims of the Association

The aims of the Association are:-

1. To promote the evidence-based clinical application of laser therapy in the fields of medical practice, dentistry, veterinary medicine and allied health professions.
2. To encourage research into the clinical application of laser therapy in accordance with internationally accepted standards of best practice.
3. To encourage laboratory-based research into mechanisms of photobiomodulation.
4. To promote education, encourage international co-operation and provide a forum for information exchange.
5. To establish WALT as the international reference body for accreditation of standards in research and education in laser therapy across all disciplines.

Article 3: Membership

Membership of the Association will be granted under the following categories:-

1. **Member** – membership open to professionals working in mainstream specialties or to scientists involved in research or education. Full subscription (mandatory) includes receipt of journal “Photomedicine and Laser Surgery” and WALT e-newsletter. Members enjoy voting rights and are eligible for election to the Executive Council and the Advisory Committee.

2. **Associate Member** – membership open to duly qualified healthcare workers in associated specialties. Subscribers have a choice of full subscription as above or WALT only (no journal) plus receipt of e-newsletter. Associate members enjoy voting rights and are eligible for election to the Advisory Committee.
3. **Student Member** – membership open to undergraduate and postgraduate students undertaking a course of study leading to a higher qualification. Student members have on-line access to the journal for research purposes. Photo-ID proof of status is required. Student members do not have voting rights nor are they eligible for election to the Executive Council or the Advisory Committee.
4. **Corporate Member** – membership open to business organisations or individuals involved in laser industries or their allied science. Choice of subscription level is as for Associate members. Corporate members enjoy voting rights and are eligible for election to the Advisory and Industry Committees.

- Membership subscription is to be paid annually with the level of fees reviewed from time to time as necessary by the Executive Council and approved at the General Assembly.
- It is the responsibility of members to inform the Membership Secretary of any change in circumstances or change of address.
- All members, regardless of category, are expected to support the aims and objectives of the Association and to promote WALT within their sphere of activity.

Membership Sub-Committee – will meet on an ad hoc basis to advise the Executive Council on membership matters and, when necessary, review the status of members.

The Sub-Committee will be chaired by the Membership Secretary and comprise of a further 2 standing members appointed by the Executive Council.

Fellowship of the Association – this honorary appointment will be the highest accolade the Association can bestow on a member. It replaces the previous category of Honorary Member. It will be awarded as recognition of long standing support for the Association and for the promotion of the Association's aims and ideals. It carries no financial benefit and will be awarded at the WALT Congress following recommendation by the Executive Council and approval by the General Assembly.

Life Membership – at the 2000 General Assembly in Athens a number of members made substantial donations to the Association to establish a fund to refinance the Association and the Journal. In return for their generosity the Executive Council supported by the General Assembly made the donors Life Members of the Association. A Life Member enjoys the status of a full member with the annual subscription paid by the Association. A list of Life Members is kept in the Annals of the Association.

Affiliation to WALT – the Executive Council may, after proposal and acceptance at a General Assembly, grant affiliation status to a regional or national association. This status does not carry any financial obligation to WALT.

Article 4: Organisation

Executive Council - the Council will consist of the following officers. Terms of office are appended in brackets.

1. **President** (2 years)
2. **Immediate Past President** (2 years)
3. **President-Elect** (2 years)
4. **Secretary General** (4 years)
5. **Treasurer** (4 years)
6. **Membership Secretary** (4 years)
7. **Scientific Secretary** (4 years)
8. **Editor-in-Chief of Journal or Deputy**

- All appointments to the Executive Council must be ratified by the General Assembly.
- Nominations for the posts of Secretary General, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Scientific Secretary must be received in writing by the Secretary General at least 28 days prior to the Congress start date.
- In exceptional circumstances, as determined at a General Assembly, the holders of the above posts may serve for further 2 year periods.
- All members of the Executive Council must hold full membership of the Association.

Purpose of Executive Council

1. To supervise the activities of the Association.
2. To ensure a Congress is held every 2 years.
3. To represent the Association across the global stage.
4. To deal with matters referred by the Advisory Committee or individual members.
5. To report to the General Assembly.

Advisory Committee – this Committee will draw its members from the general membership of the Association and shall comprise a maximum of 8 members with representation spread equally across the various categories of membership. Nominations for these positions should be handed in writing to the Secretary General no later than the first day of the Congress. Election will take place at the General Assembly. Members will serve for 2 years but may be re-elected. All Committee members shall be members of the Association.

Purpose of Advisory Committee

1. To represent regional views and opinions.
 2. To recommend good practice and advise the Executive Council.
 3. To encourage membership of the Association within their regions.
 4. To actively seek venues within their regions for future Congresses.
- Members of the Advisory Committee are recommended to have regular communication with fellow members.
 - It is their responsibility to elect a Chairman for the period of their office.
 - The Committee must meet formally during the Congress and present a written report to the Executive Council and the General Assembly.

Presidents Committee – this Committee comprises all past Presidents of the Association. The Committee is invited to meet formally during the Congress and submit a written report to the Executive Council and the General Assembly.

Purpose of Presidents Committee

To draw on their experience and standing in offering advice and support to the Association and its Congress.

Scientific Committee – this Committee is chaired by the Scientific Secretary and will comprise a maximum of 10 persons selected by the Scientific Secretary on the basis of their scientific background and qualifications. The Committee will communicate regularly and report directly to the Executive Council. The Scientific Committee will submit a written report to the General Assembly. Members will serve on the Committee for 2 years but may be re-appointed. The Chairman has the power to co-opt additional individuals for a specific advisory role. These persons do not have voting rights on the Committee.

Purpose of Scientific Committee

1. To advise the Executive Council and the Association on all scientific matters.
2. To ensure that the Association and its members follow accepted scientific practice and procedure.
3. To advise and support the Congress Scientific Committee.
4. To monitor the scientific content of papers published, or offered for publication, and to advise on matters of study design, parameters and dosage levels, data analysis and conclusions drawn.

Industry Committee – this Committee will be chaired by a Corporate member appointed by the Executive Council and will comprise a further 4 Corporate members elected by the General Assembly. The Committee will communicate regularly and report directly to the Executive Council. The Committee will meet formally during the Congress and submit a written report to the General Assembly.

Purpose of Industry Committee

To advise the Association on all matters relating to technological development and advancement in commercial equipment and associated legislation and to report any business concerns that might impact upon the Association and its reputation.

Minutes of Meetings – minutes should be taken of all formal Council and Committee meetings, circulated to Council and Committee members, and then lodged with the Secretary General as a permanent record of proceedings. Members may have access to minutes on written request to the Secretary General.

Sub-Committees – may be appointed as required by the Executive Council. Examples include Membership, Bylaws and Finance Sub-Committees. Each Sub-Committee will be chaired by an appropriate member of the Council or Advisory Committee with further members appointed from the Advisory and Presidents Committees. The Sub-Committees report directly to the Executive Council. A formal record of their meetings and recommendations must be lodged with the Secretary General.

Article 5: General Assembly

A General Assembly will be held during each Congress. All members in good standing who wish to vote must register themselves before the start of the Assembly. The outgoing President will chair the Assembly but may appoint a General Assembly Co-ordinator to conduct the agenda.

The Agenda must contain the following business:-

1. Receipt of Apologies
2. Acceptance of previous Minutes
3. President's Report
4. Secretary General's Announcements
5. Treasurer's Financial Statement
6. Membership Secretary's Report
7. Scientific Secretary's Report
8. Journal Editor-in-Chief's Report
9. Report from Executive Council
10. Report from Advisory Committee
11. Report from Presidents' Committee
12. Report from Industry Committee
13. Reports from Sub-Committees
14. Ratification of Executive Council membership
15. Election of Advisory Committee members
16. Election of Industry Committee members
17. Voting for the next congress
18. Presidential Handover

19. New President's Address
20. Announcement of Location of next Congress
21. Presentation by Representative of Host Nation of next Congress
22. Any Other Business

- Voting will be by a show of hands. Proposals will be carried by a simple majority of those registered to vote.
- The President holds a casting vote.
- No voting by proxy is allowed.
- A secret ballot may be held if proposed and seconded and supported by more than 50% of those registered to vote.

Article 6: The Congress

A Congress of the Association will be held every 2 years.

The Location of the Congress will be decided by the Executive Council following written submissions to the Secretary General by those Organisations/Associations wishing to host the Congress.

The Venue for the Congress will be announced at the General Assembly.

The Organisation of the Congress will be the responsibility of the Host Nation who will appoint an Organising Committee, Scientific Committee and such other Committees as is deemed necessary.

The President of the Congress will be elected by the Organising Committee. The Congress President and the Chairman of the Organising Committee, if different, will be co-opted onto the Executive Council for the duration of their term of office.

The Scientific Programme for the Congress will be the responsibility of the Congress Scientific Committee in consultation with the Association's Scientific Committee.

The Fees and Finances of the Congress will be the responsibility of the Organising Committee who will take into account local and global circumstances when setting the level of fees payable by delegates. All costs and disbursements shall be the responsibility of the Host Organisation.

Congress Announcements will be the responsibility of the Organising Committee and will consist of a minimum of a First Announcement, a Preliminary Programme and call for abstracts and a Final Announcement with full registration and booking details. The Organising Committee will have access to the Association's Website and will expect the Association's members to assist in the promotion of the Congress.

A Congress Report and Financial Summary will be produced by the Organising Committee and lodged with the Secretary General within 1 year of the Congress.

Article 7: Association Funds

- The Association's funds will be administered by the Treasurer who will keep detailed records of all financial transactions carried out in the Association's name.
- The Treasurer is authorized to raise accounts and make payments in respect of membership subscriptions, website fees and journal invoices.
- In the absence of the Treasurer the Secretary-General is authorized to perform the above functions.
- The Treasurer will produce a 6 monthly report to the Executive Council and will give a detailed financial statement of the Association's accounts at the General Assembly.

Article 8: The Journal

The official title of the journal is "**Photomedicine and Laser Surgery**" published by Mary Ann Liebert Inc. of New Rochelle, New York State, USA.

The **Co-Editor-in-Chief** is a member of the Executive Council with a Deputy taken from one of the Senior Editors.

The responsibilities of the Co-Editor-in-Chief include reporting regularly to the Executive Council on journal matters: negotiating with Mary Ann Liebert Inc. on changes in journal subscription charges following authorisation by the Executive Council; and presenting a report to the General Assembly.

Article 9: Bylaws

- Changes to the Bylaws can only be approved at the General Assembly.
- Written notification of proposed amendments or changes to the Bylaws must be submitted to the Secretary General 6 weeks prior to the General Assembly who will then circulate the proposed changes to all members.
- For this purpose it will be deemed sufficient to notify members by e-newsletter and to post the proposals on the Association's website.
- Voting will take place at the General Assembly and any changes require support by 75% of those present and registered to vote.
- No voting by proxy is allowed.
- Voting will be by a show of hands or by a secret ballot if supported by more than 50% of those registered to vote.