



**CIOFF®**

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF ORGANIZATIONS  
OF FOLKLORE FESTIVALS AND FOLK ART**

Official Partner of UNESCO – Associate Status  
Accredited to the UNESCO ICH Committee

**BY-LAWS**

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**Budapest**

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# **Chapter I: Name, Headquarters, Field of Activities**

## **Article 1 - Name**

- 1.1 The association is named: International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Folk Art, hereafter by the abbreviation CIOFF®.
- 1.2 CIOFF® is an international cultural non-governmental and non-profit organization, as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO.

## **Article 2 - Registered Office**

- 2.1 The headquarters of CIOFF® is in Confolens, Department Charente, France, where it was founded on August 10th 1970, according to French law in general and particularly in accordance with the law of July 1st 1901, regulating the procedure for the formation of associations according to civil rights.

## **Article 3 - Sphere of Activities**

- 3.1 The field of activities covers expressions as defined in the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), mainly on operative level, through such activities as folklore festivals and folklore group exchanges, training and education, transmission to children, conferences, publications, etc.□
- 3.2 CIOFF® activities are extended to CIOFF® Events, to the members as well as to cooperation with other organizations.□

## **Article 4 - CIOFF® Logo, Slogan and Official Languages**

- 4.1 The official logo of CIOFF® is a blue ellipse shaped global world map with white continents, with a red band across it bearing the designation «CIOFF® » in white letters. The logo is always used with the official slogan.
- 4.2 The official CIOFF® slogan is “for living traditions” (in English), “pour des traditions vivantes” (in French) and “por las tradiciones vivas” (in Spanish).
- 4.3 The official CIOFF® languages are English, French and Spanish.

## **Article 5 - Internal Regulations**

- 5.1 A number of detail items, which are not covered specifically in these By-laws, are covered by the Internal Regulations (IR).

## Chapter II: Objectives and Tasks

### Article 6 - Objectives

- 6.1 To maintain peace and strengthen friendship between people and their countries, CIOFF® promotes international understanding, particularly in the field of ICH, in accordance with the principles of UNESCO.□
- 6.2 Its primary objective is to promote ICH in the following areas:
- Dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage through International Folklore Festivals, traditional arts and other forms of cultural expression
  - International cooperation
- In addition, CIOFF® will facilitate cooperation on identification, conservation and preservation of ICH.
- 6.3 CIOFF® carries out its objectives on the basis of the value of cultural heritage, the equal weight of traditions from different sources, the understanding among people and respect for cultural heritage.□

### Article 7 - Tasks

- 7.1 Organization of the CIOFF® World Congress, consisting of three parts:
- The General Assembly
  - Programs related to the cultural policy
  - Meetings of other CIOFF® bodies□
- 7.2 Initiation and organization (according to criteria defined in the Internal Regulations) of international festivals, performances and other events which promote the importance and the educational value of ICH.
- 7.3 Support for members through invitation, exchange, and participation of folklore groups in folklore festivals, as well as arranging appropriate conditions for their stay and the organization of performances in the host country.
- 7.4 Advice on organizing various events, exhibitions, presentation of handicraft and costumes, etc.
- 7.5 Regular distribution of information about the dates and description of various international folk art events, annual publication of a calendar of international folklore festivals.
- 7.6 Support of organizers of international conferences by specialists and by publishing methodical material.
- 7.7 Help with collection and distribution of information and material regarding methodical activities in the form of brochures, films, recordings and other documents in the field of ICH.
- 7.8 Publication of an information bulletin and non-periodical material concerning problems related to ICH and international folklore festivals organized by CIOFF®.

# Chapter III: Membership

## Article 8 - Members

- 8.1 CIOFF® membership levels:
- Full Members
  - Associate Members
  - Partner Members
  - Corresponding Members
  - Supporting Members
  - Honorary Members

## Article 9 - Full Members (FM)

- 9.1 Full members are National Sections of CIOFF® which have as aims to:
- present, promote and preserve expressions of traditional culture
  - organize CIOFF® folklore festivals and related activities
  - unite volunteer organizations working in the field of dance, music, costumes, traditions and other expressions of traditional culture, as well as individual scientists (scholars), interested persons and institutions
  - coordinate, in accordance with national conditions and legislation, the activities and the aims of CIOFF® (Conditions are specified in the Internal Regulations).
  - cooperate with their country's UNESCO National Commission in the field of ICH
- 9.2 CIOFF® recognizes only one National Section per country. It is a requirement that the country be a member of the United Nations Organization or one of its agencies. National Sections which existed before these By-laws become effective, are not affected by this requirement.□
- 9.3 In exceptional cases, geographical regions of two countries where no National Sections exist and which are linked by traditional or ethnic ties, may voluntarily and temporarily be joined together into one National Section.□
- 9.4 A National Section shall be democratic, open, representative and communicative.
- Democratic: The rules of the National Section must guarantee fair election procedures for offices of the National Section.
  - Open: Organizations, institutions, festivals, groups and individuals that are able and willing to accept the aims and policies of CIOFF® must have the opportunity to be members of the National Section.
  - Representative: A National Section must be representative of the traditional culture and folklore of its territory. For countries where no appropriate folklore organization exists, a relevant government body may be regarded as fulfilling these requirements.
  - Communicative: A National Section must be communicative and respond to communications in a timely manner.□
- 9.5 *Rights of full members:*  
Each full member (FM) has the duty to actively participate in the work of CIOFF®:

- to name a delegate to the General Assembly
- to nominate two members of its Youth Commission as Delegates to the Youth Forum. FM without a Youth Commission may nominate one observer to the Youth Forum
- to submit candidatures for the Commissions, Executive Committee, Committees and Working Groups
- to take part in international events
- to assist in editing and publishing publications
- to decide on the acceptance of members
- to submit propositions and motions
- to benefit from publicity and support by CIOFF®, through :
  - asking CIOFF® to grant patronage for international folklore festivals
  - practical assistance in the organization of international events, and the recruitment or exchange of folklore groups suitable for the character of the event
  - access to documentation, methodical materials, analyses and other documents about the work of CIOFF®□

#### 9.6 *Obligations of full members:*

Each full member is obliged to actively participate in the work of CIOFF®:

- to obey the decisions and implement the aims of CIOFF® on the basis of the By-Laws and Internal Regulations
- to pay the membership fee set by the General Assembly by the due date determined in the Internal Regulations
- to provide each year the National Report of activities, the Festivals Reports and the Reports on participating groups, within the due dates determined by the Executive Committee
- to update each year online the list of festivals on the website [www.cioff.org](http://www.cioff.org) for the preparation of the Calendar of Festivals, to be submitted by the due date determined and announced annually by the Festivals Commission
- to accept that any refusal of membership/association in the National Section that has not been resolved through mediation by the EXCO can be appealed to Council. The National Section undertakes to implement the decision of the Council.

Each member has the duty to utilize its right to vote and to enrich the work of CIOFF® as a result of its own activities.□

#### 9.7 *Members in good standing*

Full members which do not fulfill the obligations listed in 9.6 lose the right to vote and the status of good standing during the General Assembly. This means that the National Delegate must pay the full fees for his or her accommodations during the CIOFF® Congress.□

## **Article 10 - Associate Members (AM), rights and obligations**

- 10.1 A folklore organization or festival may become an Associate Member for a country where no National Section exists. CIOFF® provides assistance to the Associate Members to become National Sections.□

- 10.2 Associate Members have voting rights, except at the General Assembly, where their official representative has speaking right on issues concerning their activities or their relations with CIOFF®. They have the right to nominate one observer to the Youth Forum.
- 10.3 Associate Members have the same obligations as Full Members.

### **Article 11 - Partner Members (PM), rights and obligations**

- 11.1 A folklore organization or festival may become a Partner Member for a country where the establishment of a National Section is not expected in the near future.
- 11.2 Partner Members have voting rights except at the General Assembly, where their official representative has speaking right on issues concerning their activities or their relations with CIOFF®. They have the right to nominate one observer to the Youth Forum.
- 11.3 Partner Members have the same obligations as Full Members.
- 11.4 A territory (which is a part of a National Section and situated in the geographical area of another Sector than the respective National Section) may, in principle, apply for Partner Membership. Such territories belonging to the same National Section and situated in the same Sector shall form together only one Partner Membership.

### **Article 12 - Corresponding Members (CM), rights and obligations**

- 12.1 A cultural organization or a festival or an individual in a country where no CIOFF® member exists and with which CIOFF® is interested in having relations, may become a Corresponding Member. □
- 12.2 Corresponding Members have no voting right. Their official representatives have speaking rights on issues concerning their activities or their relationship with CIOFF®. They pay no membership fee. □
- 12.3 Corresponding Members must observe and carry out the aims and decisions of CIOFF®, on the basis of the By-Laws and Internal Regulations

### **Article 13 - Supporting Members (SM), rights and obligations**

- 13.1 All types of sponsors and donors may become Supporting Members, on the basis of a financial cooperation agreement signed by the President in the name of the Council. They have no voting right.

### **Article 14 – Exclusivity**

- 14.1 Any organization or any person that is accepted as a member of CIOFF® cannot be a member of any other similar international organization, organizing folklore festivals.
- 14.2 Individuals and organizations that are associated with a CIOFF® member cannot be members of any similar organization, organizing folklore festivals.

## **Article 15 - Honorary Members (HM), rights and obligations**

- 15.1 Honorary Members are the founders of CIOFF®, as well as persons who have rendered great services to CIOFF®, for friendship among nations and for the promotion of traditional culture. The title of Honorary Member is awarded by the General Assembly on proposal from the Council and is evidenced by a diploma and a CIOFF® Pin.
- 15.2 The title of Honorary President has been awarded to the first CIOFF® President
- 15.3 Honorary Members can take part in the work of CIOFF®. They have no voting right, except when they are the delegate of a full member at the General Assembly.

## **Article 16 - Complaint**

- 16.1 A complaint must be presented to the Executive Committee (EXCO) with all relevant documents in one of the official CIOFF® languages. Within two (2) months, the EXCO will confirm receipt of the complaint and informs about the follow up decision.

## **Article 17 - Termination of membership**

- 17.1 Any member can, at any time, resign on its own, after having fulfilled the conditions outlined in the Internal Regulations.
- 17.2 Any member may be expelled from CIOFF®, for violation of the By-Laws or for non-compliance with the principles of CIOFF®, as outlined in art. 6 and 9.4. Expulsion requires an absolute majority (50% of the votes + 1) vote of the General Assembly. Council may terminate the membership status of a member that has not paid its membership fee during two (2) consecutive years.
- 17.3 Cessation of membership causes the loss of all claims in relation to CIOFF®.

## **Chapter IV: International cooperation**

### **Article 18 – Cooperation agreement**

- 18.1 For cooperation with international cultural or scientific organizations, CIOFF® shall work on the basis of a Cooperation Agreement.

## **Chapter V: Organization**

### **Article 19 - General Assembly**

- 19.1 The General Assembly is the highest organ of CIOFF®. It is responsible for the election of the Council, for revisions of the By-Laws and Internal Regulations, and for decisions on matters of principle.
- 19.2 It meets at least every second year. Date and place of the meeting are determined by the General Assembly at least one year in advance. The agenda, as well as the number of participating associate members and observers, are determined in accordance with the Internal Regulations.



- 19.3 A National Section is represented at the General Assembly by a Delegate. A written authorization, signed by two board members of the National Section, must be presented to the Secretary General before the opening of the General Assembly.
- 19.4 Each National Section in good standing that does not send a delegate has the right to designate a delegate of another National Section in good standing as its representative with voting right (Proxy). One National Section can represent only one other National Section.
- 19.5 Proxy: Full members in good standing, represented by a Proxy confirmed at the roll call, are considered as present for the Quorum and have voting right at the General Assembly.
- 19.6 The General Assembly takes decisions by simple majority (also called relative majority), except in cases where an absolute majority (50% of the votes expressed + 1) or when a quota is required by these By Laws.
- 19.7 Quorum: The decisions of the General Assembly are only valid when at least one half (1/2) of the full members are present at the opening or first session. The “Good standing” status is not relevant. If a Delegate leaves the session(s), he is considered as absent for the vote but present for the quorum.  
If this quorum is not reached, an extraordinary General Assembly may be held upon a proposal in writing by the Executive Committee. For this purpose, a waiting time of two (2) hours is required. At such extraordinary General Assembly at least one thirds (1/3) of the full members must be present.
- 19.8 In case of imperative necessity, the Assembly can also be held electronically, as long as it is carried out through the use of a platform that allows all participants to vote in confidentiality. In this case, the convocation notice must contain an indication of the procedure for accessing and connecting to the platform.

## **Article 20 - Extraordinary General Assembly**

- 20.1 An extraordinary General Assembly may also be called, if important circumstances make it necessary. At least one thirds (1/3) of the Full Members must request this in writing, or it may be called on the initiative of the Executive Committee. □
- 20.2 This General Assembly can only deal with the agenda items for which it has been called.

## Article 21 - Regional Sectors

- 21.1 In order to increase the effectiveness of CIOFF<sup>®</sup>, members are grouped into regional sectors, in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly.
- 21.2 The aim of the sectors is to promote the interests of CIOFF<sup>®</sup> in the respective regions specifically:
- to support and counsel their members and promote their cooperation and mutual support, especially by exchanging information and by organizing common activities.
  - to take initiatives, prepare proposals and take positions on items related to the Council and the General Assembly.
  - to contribute to the solution of problems and to the implementation of tasks, projects, and programs agreed by the General Assembly.
  - to cooperate with other CIOFF<sup>®</sup> bodies and especially with other sectors.
  - to promote relations with other national and international organizations and institutions (UNESCO, etc.) within their territories, in accordance with the principles of CIOFF<sup>®</sup>.
- 21.3 Each Sector elects one member as Sector Representative to the CIOFF<sup>®</sup> Council for a period of four years.
- The Sector Representative is the Sector' leading authority, responsible for its functioning and for the connection between the Council and the Sector.
- Every two years, half of the positions for Sector Representatives in the Council shall be open for election.
- 21.4 If a sector has separate financial accounts, they shall be included in the financial report of CIOFF<sup>®</sup>. Decisions on how to utilize these financial resources are solely in the hands of the Sector.

## **Article 22 - Commissions, Committees and Working Groups**

### *22.1 Commissions*

- Commissions are set up for the development of basic principles in the various fields of CIOFF® activities and to advise the Council and the General Assembly. Their methods of operation are specified in the Internal Regulations.
- For each commission the General Assembly elects a Chairman for a period of four (4) years. Every two years, half of the chairmanships must be open for election.
- The Chairman of each Commission establishes a list of Commission members and presents it to the Council for confirmation. The list should include a Youth Representative.
- Each Commission thematically unites all relevant Committees. Exceptions may be decided by the General Assembly.
- The Chairman of a Commission is a member of the Council.

### *22.2 Committees*

Committees are established to deal with specific issues. In the Council they are represented by a designated member of the Council.

Each Commission and Committee has a Vice-Chairman to assure the continuity of the work, in case the Chairman is not able to do his/her job.

### *22.3 Ad hoc Working Groups*

Working Groups are established to solve a specific problem or to work on a defined and time limited project. They are under the direct responsibility of the Executive Committee.

## **Article 23 - Youth Movement**

- 23.1 The Youth Movement is organized by the Youth Forum, which takes place every two (2) years and is represented by the Youth Coordination Committee. The Youth movement is made up of persons from 15 to 28 years of age, who are members of a National Section. Members of the Coordination Committee shall be over 18 years of age.
- 23.2 Each National Section that has a National Youth Commission has the right to nominate two Delegates to the Youth Forum. National Sections that do not have a Youth Commission have the right to nominate one observer to the Youth Forum.
- 23.3 Chairman and members of the Youth Coordination Committee are proposed by the Youth Forum. The Chairman is confirmed by the General Assembly. The other Committee members are confirmed by the Council.
- 23.4 The Chairman of the Youth Coordination Committee is a member of the CIOFF® Council.
- 23.5 The Youth Forum may propose a Youth Representative to be a member of a Commission, a Committee or a Working Group.
- 23.6 Detailed provisions are stipulated in the internal Regulations of the Youth Forum.

## **Article 24 – Council**

- 24.1 The Council consists of:
- the President of CIOFF®
  - other members of the Executive Committee
  - the Representatives of the Sectors
  - the Chairmen of the Commissions
  - the Chairman of the Youth Coordination Committee
  - the CIOFF® Representative to UNESCO, who is appointed by the Council and ratified by the General Assembly for a period of four (4) years. The mandate is renewable.
- 24.2 The Council is the governing body of CIOFF® and is responsible to the General Assembly for the activities of CIOFF®. Its main tasks are to:
- promote and develop the policies of CIOFF®
  - decide on the strategies to implement the operational programs
  - direct and control the implementation of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly
  - monitor and guide the activities of the regional sectors and of the Commissions
  - prepare all substantive issues for the World Congress.
- 24.3 The Council meets twice in connection with the General Assembly, once before and once after the General Assembly. It also meets once between two General Assemblies.
- 24.4 Meetings of the Council are called by the President or upon request from at least four (4) members of the Council. The Council is able to make decisions when at least two thirds (2/3) of the members are present. Decisions are taken by simple (= relative) majority vote. In the event of an equal number of votes, the vote of the chairman is deciding.
- If the required number of participants is not reached, an extraordinary Council Meeting may be held after a proposal in writing by the Executive Committee. For this, a waiting time of two (2) hours is required. At such extraordinary Council Meeting, at least one third (1/3) of the Council members must be present.
- 24.5 In case of imperative necessity, the Council can also be held electronically, as long as it is carried out through the use of a platform that allows all participants to vote in confidentiality. In this case, the convocation notice must contain an indication of the procedure for accessing and connecting to the platform.
- 24.6 A member of the Council may hold only one position at a time, except for the Committees and Working Groups.

## **Article 25 - Executive Committee (EXCO)**

- 25.1 The Executive Committee consists of the President of CIOFF®, two Vice- Presidents, the Secretary General and the Treasurer.
- 25.2 The President is elected by the General Assembly for a period of four (4) years. He cannot serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. □
- 25.3 The other members are elected for a period of four (4) years. The mandate is renewable. Terms shall be staggered so that one half of the positions shall be open for election

every two (2) years.

- 25.4 The Executive Committee is the executing body of the Council. Its tasks are to:
- prepare the World Congress and the Council meetings
  - receive formal complaints from members and decide on follow up within two (2) months. The complaint and all relevant documents are presented in one of the official CIOFF® languages.
  - deal with all other current business.
- 25.5 The Executive Committee maintains contact with other international organizations, with National Sections and with organizers of international folklore festivals. □
- 25.6 Meetings of the Executive Committee are called by the President or upon request from at least two (2) members of the Executive Committee.

## **Article 26 Self-Regulations**

- 26.1 If a Sector, a Commission, a Committee, the Youth Movement have their own regulations, these must be in accordance with the CIOFF® regulations.

## **Chapter VI: Finances**

### **Article 27 - Finances**

- 27.1 The financial resources of CIOFF® for its statutory activities consist of :
- regular income:
    - membership fees
  - extraordinary income:
    - contributions, donations, subsidies
    - income resulting from activities.
- The money is to be deposited in a bank designated by the Executive Committee.
- 27.2 Bookkeeping must be carried out in accordance with accepted international standards.
- 27.3 Two auditors elected by the General Assembly for a period of four (4) years, must audit the books and administration. The mandate is renewable for one term.  
Members of the Council are not eligible as auditors.
- 27.4 The audit must take place before the General Assembly. In case of absence of the auditors at the General Assembly, their report is presented by the Secretary General.
- 27.5 The annual income statement and balance sheet at year-end and the budget are approved by the General Assembly.
- 27.6 The amount of membership fee is determined by the General Assembly. In exceptional cases special arrangements can be made by the Council.

## **Chapter VII: Dissolution**

### **Article 28 - Dissolution**

- 28.1 The dissolution of CIOFF® can only be decided by an extraordinary General Assembly, which is called for this purpose and in which two thirds (2/3) of Full Members in Good Standing participate. The decision can only be taken with a three fourths (3/4) majority of votes. If the number of delegates present is less than the required two thirds (2/3), another extraordinary General Assembly is to be called within three (3) months at the latest. At such an extraordinary General Assembly the decisions are made with absolute majority (50% of the votes expressed + 1) of votes, regardless of the number of delegates present.
- 28.2 The resolution taken by the General Assembly on the dissolution of CIOFF® must contain the settlement of property and financial resources which are at CIOFF®'s disposal at the time.

## **Chapter VIII: Final clauses**

### **Article 29 - Final clauses**

- 29.1 The By-Laws may only be changed by a vote in the General Assembly with the presence of two thirds (2/3) of Full members in good standing. The decision is taken with an absolute majority (50% of the votes expressed + 1) of votes. The text of the proposed changes must be presented to all members at least 90 days before the convening of the General Assembly.  
The General Assembly, as well as other CIOFF® decision making bodies, make decisions by simple majority vote, except in cases where a specified majority is required by these By Laws.
- 29.2 Problems which are not covered by the By-Laws and Internal Regulations are decided by the Council with absolute majority (50% of the votes expressed + 1).
- 29.3 The amended By-Laws were accepted by the General Assembly on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2021 in Budapest and enter in force after the closure of the General Assembly.
- 29.4 In case of doubt, the text in French language is decisive.