

**International Society of Political Psychology**  
**Explanatory Statement on Proposed Constitutional Changes**

*The revised Constitution was approved by the Governing Council on January 23, 2019 for submission to the membership during the 2019 Governing Council Elections*

**ISPP Governing Council Restructuring Committee Members (authorized January 2017):**

David Redlawsk, Chair	
Bert Klandermans (Councilor)	Michal Bilewicz (through July 2017)
Sev Bennett (Executive Director)	Tali Mendelberg (through July 2017)
Chris Federico (beginning July 2017)	Felicia Pratto (through July 2018)
Neil Ferguson (beginning September 2017)	Martijn van Zomeren (Sept 2017-July 2018)

**Purpose of the revisions**

The Constitution and Bylaws of the ISPP have been our guiding documents since the beginning of the Society. The current Constitution and Bylaws were adopted in 1985. They have been amended a number of times as needed as ISPP evolved.

In January 2017, the Governing Council (GC) formed a “GC Restructuring Committee” chaired by now-president David Redlawsk to consider proposals to streamline the operations of the GC and ISPP, particularly given the hiring of a full-time Executive Director who is a professional trained in association operations and conference planning and management, rather than an academic as was the case in the past.

The current Constitution and Bylaws have a number of structural requirements that the Governing Council believes are no longer appropriate given a full-time Executive Director, and which we are no longer following out of necessity. Moreover, the Governing Council itself, along with the Executive Committee (EC) is quite large given the size of ISPP. The large size of the GC/EC has increased costs as we continue to have two in-person GC meetings per year.

The Restructuring committee considered several proposals to make the GC/EC smaller and to revise operations of the GC to revolve around a more comprehensive committee structure. As the proposals were studied, with GC discussions in July 2017, January and July 2018, and January 2019, it became clear that large parts of the Constitution and Bylaws should be revised to reflect current operations and to update the structure of ISPP governance. It was also necessary to correct contradictions and unclear areas within the documents, and to reflect the existence of a full-time Central Office, defining its relationship to the GC in more detail.

A final proposal by the restructuring committee was reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee in December 2018, and recommended to the Governing Council. Because there are extensive amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws throughout, the amendments are being presented collectively for a single vote as an essentially new Constitution.

The resulting Amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws were approved by the Governing Council in January 2019, for submission to the membership for approval, under the current Constitutional provisions for Amendments.

**To be ratified, the proposed Amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the Members voting, provided at least one-third of the membership casts a vote (Article XIX, Section D.) If ratified this will become the official Constitution of the ISPP.**

A “tracked” version showing changes made by the Restructuring Committee and approved by the GC, and a “clean” version are hereby submitted to the ISPP Membership for review and approval.

### **Key Changes in the Proposed Constitution**

**Following are not all of the changes, but a brief summary of the key changes in the Constitution and Bylaws. Please read the revised Constitution for the complete text.**

#### *General Changes to Governing Documents*

The ISPP Constitution does not currently distinguish between the Constitution and Bylaws, even though they are separate sections. Both have the status of core documents that can be changed only with a great deal of effort and approval of the membership, using the same process.

Good governance suggests a hierarchy of documents. The Constitution should be the core structural document, defining the Society and its organization in broad terms. It should be very hard to change. Bylaws should be rules that govern the organization and operations of the ISPP and the GC and EC. The Bylaws should be changeable when new circumstances arise, but should require careful thought by the GC before any changes are made. Finally, the Procedures Handbook should detail the day-to-day operational policies as adopted by the Governing Council.

The *Constitution* lays out the membership of ISPP; its governance structure; the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council, each officer, and GC members; the methods of election and removal (retaining the current election structure); the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director; the role of the Bylaws; and the Annual Business Meeting. It will also permit (but not define in detail) a committee structure for the operations of the GC and ISPP, and permit the creation (and elimination) of official publications of the Society. It will also describe requirements of a budget process. The Constitution will be purposefully difficult to amend, requiring notice of amendment, and approval by a super-majority of both the GC and the ISPP membership.

The *Bylaws* will define the operations of the GC and ISPP, detailing, for example, specifics of the committee structure, who will serve and chair the committees (where not defined in the Constitution), specific details of the nomination process (including a diversity statement),

specifics of the program committee and annual meeting process, quorum requirements, financial limitations (including endowment funding), and similar GC operational concerns (including details about budgeting limitations like funds carry-overs, or requirement of a balanced budget). The Bylaws will be used to designate official publications and to define the processes of selecting editorial teams for those publications. The Bylaws will be amendable by action of the GC itself, requiring specific notice of amendment and a supermajority vote. The intent is to allow the GC to make critical revisions in its processes for its own operations without needing approval from the membership at-large, in order to allow ISPP to adjust to changing circumstances.

The Procedures Handbook will detail specific adopted policies of the GC for any aspect of operations that does not rise to the level of being required in the Bylaws. An example might be a policy with respect to the process of funding small conferences. Policies would require approval by a majority vote of the GC to be approved.

The revised Constitution implements this hierarchy in Article 16. The Enactment Clause (Article 26) requires the GC to adopt Bylaws within a year of the Constitution's approval. These Bylaws will be designed to fully implement the Constitution, especially the newly expanded-committee structure.

### *Purpose*

A new paragraph (E) is added to Article 2: Purpose, to make clear we also aim to promote goals of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the Society and the discipline.

### *ISPP governance structure*

#### 1. Officers (Articles 9 through 14)

As part of the effort to streamline operations and lower GC costs, several officer positions have been eliminated or restructured.

The position of the Councilor is eliminated. The full-time Central Office now serves as the repository of institutional memory (a key role of the Councilor in the past).

One Vice-President position is eliminated. Given the full-time Central Office, the GC believes we do not need three Vice-Presidents. The remaining two Vice-Presidents will continue to serve overlapping three-year terms.

The currently-serving Councilor and Vice-President for Conferences will continue to serve on the EC and the GC until the expiration of their current terms, so the positions will not be actually removed until then.

The Executive Director (ED) position is restructured as an employee of ISPP and will no longer have a vote on the GC, EC, or any Committees. The ED will be an ex-officio non-voting member on the various bodies.

There are clarifications of the roles of some officers. One Vice-President shall chair the Initiatives Committee, while the other Vice-President will chair the Conferences and Communications Committee (Article 12). The Past-President will chair the Operations and Procedures Committee (Article 11) and will be a member of the Personnel Committee. The Executive Director will report to the Personnel Committee (Article 13). These committees are newly formed and take the place of a wide range of existing *ad hoc* committees.

## 2. Executive Committee (Article 8)

The Executive Committee (EC) is streamlined, and will now consist of the President, the Past-President, the President-elect, two Vice Presidents, and the Treasurer. The Executive Director shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member. The Executive Committee's powers remain the same, although language pertaining to these powers has been clarified in this Article.

The following are removed as voting members of the EC: The Editors of *Political Psychology*, the Executive Director, and the eliminated officer positions. The publications of ISPP – including *Political Psychology* – operate independently of the ISPP once the editors have been selected and are not directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the Society. Nonetheless, given *Political Psychology*'s special status, the GC determined that the Editor-in-Chief should continue to be a voting member of the Governing Council (see below).

## 3. The Governing Council (Article 7)

The Governing Council will continue to have 15 at-large members, with five elected each year in competitive elections, and serving three-year terms. Its powers remain the same, although language pertaining to these powers has been clarified in this Article.

The voting members of the Governing Council shall consist of the members of the Executive Committee, plus 15 elected at-large members, the Chair of the Early Career Committee, and the Editor-in-Chief of *Political Psychology*. As with the Executive Committee, the Executive Director shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member.

The following will be removed as voting members of the GC: the eliminated officer positions, the editors of publications other than *Political Psychology*, the past-Executive Director, the Executive Director, and the Chairs of the Program Committee. Other than the ED, who will remain a non-voting member, all of these positions are not actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the Society. Although most continue to play important roles outside of this, this roles do not require voting membership on the GC.

Article 7 also specifies who must be invited to all meetings of the GC as non-voting observers: editors of publications other than *Political Psychology*, Program Chairs, and the ISPP Communications Director if one is appointed. The GC may also invite others to the meeting.

#### 4. New Committee Structure

The new Constitution envisions a functioning committee system for the GC as defined in detail in Article 15. Details of this committee structure that are not already in the Constitution will be placed into the Bylaws.

Every at-large GC member will serve on at least one Operating Committee. These committees may also include non-GC members, so any member of ISPP can be asked to serve on one of the committees.

Some Operating Committees are defined in the Constitution:

The *Finance Committee*, which oversees the treasurer and ISPP finances (Article 15, Section C). It is responsible for working with the Treasurer and Executive Director on the ISPP budget, and overseeing off-budget expenditures when necessary. The Finance Committee will also take over the responsibilities of the current Investment and Endowment committee. It will be chaired by a member of the GC appointed by the President.

The *Personnel Committee*, which consists of the President-elect, President, Past-President, and Treasurer. It is responsible for oversight of the Executive Director and Central Office (Article 15, Section D).

The *Program Committee*, which will continue as it currently exists (Article 15, Section E).

The following committees are named in various places in the Constitution, with details to be placed into the Bylaws. These committees will be responsible for ongoing ISPP projects.

The *Operations and Procedures Committee*, which is mentioned in Article 11 and chaired by Past-president. It will review procedures and changes to ISPP and Central Office operations and make recommendations to the GC.

The *Initiatives Committee*, which is mentioned in Article 12, and chaired by one of the two Vice-Presidents. It will propose and oversee ISPP initiatives such as small grants, the strategic plan for diversity, and other projects designed to further the purposes of ISPP. The functions of the current Allocations Committee will be moved into this committee.

The *Conference and Communications Committee*, which is mentioned in Article 12, and chaired by one of the two Vice-Presidents. It will work with the Program Committee and the Central Office on the annual Scientific Meeting, as needed. It will also consider and recommend to the GC proposals for regional conferences. It will act as the search committee for publications

editors, and will make recommendations regarding publications, and all other methods of communication (blogs, website, social media, etc.) It will work closely with the Early Career Committee in doing this.

The *Early Career Committee*, an existing self-perpetuating committee for early career ISPP members. The Chair will be a voting member of the Governing Council. Details of the ECC will be defined through Bylaws.

Note that all committees will be expected to operate throughout the year using subcommittees. Recommendations of committees will come to the Executive Committee for review and the Governing Council for approval. The GC expects that this new structure, once fully implemented, will allow much more flexibility for ISPP to change its operations as circumstances change, and will allow more efficient use of the skills of those who volunteer to serve the Society.

## 6. Other key changes

The new Constitution clarifies qualifications for office (Article 20), requiring membership for all those serving (except the professional Executive Director, who is not an academic). This is missing in the current Constitution.

The role of the GC in contracting for publications is clarified in Article 19.

Electronic meetings of the GC and EC are now authorized in new Article 17.

The current nominations process for the GC and officers remains basically as is, though language is clarified in Article 21.

A new Article 23 defines clearly what happens when there are vacancies in the GC or officers, something that is missing in the current Constitution. Finally, a new Article 24 specifies procedures for removing officers and GC members, if necessary.