ASAF Rules of Procedure

These ASAF Rules of Procedure have been adopted by all ASAF members during a meeting of members and the following online voting from September 3rd till September 6th 2024. These Rules of Procedure entered into force with the publication on October 11th 2024.

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RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1. Eligibility criteria

Membership of the Forum is open to all professors, staff, former and current students, nationals of the 54 African States who have benefited from one of the African Union or the European Union scholarships, which are mentioned in the ASAF Statutes (Article 4.1). Those whose mobility contracts are still in force can also join the Forum.
International mobility is a requirement for joining ASAF.

The preceding paragraph concerns the following persons: students, staff and trainees.

1.2. Membership Validation

To be admitted as an ordinary member, the applicant must:

- apply via the online application tool,
- provide sufficient information about identity and contact, documentation that attests to the applicant's eligibility for becoming an ordinary member,
- fully accept the Statutes, Rules of Procedure and Internal Regulations of ASAF,
- commit to taking active responsibilities and participating in the activities of ASAF.

1.3. Honorary Members

Proposals for Honorary Members are made by any ASAF member or partner to the Meeting of Members, through the Board, stating the reasons for the nomination.

The proposal is to be submitted to the Service Provider in writing as confidential mail. Then, the Service Provider will organize an anonymous vote to ask the opinion of the Board.

If the Board Members are unanimous, a recommendation for Honorary Membership will be made to the Meeting of Members, who will decide at the Meeting of Members or by voting on the ASAF Community Portal. The person nominated will not be present at any meeting for the agenda item to consider their nomination. Voting in favour shall follow the same rules as those governing decisions taken by the MoM, as mentioned in ***Article 10.5.3*** of the Statutes. The Service Provider will prepare a certificate, which the President of the Board will present to the person concerned on a suitable occasion.

Honorary Members are not eligible for positions within ASAF, nor do they hold the right to vote. All other activities are open to them.

They are also not entitled to receive travel support for meetings.

1.4. End of Membership

Membership ceases:

- Upon the resignation of the member addressed to the Board. The member must notify the Board in writing of his/her resignation, indicating the date on which he/she wishes to terminate his/her membership of the Forum;

- Upon the death of the member; or

- By expulsion pronounced by the Board for a serious reason if a member refuses or deliberately neglects to comply with the provisions of the Statutes, the Rules of Procedure or the Internal Regulations, or is guilty of conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Forum, provided that:

  a) Such member is notified of any charge against her/him under this Article by written notice sent at least 14 (fourteen) days before the Board meeting at which such charge is to be considered;

  b) The accused member shall have the right to attend the hearing to answer the charge or may respond in writing;

  c) The vote of the Board members present at that meeting shall be by secret ballot and the motion of the Board to expel the member from the Forum shall be deemed to be carried if at least 2/3 of the Board members present vote in favour of the motion.

The members concerned may appeal against this sanction within 30 (thirty) days to the Meeting of Members. In this case, she/he may present her/his explanations at an Extraordinary Meeting of Members.
The final decision of his expulsion in case of appeal has to be taken by the Meeting of Members if 2/3 of the casted votes of the ordinary members vote for this.
If not, the member will be reintegrated as an ASAF ordinary member.

2. PARTNERS

2.1. How to become a partner?

Those stakeholders of which the quality is proven by a file, legally established according to the law and practice in their home country, who are interested in the goals pursued by ASAF, and who accept to abide by these Statutes and Rules of Procedure, may be admitted as Partners of the Forum.

These potential partners shall send a signed letter to the Board expressing their interest in joining ASAF's network. The Board will decide on this request in a Board meeting.
After the Board has checked the application, a written partnership agreement must be drawn up and signed by both entities within a maximum of one month of receipt.
Partners' admission must be confirmed in the next Meeting of Members.

The members of ASAF may also suggest to the Board that stakeholders meeting the criteria mentioned in the first paragraph of this article, be approached as partners.

2.2. Rights and duties

In reference to ***Articles 4.2*** and ***6*** of the Statutes, ASAF Partners are invited to contribute on all levels of ASAF, pursuing aims of common interest. Partners are not eligible for holding positions or taking part in votes if not explicitly mentioned in the governance documents.

The partnership implies an obligation of human, financial and technical means.

Thus, the partnership may include:

- the provision of information on both sides, for the joint monitoring of projects ;
- the allocation of resources by ASAF partners (in particular financial resources such as remuneration, equipment, operating costs, insurance, etc.) ;
- the delivery of results by ASAF Working Groups, on forms agreed upon by ASAF and its partners (reports, models, prototypes, programmes, procedures, etc.).

2.3. Termination of Partnership

The partnership may be terminated by each of the signatory Partners subject to compliance with a two-month notice period by sending a registered/signed letter with acknowledgement of receipt.

This agreement may also be terminated in the event of liquidation or dissolution of one or other of the signatory Partners under the legal and regulatory conditions in force and, where applicable, subject to the applicable provisions of public order.

In the event of termination of the Partnership Agreement, all rights and obligations of both entities shall automatically terminate.

3. BOARD

The Board, consisting of 9 (nine) members, is responsible for the preparation of all strategy and policy matters of ASAF. It reports to the Meeting of Members and is chaired by its President.

3.1. Rights and Duties of the Board

The Board shall be responsible for managing all activities of ASAF on a continental level. This body's members coordinate all ASAF's activities, the Task Forces, the Working Groups, the Committees and the Co-Ambassadors. The Board represents ASAF on a continental and global level and is the main interlocutor towards the European Union and African Union.

3.2. Decision-making process

Decisions of the Board are taken collectively and generally need a simple majority vote. In cases of a draw the vote of the President counts double. Certain cases laid down in the Statutes, Rules of Procedure or Internal Regulations may require qualified majorities.

3.3. Roles of the Board members

The Board works as a collective organ, built on a collaborative approach and composed of equal members.

Each Board member shall be assigned specific tasks and activities.

Currently, the assigned roles are the following:

a) The President

b) 2 Vice-Presidents: one for Mobility Programme, Diversity & Inclusion and the other for Regional Cooperation & Integration

c) The Liaison Officers to the following Task Forces :

- The Professional and capacity development
- The Membership promotion and activation
- The Research and surveys
- The Communication
- The Internal affairs
- The International collaboration and cooperation

3.3.1. President of the Board

ASAF shall have one President at any point in time.

The President of the Board presides over the Board by convening and moderating meetings, drafting the agenda. She/He shall be the first point of contact of ASAF externally.

The President is also responsible for the general coordination of ASAF: she/he facilitates and moderates the internal and external coordination of the Forum's activities.

She/He supports and maintains beneficial/strategic relationships and partnership with the Service Provider, funders, partners, and core stakeholders such as the EU and AU commissions, delegations, students and alumni networks among others.

3.3.2. Vice-Presidents

The 2 (two) Vice-Presidents support the President in performing his/her tasks.

They are co-chairs of the Board meetings and the 2nd highest-ranking-persons in the Forum, and may occasionally become substitutes for the President, if necessary.

The Vice-Presidents ensure that an agenda and official minutes (a list of participants, key discussion points and all formal decisions) are prepared for Board meetings.

In addition, each one of them presides over one of the Committees:

- The Vice-President responsible for the Mobility Programme, Diversity & Inclusion is in charge of mobilization and engagement with students and alumni from the diverse mobility programs in the different ASAF activities.

- The Vice-President responsible for the Regional Cooperation & Integration is in charge of mobilization and engagement with students and alumni from the diverse regions of Africa in the different ASAF activities.

3.3.3. Liaison Persons

The Board members, who are neither President nor Vice-Presidents are assigned as Liaison Person to a Task Force (TF), during a term of 2 (two) years.

As Liaisons to a TF, the Board members safeguard that the work of the TF is in line with ASAF's overall strategy, help to coordinate the TF, support the Co-Speakers in the management of the TF and ensure that the Board is always abreast with the activities.

If ASAF has more Task Forces than Board members, the President should take over a Liaison as well. If there are even more TFs also, the Vice-Presidents may be assigned with the role of a Liaison Person or Board members take over more than one Liaison.

3.3.4. The President and two Vice-Presidents

must reside on the African Continent during their term of office. The President and the two Vice-Presidents together have to cover:

3.3.4.1. Both genders,

3.3.4.2. French and English fluency,

3.3.4.3. Three different regions,

3.3.4.4. Three different mobility programmes.

3.3.5. A newly elected Board

shall agree on the assignment of roles in the Board during the first 4 (four) weeks after the election and upon assumption of duty. If the Board does not manage to assign the roles within the stipulated time, it is considered to have failed and immediately a new Board shall be elected.

3.4. Election and removal of the Board

The Board is elected by all ordinary members of ASAF.

3.4.1. Term

The term of office of the Board members shall be 2 (two) years. If a single Board member is elected later as a substitute, his/her term still ends with the end of the rest of the Board and is considered as a full term regardless of the duration.

3.4.2. Number of terms

An ASAF member is entitled to serve on the Board for a maximum of two terms only.

3.4.3. Eligibility criteria

All ordinary ASAF members are eligible to stand and be voted for onto the Board.

3.4.4. Election process

A call for applications shall be published 8 (eight) weeks prior to the call for the election. The application must contain, among others, information about:

- Gender
- Mobility programme

- Country of nationality
- African region the applicant affiliates with (as defined by the AU)
- Primary language (FR or ENG)
- Motivation: why the person is running for this position, what the person wants to achieve, etc.

The eligibility will be checked by the Service Provider and the Internal Affairs Task Force and presented to the outgoing Board. All eligible applicants will be put in a list according to their region of affiliation.

The applicants will have 2 (two) weeks to promote their application.

The election will take place for one week. Each ASAF member, regardless of where he/she is, has one vote for each regional list.

After the election, the results will be collated according to the diversity and inclusion criteria of ASAF. The following processes will be implemented point by point till the number of Board members as stated in the Statutes is reached:

1) The candidate with the highest number of votes will become a Board member (A);
2) Out of the remaining four regional lists, the candidate with another gender than (A) and highest number of votes will become Board member (B);
3) Out of the remaining three regional lists the candidate with the highest number of votes become Board member (C);
4) Out of the two remaining regional lists the candidate with the currently underrepresented gender and the highest number of votes become Board member (D);
5) The candidate from the last regional list with highest number of votes become Board member (E);
6) After the first five Board members identified, all other candidates from countries already represented on the Board are excluded;
7) If not all mobility programmes are covered yet (Nyerere, Intra-Africa, Intra-ACP, Erasmus+) the candidate(s) with the highest number of votes from the not yet represented programmes become Board members (F);
8) The remaining places will be awarded to candidates, following these criteria:

a. balance between AU-AU mobilities and AU-EU mobilities

b. gender balance

c. at least three ENG and three FR speakers

d. number of votes

9) As soon as three Board Members come from the diaspora (current residency outside of Africa), the remaining candidates from the diaspora are excluded.

3.4.5. Removal procedure

3.4.5.1. If the entire Board should be removed, ASAF members can convey a Meeting of Members following the normal procedure for that and in this meeting dismiss the Board with a 2/3 majority vote. If the whole Board is dismissed, the procedure for the election of a new one starts. The old Board remains acting until the new Board is elected. The new Board will start with a term of two years.

3.4.5.2. If a single Board member should be removed, or resigned or is dead, and the remaining term of the Board is more than 7 (seven) months, the Board with a 2/3 majority shall open within 3 (three) weeks a new call for candidacy for this specific position. Eligible candidates have to cover the necessary preconditions in regard to gender, region, programme, language etc. The term of the single substitute member is the remaining time as for the whole Board.

3.5. Board meetings

The Board shall meet at least every three months, and whenever convened by its President or at the request of at least 2 (two) members. Where appropriate, a Member of the Board may participate in the meeting by audio or video conference.

Decisions are taken by a simple majority. Minutes shall be kept of the meetings. The minutes shall be saved and recorded by the President of the Board.
Copies of the minutes will be saved in the respective folders of ASAF Community Portal, available for all ASAF members.

3.6. Proxies & power of attorney

If a Board member is not able to attend an on-site Board meeting, he/she can assign a substitute:

- The Vice-President for Regional Cooperation and Integration can assign one of the five Regional Coordinators;

- The Vice-President for Mobility Programme, Diversity and Inclusion can assign one of the Co-Speakers of the Committee;
- The Liaisons of the different task forces can assign one of the Co-Speakers.
- The President cannot assign a substitute as he/she will automatically be covered by the Vice-Presidents.

The Board member must give power of attorney to someone, if he/she is not able to attend neither on-site nor online. The Board member is free to give the power of attorney to:

- Their substitutes, empowering them to take part in voting during the Board meeting,
- Or another Board member present in the meeting.

About a substitution for an on-site meeting the respective Board member has to inform the other Board members and the SP at least 2 (two) months in advance.

Concerning the powers of attorney, the Board member has to inform the Board and the SP at least 2 (two) weeks in advance.

4. COMMITTEE ON MOBILITY PROGRAMME, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

4.1. Members

The Committee is composed of two members from each of the following programmes/groups:

a) Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme,

b) Intra-ACP Mobility Scheme,

c) Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme,

d) Erasmus+:

i. Erasmus Mundus

ii. Erasmus Staff

iii. Erasmus credit mobility.

4.2. Eligibility criteria/covering diversity

The duo for each programme has to cover the following diversity criteria:

a) Two different Genders

b) Two different countries

c) Covering ENG and FR

4.3. Term

The term is two years.

4.4. Elections

Elections are held in September.

The call for applications is published at least six weeks in advance.

ASAF members have at least one week to apply.

The eligibility of the applicants will be checked within a week.

Eligible applicants are put into lists according to the programme they want to represent, will be published and have at least one week to campaign.

Election is open for one week in the Online Community.

Every ASAF member can vote on all programme lists[1].

Elected are:

a. The member with the highest number of votes on each list

b. The member with the highest number of votes on each list, which differs from the first in gender, country and primary language.

c. If no candidate fulfills all diversity criteria, the following order applies

[1] At the current stage, ASAF Community Portal cannot "divide" all members according to their mobility programme. This might be possible later on, but will also raise the issue of members being alumni from several programmes.

i. Gender

ii. Language

iii. Country

4.5. Co-Speakers

The Committee on Mobility Programme, Diversity and Inclusion appoints two Co-Speakers.

The Co-Speakers support the Vice-President in organizing and managing the Committee and back-up the cases the Vice-President cannot attend.

The Co-Speakers have to cover the following diversity criteria:

a. Two different Gender

b. Two different countries

c. Covering ENG and FR

5. REGIONAL COORDINATORS

5.1. Definition

For Each African Region (definition of the AU) out of the Co-Ambassadors in office, a Regional Coordinator will be elected.

The Regional Coordinators will serve a one-year term.

They form together with the respective Vice-President the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration.

As Regional Coordinators are elected from the Co-Ambassadors, they are an exception of the general -no plurality of offices- policy mentioned in ***Article 6*** of these present Rules of Procedure.

If the term of a Co-Ambassador ends but he/she is still Regional Coordinator, he/she will finish the term as Regional Coordinator.

5.2. Elections

Regional Coordinators elections shall take place in March. All Co-Ambassadors of the respective regions elect the Regional Coordinator out of the Co-Ambassadors. If a Regional Coordinator resigns, a new Regional Coordinator will be elected. In this case the term is only the reminder of the time till the next regular elections are held.

If the Co-Ambassadors of a region want to replace the current Regional Coordinator, they can do so by electing a different Co-Ambassador for this position. With the election of the new Regional Coordinator, the office of the old one ends. The office of the new one only lasts till the next general election is held in March.

6. TASK FORCES

6.1. How to become a member?

ASAF members who want to join a Task Force can directly apply to the group concerned via ASAF Community Portal.

An answer will be sent to them within 15 days after application.

6.2. Structure

Each Task Force has two Co-Speakers and a Liaison Officer. These three distinguished members of the task force coordinate and account for the work of the task force.

The Co-Speakers mainly deliver, coordinate the work and act as contact persons for the Task Force members, the ASAF members, the Service Provider as well as external stakeholders.

The Liaison as a member of the Board is assigned by the Board to this Task Force. He/she safeguards the information flow between Board and Task Force (i.e. he/she reports in the Board meetings about the work of the Task Force), has an eye on coherence with other task forces and the Board's policy and provides support to the Task Force (and the Co-Speakers) where needed. He/She is not organizing or leading the task force (this is the job of the co-speakers).

6.3. Election of Co-Speakers

The Co-Speakers are proposed by the members of the Task Force and assigned by the Board. Their election must respect the rules regarding gender and linguistic parity. The assignment has to be confirmed by the Meeting of Members.

7. SINGLE TASK FORCES

There are initially six Task Forces, namely:

- Professional and capacity development
- Membership promotion and activation
- Research & Surveys

- Communication
- Internal affairs
- International collaboration and cooperation

The objectives/functions, task description/roles and responsibilities etc. are subject to Internal Regulations of the specific Task Force.

The Board can propose the Meeting of Members to merge or dismiss existing Task Forces as well as to establish new ones.

8. CO-AMBASSADORS

8.1. Role

ASAF aims to have two Co-Ambassadors in each African country. The Co-Ambassadors are representing ASAF in the country of assignment as well as representing the ASAF members of the respective country towards ASAF.

There should always be two Co-Ambassadors, performing in a collaborative manner.

The two Co-Ambassadors must reflect ASAF's diversity in the sense of mobility (one Co-Ambassador must be Alumni of an Intra-African Mobility, the other of an Africa-EU mobility) and gender. If applicable for certain countries the linguistic diversity also has to be covered. Aim is that other Alumni, prospective students and external stakeholders can always approach a Co-Ambassador with the specific profile.

8.2. Eligibility

Each ASAF member with permanent current residence is eligible to be a Co-Ambassador of the country of her/his residence. Each ASAF member with African country of nationality is eligible to be a Co-Ambassador of their country of nationality.

8.3. Term

The Co-Ambassadors serve for 2 (two) years and for a maximum of two terms only. The term of office generally starts on the 1st of January and ends on the 31st of December two years later.

8.4. Elections

Elections are generally held in December. The terms of the Co-Ambassadors are designed to be overlapping for a year each, safeguarding that always an experienced Co-Ambassador is in Office and loss of knowledge etc. in hand-over can be avoided.

There is a call for applicants stating the eligibility criteria (which depend on the profile of the Co-Ambassador remaining in office). A well filled in profile in ASAF Community Portal is also a precondition.

The applicants should have 2 (two) weeks to present themselves in ASAF Community Portal.

All members of the country group can vote for the Co-Ambassador. Members of the Country Group can be citizens of the respective country, residents of the respective country and Alumni who passed their mobility in the respective country.

The candidate who received the highest number of votes is the elected Co-Ambassador. If there is a tie, a run-off will take place within the next week to break the tie between the candidates. This process might be repeated till one candidate is elected.

8.5.

If a Co-Ambassador moves out of the country of assignment for more than 6 (six) months, they must resign**.** A Co-Ambassador also has to resign if he/she realizes that he/she is not able anymore to fulfill the commitments of a Co-Ambassador.

8.6.

If the actions and communication of a Co-Ambassador brings ASAF into disrepute, the Board, following a written statement of the Committee on Regional cooperation and integration, can with a 2/3 majority decision, dismiss the Co-Ambassador. This decision has to be published and justified on ASAF Community Portal. The Board also has to report to the members during the next Meeting of Members.

8.7.

If a Co-Ambassador is dismissed or resigns, a substitute is elected if more than 10 months are left of the term of the resigning Co-Ambassador. The newly elected Co-Ambassador will take over the term of his/her predecessor. If there are less than 10 months left, the vacant position will be filled within the next regular election in December.

8.8.

The Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration shall ensure the healthy cooperation between the two Co-Ambassadors. It acts as an arbitrator, with the help of the Internal Affairs Task Force, if there is any problem between the co-ambassadors

8.9.

If members are dissatisfied with the performance or behavior of a Co-Ambassador, they can approach the Vice-President for Regional Cooperation and Integration to ask for mitigation, in accordance with the Internal Regulations of that committee.

9. WORKING GROUPS

9.1.

Working group aims should be always SMART[2].

9.2.

A working group is always designed for the duration of one year.

9.3.

Working groups have at least 10 members out of which are at least 5 (five) active ASAF members. In total a working group should not exceed 20 members.

9.4.

The working groups are led by two Co-Chairs out of which one must be ASAF member and one can be also a partner.

9.5. Establishment of a working group:

The 5 (five) prospective Working Group members hand in to the Board the concept of the proposed working group outlining:

- The title
- The methodology
- The list of (at least 5) committed members
- Expected deliverables
- Timeline

If the Board assesses the application and finds it laudable, it proposes the Meeting of Members to establish the working group.

[2] Working groups' goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related.

Up to the next Meeting of Members, the Working Group can start being active on a preliminary basis after the positive assessment of the Board.

10. PLURALITY OF OFFICES – DISMISSAL – VACANCIES – AD INTERIM OFFICE HOLDERS

In general, each ASAF volunteer must have sufficient time and resources at hand to well fulfill his/her mandate. To do so as a general rule not more than one position should be covered by any one member.

If a member runs for a position even though he/she already is holding one position, her/his election (not the running for the position) to the new position will be regarded as automatic resignation from his/her current position.

This rule does not apply to members of Task Forces (other than the Liaison and the Co-Speakers) and Working Groups.

11. INTERNAL REGULATIONS

All internal regulations need to be in line with the principles of ASAF, following the principles of transparency, equal rights, democracy, respect the rule of law, diversity and representation thereof.

The Statutes and the Rules of Procedure have precedence over the internal regulations.

Each body of ASAF develops internal regulations for the functioning of its entity. A 2/3 majority of the body has to confirm the Internal Regulations. The internal regulations will be assessed by the Internal Affairs Task Force. Upon the basis of the assessment of the internal Affairs Task Force the Board validates the internal regulations with a simple majority vote. The validated Internal Regulations will be published in the Community Portal to be available for all ASAF members.

Amendments to the Internal Regulations shall follow the process outlined in ***Article 17.3, Paragraph 3*** of the Statutes. As long as the changes haven't been validated and published, the old Internal Regulations apply.

12. ENTRY INTO FORCE

The Rules of Procedure enter into force and serve as a legal binding document published online after approval by ASAF members.

13. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

13.1. Membership

Members, who have been members of ASAF before the first Statutes and Rules of Procedure got into force and would not meet the membership criteria, nevertheless remain ASAF members.

13.2. Terms of Co-Ambassadors

To achieve the overlapping terms of Co-Ambassadors, some first terms still have to be called for only one year whereas other terms already have the two-year term. This will be clearly communicated in the call of the specific Co-Ambassador.

Also the short one-year term will be considered as a full term in regards to the number of terms.

13.3. Count of Terms

Terms served in ASAF in the preliminary setting of the past years count as terms if it comes to a limited number of terms. This especially applies to:

13.3.1. Co-Ambassadors

13.3.2. Board members, in which case the membership in the core group/Interim Board will count as one Board term.