

# **Japan Exchange & Teaching Programme Alumni Association International (JETAA International / JETAA-I)**

## **Organizational Bylaws**

May 2016

### **Article I: Official Name**

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme Alumni Association International (JETAA International / JETAA-I).

### **Article II: Constituency**

JETAA-I exists to serve its constituent chapters, as recognized by JETAA-I in consultation with CLAIR and the relevant Japanese Ministries, as well as individual members of the alumni community.

### **Article III: Purposes**

JETAA-I has been established to:

- Be the international umbrella alumni association of former Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme participants around the world;
- Serve as a coordinator and liaison among JETAA chapters worldwide, individual JET alumni, official Japanese government entities, and other stakeholders;
- Promote and support the JET Programme and its alumni chapters;
- Provide information and resources for and about the JET and JETAA communities in Japan and abroad;
- Support and assist in new chapter development;
- Strengthen networking among the JET alumni community, its chapters and members, current JETs, and other Japan-related organizations and entities;
- Nurture and enhance ties between Japan and the rest of the world.

### **Article IV: Leadership Structure**

#### **Section 1. Overall Structure**

The leadership structure of JETAA-I shall consist of the Executive Officers (Chair and Vice Chair), assisted by a Board of Advisors, a Webmaster, and the Executive Committee (Country Representatives), all of whom are responsible to the general membership as represented by the Chapter Representatives.

#### **Section 2. Country Representatives**

A. All countries containing at least one chapter of twenty (20) or more members shall be eligible to select a Country Representative. In the case of single-chapter countries, the Chapter Representative shall automatically assume the additional responsibilities and role of Country Representative, unless the membership of that country votes otherwise.

- B. Countries are strongly encouraged to establish their Country Representative selection process and terms of office so as to mesh with the JETAA-I cycle and Japanese fiscal year, with new officers beginning their terms on April 1st of each year.
- C. Country Representatives shall not be required to represent more than nine chapters. Countries with ten or more chapters shall have the option of electing additional Country Representatives so that no one Country Representative is burdened with representing more than nine chapters. The method of dividing responsibility between / among multiple Country Representatives shall be established by the country in question, whether geographically, functionally, or otherwise. Regardless of the method chosen, all Country Representatives shall have equal authority and standing in JETAA-I.
- D. The Country Representatives' primary role is to serve the alumni in their countries. Furthermore, it is hoped they will participate in the JETAA-I Executive Committee, contribute to its good governance, deliberate and act upon any matters felt to affect the global alumni community or that might benefit from engagement by that community as a whole, and to help ensure effective and timely two-way communication between JETAA-I and their respective countries or regions.
- E. In particular, they are responsible for representing the views of their constituents (both chapters and individuals) at meetings and conferences and for disseminating information and decisions from these meetings and conferences back to those chapters / constituents.
- F. The Executive Officers and Executive Committee may cooperatively establish committees, responsibilities and / or duties to be carried out by the Executive Committee members as appropriate.
- G. It is also hoped that Country Representatives will inform the Executive Officers or Committee, as appropriate, of any significant activities or developments within their jurisdictions.
- H. The Executive Officers may, in consultation with the Executive Committee, produce a set of guidelines governing the roles, responsibilities, selection process, and tenure of Country Representatives. Any such guidelines shall become effective only following an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Executive Committee voting.

### **Section 3. Executive Committee**

- A. The Executive Committee shall consist of all current Country Representatives serving on behalf of recognized member countries. Executive Committee responsibilities include election of JETAA-I Executive Officers (Chair and Vice Chair) and other defined tasks as appropriate. To ensure a representative voice for all JETAA-I member countries, voting within the Executive Committee is on a 'one Country Representative / one vote' basis.
- B. Country Representatives are responsible for representing the views of their chapters at meetings and conferences and for disseminating information and decisions from these meetings and conferences back to their chapters. Therefore, the Executive Committee shall be accountable to their respective constituents for decisions made by the Committee and will report to them in accordance with any requirements established by their respective countries.

- C. The Executive Committee, either as a whole or through any of its members, shall also act to ensure that the Executive Officers are performing their duties as stipulated in the Bylaws and are carrying out as instructed any decisions made by the Executive Committee at conferences, meetings, or any other officially recognized means.

#### **Section 4. Executive Officers**

- A.1. **Chair:** The Chair is responsible for leading all meetings of the Executive Committee and other officers of JETAA-I, acting as the official spokesperson and primary liaison for JETAA-I, supervising projects, and advising and working with the Vice Chair where appropriate. The Chair shall also be responsible for supporting chapter development in new or struggling chapters and facilitating positive, timely and effective communication in the alumni community, both among chapters and with the Executive Committee.
- A.2. The Chair shall report to the Executive Committee at least once annually on the condition and activities of JETAA-I covering the period since the previous report. This includes activities undertaken by the Chair, Vice Chair, Webmaster, and Board of Advisors.
- B.1. **Vice Chair:** The Vice Chair is responsible for providing day-to-day supervision of specific projects as directed by the Chair and / or the Executive Committee. Upon consultation with the Executive Committee and Board of Advisors, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence for any reason. In addition, the Vice Chair coordinates changes to the Bylaws, oversees the work of any committees, and assists the Chair with supporting new and developing chapters.
- B.2. The Vice Chair may also assume responsibility for other types of communications, such as publicity and promotion where directed by the Chair and / or Executive Committee. The Vice Chair, working with the Webmaster and other content providers, shall be responsible for overseeing:
- The maintenance of any JETAA-I database of chapter information;
  - Development and maintenance of the JETAA-I website;
  - The provision of content to social media and other information and communications resources.
- C.1. **Webmaster:** A Webmaster position and job description shall be determined and filled by the Executive Officers and shall serve at their discretion to assist in the above-mentioned duties.
- C.2. The Webmaster has overall responsibility for the technical aspects of JETAA-I. The Webmaster position is an appointed one and has no voting rights, unless the Webmaster is a Country Representative.

#### **Section 5. Term of office limit**

- A. Executive Officers may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms in any one position. Each Executive Officer shall be encouraged to run for two terms.
- B. In the event of an Executive Officer position becoming vacant prior to the expiration of the term of office, the Executive Committee shall appoint an interim replacement, preferably but not necessarily drawn from the current members of the Executive Committee, to assume the duties of that Executive Officer position for the remainder of the term.

## **Section 6. Board of Advisors**

- A. A Board of Advisors shall be established, ideally consisting of approximately five (5) persons, to advise and assist the Executive Officers in their duties. Members of this Board shall be selected, as vacancies occur, by the Chair in consultation with the Vice Chair, current Board of Advisor members, and Executive Committee.
- B. Board members are encouraged to serve for at least two but not more than five years, and serve at the pleasure of the Executive Officers.
- C. Members of the Board of Advisors should have knowledge of the JET Programme, AJET (the Association of Japan Exchange and Teaching), and of JETAA at the chapter, national, and international levels. This could include (in descending order of priority):
- Former Executive Officers or Executive Committee members of JETAA-I;
  - Current and / or former officers from AJET;
  - Representatives (other than Country Representatives) from member chapters;
  - Stakeholders in the JET Programme or alumni community;
  - Other people considered by the Chair to be qualified in some way to contribute to the Board.
- D. The Board should serve in a complementary role to the Executive Committee, which is also expected to provide advice and support to the Executive Officers as necessary.
- E. Except where experience as an officer in some capacity is specified, Board members do not necessarily need to be alumni.

## **Article V: Procedures**

### **Section 1. Membership**

- A. JETAA-I membership is on a country basis and is restricted to countries recognized by JETAA-I. Member countries must have at least one chapter that operates as an 'active' chapter, with at least twenty (20) current alumni members and written chapter bylaws.
- B. Member countries may be either single-chapter countries or multiple-chapter countries. Countries are encouraged to seek official JETAA-I recognition for their chapters. This will facilitate JETAA-I's ability to support them directly, should that be considered desirable, and the number of recognized chapters in a country will be the primary factor in determining how many Country Representatives that country may seat on the Executive Committee.
- C. In the case of a JET alumni chapter existing in a country with fewer than 20 members, where it is the only chapter in a country, Associate Membership may be granted by the Executive Committee, until such time as the 20 member minimum is reached in that country. Associate Members have no voting rights.
- D. Associate Membership may bring the following benefits:
- The use of the JETAA-I name and/or logo;
  - Participation in conferences or meetings (as possible/ appropriate);

- Support from, advice from and connectivity to JETAA-I Executive Officers and Executive Committee members as well as global Chapter Representatives;
  - Access to JETAA-I resources and information.
- E. Sub-chapters, where they exist, shall not be represented in their own right but through their parent chapter. They may, however, apply for official recognition by JETAA-I. In this case, they shall be subject to all requirements and privileges of parent chapters, except voting and attendance at JETAA-I meetings.
- F. New chapters seeking to become members, groups seeking to become associate members, or sub-chapters seeking official recognition may do this by submitting a copy of their bylaws, current membership list, and a summary of activities over the last 12 months, together with a cover letter requesting membership or recognition to the JETAA-I Chair. The Chair shall review these materials and share them with the Vice Chair and Executive Committee. Once any issues or questions are resolved, the Executive Committee shall vote on whether to accept, defer, or reject the application.
- G. In the case of a former JET Programme participant residing in a country where there is no recognised JETAA chapter, associate membership on an individual basis may be granted by the Executive Committee until such time as an official JETAA chapter may be established in that country. Individual associate members have no voting rights.
- H. Member chapters, associate member chapters and sub-chapters of JETAA-I shall be committed to providing service related to the JET Programme, establishing and strengthening relationships with other chapters and outside Japan-related organizations, and working towards the growth, development and success of the global alumni community. They should, at all times, maintain integrity and professionalism and serve as exemplary representatives of the alumni-community.

## **Section 2. Meetings**

- A. The Executive Committee and Executive Officers will meet as necessary to progress the business of JETAA-I. It is preferable that these meetings be face-to-face (funds permitting). However, when this is not possible, they shall be conducted virtually (i.e. via teleconference or the Internet).
- B. Any such meeting may be proposed in writing (in either electronic or physical documentation) by the Chair or any Executive Committee member. A proposal to hold a meeting shall be put to the Executive Committee and will proceed upon receiving support from two-thirds majority or more of Executive Committee members.
- C. Upon a meeting being approved, the Vice Chair shall provide written notification (in electronic or physical documentation) to all members of the Executive Committee and Board of Advisors and to other relevant stakeholders. Said notification shall include the date, time, venue or means of communication and the meeting agenda.
- D. The Vice Chair should arrange meetings that allow maximum participation of Executive Committee members at no or minimal personal cost to those members.

- E. Whenever possible, virtual meetings should be announced at least two weeks prior to the date and face-to-face meetings at least eight weeks. Shorter timeframes are permitted when circumstances demand such immediate action.
- F. In the event of an Executive Officer, Executive Committee member, or any other person of responsibility failing to complete a task volunteered for or appointed to, or behaving in an inappropriate manner as specified in the Bylaws or other guidelines, without due cause, funding will not be provided for transport to, or attendance at meetings or conferences. A person may be deemed ineligible to attend such meetings or conferences by a vote of at least 51 percent of the Executive Committee.
- G. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be 75% of current Executive Committee membership. Current Executive Committee membership shall be the body of those Country Representatives whose countries have sought and received membership in JETAA-I.
- H. In the event that a quorum is not achieved within 30 minutes of the publicized commencement of the meeting, the meeting shall be suspended until such time as the Chair re-convenes.
- I. In the event of an Executive Committee member or Executive Officer being unable to attend an Executive Committee meeting, they may nominate a representative to attend in their place. Such notification should be provided to the Chair at least seven (7) days prior to the advertised date of the meeting, except in the case of unforeseen circumstances (e.g. accident or emergency). The nominated representative should preferably be a former Country Representative or a current Chapter Representative from the same country as the absent Executive Committee member. If neither of these options is possible, the nominated representative must be a current member of the chapter that the absent Executive Committee member is a member of.

### **Section 3. In-person meetings**

- A. As stated, the Vice Chair shall give written notice (electronic or physical documentation) of any face-to-face meeting of the Executive Committee to Executive Committee members at least eight (8) weeks prior to the advertised date of any such meeting. The Vice Chair shall, in collaboration with the Chair and Executive Committee members, oversee meeting arrangements and advise all Executive Committee members of the details at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The Executive Officers shall endeavour to ensure that no Executive Committee member is unduly disadvantaged with regard to participation in a meeting by the cost involved in meeting attendance (e.g. airfares, accommodation).
- B. Commencement of the meeting is subject to a quorum being reached in terms of Executive Committee members physically present at the meeting venue.

### **Section 4. Other meetings**

The Vice Chair shall give notice of any meeting to Executive Committee members at least fourteen (14) days prior to the advertised date of a meeting. The Vice Chair shall, in consultation with the Chair, Webmaster (where necessary), and other Executive Committee members, be responsible for arranging the mechanism by which the meeting will be conducted (teleconference, Internet, etc.) and advising Executive Committee members of the arrangements at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Commencement of the meeting is

subject to a quorum being reached in terms of Executive Committee members present to participate.

## **Article VI: Terms, Qualifications, and Eligibility for Office**

### **Section 1. Executive Officers**

A. Terms of office for Executive Officer positions shall be for a period of one year, after which all positions become vacant. Eligibility for the position of Chair is restricted to current or former Executive Committee members (Country Representatives) and Chapter Representatives. It is preferable that candidates for the position of Vice Chair have similar experience, although exceptions may be considered. Candidates for the position of Chair and Vice Chair must be former JET Programme participants.

- B. In the case where a Vice Chair lacks the above-mentioned experience as a Country or Chapter Representative, they may run for the office of Chair after they have served at least two terms as Vice Chair.
- C. No individual shall be permitted to hold more than one Executive Officer position at any one time. Once elected, an Executive Officer will have the option of standing down from their Chapter Representative or Country Representative position, in order to fulfil their responsibilities to the Executive Officer post.
- D. Should an Executive Officer choose to retain their seat on the Executive Committee as a Country Representative, they shall retain the vote pertaining to that office. Executive Officers themselves have no vote, and serve only to execute the decisions of the Executive Committee and fulfill any functions stipulated by that Committee or these Bylaws.

### **Section 2. Executive Committee (Country Representatives)**

Terms of office for all Country Representative positions shall be determined by each country as they see fit, but shall be no more than two consecutive years, after which the position becomes subject to re-selection. Eligibility for JETAA-I Executive Committee membership is restricted to Country Representatives in good standing and who have been duly nominated and selected by a majority of the chapters or members within their country.

## **Article VII: Conducting Elections**

### **Section 1. Executive Officers**

A. Elections to fill Executive Officer positions shall be conducted once annually following guidelines established for that purpose. The timing of the election process should allow for Executive Officers to begin their terms of office on April 1st, with sufficient time allocated to adequately carry out each step of the election process as outlined.

- B. A duly designated Advisory Board member shall be responsible for calling elections and communicating election procedures to the Executive Committee. Said Advisory Board member should be a neutral third party designated by the Executive Committee for that task. In turn,

Country Representatives are responsible for informing Chapter Representatives as soon as an election has been called.

- C. The above-mentioned Advisory Board member shall serve as the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the conduct of the election, from disseminating information to gathering and announcing the voting results.
- D. Only current Executive Committee members (Country Representatives) are eligible to vote for JETAA-I Executive Officers. Voting is on a 'one Country Representative / one vote' basis. Current Executive Officers eligible for re-election shall be allowed to do so unless their performance is such that the Executive Committee does not believe they should be given the privilege of continuing to serve. In this case, a two-thirds majority of Executive Committee members voting is necessary to block such a candidacy.
- E. In the event there is only one candidate for any Executive Officer position, that person shall automatically assume said position as if elected, unless a motion of opposition is raised by any member of the Executive Committee and seconded by another member. In that case, the Committee must discuss the objection to the candidate and vote, within a reasonable time, on whether to allow or deny the candidate's continuation in their position. A two-thirds majority is required to block the candidate's continuation in that post.
- F. Previous officers shall relinquish their duties and new officers shall assume duties on April 1st of each year, unless there is consensus agreement to alter this for some pressing reason. The acceptable period of time before or after April 1st within which the transfer should occur shall be set in the election guidelines.

## **Section 2. Country Representatives (Executive Committee members)**

The method of selection for Country Representatives shall be the responsibility of the country concerned, but shall be done in a manner consistent with any applicable JETAA-I Bylaws. Notification of the results of this selection shall be shared with the Executive Officers and Executive Committee within fourteen (14) days of the incoming Country Representative assuming office.

## **Article VIII: Voting**

### **Section 1. Voting Procedures**

- A. All voting on matters pertaining to JETAA-I shall be done by secret ballot in a manner that respects the voter's privacy and allows for all members to participate. The method of voting, whether in-person, online, or otherwise, shall be determined by the Returning Officer or Chair in consultation with the Executive Officers and Committee members, and this information shall be shared with all stakeholders.
- B. The Returning Officer, for elections, or the Chair, for votes involving the Executive Committee, is expected to conduct due diligence to ensure that every Country Representative is notified of any vote called.



- C. Voting may be conducted outside of a formally called meeting, depending on circumstances. In this case, quorum requirements do not apply. However, due diligence to notify all Executive Committee members is required.
- D. Vote tallies pertaining to elections, removals, amendment of the Bylaws, or Matters of General Concern, whether simple majority (50 percent plus 1) or super-majority (two-thirds), shall be based only on the Executive Committee members voting, excluding abstentions. All Country Representatives are expected to vote, although they may vote to abstain. Any non-votes will be considered abstentions. Abstentions will not be included in the final vote tally.
- E. Candidates may stand for office by submitting platforms and any required documentation for review by the Returning Officer and Executive Committee and receiving approval for their candidacy.
- F. Motions to amend the Bylaws or on Matters of General Concern may be proposed by anyone, but need to be seconded by a member of the Executive Committee before being considered for a vote.

## **Section 2. Election of Executive Officers**

- A. Voting shall be by a system whereby the candidate receiving the most number of votes shall be declared successful. Voters have one vote to cast for candidate for each open position. They may not vote for multiple candidates for one position. Such votes shall be considered invalid.
- B. In the event of a tie vote, the Returning Officer shall conduct a competition of chance before witnesses, such as drawing lots, janken, or a coin toss, in a manner mutually agreed upon by the candidates, to determine the winner.

## **Section 3. Amending the JETAA International Bylaws**

- A. Proposed amendments to the JETAA International Bylaws shall be put to the vote of the Executive Committee (Country Representatives).
- B. Voting on proposed bylaw amendments will be based on a referendum-style approach, that is, voting to accept or reject the proposal. Proposed bylaw amendments receiving the support of two-thirds or greater of the Executive Committee (Country Representatives) voting shall be considered passed.
- C. All JETAA-I Executive Committee members shall be provided with written notification (electronic or physical documentation) of proposed amendments and date of the vote at least six (6) weeks in advance. Country Representatives are expected to seek the views of all of their Chapter Representatives, for multi-chapter countries, or chapter members, for single-chapter countries, prior to voting.

## **Section 4. General Matters of Concern**

- A. Voting on general matters of concern regarding proposals brought before the Executive Committee shall be done in accordance with the conditions pertaining to voting noted at the beginning of this section, and shall only be conducted after thoughtful and comprehensive discussion among the Executive Committee members and Executive Officers, as well as any consultation with stakeholders or sources of information identified through those discussions.

- B. Votes on general matters of concern require only a simple majority of members voting to be approved.

## **Article IX: Removal of Members**

### **Section 1. Executive Officers**

The Chair and / or Vice Chair can be removed from their capacity as Executive Officers by a two-thirds or greater vote of all Executive Committee members voting in the case of a serious breach of the JETAA International Bylaws or in the case of an issue of “no confidence” for whatever reason.

### **Section 2. Country Representatives**

- A. A Country Representative may be removed from the Executive Committee by a two-thirds or greater vote of all Executive Committee members voting in the case of a serious breach of the JETAA International Bylaws or in the case of an issue of “no confidence”. The Country Representative in question cannot vote in this matter.
- B. A Country Representative may also, if the country so provides, be removed from office by Chapter Representatives or chapter members within their respective country in the case of misconduct, malfeasance, or an issue of “no confidence” for whatever reason, following procedures laid out for that purpose. A vote of two-thirds of all chapter members voting or of all chapters voting should be the standard for removal.
- C. Removal as an Executive Committee member, Executive Officer, or Country Representative may result from inappropriate and / or illegal behaviour, such as but not limited to:
- Abuse of any form of communication within or outside of the sphere of JETAA-I;
  - Conduct considered unprofessional, subversive, threatening or harassing in nature;
  - Misrepresentation;
  - Financial or other malfeasance.
- D. Any Country Representative removed from office by a vote of their chapter(s) shall become ineligible to sit on the Executive Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the said country to replace any Country Representative.
- E. JETAA-I, its Executive Officers or Executive Committee, have no authority to remove from office any individual Country Representative from their capacity as Country Representative. This authority lies with that person’s home chapter(s) and membership. JETAA-I may, however, recommend removal of a Country Representative for any valid reason, including those listed above.

### **Section 3. Chapter Representatives**

JETAA-I, its Executive Officers or Executive Committee, have no authority to remove from office any individual Chapter Representative in their capacity as Chapter Representative, but may recommend further investigation of an issue. It is the responsibility of the JETAA leadership in said country to take appropriate action in addressing any situation where a Chapter

Representative has breached their respective chapter or national bylaws and / or has lost the confidence of the general membership of their respective chapter.

#### **Section 4. Chapters**

A. Member chapters may be removed from JETAA-I for intentionally misrepresenting information to the Executive Officers or Executive Committee, conduct counter to the objectives and image of JETAA-I, or any other action considered injurious to part or all of the JET alumni community. Removal requires a two-thirds majority or greater vote of the Executive Committee members voting.

B. Any such removal may be considered either a temporary suspension until such a time as clearly defined remedies, as set out by the Executive Officers and Executive Committee, are taken, or as a permanent disqualification from participating in JETAA-I.

**JETAA International**  
**May 2016**