This Membership Policy explains the definition of being a member of CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the process of joining and renewing a membership, and the associated roles and responsibilities in accordance to our by-laws. Last edited: 9 October 2018.
WHO IS CIVICUS?

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and individuals dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world. CIVICUS was established in 1993 by a diverse group of civil society leaders "as a true coalition from the outset" aimed at reinforcing and supporting people’s willingness to participate in public affairs, actuate positive change and tackle challenges together, in every region of the globe.

OUR VISION

A worldwide community of informed, inspired, committed citizens engaged in confronting the challenges facing humanity.

OUR MISSION

To strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world.

OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

● We believe in justice and dignity for all, while putting the most excluded first.
● We believe that people and their organisations, working together, can change the world.
● We stand for a strong, independent and progressive civil society.
● We challenge power with principled courage.
● We are champions of accountability, diversity and inclusion.
● We are committed to global solidarity and believe in building from within and beyond borders.
● We seek systems change to tackle the universal and inter-related nature of the world's most pressing challenges.

CIVICUS Theory of Change , as defined in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. For more information consult www.civicus.org

1 Miklós Marschall, First CIVICUS Secretary General, "Getting a world alliance started – my four years at CIVICUS", available here: http://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/getting-a-world-alliance-started-my-four-years-at-civicus/
WHY CIVICUS MEMBERSHIP?

When you join CIVICUS you become part of a global alliance that acts together by mobilising our collective knowledge, skills, expertise, influence and power. Our overall goal is to strengthen civil society and citizen action to build a more just, inclusive and sustainable world.

BY JOINING CIVICUS, YOU WILL:

- Be part of a worldwide community of informed, inspiring and committed organisations and individuals engaged in tackling the challenges facing humanity.
- Connect with a diversity of members and partners dedicated to (1) defending civic freedoms and democratic values; (2) strengthening the power of people to organise, mobilise and take action; and (3) empowering a more accountable, effective and innovative civil society.
- Work collaboratively to build solidarity across borders, amplify excluded voices, promote the resourcing of a diverse and resilient civil society, and advocate for systemic change.

THE MORE YOU GET INVOLVED AS A MEMBER, THE MORE YOU:

- build expertise and better understand the state of civil society and emerging trends by collaborating on research and analysis.
- strengthen your capacity for action through training and networking opportunities, accessing resources, and sharing knowledge and best practices.
- increase your influence and expand the right to speak out, organise and take action through joint advocacy and campaigning.
- become an agent of change by driving collective action and engaging in events and initiatives that contribute to CIVICUS programmes.

VOTING MEMBERS COLLECTIVELY SET THE AGENDA AND PRIORITIES FOR THE CIVICUS ALLIANCE. AS A VOTING MEMBER YOU:

- are recognised as legitimate and trusted civil society actors that champion human rights and social justice through the CIVICUS voting member verification process.
- play a leadership role in key activities by convening events, steering campaigns and co-designing programme initiatives.
- increase your visibility by having your events, products, programme and job opportunities shared in exclusive member communications.
- enhance the diversity and resilience of the alliance through your support to other members via the Member Solidarity Fund.

WHO SHOULD JOIN?

Our definition of civil society is broadly defined as “the arena outside the state, the market and the family where people come together to pursue joint actions”. We define civil society actors as non-governmental organisations, activists, civil society coalitions and networks, protest and social movements, voluntary bodies, campaigning organisations, charities, faith-based groups, trade unions and philanthropic foundations.

We welcome all civil society actors who demonstrate that they are committed to strengthening civil society and citizen action, adhere to the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and use peaceful means to pursue their objectives. Our membership is therefore diverse, spanning a wide range of issues, sizes and organisation types, transcending thematic, geographic and sectoral divides, and yet unified in solidarity towards our common purpose.

OUR MEMBERSHIP GOALS (2017–2022)

- Create a global movement of diverse and progressive civil society actors.
- Catalyse collective action and solidarity within our membership.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of our members as key actors and leaders in civil society.
- Realise better coordination and strategic connections across the alliance.

Before joining, we recommend that all interested parties read this membership policy carefully, as well as our Strategic Plan, to make sure there is understanding and alignment of what CIVICUS members seek to achieve.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Any natural or legal person or entity who desires to become a CIVICUS Member must meet the conditions below.

- Be an authentic foundation, civil society organisation, national or regional civil society platform or network, or social movement, OR be an individual who has attained recognition in their communities and/or among their peers.
- Organise, support, speak up, champion or advocate for citizen participation and civil society in a country, region, or globally - including for the protection and promotion of civic space, democratic values and the pursuit of social justice.
- Abide by and promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Embody CIVICUS’ Vision, Mission and Values, and adhere to CIVICUS’ Code of Conduct for members.
- Be an active, dedicated and committed member of civil society through engagement within the CIVICUS Alliance and/or in other networks, coalitions, alliances and/or codes of conduct.

(CONTINUED ON P 6)
MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES
CIVICUS has two membership categories, both open to individuals and organisations:

- Associate membership is free and does not expire.
- Voting membership is valid for a 3-year period and can be automatically renewed if Voting member responsibilities have been met. Voting members contribute to a Member Solidarity Fund. Contributions are optional for voting member individuals and organisations with annual income of $80,000 or less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY NAME</th>
<th>VOTING STATUS</th>
<th>FEES</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Member: Individual</td>
<td>Non-voting</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Lifetime (opt-out)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Member: Organisation</td>
<td>Non-voting</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Lifetime (opt-out)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Member: Individual</td>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>Paid</td>
<td>3-years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Member: Organisation</td>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>Paid</td>
<td>3-years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VOTING MEMBERSHIP FEES
- Individual Voting Membership are invited to make an optional contribution of $50 per year ($150 for 3-year cycle).
- Organisational Voting Membership fees are paid in proportion to the organisation’s annual income, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Up to $80,000</td>
<td>Optional contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>$80,0001-$250,000</td>
<td>$240 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>$250,001-$500,000</td>
<td>$390 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>$500,001-$1,000,000</td>
<td>$750 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>$1,000,001-$3,500,000</td>
<td>$1500 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 6</td>
<td>$3,500,001-$5,000,00</td>
<td>$3000 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 7</td>
<td>$5,000,001-over</td>
<td>$12,000 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 8</td>
<td>Private Foundations, Trusts</td>
<td>$21,000 for 3-year cycle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fees can also be paid on an annual basis.

A tailored discount may be negotiated for bulk membership subscriptions with a parent body or international secretariat overseeing/co-ordinating multiple affiliates, networks or coalitions and/or country-based offices.

All membership fees are allocated to a **Member Solidarity Fund**. The Member Solidarity Fund allows members:
- To seek support and act in solidarity with one another,
- To contribute to civil society diversity and resilience, and
- To create opportunities where they do not exist for change seeking actors to contribute to a more just, inclusive and sustainable world.

The Member Solidarity Fund is guided through the following principles:
- Member-funded
- Accountability and commitment
- Innovation, learning and best practice
- Sustainability
- Member-directed
- Mission-alignment
- Diversity of funding methods
- Complementarity

VOTING MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES
Voting member responsibilities are outlined below:
- Members nominate, stand and elect the CIVICUS Board of Directors for 3-year tenures. Only designated representatives from an organisational member and individual members can stand for elections to the Board. Each member shall cast one ballot and Directors shall be elected by a plurality of the votes cast. Board Directors can only serve two consecutive terms.
- Members approve the annual report and financial statements every year during the Annual General Meeting and take this opportunity to provide feedback and interact with the Board and Secretariat on CIVICUS’ programmes and operations.
- Members participate in the annual constituency survey and every five years in the Board-led strategic priorities consultation to inform our strategic direction and approach.
- Members engage in various initiatives to provide feedback and perspectives on the situation and health of civil society in their country, region or globally.
- Members stand and act in solidarity with each other and the rest of the alliance
## HOW TO JOIN?

The standard procedure of the membership joining process for voting and associate members is illustrated in the following steps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STEP 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>STEP 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>STEP 3</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete an online application form on the CIVICUS website. In cases where the member does not have internet access, an offline form will be made available.</td>
<td>Receive confirmation of application receipt.</td>
<td>Undergo review by CIVICUS (entire assessment process usually takes about 3 weeks).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STEP 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>STEP 5</strong></th>
<th><strong>STEP 6</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receive notification of membership decision.</td>
<td>If accepted as Voting Member, complete the payment of the membership fee online or offline.</td>
<td>Receive membership confirmation email.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

We believe that civil society actors are truly principled agents of change when they demonstrate a sustained commitment to human rights, equality and justice.

All applicants are required to:
1. Fully meet the eligibility requirements for membership.
2. Complete the CIVICUS membership application form, which includes:
   a. indication of compliance with CIVICUS’ mission, vision and values
   b. indication of compliance with CIVICUS member code of conduct
   c. indication of consent to abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
   d. indication of consent or denial to receive notices by electronic mail, and to share contacts within the CIVICUS network.

It is the responsibility of the Member to notify CIVICUS at membership@civicus.org if the designated representative, their contact information, or their indication of consent to receive notices by electronic mail changes at any time.

All members will have their applications reviewed and confirmed by the CIVICUS Membership Team to ensure that they are legitimate and credible civil society actors who align with CIVICUS’ values and principles. Associate membership verification will include review of publicly available information, previous CIVICUS engagement/relationships and consultation with peer organisations. In addition, **prospective individual and organisational members applying to voting categories** are required to complete a three-tier assessment as outlined below:

### I. SELF-ASSESSMENT

How does your commitment to human rights and social justice manifest internally in your policies, practices and/or daily operations, as well as externally with peoples and communities you work with/for? (250 words maximum)

### II. PEER REVIEW

Please share the contact details of a peer organisation/activist or constituent that we can contact for a letter of support related to how your values are reflected in your work.

### III. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Please select from the list below only the documents that you currently use; we will conduct random spot check.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>INDIVIDUALS</strong></th>
<th><strong>ORGANISATIONS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any details of capacity strengthening/empowerment for constituencies, staff and/or communities</td>
<td>Anti-discrimination policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any details related to commitment to HRBA, women’s rights and/or marginalised peoples and communities</td>
<td>Any details of capacity strengthening/empowerment for constituencies, staff and/or communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV outlining history of civic activism or civil society strengthening</td>
<td>Any details related to commitment to HRBA, women’s rights and/or marginalised peoples and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public statements/campaigns/media clippings, activities, postings and/or messages (inclusive of social media)</td>
<td>Diversity charter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour related policies; volunteer, intern and staff handbook</td>
<td>Profile or brief organisational history (any document detailing the mandate and scope of the organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public statements/campaigns/media clippings, activities, postings and/or messages (inclusive of social media)</td>
<td>Public statements/campaigns/media clippings, activities, postings and/or messages (inclusive of social media)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record of any complaints and/or feedback received</td>
<td>Statute of establishment, charter or constitution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicative factors for non-selection during the assessment process include:
- Evidence of hate speech/actions (based on any distinction) which are contrary to CIVICUS ethos
- Clear evidence of governance bias contrary to CIVICUS values, mission and vision
- Previous proven corruption, mismanagement of funds, projects, staff and partnerships (with no attempt at mitigation)
ADMISSION OF MEMBERS
The Membership Team will review applications received for membership and complete an appraisal form, checking applicants’ social media channels, requesting peer reviews, spot-checking documentation and carrying out other due diligence as necessary. When CIVICUS considers the member fully verified, and in the case of voting members when their fees are paid, membership shall commence.

RENEWAL
Associate membership is free and does not expire, although the membership team will review associate member profiles every three years to ensure that they still meet the membership criteria outlined in the membership policy.

On application for renewal of membership, voting members who have met their membership responsibilities will have the option of automatic renewal, based on the payment of their membership fees. Alternatively, they will be required to undergo the assessment process again.

TERMINATION
Membership will terminate in the following situations.

● Resignation: Membership is terminated upon receipt of a written notice of resignation addressed to the CIVICUS Membership Team.

● Dissolution or death: Membership is terminated on the dissolution of a member organisation or death of an individual member.

● Expulsion: Membership is discontinued when evidence is brought that a member has not abided by CIVICUS’ principles or code of conduct, or does not fulfil the membership criteria outlined in the membership policy. In such a case, a written notice will be prepared by the Membership Team setting forth the reasons and evidence for the termination. The written notice will be sent to the concerned member, who will have five days to respond in writing. All documentation will then be sent to the CIVICUS Board of Directors Governance and Membership Committee, who will prepare a recommendation for the Board. A special resolution on expulsion needs to be endorsed by a majority vote during a Board of Directors’ meeting at which there is a quorum.

HOW ARE WE ACCOUNTABLE?
CIVICUS is committed to empowering civil society to become more accountable, effective, inclusive and innovative agents of change through its membership.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CIVICUS MEMBERS
In order to function well as a global alliance, keep CIVICUS’ positions and messages consistent and effective, and protect individuals and organisations from harassment and reprisals, CIVICUS members must agree to adhere to the following conditions:

● CIVICUS members will always conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible and respectable manner in all circumstances, in alignment with CIVICUS’ vision, principles and values.

● CIVICUS members are invited to use the CIVICUS badge to indicate their membership to CIVICUS, and share information about CIVICUS’ strategic priorities and activities.

● CIVICUS members do not represent CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. Members will not act as official representatives, nor speak on behalf of and/or in the name of parts of or the whole alliance, unless otherwise stipulated in writing by the Board or the Secretariat.

COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK MECHANISM
As a member of Accountable Now, CIVICUS takes its commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous learning and improvement very seriously. We count on members, constituents and partners to contact the CIVICUS Secretariat when they have questions or concerns. As a member-based organisation, it is essential that members hold CIVICUS as an organisation and an alliance to account.

Note that any complaint will be taken seriously and investigated following a feedback mechanism launched in 2018. You can read the full Feedback Response Policy and access our feedback form here.