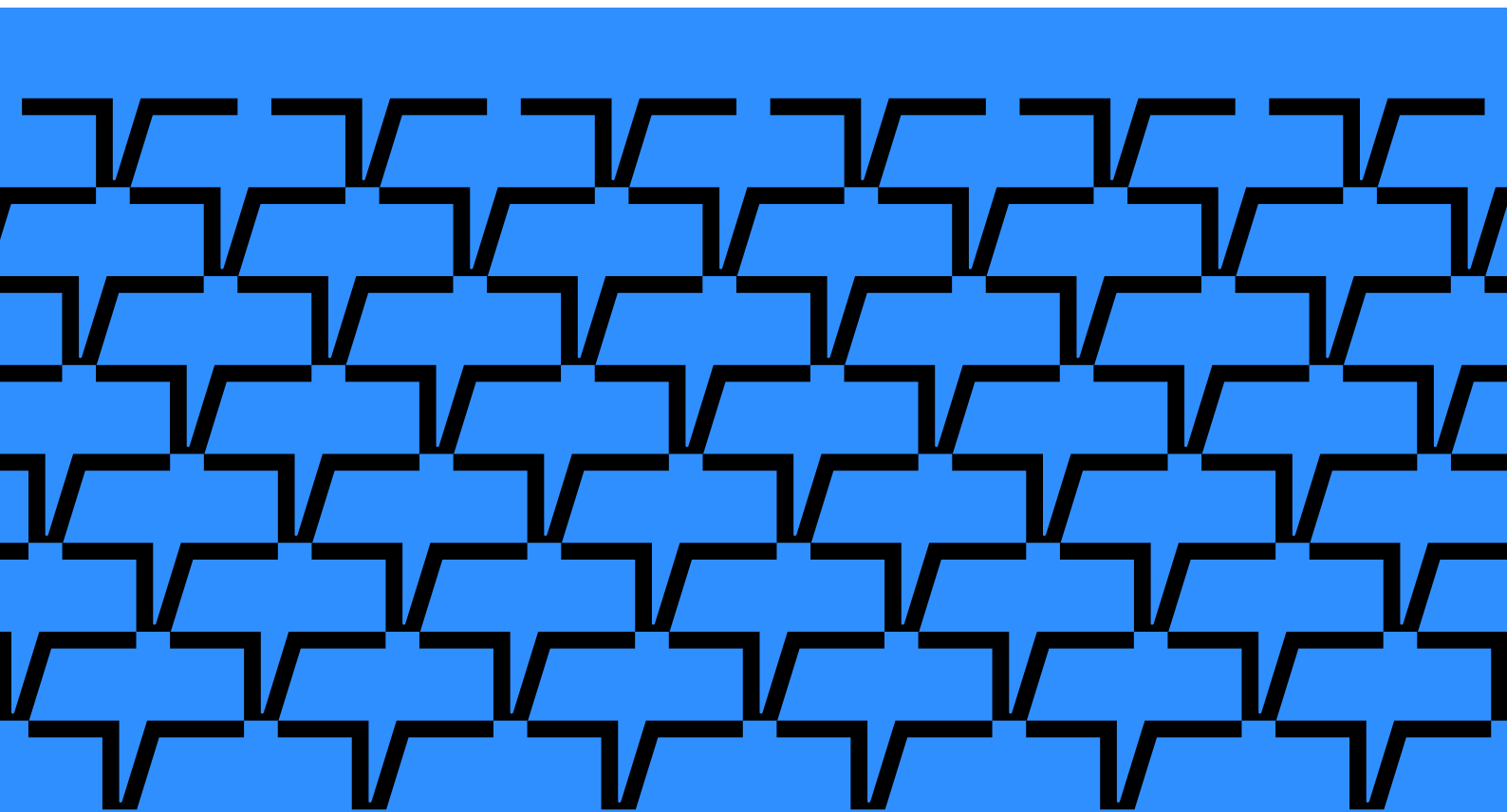




# Rules of procedure

of the Network of European Integrity  
and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA)

(VALENCIA) APRIL 2024



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# Chapter 1 – Members

## Article 4 of NEIWA Constitution

***In accordance to article 1 of this constitution, the network is open to:***

- *public authorities, public bodies from the EU, EU-candidate or EFTA countries;*
- *who have national or regional competences;*
- *with a central and/or pivotal role in the field of whistleblowing.*

***The membership process will be as set below:***

- *An application form is sent to the NEIWA Board.*
- *The NEIWA Board reviews the application and after validation presents it for acceptance to the Network at the General Assembly.*

## Application procedure

- 1.1 To become a NEIWA Member, an organization shall make a formal application request in writing. This application shall be submitted by a representative of the requesting organization to the Secretariat or a Board member and shall be accompanied by the completed application form, including the questionnaire, which is available in the ANNEX I. The general criteria for NEIWA membership are available in ANNEX III.
- 1.2 In accordance with Article 4 of the NEIWA Constitution, the Board reviews the application questionnaire and any relevant supporting documents that the organization/authority has sent.
- 1.3 During the validation process the document Board Review Form of the Membership Application, available in ANNEX II., is completed by the Board for record of the membership discussion of each applicant and retained by the Secretariat. The Board reviews the application and after validation presents it for acceptance to all the members of NEIWA.
- 1.4 If the Board finds that the application is not completed, the Vice-Chair may request the applying organization to submit additional information or documents which will be noted in the Board Review Form of the Membership Application. Should an organization fail to meet the threshold for membership, the Secretariat shall communicate to the organization the rationale for the decision,
- 1.5 After reviewing and validating the applications, the Chair forwards to the Network the application questionnaire and the supporting documents presented by the applicant, as well as the Board Review Form of the Membership Application. The Network will decide upon the membership applications according to the decision-making process set out in Chapter 12.
- 1.6 If the NEIWA members approve the new membership, the Secretariat shall send a letter signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board to the new NEIWA member.
- 1.7 Should the Network decline to accept a new applicant, the Secretariat shall send them a letter signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board outlining the rationale for it.

## Suspension of membership

- 1.8 The Board can temporarily suspend membership to NEIWA if a member does not appoint a delegate and a substitute delegate according to the rules set out in Chapter 4, articles 4.1 - 4.9, if the member does not attend three successive General and Extraordinary General Assemblies, or if the member does not pay financial contribution as defined in the Chapter 11, articles 11.9 - 11.10.
- 1.9 In such cases, the Secretariat will send a signed letter by the Chair to the organization informing it of the suspension.
- 1.10 When suspended, the member shall not receive any communication from NEIWA, including documentation and mailings, and shall not participate in the NEIWA General Assemblies, interim meetings or working groups.
- 1.11 The suspended member can regain membership once it has regularized its situation. After the decision of the Board to end the suspension, the Secretariat will send a signed letter to the organization signed by the Chair and informing them of the end of its suspension.

## Termination of membership

- 1.12 Membership to NEIWA shall cease:
  - A). If a member withdraws its membership by an official letter signed by a legal representative of the respective organization to the Board. The information will be provided to the next convened General Assembly. The resigning member shall respect the previous commitments made to the Network (e.g., contribution to working groups).
  - B). If a member does not maintain the requirements for its membership as set out in Article 4 of the NEIWA Constitution and/or when the country has abolished the authority that held a membership in the Network.
  - C). Under extraordinary circumstances, if a member does not comply with the NEIWA Constitution and rules of procedures and/or if it engages in activities that are contrary to the ethics and integrity governing the actions of a NEIWA member.
- 1.13 Any member can raise in writing his/her concerns regarding cases in B) and C) to the Board.
- 1.14 In the cases in B), C), the NEIWA Board will notify the Network of the possible end of the membership of an organization. The concerned member may comment in writing to the Board. After consideration of all arguments raised, the Board shall make a final proposal to the Network at its next General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly.
- 1.15 The Network will make a final decision according to the decision-making procedure established in Chapter 12. The required majority for the termination of membership is 3/4 majority of the attending members.
- 1.16 The Secretariat will inform the member of the decision by a signed communication by the Chair on behalf of the Board.

# Chapter 2 – Partners

## Article 4 of NEIWA Constitution

*NEIWA can collaborate with partners that have similar objectives as mentioned in article 2. (e.g. international and regional organizations, public authorities, public bodies, think-tanks, universities, NGOs, NPOs and civil society organizations).*

- 2.1 NEIWA can engage in partnerships with international and regional organizations, think-tanks, universities, NGOs, NPOs, civil society organizations and public authorities for the purpose of fostering cooperation and undertaking joint initiatives in the field of whistle-blowing and the protection of reporting persons.
- 2.2 Any organization who adheres to the objectives and goals and general principles set out in Articles 2 and 3 of the NEIWA Constitution can become a partner of NEIWA. The initiative to become a partner can come from the partner itself or from NEIWA.
- 2.3 The Chair forwards a proposal of partnership to the Network to be discussed at the General Assembly. The proposal outlines how the interests and activities of the partner organization align and are compatible with the objectives, goals, and general principles of NEIWA.
- 2.4 The Network will make a final decision in accordance with the decision-making process set out in Chapter 12.
- 2.5 Partners may be invited to attend the General Assemblies, Extraordinary General Assemblies, the in-between meetings, and the working groups to make presentations or make contributions to the topics for the attention of the Network. Partners will keep the confidentiality on the topics covered during these meetings and will not take part in the debates and votes of the General Assembly.
- 2.6 Partners do not hold voting rights and are not eligible to elective positions of the Network.

# Chapter 3 – Honorary Associates

## Article 6 of NEIWA Constitution

*The General Assembly may elect as an honorary associate of NEIWA any person who has made an outstanding long-term contribution to the network's work and who, in the opinion of the General Assembly, deserves such distinction.*

- 3.1 The Network can grant the title of “honorary associate” of NEIWA to any person who has made an outstanding long-term contribution to the Network’s work, as long as he/she maintains common or compatible interests with NEIWA regarding the goals and general principles set out in Article 2 and 3 of the Constitution.
- 3.2 The proposal is submitted by the Board, or at least 8 NEIWA members and circulated to the Network. The proposal shall be discussed at the following General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly. The proposal outlines the reasons why the candidate fulfills the criteria to become an honorary associate.
- 3.3 The Network makes a final decision according to the decision-making process set out in the Chapter 12.
- 3.4 Honorary associates are elected for life.
- 3.5 Honorary associates may be invited to attend the General Assemblies, Extraordinary General Assemblies, the in-between meetings, and the working groups to make presentations or make contributions to the topics dealt by the Network. Honorary associates will keep the confidentiality of the topics covered during these meetings and will not take part in the debates and votes of the General Assembly.
- 3.6 Honorary associates do not hold voting rights and are not eligible to elective positions of the Network.
- 3.7 The position of the honorary associate terminates in case the person has been found guilty of any crime or misconduct by a court of law or an administrative authority.

# Chapter 4 – Structure

## Article 7 of NEIWA Constitution

### **NEIWA is composed of:**

- *The Network, which includes all members and from which the board is created.*
- *The Board, which is the general governing body, consisting of the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the representatives from the authorities who organized the previous, current, and future General Assembly.*
- *The chair and the vice-chair will be representatives from public authorities or public bodies from different countries. An authority or public body can only have one seat on the board. This means that if an authority or public body is represented by the chair or the vice-chair and hosts/ed the previous, current or future General Assembly, the network shall elect a substitute board member from a different authority or public body for as long as either the chair or the vice-chair is in function.*

*Each member shall appoint at least one delegate and if deemed necessary one substitute delegate to the Network and indicate to the Secretariat of the Network the main contact person for the purpose of exchange of information.*

### Delegates to the Network

- 4.1 The Network consists of all the NEIWA members. In the Network, each member is represented by a delegate or substitute delegate.
- 4.2 Each member communicates to the Secretariat the appointment of a delegate, and if deemed necessary of a substitute delegate within 30 days after the adoption of the Rules of Procedure and every 2 years during the month of January, starting from January 2026. The Secretariat confirms the delegate and substitute delegate(s) and all the communication shall be directed to the delegates and substitute delegates.
- 4.3 The Secretariat keeps an updated list of all delegates and substitute delegates with their contact details.
- 4.4. In case the member organization does not appoint it's delegates in the given period, the Secretariat sends an official reminder via e-mail to the delegates nominated in the previous period, with a 2-week deadline to appoint new delegates or confirm the already appointed delegate and/or substitute delegate.
- 4.5. In case the delegates are still not appointed, the Secretariat sends an official letter signed by the Chair to the member organization, with the request to appoint a delegate within a 2-week deadline following receipt of the letter.
- 4.6 In case the delegates are still not appointed in the given deadline, the Board suspends the membership of the organization based on the procedure defined in Chapter 1, articles 1.8-1.11.
- 4.7 Any change in a delegate or substitute delegate should be promptly communicated to the Secretariat which confirms the change to the member.
- 4.8 The position of the delegate, or substitute delegate can be held by the same person as long as their organization appoints them.
- 4.9 Board members can also hold a position of the delegate or substitute delegate.

## The Board

- 4.10 The Board consists of Chair, Vice-Chair and the representatives from the authorities who organized the previous, current, and future General Assembly. The seats of Chair and Vice-Chair are therefore tied to physical persons, who are elected to the position (individual seat). The three additional seats are tied to a member authority (institutional seat). The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair is outlined in Chapter 7.
- 4.11 All board members need to be personnel at the service of the respective member organizations or their representatives at all times during their mandate.
- 4.12 In the case of institutional seats, the member organization appoints a representative to be the member of the Board within a 2-week period after the confirmation of the hosting of the future General Assembly. The appointment is communicated to the Secretariat, for the attention of the Chair.
- 4.13 If either the Chair or Vice-Chair are hosting the General Assembly, an election of a substitute individual Board member to be the Board is required. The election takes place based on the procedure as defined in Chapter 7. The term of substitute individual member ends, when the institutional seat can be filled again or when the institutional seat comes to the end of its term.

## Resignation of the Board members

- 4.14 If the individual member of the Board resigns, leaves the organization, or cannot fulfill their role anymore, a substitute individual member needs to be elected based on the procedure as defined in Chapter 7, articles 7.13 – 7.19.
- 4.15 If one of the representatives appointed by the institutional member resigns, leaves the organization, or cannot fulfill their role anymore, the member organization appoints a new representative within a 2-week period. The member organization informs the Secretariat about their new representative.



# Chapter 5 – The Network

## Article 8 of NEIWA Constitution

***The Network is the body of supreme authority of NEIWA and includes all NEIWA's members.***

***The duties and responsibilities of the Network are, inter alia:***

- determining the general policies of NEIWA;
- accepting, suspending or expelling members, partners and other associates;
- electing and dismissing members of the Board;
- adopting declarations;
- adopting and amending the Constitution of the Network;

- 5.1 The Network is the body of supreme authority of NEIWA. The Network meets regularly in General Assemblies, which is the main forum of policy and decision making of the Network.

## General policies and declarations

- 5.2 For determining the general policies of NEIWA, the Network will consider the European Union policies, the topics explored by the working groups and the results submitted to the Network, the interests of civil society, any other relevant issue regarding the objective and goals of the Network and the Network's declarations. The decision-making process for determining NEIWA's general policies is established in Chapter 12.
- 5.3 During every General Assembly, the Network adopts a declaration, which states the position of the Network in the context of the latest developments in the field of whistle-blowing. The rules for the adoption of the declaration follow the procedures established in Chapter 12.

## Amendment to the Constitution

- 5.4 To amend NEIWA Constitution, at least 1/3 of the members of the Network, or any Board member shall submit a request to the Chair. The Chair presents the amendment/s to the Constitution at the next General Assembly, or Extraordinary General Assembly. The procedure for the amendment shall comply with those stated in Chapter 12. The required majority for the amendment to the Constitution is 3/4 of the attending members.

## Dissolution of NEIWA

- 5.5 A request to the Chair for the dissolution of NEIWA can be submitted by at least half of the members of the Network. The Chair will call an Extraordinary General Assembly to discuss the proposal. The final decision regarding the dissolution of the Network shall require the unanimity of the attending members where at least 2/3 of the Network is present.

# Chapter 6 – The General Assembly

## Article 9 of NEIWA Constitution

*The Network meets at least once a year at a General Assembly. In addition to General Assemblies, in between meetings of the Network can occur.*

*An Extraordinary General Assembly can be held within 6 weeks of an issue being identified to the Board.*

*Partners and associates may be invited to attend the General Assemblies and the meetings.*

*The agenda of the General Assembly is decided by the Board.*

## General Assembly

- 6.1 The meetings of the Network which gathers formally as a General Assembly may be held in person or in an on-line form. The General Assembly shall be held at least once a year.
- 6.2 The call for the next General Assembly shall be issued by the Chair at the ongoing General Assembly.
- 6.3 If no member of the Network offers to host the General Assembly, the assembly shall be held on-line and organized by the Chair with the support of the Board and the Secretariat.
- 6.4 Each member of the General Assembly shall receive a communication with the indication of the date and place of the next General Assembly at the latest 3 months in advance.
- 6.5 At least one month prior to the General Assembly, each member shall confirm its attendance to the meeting to the organizing institution and to the Secretariat.
- 6.6 At least two weeks prior to the assembly date, the Chair or the delegated member of the Board or the host shall send the meeting's agenda to all NEIWA members. If the meeting shall be held on-line a link of the meeting shall be included.
- 6.7 The General Assemblies' works shall be kept confidential.
- 6.8 The reached decisions and outcomes, such as the declaration, shall be published on NEIWA's website. Alternatively, they can be published on the website of the Chair's institution or any other organization with which the Network has reached an agreement.
- 6.9 Partners, honorary associates or other third parties may be invited to attend the General Assemblies and to make presentations and contributions to the topics discussed by the Network. They will be invited to a selected panels and meetings and keep the confidentiality of the debates.

## Extraordinary General Assembly

- 6.10 An extraordinary General Assembly shall be called by the Chair when an issue is identified and reported to the Board by any member and an urgent decision has to be made by the Network.
- 6.11 An extraordinary General Assembly shall be called if one third of the members require so.

- 6.12 The Secretariat will issue the invitation to the Extraordinary General Assembly at least 6 weeks before it takes place.

### **In-between meetings**

- 6.13 The general form of in-between meetings shall be on-line.
- 6.14 All members of the Network shall receive an e-mail with details of the date, time and link to the meeting and the agenda of the meeting at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- 6.15 The in-between meetings can deal with any issues raised by the Board or by the Network, such as the activities of the working groups. The Chair, or the Vice-Chair shall moderate the in-between meeting.
- 6.16 If any issue of special relevance arises during the in-between meeting, an Extraordinary General Assembly can be proposed unless the issue can be discussed in the next General Assembly.

# Chapter 7 – Election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer

## Article 10 of the NEIWA Constitution

*The Network shall elect at its General Assembly the Chair, the Vice-Chair and (if required) the Treasurer from among its members. The Chair and Vice-Chair and Treasurer shall be elected by simple majority for two years where over half of the Network is present. They can be re-elected for 1 additional term. Any member may submit candidatures for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.*

- 7.1 The positions of NEIWA Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are held by individuals (representatives of a member organization) who are elected as such to those positions by the Network. Those positions are not held by the member organizations, as it is the case for the other three Board members.
- 7.2 The positions of NEIWA Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer can be renewed for one more term.
- 7.3 The Chair and the Vice-Chair must be from different countries. When a new Chair is elected, the candidate for the Vice-Chair from the same country must withdraw his/her candidacy.
- 7.4 If a new Chair is elected from the same country as the Vice-Chair, whose term has not yet ended, then the term of the Vice-Chair terminates at the moment of the election of the new Chair. A new Vice-Chair shall be elected.
- 7.5 If the election of a new Chair, Vice-Chair or Treasurer is not successful, the position is fulfilled by the outgoing Chair, Vice-Chair or Treasurer and a new election shall be held within a one-month period.
- 7.6 If the Chair, Vice-Chair, or Treasurer resign before the end of their term, a new election shall be called by the Board to take place at the latest in one month from the date of resignation.

## Candidacy

- 7.7 The Secretariat opens a call for candidates for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and (if required) the Treasurer at least one month before the assembly where the election will be held. The election takes place at least one week before the end of the respective terms.
- 7.8 Candidates for the respective positions propose their candidacy to the Secretariat at least two weeks before the election.
- 7.9 The Board evaluates whether the candidates fulfill the criteria for candidacy (membership in the organization, maximum 2 terms condition) and confirm the candidacy of individual candidates.
- 7.10 The list of candidates for the respective positions is distributed to the members of the Network at least 7 days before the election.

- 7.12 Before the election, the respective candidates deliver short presentations about their vision and program for NEIWA, either in-person or electronically before the election.

## **Election**

- 7.13 The election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer takes place during the General Assembly, or Extraordinary General Assembly, by a secret ballot.
- 7.14 The procedure for the elections is defined in Chapter 12, except for the secret ballot procedure and the required majority needed to elect a candidate to position, which are defined further in this section.
- 7.15 Candidates who obtain more than half of the votes of the attendees, are elected to the position.
- 7.16 If no candidate obtains more than half of the votes, the two candidates with the most votes move to the second round of the election. In case the third (or fourth) candidate has the same number of votes as the second candidate, then they both move to the second round.
- 7.17 In the second round, the candidate who obtains the simple majority of votes is elected to the position.
- 7.18 If no candidate gets a majority of votes in the second round, then a new election shall be called by the Board, to take place at the latest in one month.
- 7.19 If there is only one candidate for the respective position, s/he needs to obtain more than half of the votes. Otherwise, a new election needs to be called by the Board, to take place at the latest in one month.

# Chapter 8 – Chair

## Article 11 of NEIWA Constitution

### **The duties and responsibilities of the Chair are, inter alia:**

- *promoting and advocating the values and objectives of NEIWA (core functions);*
- *overseeing the overall direction and promotion of NEIWA (development function);*
- *representing NEIWA;*
- *liaising and co-operating with other organizations, networks, fora, and stakeholders (external relation function);*
- *presiding over the General Assembly (presiding function);*
- *presiding over the Secretariat (administrative function);*
- *reporting to the General Assembly on the Board and network activities (reporting function);*
- *liaising with the Vice-Chairperson, Board members and Treasurer;*
- *preparing applications/decisions for the General Assembly;*
- *proposing new Members, Partners and associates to the General Assembly.*

*The Chair may delegate certain of his/ her functions to the Vice-Chair.*

## Representation and cooperation

- 8.1 The Chair shall act as the official spokesperson of NEIWA, conveying the organization's positions, policies, and initiatives to external entities, both in writing and verbally.
- 8.2 The Chair shall represent NEIWA at conferences, expert meetings, seminars, and other relevant events, delivering speeches, participating in panel discussions, and engaging with stakeholders to advance NEIWA's standing in the international community.
- 8.3 The Chair may liaise, cooperate, and enter into agreements with partners and other external parties that align with NEIWA's goals. The Chair initiates contacts, prepares collaboration proposals, and negotiates terms with external entities. When a potential collaboration opportunity arises, the Chair shall prepare a detailed collaboration proposal, outlining the objectives, scope, roles, responsibilities, and expected outcomes of the partnership.
- 8.4 The activities mentioned in 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 are subject to consultation and approval by the Board, or the entire Network if deemed necessary by the Board.
- 8.5 The Chair acts on behalf of the Board and signs official documents and correspondence.

## Meeting of the Board

- 8.6 The Chair initiates regular meetings of the Board, based on the necessity and importance of the issues to be discussed. The Chair develops the agenda for the Board meetings and distributes the agenda to other Board members at least 2 days before the meeting.
- 8.7 All the decisions of the Board shall be made by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, the decision shall be made by a simple majority vote.

## General Assembly meetings

- 8.8 The Chair shall preside over meetings of the NEIWA General Assembly, Extraordinary General Assembly and in-between meetings ensuring the orderly conduct of proceedings and adherence to the agenda.
- 8.9 The Chair shall call the General Assembly meetings, welcome participants, and confirm the presence of a quorum before proceeding with the agenda. The Chair shall introduce speakers, manage speaking turns, and facilitate discussions, allowing all General Assembly members the opportunity to participate and express their views.
- 8.10 The Chair oversees the decision-making process, ensuring that votes are conducted according to NEIWA's established procedures, nominates members who count the ballots and announces the outcomes of votes promptly.
- 8.11 The Chair shall be responsible for preparing and presenting membership applications (ANNEX I), Board Review Forms of the Membership Applications (ANNEX II), proposals for partners and honorary associates to the General Assembly for discussion and approval.
- 8.12 The Chair is responsible for the development of a declaration to be published after the General Assembly, subject to the approval by the Network.
- 8.13 The call for the next General Assembly shall be issued by the Chair at the ongoing General Assembly.
- 8.14 The Chair shall provide regular written or verbal reports to the Board in the regular Board meetings and to the Network, preferably during the General Assembly, on their external engagements, including updates on negotiations, partnerships, and significant interactions at least once a year.

## Delegation of functions

- 8.15 The Chair may delegate certain functions and responsibilities to the Vice-Chair as deemed necessary for the efficient operation of NEIWA. Such delegations shall be documented and communicated to the Board. The Chair may delegate specific representation duties to the Vice-Chair or other Board members.

# Chapter 9 – Vice-Chair

## Article 12 of NEIWA Constitution

### **The duties and responsibilities of the Vice-Chair are, inter alia:**

- supporting the Chair in all his/her functions;
- overseeing and coordinating the work of the working groups or projects;
- overseeing the application process for new members wishing to be considered, to join NEIWA;
- replacing the Chair in his/her functions as necessary in his/her absence.

- 9.1 The Vice-Chair shall maintain close collaboration and communication with the Chair to ensure the effective functioning of NEIWA. This includes regular updates on activities and any matters that require joint decision-making.

### Working groups

- 9.2 The Vice-Chair oversees and coordinates the work of the working groups or projects within NEIWA. The Vice-Chair ensures that working groups or projects align with NEIWA's strategic goals and objectives.
- 9.3 The Vice-Chair facilitates communication and collaboration among working groups, the Board, and the Network. The Vice-Chair communicates regularly with the working group leaders about the progress of the work and informs the Board.
- 9.4 The Vice-Chair provides guidance and support to working groups to help them achieve their objectives.

### Membership applications

- 9.5 The Vice-Chair shall administer the application process for new members wishing to join NEIWA. This includes overseeing Compliance of the process with the procedure set out in Chapter 1, articles 1.1 – 1.8.
- 9.6 The Vice-Chair presents membership applications to the Board for consideration and approval. The Vice-Chair collects any comments from the Board members and leads further communication with the applying organization in case any further documents need to be submitted.

### Replacing the Chair

- 9.7 The Vice-Chair shall assume all the Chair's functions in the absence of the Chair, or when the Chair is not elected.
- 9.8 The Vice-Chair shall assume the Chair's functions as delegated to him/her according to the article 8.14.



# Chapter 10 – Secretariat

## Article 13 of NEIWA Constitution

The member chairing the Network ensures the Secretariat for the Network during the chairmanship period of two years.

**The duties and responsibilities of the Secretariat are, inter alia:**

- providing strategic, administrative, and other support to the structure and overall activities of the Network and of the Board;
- informing - on a regular basis, through email- all NEIWA members, partners and associates on developments and activities;
- maintaining and servicing the NEIWA electronic information storage.

- 10.1 The Chair shall ensure the Secretariat for the Network during their chairmanship period of two years. The costs of the Secretariat are maintained by the Chair's organization.
- 10.2 The Chair may delegate some of the functions of the Secretariat to other Board members and their organizations.
- 10.3 The Secretariat shall provide strategic, administrative, and other necessary support to the Network and the Board, which includes gathering minutes from the meetings and assemblies; gathering the lists of attending members; and gathering the ballots cast in individual votes.
- 10.4 The Secretariat shall inform all NEIWA members, partners, and honorary associates of developments and activities regularly through e-mail. Updates should include relevant information on NEIWA's initiatives, decisions, and other developments.
- 10.5 The Secretariat shall ensure that communication is timely, accurate, and inclusive, facilitating transparency and engagement among NEIWA stakeholders.
- 10.6 The Secretariat shall make sure that his/her contact details (primarily e-mail) are fully accessible to the members of the Network and external organizations.
- 10.7 The Secretariat shall be responsible for maintaining and servicing the NEIWA electronic information storage. This includes the organization's digital documents, records, and resources. The Secretariat shall make sure that all communications are made in compliance with GDPR and applicable regulations on data protection.
- 10.8 The Secretariat shall ensure that information stored electronically is easily accessible to authorized NEIWA members, partners, and honorary associates as needed for their roles and responsibilities.
- 10.9 The outgoing Chair shall ensure a smooth transition of the Secretariat and NEIWA's documentation to the incoming Chair, providing necessary guidance and information to ensure continuity and effectiveness.

# Chapter 11 – Treasurer

## Article 14 of NEIWA Constitution

*The costs of the Secretariat of NEIWA are maintained by the Chair, the costs associated with hosting the General Assembly and other meetings are the responsibility of the host member of the network. Members may be asked for a financial contribution. The Treasurer can be elected as NEIWA develops into the future.*

- 11.1 The Treasurer of NEIWA is responsible for managing the financial matters of the Network, ensuring transparency, and maintaining accurate financial records.
- 11.2 The Treasurer plays a crucial role in overseeing and reporting on the Network's financial activities and ensuring compliance with financial regulations.
- 11.3 The Treasurer is responsible for managing NEIWA's financial resources, including funds, donations, and any other financial assets.
- 11.4 The Treasurer should establish and maintain a system for recording financial transactions, keeping records of income and expenditures, and preparing financial statements.
- 11.5 The Treasurer shall work closely with the Board to develop an annual budget for NEIWA. The annual budget needs to be approved by the Network during the General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly, subject to the procedure developed in Chapter 12.
- 11.6 The Treasurer will oversee financial transactions and ensure that they are conducted in accordance with established financial policies and procedures.
- 11.7 The Treasurer is responsible for providing regular financial reports to the Board and a yearly report to the Network during General Assembly and Extraordinary General Assembly meetings. Financial reports should include an overview of NEIWA's financial status, income, expenditures, and any other documents and significant financial developments.
- 11.8 The Treasurer shall maintain transparency in all financial matters and be available to answer questions or provide clarifications to the Network members as needed.

## Financial contributions

- 11.9 Financial contributions may be requested from the Network members when necessary to cover NEIWA's operational expenses. Proposals of financial contributions shall be prepared and distributed in advance to the Network for internal consideration. Financial contributions may differ according to the budget of each member and statutory obligations and national obligations. The decisions on financial contributions of members shall be made by a voting procedure developed in the Chapter 12. General consensus does not apply.
- 11.10 Unjustified failure to provide the agreed upon contribution may lead to suspension of membership, as defined in the Chapter 1, articles 1.9 – 1.12.

# Chapter 12 – Decision Making

## Article 15 of NEIWA Constitution

*NEIWA Members act upon the common understanding and undertaking of professional cooperation and friendship and in the spirit of equal partnership.*

*When making decisions, the network strives to achieve general consensus.*

*Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made by 2/3rd majority of the attending members of NEIWA where over half of the Network is present.*

*Decisions regarding the election of Board members, expulsion of NEIWA members, adoption and amendment of the Constitution, financial contributions of members, and dissolution of the Network shall be made through a formal voting procedure; general consensus shall not apply.*

*Partners and honorary associates do not hold voting rights.*

*In cases not provided for in this Constitution, the Board will decide and inform the General Assembly accordingly.*

- 12.1 This article applies to all decision making conducted by the Network unless other provisions of this Rules of procedures state otherwise.
- 12.2 To make decisions for the whole Network, more than a half of the members shall attend the General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly. If the required quorum is not met, the Network cannot make any binding decisions and a new General Assembly or Extraordinary general Assembly shall be called.
- 12.3 Each attending member organization holds one vote, which is cast by its delegate even if more than one delegate from the organization is in attendance. If more than one delegate attends an Assembly, substitute delegates have the right to vote only in absence of delegates.
- 12.4 The Network strives to make decisions by consensus. Decision making by consensus applies only to in-person meeting, where members clearly indicate their position (e.g., by raising their hand). If all members are in agreement, the vote is passed and valid.
- 12.5 If consensus cannot be achieved, the vote needs to be passed by a 2/3rd majority of the attending members.
- 12.6 If the required majority is not achieved, the motion is rejected. The vote on the same motion can only be held once during the General Assembly or Extraordinary General Assembly.
- 12.7 In case the General Assembly, or Extraordinary General Assembly takes place online, the same rules on the quorum and required majority apply. In the online setting, the general consensus decision-making does not apply, the attending delegates cast their votes in writing (e.g., e-mail, or articulating their position in the chat).
- 12.8 During the online voting, the Chair appoints at least two delegates to receive and count the votes and present them to the Board with the results.

- 12.9 In the case of hybrid meetings, the general consensus decision-making does not apply; the online attending delegates cast their votes in writing (e.g., email, or articulate their position in the chat), in-person attending delegates cast their votes in writing or by raising their hand; the vote is a combination of votes cast by the attending delegates and emails, (Chat votes) sent by the members connected online.
- 12.10 Decisions regarding the election of Board members, expulsion of NEIWA members, adoption and amendment of the Constitution, financial contributions of members, and dissolution of the Network shall be made through a formal voting procedure laid down in corresponding chapters; general consensus shall not apply.

# Chapter 13 – Working Groups

## Article 15 of NEIWA Constitution

*NEIWA can set up Working Groups that consist of Members. Partners and Associates may also participate. Working Groups elaborate on specific issues and projects and report their results to the Network. Within one year of the adoption of this Constitution, an initial set of rules of procedure for its internal functioning shall be developed.*

- 13.1 NEIWA may establish working groups to address specific issues, questions and develop projects related to its objectives and goals. Working groups shall have specific objectives and responsibilities related to their designated areas of focus. These objectives should align with NEIWA's overarching goals, as outlined in the Article 2 of the Constitution.
- 13.2 Working groups may consist of members (representatives of member organizations), partners, and honorary associates. Participation of other external collaborators is subject to the approval of the Vice-Chair.
- 13.3 Any member organization can propose the establishment of a working group. This proposal shall include the outline of the topic to be developed, as well as suggested time-period for its completion. The proposal is made to the Vice-Chair. The decision to establish the working group is approved by the Board.
- 13.4 The Vice-Chair communicates the call to join the established working groups to all the member organizations, and if deemed necessary also to observers, partners, and honorary associates. The Vice-Chair confirms the participating parties.
- 13.5 Each working group, in cooperation with the Vice-Chair shall select a leader and a co-leader to lead and facilitate the group's activities.
- 13.6 The leader shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the working group, setting the agenda for meetings, and ensuring progress toward the defined goals and objectives and reporting to the Vice-Chair about the group's progress.
- 13.7 Working groups are responsible for elaborating on specific issues and projects, conducting research, and developing recommendations in their respective areas.
- 13.8 Working Groups may hold meetings, either in person or virtually, to discuss progress and share information.
- 13.9 Working Groups shall report their progress and findings to the Vice-Chair on the regular basis and to the Network when required. Comprehensive reports are presented during the General Assembly, or Extraordinary General Assembly.
- 13.10 The leader of a working group, and/or any other member appointed by the leader shall present the findings and recommendations of the working group to the Network during the General Assembly, or Extraordinary General Assembly.
- 13.11 The duration of a Working Group's existence shall be determined based on the specific objectives and goals outlined in their work plan. The decision to extend the duration of the working group can be proposed by the leader and is subject to the approval by the Vice-Chair.

## **Chapter 14 – Common Provisions**

- 14.1 The general principles of NEIWA are followed in cases that are not covered in these rules of procedure.
- 14.2 Any changes to the rules of procedure are subject to the decision-making procedure developed in Chapter 12. The motion for amendment of the rules of procedure shall be made by the Board.

# ANNEX I. Membership application to join NEIWA

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT AT REVIEW**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**1. NAME OF THE AUTHORITY APPLICANT**

(Fill in the name also in English)

.....

**2. IS THE COUNTRY (1) EU MEMBER STATE, (2) EU-CANDIDATE OR (3) EFTA COUNTRY**

(fill the status of a country)

YES/NO

.....

**3. IS THE APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY A PERSON HOLDING A SENIOR APPOINTMENT WITHIN THE REQUESTING ORGANIZATION AND IT SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE APPROPRIATELY COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM**

(Receipt of a no answer will void this application)

YES / NO

**4. INVOLVED IN WHISTLEBLOWING IN LINE WITH ARTICLE 1 OF THE CONSTITUTION** (Receipt of a no answer will void this application)

YES / NO

**5. TYPE OF AUTHORITY**

.....

**6. ARE THEY A SEPARATE (INDEPENDENT) AUTHORITY OR PART OF SOME OTHER ORGANIZATION?**

.....

**7. BASED ON THE APPLICATION FORM SUBMITTED AND THE REVIEW CONDUCTED IS THE BOARD SATISFIED THAT THE ORGANISATION MEETS THE STANDARDS SET IN ARTICLE 1 OF THE NEIWA CONSTITUTION TO JOIN NEIWA**

.....

**IF NOT PLEASE SPECIFY THE REASONS HERE**

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## ANNEX II. Criteria of NEIWA membership

The Network of European Integrity and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA) gathers Public Authorities and public bodies from EU Member States, EU-candidates, and EFTA countries, who have a central and / or pivotal role in the field of whistleblowing (reports, investigation, protection, support, advice, prevention, education and or enforcement with the EU Directive 2019/1937 as the common basis.

Whistleblowing as a subject matter includes tasks in the following areas:

- Reports and investigation
- Protection and support
- Advisory
- Prevention and education
- Enforcement

NEIWA is a Network governed by a constitution and all new member applicants should agree that they will recognize the requirements within the NEIWA Constitution and adhere to the Rules of Procedure which govern the functions of this Network.

In accordance to Article 1 of the NEIWA Constitution, the network is open to:

- public authorities, public bodies from the EU, EU-candidate or EFTA countries;
- who have national or regional competences;
- with a central and/or pivotal role in the field of whistleblowing.

### Criteria of membership

In line with articles 1 and 4 of the NEIWA Constitution, the following criteria must be observed in order to become a member of NEIWA:

- be a public authority, public body from EU Member States, EU-candidates or EFTA countries;
- have national or regional competences;
- have a central and / or pivotal role in the field of whistleblowing;
- have a role in receiving reports and conducting investigations;
- have a role in providing protection, support, advice;
- have a role in encouraging prevention or education,
- have the ability to enforce the rules or impose sanctions.

The Board will assess these criteria through the application questionnaire evaluation.



# NETWORK OF EUROPEAN INTEGRITY AND WHISTLEBLOWING AUTHORITIES

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