

Telugu Association of Montreal (TAM)



Constitution and By-Laws

Constitution

Chapter 1

Article I: Name of the association

The name of the organization shall be the Telugu Association of Montreal, hereinafter referred to as TAM.

Chapter 2

Article II: Constitution

Herein referred to as the CONSTITUTION, this document governs all activities of TAM. The President rules on all constitutional interpretations during and in-between meetings.

Such interpretations may be changed by an absolute majority vote of the Board of Directors (as defined in Chapter 5).

Chapter 3

Article III: Objectives

The objectives of a TAM in Quebec can be multifaceted, aiming to serve the Telugu-speaking community and foster cultural exchange. Here are some potential objectives:

1. Cultural Preservation and Promotion:

- Organize cultural events, festivals, and celebrations such as but not limited to Ugadi, Sankranti, and Diwali.
- Conduct Telugu language classes to help younger generations learn and preserve their mother tongue.
- Promote traditional Telugu arts, music, dance, and theater through workshops and performances.

2. Community Support and Networking:

- Provide a platform for Telugu-speaking individuals to connect, network, and support each other.
- Facilitate social gatherings, meet-and-greet events, and family picnics to strengthen community bonds.

3. Educational and Professional Development:

- Offer career counseling, job fairs, and mentorship programs for students and professionals.

- Conduct seminars, workshops, and lectures on various topics including education, career advancement, and entrepreneurship.

4. Social and Welfare Activities:

- Organize charity events, blood donation camps, and community service initiatives to give back to the local community.
- Provide support and assistance to new immigrants in settling down, including help with housing, job search, and understanding local laws and customs.

5. Integration and Multicultural Exchange:

- Foster relationships with other cultural and community organizations to promote multicultural understanding and harmony.
- Participate in local multicultural events and festivals to showcase Telugu culture and traditions.

6. Youth Engagement:

- Create specific programs and activities aimed at engaging the youth, such as sports tournaments, cultural competitions, and leadership camps.
- Encourage youth participation in community service and cultural preservation initiatives.

7. Information Dissemination:

- Maintain a website, newsletters, and social media presence to keep the community informed about events, opportunities, and news relevant to the Telugu-speaking population in Quebec.
- Provide resources and information on education, healthcare, legal services, and other essential services.

8. Cultural Exchange Programs:

- Organize exchange programs with Telugu associations in other parts of Canada and around the world to foster a sense of global Telugu identity.
- Promote visits and performances by artists and scholars from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

By pursuing these objectives, TAM in Quebec can play a vital role in enriching the lives of its members, preserving their cultural heritage, and fostering a sense of community and belonging.

Chapter 4

Article IV: Membership

Membership of the TAM shall be open to all adults who are desirous of furthering the objectives of the TAM and remains in effect if the member remains in good standing, having paid all the current dues as set out in the by-laws, abides by the constitution and meets below criteria.

- 1) A person who has roots in Telugu states
- 2) A person who speaks Telugu
- 3) A person with Telugu speaking spouse

Article V:

Membership shall consist of Two types: Patrons/ Donors and Annual membership.

- a) A Patron/Donor is an individual, a Company or a Corporation who makes the appropriate donation as set out in the by-laws.
- b) Annual membership, both Family and Single, shall expire on 31st of December, unless renewed.

Article VI:

The membership meetings of the TAM shall be held in accordance with the by-laws.

Chapter 5

The Board of Directors

Article VII:

The business of the TAM shall be conducted by a Board of Directors, hereinafter called the BOARD selected from the self-nominated members along with an endorsement from at least 2 other members. Directors shall serve in an honorary capacity. The BOARD shall be assisted as necessary by any committee set up for specific purpose with specified terms of reference, as defined in the by-laws.

Article VIII:

The BOARD shall be responsible to the general membership.

Formation of the BOARD

Article IX:

The BOARD shall comprise of the following:

- a) An Executive comprising of four office-bearers, namely President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer.
- b) One or three directors.

Article X:

The term of office on the BOARD shall be two years' (a year, in this context shall be the interval between two General Membership Meetings). Three Directors shall be elected in every even year of operation and two in every odd year of operation. These five Directors shall, among themselves,

elect the Office-bearers. Selection of the directors will be done purely by self-nomination of TAM members using application web-form sent by TAM including an endorsement from at least 2 other TAM members. If more than required number of nominations are received, then an election will be conducted to identify the new directors.

Resignation of Board of Directors

If a board member wishes to resign mid-term, they must submit a formal resignation to TAM, providing a 30-day notice period.

In the event of a mid-term resignation by an existing committee member, the following points shall be considered:

1. If the minimum quorum is maintained, the TAM committee may appoint a new committee member in accordance with the previously outlined selection criteria.
2. If the quorum is not met, a member of the Advisory committee shall fill the spot of Board of directors until next AGM.

The Advisory committee in case of full dissolution could convene an emergency AGM within 30 days of receiving the resignation(s).

Article XI :

The president provides general leadership and coordination, presides at the membership and board meetings of the TAM and signs official documents, the president is an ex-officio member of all committees

Article XII :

The vice-president assists the president and fulfills all functions of the office during the president's absence. The vice-president becomes president if the post is declared vacant and serves until the next annual election.

Article XIII:

The Secretary of the TAM conducts all general correspondence. The secretary shall issue notice to all membership and board meetings and keep accurate minutes of such meetings. All correspondence related to the contractual obligations set out in the by-laws of the TAM duly authorized by the board shall be signed by any two of the following: the President, the Secretary and the treasurer. The secretary shall carry out other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the general membership or the President.

Communication

- Proper communication protocols shall be followed to maintain confidentiality and professionalism. For example, emails should use **BCC** rather than **CC** to protect recipients' privacy.

- Future Event dates should be published on the website, at least 2 months prior conducting the event.

Article XIV:

The functions of the Treasurer will be as follows:

- A) To keep an accurate account of the receipts and expenditures of funds, and of all assets and liabilities of the TAM.
- B) To deposit all funds received for or on behalf of the TAM in bank approved by the executive committee.
- C) To maintain membership up-to-date record.
- D) To make recommendations to the board on the procurement of assets.
- E) To facilitate the accounts of the TAM in collaboration with the Secretary, arrange for copies of the accounts and financial statements to be circulated with the notice of the General Membership; and
- F) To perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President
- G) Communicate a full and accurate financial summary to the community within one month following all TAM community events.

Article XV:

In case of conflict of jurisdiction, the president shall coordinate matters between the office-bearers and if necessary, act as an arbitrator.

Article XVI:

Advisory Committee

The advisory committee shall consist of 2 members who had served at least one full term as TAM executive committee member on voluntary basis.

Each advisory committee member shall be chosen by the board of directors and is expected to serve for 2 years.

Advisory committee shall be entitled to only one vote.

The primary roles of advisory committee are:

1. Work alongside the Executive Committee adhering to existing By-Laws and Guidelines.
2. Provide input and feedback on request of the Executive Committee to enhance community event management. This includes, but is not limited to, Sponsors, Communications, Master of Ceremony, Finances, Hall Booking, Food Catering, Cultural Programs, and Volunteers.
3. Offer non-binding strategic advice to the Executive Committee.
4. The Advisory Committee shall not engage in the Executive Committee's day-to-day operations unless specifically requested. For example, if the Executive Committee lacks

quorum, Advisory Committee members may temporarily step in until a suitable replacement is found,

5. Serve as the deciding vote on major decisions if requested by the Executive Committee.

Chapter 6

Banking procedures

Article XVII:

The executive committee shall approve the bank in which the accounts of the TAM shall be kept. All accounts shall be kept in the name of the TAM. Transactions shall normally be by means of cheques / Interac e-transfers. All cheques / interac e-transfer must be signed by two of the three officers namely: the President, Secretary and the Treasurer. The executive committee shall have authority to approve expenditures up to maximum of \$50.00 (Fifty dollars) as required for the furtherance of the objectives of the TAM. Expenditures more than this amount must be authorized by the board. The maximum operating deficit for each year shall be determined by the general membership. Any increase in this deficit can only be authorized by the general membership.

All Interac e-transfers need approval from two of the three officers namely: the President, Secretary and the Treasurer either by mail or by form sent from the treasurer.

Audit of Accounts

Article XVIII:

The Auditor(s) shall be approved by the general membership. (No Auditor shall be a member of the board). The Auditor(s) shall audit and certify all accounts for the TAM, including the annual statement of accounts at the end of the tenure of the Treasurer.

Chapter 7

Article XIX:

Membership Meetings may adopt such of procedure, not inconsistent with these articles, as required for the proper conduct of their business. Without prejudice to the general provisions set out above, the President may, unless the membership decides otherwise, restrict the discussion on a motion to two interventions by any one member, each intervention being limited to two minutes duration.

Election By-Laws

Article XX:

Detailed procedures for the appointment of the Nominating Committee, date of election, etc., with respect to the election of the Board of the TAM shall be contained in the by-laws enacted by the general membership

Chapter 8

Amendments

Article XXI:

This Constitution except for the Chapter IX may be amended by a two-thirds majority of total number of Patrons, Donors and Members at a General Membership Meeting. Written copy of every proposed amendment must be received by the Secretary at least two months prior to the meeting. The Secretary shall issue in accordance with the by-laws (Article 9) text of the notice indicating the Article(s) proposed for amendment and the proposed amendments.

Article XXII:

Proposals for amendments of constitution may originate from the board or by means of a written request from the general membership.

CHAPTER 9

Dissolution

Article XXIII

Proposal for the dissolution of the TAM shall originate only by means of a written request addressed to the Secretary signed by a simple majority of the annual Membership: and that of Patrons and Donors. The Secretary shall convene a meeting to discuss the dissolution of the TAM not less than one month and not more than two months after the receipt of the request. For the purpose of this meeting, the presence of simple majority of the Annual Membership and that of Patrons and Donors shall constitute the quorum. The dissolution requires approval by two-thirds majority of the attendees present at the meeting. For this meeting, no proxy votes shall be allowed.

Article XXIV

For the purpose of dissolution, the equity of the various members shall be defined as follows:

- 1) For an Annual Member, it shall be their annual dues.

II) For a Patron, it shall be the original amount of their donation, pro-rated according to the ratio between the current minimum Patron donation, and the minimum donation at the time of their joining.

III) For a Donor, it shall be the original amount of their donation, pro-rated according to the ratio between the current minimum donor donation, and the minimum Donor donation at the time of their joining.

Article XXV

An amendment to Chapter IX can be made only by a two-thirds majority of the Annual Membership, Donors and Patrons.

By-Laws

1. These By-Laws complement the constitution of the TAM. In case where there are conflicts between the by-laws and the constitution, the constitution shall prevail.
2. The By-Laws can be amended at any time by a simple majority of those present or validly represented at a Membership meeting.
3. The membership of the TAM shall consist of below types.
 - A. Patron: An individual, married couple, or an institution who makes donation of at least \$400.00 to the TAM is entitled for lifetime membership.
 - B. Donor: An individual, married couple or an institution who donates a minimum of \$200.00 to the TAM is entitled for 10 years membership (from the date of Donation).
 - C. Family:
 - a. An individual adult can become a member by paying a \$40.00 fee, without the requirement to purchase event tickets in advance.
 - b. Membership is available for individuals or families at a discounted rate of \$20.00 per adult when paired with the upfront purchase of tickets for two events (Ugadi and Diwali).
4. Family membership shall provide names of family members at the time of registration and only adult individuals from their family to represent for voting at the meeting.
5. If a Patron or Donor is an Institution it shall designate one individual to represent for voting at the meeting.
6. In case of Family or Individual membership the number of votes will depend on number of memberships purchased.
7. If a Donor wishes to become a Patron, an amount equal to the current Donor's donation shall be credited towards the donation required to be a Patron.
8. TAM shall hold General Membership meetings normally once every calendar year. But under no circumstances shall the interval between successive meetings exceed fifteen months.
9. Special Membership Meetings may be convened (a) by the Board on its own initiative; or (b) within twenty-one days of the receipt by the Secretary of a request for such meeting signed by at least twenty percent of the membership. However, the twenty-one days maximum period may be waived subject to the agreement of all persons signing the request.
10. The Secretary of the TAM shall issue notice to all the members, at-least two weeks in advance, of any General or Special membership meetings. In the absence of the Secretary, the Vice-President shall perform this task. With such a notice, the agenda, and any supporting documentation shall be forwarded. In the case of the General Membership Meetings, the supporting papers shall include the President's report, the Treasurer's report, Auditor's report and the report of any subsidiary body not covered in the President's report.
11. The following items shall be included in the Agenda of the General membership meeting:
 - a) Approval of the minutes of the previous General Membership Meeting;
 - b) Considerations of the President's report;
 - c) Discussions of the Treasurer's and Auditor's reports;
 - d) Election of the Board of Directors for the following year;

12. The agenda for a special membership meeting shall consist only of those items mentioned in the notice (see point 8 above)
13. The quorum at any membership meeting shall be fifteen percent of the membership; for the purpose of quorum, no proxy shall be allowed.
14. All meeting shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's rule of Order stated below.

Basic Principles

- a. A quorum must be present for business to be conducted
 - b. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations
 - c. No person should speak until recognized by the chair
 - d. Personal remarks or side discussions during debate are out of order
 - e. Only one question at a time may be considered, and only one person may have the floor at any one time
 - f. Members have a right to know what the pending question is and to have it restated before a vote is taken
 - g. Full and free discussion of every main motion is a basic right
 - h. Decisions are made democratically through voting, ensuring a majority consensus
 - i. Silence gives consent. Those who do not vote allow the decision to be made by those who do vote.
 - j. The Chair should always remain impartial.
15. Only members shall attend the AGM or Special meetings.
 16. Each member of the TAM who is present at the membership meetings shall be entitled to one vote at all membership meetings. The president shall exercise their vote in case of a tie.
 17. A two-thirds majority of the present members is required for expulsion of an annual member from the TAM.
 18. The membership year of the TAM shall be the calendar year. Each member of the TAM shall pay annual dues in advance on or before 1st of February of each year.
 19. Each BoD shall hold an office role (President, Vice-President, Treasurer and secretary) for not more than a year within their tenure.
 20. All directors and member of Executive committee shall perform their constitutionally assigned duties in honorary capacity.
 21. To be nominated for election as a director, a person shall have been a member of the TAM continuously for at least 1 year. Nominated person shall be endorsed by two TAM members. Nominations may be sent to the Secretary prior to the meeting. Alternatively, nominations may also be made from the floor. No nomination is valid unless the nominee is present at the meeting or has provided acceptance of the nomination in writing to the Secretary.
 22. In case of no nominations received, the Board of Directors may appoint a Nominating Committee to bring in a slate of nominees, without prejudice to the Article 21.
 23. A vacancy arising through a Director ceasing to hold office shall be filled by holding a by-election, if such vacancy arises more than six months prior to a planned General Membership Meeting. The elected member shall hold office role for the balance of the term. Should such a vacancy arise less than six months before a planned General Membership Meeting the Board may at its discretion, hold a by-election, leave the post vacant or co-opt

a qualified member. The Board may not have more than two co-opted members at any one time.

24. The meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called by the President, at intervals of not more than three months. Four Directors shall constitute a quorum. The President shall also call for a meeting of the Board of Directors if required in writing by at least two Directors.
25. The Board of Directors may establish, to deal with specific questions, such committees or working groups as deemed necessary. In establishing such bodies, the Board of Directors shall define their terms of reference. The Chairperson, rapporteurs, members of such groups need not be all directors. However, each such bodies shall have one director besides the President.
26. All contracts with other organizations shall be in writing and must obtain prior approval of the Board of Directors. Contracts shall be signed by only two of the three officers: the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer.
27. The Auditor(s) for the purpose of internal audit of accounts, shall be approved by the General Membership, and no Director shall be an Auditor. The Auditor(s) shall audit and certify all accounts of the TAM, including annual statement of accounts for the financial year ending thirty first of December.