

Telugu Association of Montreal (T.A.M.)
By-Laws, Guidelines and Two-Tier Committee
January 26, 2023

Preamble:

The Telugu Association of Montreal (T.A.M.) was formed in 2009 and serves as a unifying platform for Telugu people in Montreal to celebrate and preserve our language, culture and traditions. It is run by dedicated volunteers serving on a committee. The mandate is to ensure continuity by openness, transparency, and inclusion. Special focus is on children, community harmony, and having fun while celebrating together.

References:

1. T.A.M. Minutes of Meeting (March 31, 2018)
2. T.A.M. Minutes of Meeting (March 16, 2019)

These references were sent to the Telugu community at large and can be further distributed to any Telugu person who was not present at the meetings or did not receive them by e-mail for any reason.

Introduction:

This document presents the results of Actions # 1 and 2 of reference 2, ie.

- (a) Formal stand-alone consolidated By-Laws & Guidelines document – see Attachments A and B
- (b) Guidelines for the agreed “Advisory Committee” – see Attachment C

As agreed, this document was initially drafted by Viswanath Tata. It was presented to the T.A.M. Committee during two separate meetings where it was discussed and updated. This final document is based on unanimous consent following those meetings.

ATTACHMENT A – BY-LAWS

These T.A.M. By-Laws have been established following a democratic voting process by the Telugu community, as presented in references 1 and 2. They cannot be changed or modified without community majority consent.

1. T.A.M. Executive Committee shall consist of a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 5 members
2. T.A.M. mandate is to serve for a two years maximum period
3. T.A.M. Executive Committee shall have documented Guidelines (see Attachment B)
4. UGADI function shall be the forum where T.A.M. committee member terms shall start & end
5. T.A.M. shall operate as a Two-Tier system, consisting of the Executive Committee referenced in By-Law 1, as well as an Advisory Committee as described in Attachment C

ATTACHMENT B – GUIDELINES

These T.A.M. guidelines represent Best Practices based on experience over a ten years period and were discussed transparently and fairly by the Telugu community as described in references 1 and 2. They are intended to provide a framework for community inclusion, effective communication, team cohesion and respect, and are fully aligned with the T.A.M. Mission and Vision.

1. New Committee members – preference should be given to new volunteers, ie. those who have not previously served. In exceptional cases where a previous volunteer wishes to serve again, there should be a minimum gap of at least one term. Also, volunteers should have been in Montreal for at least one year (enough time to know about the community) and they should have attended at least one T.A.M. event (to know what is actually involved in organizing them). This ensures stability and provides equal opportunity for all.
2. Family members – two volunteers from the same family cannot be on the committee at the same time.
3. Events per year – Executive Committee must organize Diwali, Ugadi and Summer picnic each year
4. Priority – given to Telugu members
5. Transparency & Communication – committee must provide timely communication of any significant changes to the committee (eg. member departing for personal reasons) within two weeks of the event. This is to include a detailed plan for a seamless transition or a call for community assistance.
6. Finances – a full and accurate financial summary should be communicated to the community within two weeks following a T.A.M. community event
7. Quorum – if less than 3 committee members remain (see By-Law # 1) then the remaining committee members must immediately inform the community after also consulting with the Advisory Committee. This is key for stability and continuity.
8. Privacy – proper communication protocols shall be employed (eg. using bcc: rather than cc: in e-mails, to preserve confidentiality of information)
9. Attendance / Involvement – every attempt must be made to bolster attendance at events, via emails, EVITE, personal contact, etc. This will ensure longevity of this worthy cause.
10. Commercial Endorsements – T.A.M. shall not provide a forum for commercial endorsements such as movies, etc. In addition, T.A.M. platform shall not be used to promote any individual or group for any purpose other than to serve the interests of T.A.M. mandate. However, it is agreed that T.A.M. will use its e-mail name to advertise two specific Telugu events, namely 'Seetha Rama Kalyanam' and 'Bathukamma Sambaralu'.

ATTACHMENT C – ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Preamble:

The community was not in favor of a formal, registered organization. As a compromise, the need for a Two-Tier system consisting of the formation of an Advisory Committee was vigorously discussed and voted upon (see discussion point number 10 of reference 2). It was overwhelmingly accepted by the community and will be essential to stabilize and enhance the existing the T.A.M. Mission and Vision.

Guidelines:

The primary roles of the Advisory Committee are

- (1) With the community's best interest in mind, to ensure T.A.M. long term stability, alignment, and growth. The term of the Advisory Committee shall be 4 years in order to ensure stability. This is greater than the mandate for the Executive Committee of 2 years in By-Law # 2
- (2) Along with the Executive Committee, ensure adherence to and further formulation/modification of the By-Laws and Guidelines
- (3) Provide input / feedback into new Executive Committee guidelines required to conduct community events efficiently. These include but are not limited to Sponsors, Communications, Master of Ceremony, Finances, Hall booking, Food catering, Cultural programs, and Volunteers
- (4) Provide non-binding strategic advice to the Executive Committee
- (5) The Advisory Committee shall not participate in the day-to-day operation of the Executive Committee, unless specifically requested to do so. For example, in the case of a quorum not being achieved, to temporarily step in as needed until a suitable replacement can be found
- (6) Act as tie-breaking vote for major decisions if requested by the Executive Committee

The Advisory Committee shall consist of two (2) members who possess the following qualifications:

1. Montreal resident for a minimum of ten years
2. Demonstrated leadership and track record of maintaining stability of T.A.M. Mission and Vision
3. Extensive recent experience in successfully organizing T.A.M. events as a committee member. This includes regular participation, attendance and contributions
4. Well known to community, both 'new' and 'old' - to ensure balanced decision making
5. Ability to remain objective and flexible – important to provide fair and reasoned guidance
6. Excellent verbal and written communication skills – for effective communication and transparency, as well as to maintain a high standard of Code of Conduct and decorum
7. Willingness and ability to commit time to support T.A.M. as requested

Proposal:

To implement the 2-Tier system in order to stabilize, align and grow the T.A.M. platform, the Advisory Committee shall be formed by Lakshmi Tata (acclaimed) and TBD. This TBD open position shall be based on community feedback.