

# Constitution of DIYbio MIT

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Definition of Members . . . . .	2
2.2	Active Members . . . . .	2
2.3	Keyholders . . . . .	2
2.4	Minimum Membership . . . . .	3
2.5	Nondiscrimination . . . . .	3
<b>3</b>	<b>Meetings</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1	General Meetings . . . . .	3
3.2	Meetings of the Executive Board . . . . .	3
<b>4</b>	<b>Election of Keyholders</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1	Nomination . . . . .	3
4.2	Quorum for Elections . . . . .	4
4.3	Questioning . . . . .	4
4.4	Voting . . . . .	4
<b>5</b>	<b>Officers and Executive Board</b>	<b>4</b>
5.1	Charge to the Executive Board . . . . .	4
5.1.1	President . . . . .	4
5.1.2	Vice President . . . . .	4
5.1.3	Treasurer . . . . .	5
5.1.4	Secretary . . . . .	5
5.1.5	Biosafety Officer . . . . .	5
5.1.6	Members-at-Large . . . . .	5
5.2	Election of Executive Board . . . . .	5
5.3	Start of Term of Office . . . . .	6
5.4	Eligibility . . . . .	6
5.5	Resignation, Impeachment, & Replacement of Officers . . . . .	6
5.5.1	Resignation . . . . .	6
5.5.2	Impeachment . . . . .	6
5.5.3	Replacement . . . . .	7
<b>6</b>	<b>Amendments</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>ASA Governance Clause</b>	<b>7</b>

# Constitution of DIYbio MIT

## 1 Mission

The mission of this organization is to encourage the study and practice of amateur biology—also known as do-it-yourself biology or DIYbio for short—throughout MIT, the greater Boston/Cambridge area, and the world. To further this goal, the members of DIYbio MIT take it upon themselves to create a community where amateur biologists can come together to freely share any and all knowledge and ideas relating to DIYbio.

## 2 Membership

### 2.1 Definition of Members

Membership in DIYbio MIT shall be open to anyone interested in advancing the mission of DIYbio MIT.

### 2.2 Active Members

Members of DIYbio MIT shall maintain active status by having, in the past two months, attended at least one general meeting and participating in some activity that furthers the mission of DIYbio MIT. Only time during the fall or spring term, which shall be defined as beginning on Registration Day and ending on the last day of classes of the term, will count against the two-month time period stipulated in the previous sentence.

### 2.3 Keyholders

In order to secure the physical space of DIYbio MIT, and ensure that proper biosafety protocols are followed, keys to the office / laboratory space will be given solely to the subset of active members who are elected keyholders of DIYbio MIT.

Active members of DIYbio MIT shall be eligible to become keyholders upon completing a biosafety training course, as may be specified by the Biosafety Officer from time to time in consultation with the rest of the Executive Board. This course should include, at minimum, a basic bioengineering lab module, as well as any necessary exercises specified by the Environment, Health & Safety Office. The Executive Board shall keep a public list of active members eligible for nomination.

## **2.4 Minimum Membership**

The membership of DIYbio MIT will at all times consist of at least five MIT students and be more than half MIT students.

## **2.5 Nondiscrimination**

DIYbio MIT will not discriminate based on any characteristic listed in MIT's Nondiscrimination Statement.

# **3 Meetings**

## **3.1 General Meetings**

Meetings of DIYbio MIT shall be held every two weeks, at a time and place to be specified by the Executive Board. Notice of meetings must be given at least seven (7) days in advance. Quorum for business and motions shall be at least one-third the active members. All general meetings of the DIYbio MIT shall be open to the public, unless a meeting is voted closed to non-members of by a majority of active members present.

## **3.2 Meetings of the Executive Board**

Meetings of the Executive Board shall be held at the request of any member of the Executive Board. The President shall arrange the time and place of the meeting, and notice of the meeting must be given to the active membership at least 24 hours in advance. Five members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for business.

All meetings and proceedings of the Executive Board shall be made public and open to all members of DIYbio MIT, unless a meeting is closed to non-members of the Executive Board by the unanimous consent of all members of the Executive Board present. All business conducted at a meeting of the Executive Board must be reported to the active membership by the next general meeting in order to remain valid.

# **4 Election of Keyholders**

## **4.1 Nomination**

Any eligible member may announce his/her intent to become a keyholder at any general meeting of DIYbio MIT. After this, an election for the potential keyholder shall be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting of DIYbio MIT. Each active keyholder shall receive notice of the upcoming election at least seven (7) days in advance.

## **4.2 Quorum for Elections**

Two-thirds of active keyholders shall constitute a quorum for electing a keyholder. Absentee votes, including abstentions, shall count towards quorum, and may be filed in advance via writing to the Executive Board. Additionally, the candidate must be physically present.

## **4.3 Questioning**

Anyone present at the election may question the candidate. This questioning period must be closed before voting commences. The President may restrict questioning and limit discussion as he/she deems appropriate.

## **4.4 Voting**

Voting shall be conducted via secret ballot. A valid ballot must be marked with the name of the candidate and "yes," "no," or "abstain." Invalid or illegible ballots shall be kept as abstentions.

# **5 Officers and Executive Board**

## **5.1 Charge to the Executive Board**

The administrative responsibilities of DIYbio MIT shall be entrusted to a seven-member Executive Board comprised of five officers - the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the Biosafety Officer - and two Members-at-Large.

### **5.1.1 President**

The President shall direct the short-term goals and long-term vision of DIYbio MIT, serve as the official spokesperson of DIYbio MIT, and preside over meetings of the general body and of the Executive Board. The President shall ensure that the duties of the other officers are fulfilled. The President shall have the power and prerogative to arbitrate any disputes among members.

### **5.1.2 Vice President**

The Vice President shall assist and advise the President in all matters. The Vice President shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of DIYbio MIT, including publicity and recruitment. The Vice President shall also be responsible for maintaining the group's office and, in consultation with the Biosafety Officer, ordering appropriate supplies. The Vice President shall assume all responsibilities of the President in the President's absence. The Vice President shall assume

the responsibilities and duties of the Biosafety Officer in the Biosafety Officer's absence.

### **5.1.3 Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial matters, including securing sources of funding and keeping records of all financial transactions undertaken by DIYbio MIT. The Treasurer shall serve as an advisor to the Executive Board in all matters relating to financial policy. The Treasurer shall preside at meetings in the absence of both the President and Vice President.

### **5.1.4 Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep public records of all meetings, maintain the organization's online presence, and organize the organization's library. The Secretary shall maintain a public record of the active or inactive status of all members, and shall be responsible for the issuing and tracking of keys. The Secretary shall preside at meetings in the absence of the President, Vice President, or Treasurer.

### **5.1.5 Biosafety Officer**

The Biosafety Officer shall liaise with the Environment, Health & Safety Office (EHS) and perform all duties required by EHS. The Biosafety Officer shall ensure that all appropriate biosafety procedures are followed and that all members are educated in biosafety. The Biosafety Officer shall advise the Vice President when ordering chemical or organic supplies.

### **5.1.6 Members-at-Large**

In addition to the officers, two members-at-large will serve on the Executive Board as advisors with voting privileges. They shall be encouraged to represent the interests of other members of DIYbio MIT to the Executive Board, and to serve as ambassadors to the greater DIYbio community.

## **5.2 Election of Executive Board**

Elections for all Executive Board members shall be held at the first regularly scheduled general meeting falling in the month of March. Quorum for elections shall be half of all active keyholders.

All elections shall be by secret ballot. Elections shall be held first for President, then for Vice President, then for Treasurer, then for Secretary, and finally for Biosafety Officer. Following these elections, elections shall be held for the two Members-at-Large. Preceding each election, the duties of the position shall be read from Section 5.1.

Election of officers and Members-at-Large shall be by a majority (more than half) of those voting. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote, then all votes shall be recast.

### **5.3 Start of Term of Office**

The newly-elected Executive Board shall take office at the beginning of the next general meeting.

### **5.4 Eligibility**

Only MIT students who are active keyholders shall be eligible to serve as officers of DIYbio MIT. Any active member may serve as a Member-at-Large. Each position on the Executive Board must be held by a distinct person.

### **5.5 Resignation, Impeachment, & Replacement of Officers**

#### **5.5.1 Resignation**

Any member of the Executive Board may resign at any time for any reason, effective immediately, by proffering written or electronic notice of the same to the Executive Board.

#### **5.5.2 Impeachment**

Any member of the Executive Board may have an Article of Impeachment brought against him/her if the member is neglecting the responsibilities of his/her position, abusing the authority of his/her position, or not acting in the interest of DIYbio MIT. A proposed Article of Impeachment must address at least one of these three points.

An Article of Impeachment against any member of the Executive Board may be brought before the active membership by a petition signed by at least four of the seven members of the Executive Board or at least two-thirds of active keyholders. This petition must contain the full text of the proposed Article of Impeachment.

Once a petition is so signed and brought to the attention of the Executive Board, the Executive Board will notify the active membership of the full text of the proposed Article of Impeachment. The Executive Board will bring a vote on the Article of Impeachment before the active membership during the next scheduled general meeting of DIYbio MIT that is at least seven (7) days from the date of notification.

The member of the Executive Board is impeached if the Article of Impeachment is approved by at least two-thirds of the keyholders present.

### **5.5.3 Replacement**

In the event of a vacancy in the Presidency, the Vice President shall temporarily assume the responsibilities of President. The vacancy shall be filled by special election during the next scheduled general meeting of DIYbio MIT that is at least seven (7) days from the date of resignation.

Other vacancies in the Executive Board created by resignation may be temporarily filled by appointment of the President. Any such vacancy shall be permanently filled by special election during the next scheduled general meeting of DIYbio MIT that is at least seven (7) days from the date of resignation.

Other vacancies in the Executive Board created by impeachment shall be filled by special election during the general meeting of DIYbio MIT in which the impeachment passed.

Vacancies in the Executive Board created by succession of one Executive Board member to a different position shall be filled by special election during the same general meeting in which the succession occurred.

In the event of simultaneous vacancies in the Presidency and Vice Presidency, the Secretary and Treasurer shall jointly assume the necessary responsibilities of those offices, but not the offices themselves.

Executive Board members permanently elected under the provisions of this section shall take office immediately after their election, and shall complete the original term of office.

## **6 Amendments**

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any member of DIYbio MIT during any general meeting of DIYbio MIT. Notice of the amendment's text and purpose must be made at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting. An amendment shall pass upon majority approval of members present.

## **7 ASA Governance Clause**

The members and officers of DIYbio MIT agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Association of Student Activities, and its executive board. This constitution, amendments to it, and the bylaws of this organization shall be subject to review by the ASA Executive Board to ensure that they are in accordance with the aforementioned rules and regulations.