

Guidelines of the American Women's Club of Hamburg e.V. (revised May 6, 2021)

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1 Categories of Members

A. Full Members

1. See §3 A of the AWCH Constitution regarding qualifications for full membership.
2. Full members must renew their membership annually.

B. Associate Members

1. See §3 B of the AWCH Constitution regarding qualifications for associate membership.
2. Associate members must renew their membership annually.
3. Associate members shall enjoy all club privileges, including voting and holding elected positions, with the exception of the offices of President and Vice President.
4. Associate membership shall not exceed forty percent (40%) of the club year's total membership. The Associate membership roster shall be reviewed as necessary to maintain this percentage.
5. No one nationality shall exceed seventy percent (70%) of the total associate membership.

C. Senior Members

1. Senior membership may be offered to members who have reached seventy (70) years of age with a continuous membership of 20 years.
2. Senior members have voting privileges and pay dues.
3. Members who were awarded senior membership before 2015 are not required to pay dues.
4. Starting 2019, the Board of Officers may offer a senior member a reduction in dues, at a rate that the board determines.

D. Honorary Members

1. Honorary membership shall be determined by a majority vote of the Board of Officers.
2. Honorary members do not have voting rights and do not pay dues.
3. Honorary membership shall be reevaluated annually.

E. Full, associate, and senior members make up the body called voting members.

Sec. 2 Members' Responsibilities to the AWCH

A. Members should participate in meetings, in activities, and in assisting new members.

B. They should remember at all times that the AWCH is a volunteer organization and give freely of their time and talents to further the objectives of the AWCH. Members will not receive payment for any of the duties and tasks performed as stated in the constitution.

C. Members must be made aware of the seriousness and importance of attending meetings where a vote is necessary to elect new officers, to review the budget, or to make any constitutional changes, e.g., the Annual General Meeting.

D. See §3 of the AWCH Constitution regarding membership cancelation or termination. Members are asked to notify the Board of Officers of their resignation or non-renewal of membership in writing, by email or post, at least 30 days prior to the new calendar year.

ARTICLE II: FINANCES

Sec.1 Dues

- A. Dues are EUR 45 and paid on a yearly basis.
- B. Annual dues are to be paid in January. If new members join the club during the year, the full fee will be collected; dues will not be prorated.
- C. The dues are for the operating expenses of the AWCH and for fulfilling the goals and stated purposes of the AWCH.
- D. See §7 of the AWCH Constitution regarding changes to membership fees.

Sec. 2 Budget

- A. The Officers of the Board shall approve a proposed budget. Minutes shall be kept and be signed by the President and one other board member. The Board approved budget shall then be distributed to the membership.
- B. Specific questions concerning finances that arise after the budget has been distributed to the membership should be presented in writing to the President and Treasurer, and then brought to the membership, if necessary.
- C. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial report of the previous year's actual budget to be published fourteen (14) days prior to the AGM and then reviewed at the AGM.
- D. Receipts for normal expenses shall be submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement as they occur, monthly or quarterly. All expenses for the fiscal year end, both actual and estimated, are to be reported to the Treasurer no later than December 1, with final reporting of actual expenses no later than December 31. Each board member shall request permission from the Board of Officers before spending non-budgeted sums of money. Regular members require a Board member's approval before spending money for club activities or expenses for which they seek reimbursement.
- E. Reserves
 - 1. Emergency funds of at least €3.500 will be kept in a savings account.
 - 2. Money specified for an annual club celebration and/or a 75th anniversary celebration will be kept in a savings account.
- F. The FAWCO Representative and the President, or their representatives, will be reimbursed for registration fees for FAWCO Interim Meetings and Biennial Conference and other FAWCO functions, as deemed necessary and financially possible by the Board of Officers.
- G. Prior Board approval must be sought for all fundraising events (see also Article VII below).
- H. Gifts for special occasions, e.g. program speakers, should be at the discretion of the Board of Officers.
- I. The AWCH's fiscal year is January 1 through to December 31.
- J. The Treasurer shall prepare a quarterly financial report to be presented to the board. At the beginning of the fourth quarter the budget shall be reviewed and readjusted to meet the actual financial situation.

ARTICLE III: PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sec 1. *Currents* magazine

A. *Currents* magazine shall be published regularly as determined by the Board and provided to club members informing them of club activities, local events, legislation that affects them, *etc.* All members may submit articles for publication in the magazine. Non-members may submit articles that may be published if space permits.

B. *Currents* will be offered free-of-charge to its members in a digital form. Members wanting to receive a printed copy need to pay €5 per calendar year to cover postage costs.

Sec 2. Membership Directory

A. The Membership Directory shall be published at least annually in the member's section of the website, accessible with members' personal logins. It shall be made available to all AWCH members.

B. The Membership Directory is EXCLUSIVELY FOR PERSONAL, NON-COMMERCIAL USE. Misuse and/ or sharing the directory or its contents will be grounds for termination of membership.

Sec. 3 Website

A. The club website is located at www.awchamburg.org. Terms of its use and the data privacy policy (May 2018) can be viewed on the website (<https://www.awchamburg.org/website-terms-of-use-privacy-policy.html>).

B. The personal User ID and password to the members-only section of the website will be provided to each member after registration on the website. User IDs and passwords may not be shared and will be grounds for termination of membership.

Sec 4. Electronic mail communication

A. The AWCH e-newsletter is administered at the discretion of the Board and distributed by the Secretary or the Communication Chair. The newsletter announces upcoming events and important club information. The external provider Mail-Chimp is used for distribution in compliance with our member privacy policy.

B. Invitations to events and confirmation of registration are managed by the Activities Chair or Membership Chair through our website database.

Sec 5. Digital Practice, Media and Privacy Policies

A. The AWCH uses the Internet as its forum for communication, which includes e-mail, online invitations, e-newsletters, and various social media channels.

B. AWCH takes the privacy of its members seriously. Because you provide us personal information as a member of our organization, we are a "controller" of personal information as defined by the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR"). In compliance with the GDPR, our Member Privacy Policy (May 2018) describes what personal data we collect as part of your membership; how, why, and for how long we will use it; and how we keep it secure.

Sec. 6 Sponsorship and Advertising Policies

A. As per §2 of its constitution, the AWCH exclusively and directly pursues social and charitable purposes. The purpose of the club is the promotion of international understanding, welfare care, the support of people in

need, and education. We can procure funds for the realization of charitable purposes by other tax-privileged bodies and bodies governed by public law. The AWCH Charitable Giving Guidelines (Jan. 2020) can be found on our website. We're happy to support lectures, congresses, exhibitions, information stands and publications. We support American and International citizens living in the Greater Hamburg area and promote cultural exchanges between Americans, Germans and other nationals.

B. The club is a nonprofit organization and must maintain this status accordingly. Therefore, sponsoring or co-sponsoring events or activities with the above-mentioned purposes must be approved by the current Board of Officers. To obtain permission, the AWCH Activity/Event Planning Sheet on our website should be filled out and submitted to our Activity Chair.

C. For advertising and sponsorships, we prefer partners the club can associate with, either in pursuing social and charitable purposes or in closely benefiting the members of the AWCH. We prefer co-operations or sponsorships to help execute and drive the club goals.

D. Advertising and sponsorship requests need to include a reasonable suggestion on what the club, its aims, or members will receive in return. The money will be used to fund the realization of charitable purposes by other tax-privileged corporations and bodies of public law and/ or education of the club's members and/ or associates. The following options are currently available:

1. Advertising/ Sponsorship with a logo/ banner on our website is available for €190 per year.
2. Event sponsorship is negotiable for a certain fee depending on the event. This can range from yearly events, e.g. 4th of July and Thanksgiving Dinner, to one-time events, such as lectures or workshops. The sponsor can either provide a certain amount of money to support execution of the event or provide support in form of technical equipment and other material.
3. We can offer to execute and advertise those events in our e-newsletter and via our social media channels if free entry, a reasonable discount of 40% and more, or other benefits for current club members are provided.

E. Advertising for members only:

1. Members may post personal business events in the private AWCH Facebook group once a month. These events are limited to open houses for members' businesses, local events where members are selling their handmade items, and other one-time events, such as Christmas markets, craft fairs and flea markets. Members will post their events themselves, using photos and/ or text not infringing others' copyrights. Members may not advertise causes forwarded to them by non-members without consulting the Board. Members are requested to limit their personal suggestions and recommendations of local businesses in the private Facebook group to two per month. The group administrators may use their own discretion concerning the appropriateness of posts as well as checking for repeats.

2. Members are allowed one free advertisement in *Currents* per year and one free advertisement in our Newsletter per year.

3. Members may suggest and organize one-off or recurring events, such as workshops, lectures or exhibitions, with special conditions for club members. These events are either offered free-of-charge or for a considerable discount, such as 40% off usual price. Suggestions on recurring events that cannot include large discounts but pursue social and charitable purposes or help execute and drive the club goals may be brought up for discussion. These suggestions should be sent to the Board for discussion and approval.

ARTICLE IV: FAWCO—International Federation of Independent Organizations (NGO)

Sec 1. Membership

A. In April of 1976, AWCH joined FAWCO. The requirements for membership, i.e., payment of annual dues to FAWCO, in this organization must be maintained by the AWCH.

B. Membership can be withdrawn at any time by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by members in attendance at a meeting for this purpose.

C. The FAWCO Representative can be a member of the board. It is a two-year term and the representative may serve two terms, i.e., four years, consecutively.

D. FAWCO Membership/ Right to Reciprocal Membership

1. Since AWCH is a FAWCO member club, all members in good standing in the AWCH are automatically entitled to membership in FAWCO and are accorded all rights and privileges of membership.
2. An applicant for Associate Membership in the AWCH, who has been a member in good standing of another FAWCO Club, shall, regardless of Associate Membership quotas, automatically be accepted for Associate Membership upon receipt of an application, dues and a letter of recommendation from the other FAWCO Club.

ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

Sec 1. Duties in General

A. See Constitution, Article IV B regarding legal representation. There should be no fewer than three and no more than twelve board members.

B. Prospective board members shall be given an up-to-date job description prior to the election. Each board member

shall keep her job description current and relevant while in office. The President and Membership Chair (as a member of the nominating committee) shall have copies of all job descriptions, which will be posted on the website.

C. Board meetings are to be held regularly as determined by the board and board members are expected to attend or send a board-approved assistant.

D. Fifty percent (50%) of the Board of Officers, not including the President, shall constitute a quorum of the board of officers. The President does not vote, except to break a tie.

E. With the exception of the FAWCO Representative whose term of office is two years, the term of office for all other board members shall be one year or until their successors are elected. A board member may serve in the same office for two consecutive terms. Exceptions may be approved by the board.

F. Each board member may organize a committee to assist in the performance of duties.

G. Each board member shall submit an annual report as requested by the President.

H. Vacancies

1. Board of Officers vacant positions may be eliminated by a simple majority vote of the Board of Officers except for positions required under Article IV A of the AWCH Constitution.
2. Once a position on the Board of Officers is filled by the election of a candidate, the position may not be eliminated until the next general election unless it becomes vacant.
3. The Board of Officers shall elect persons to fill vacancies on the board. The officer elected in this manner shall serve only until the next regular election. The Vice President shall fill the vacancy of the President, however, in the event of an emergency, the Board of Officers may appoint a new President to serve until the next regular election.

I. If requested by a board member, or deemed necessary by the Board of Officers, any board member may have an assistant. The assistant may be nominated by the requesting board member or by a member of the board of officers. The assistant must be an AWCH member and be approved by a majority vote of the board. The assistant may attend board meetings in the absence of the elected board member, may be counted for the determination of board quorums and may vote.

- J. A board member may be removed under the following conditions:
1. The board member has failed to attend three (3) consecutive board meetings and has failed to request a board-approved assistant, or
 2. The board member has failed to file a verbal or written monthly report for three (3) consecutive months, or
 3. The board member has failed to perform her official obligations to such an extent that the performance of other members' official duties is severely impeded or the membership as a whole is grossly impacted and/ or she has acted in an insulting or discourteous manner to the board or club members and not within the team spirit of the club.
 4. When the issue of removal is brought up, it shall not be immediately discussed, but shall be placed on the agenda of the next scheduled board meeting. Written notice shall be given to the party sought to be removed at least 14 days prior to the meeting, at which the issue is on the agenda. This notice shall be mailed by *Einschreiben* (certified mail). Proof of mailing shall establish constructive notice. No member shall be removed except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board of Officers and after being afforded an opportunity to be heard.

Sec. 2. Board Appointed or Approved Positions

- A. The chair of a committee or a project must be approved or appointed by the board for the duration of the club year or for the duration of the specific project.
- B. The chair of a committee or project, who has been approved or appointed by the board, may be relieved of her duties by the board, in the case that she fails to do the agreed work or cooperate with the board.

ARTICLE VI: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Sec. 1 Nominations

- A. The Board shall appoint a nominating committee composed of the Membership Chair and at least two other active members in September before the election in January.
- B. All members of the nominating committee may stand for election or re-election to the Board of Officers.
- C. The AWCH shall be asked by the end of October to suggest names for candidates for consideration by the Nominating Committee. The Committee shall then confirm the willingness of these members to run for office.
- D. Fourteen (14) days before the election the nominating committee shall present in writing the candidates for office. This will include an announcement that additional nominations may be submitted to the nominating committee within seven (7) days of receipt of the proposed slate in order to appear on the ballot.

Sec. 2 Elections

- A. The election shall take place at the Annual General Meeting in January. See Article V of the AWCH Constitution regarding the AGM.
- B. At the election of officers, nominations from the floor shall be accepted, providing the person nominated is present and gives consent, or has given previous written consent.
- C. Tellers shall be appointed by the President to count written ballots on Election Day and report the results immediately. The ballots have to be kept and documented.
- D. Voting shall be by secret written ballot by voting members who are present at the meeting.

E. New officers shall be installed in February. A professional handover including all files and instructions for common practice is to be provided to each new board member by this time of installation, latest.

F. Discharge of the Board of Officers: At the AGM, club members will confirm that the out-going Board of Officers have fulfilled all duties and will be relieved of their responsibilities in good faith.

ARTICLE VII: AWCH ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Sec. 1 Planning and Organizing Activities and Events

A. The Officers of the Board coordinate the planning of yearly recurring events to celebrate American or German holidays or one-time events for specific cultural or educational activities (e.g. women's rights, art exhibition) or a philanthropic cause.

1. The board can appoint one or several board members to assist in coordinating these events (e.g. Events Chair; Activities Chair). External committees can and should be formed to support the planning and functioning of events.
2. Money is budgeted each year to help finance some of these events.
3. Dates for yearly recurring events should be confirmed early in the year in order to reserve appropriate venues and to ensure good participation.

B. AWCH welcomes suggestions from all its members for one-time or recurring events that promote the goals of AWCH as outlined in our Constitution. These may include, but are not limited to, local and international tours, day trips, special social or cultural events, classes and workshops, and fundraiser events.

1. All suggestions should be made via the AWCH Event/Activity Planning Sheet at least five weeks in advance of the proposed event and submitted to the Activity Chair for board approval.
2. The proposed financial plan must be including in the application.
3. These events should be self-financing. The board can be petitioned to arrange funds to cover some expenses, but this will rarely be granted. One of the AWCH-chosen charities can be designated to receive profits from the event, otherwise excess funds will go into the AWCH current budget.

C. Organizers of our internal groups, clubs, and circles can reserve dates and make announcements in our newsletter and website for their various activities or events. It is the discretion of the organizer to whether club-wide invitations are sent out.

1. The AWCH Event/Activity Planning Sheet must be submitted and board approved obtained if payment for the event goes through the AWCH account.
2. One form can be used for repeating events throughout the year and submitted to the Activities Chair.
3. The responsibility for ensuring self-financing of activities, should no board approval be expressly given for an activity, lies on the organizer/group leader. The activities chair and board can be consulted for advice on financing.

Sec. 2 General Policy for Events and Activities

A. Announcements of Events and Activities

1. AWCH events, activities, meetings will be made known to the club members by magazine, board-administrated e-mail newsletter, e-mail invitations, social media channels and/ or the website.
2. The announcement must include a clear statement with regard to sign-up, payment, and cancellation deadlines and states if a "No Show Fee" will be charged, in the case of free-of-charge events.

B. Registration

1. Registration is open to all members of the AWCH on a first-paid, first-reserved basis. A place is not reserved until the appropriate payment is received.
2. In the case of free-of-charge events with limited space available, a first call basis will be employed. A "No Show Fee" can be charged if cancellation is not made before the sign-up deadline to help ensure that all available slots are utilized. (see Article E: "No Show Policy")
3. Waiting lists will be kept if the need exists.

C. Guests

1. Activities may be open to partners/ husbands and children of members; the organizing team of the event decides if they may be included.
2. Members are welcome to bring guests to AWCH events, activities, and meetings (except AGMs) when space permits after the “members only” sign-up deadline. However no one guest may attend more than two such events annually without applying for membership.

E. No Show Policy

1. All events for which participants must reserve in advance must be paid for in full whether or not the person attends the event.
2. If the cancellation is called in before the sign-up deadline, there will be no charge.
3. The club reserves the right to charge a €10 “No Show Fee” for free-of-charge events. “No Show Fees” will go to the AWCH’s preferred charity.

F. Late cancellations

1. If a person cancels after the sign-up deadline, she need not pay if a confirmed substitute can be found.
2. Substitutes must be taken from the waiting list when one exists; otherwise, the person cancelling may provide her own substitute.
3. When a waiting list exists, the Activity Chair or her representative will give the person cancelling the names and contact information from the waiting list. It is the responsibility of the canceling party to find a substitute; only after confirmation by the substitute is the cancelling party relieved of her financial obligations. When no waiting list exists, the cancelling party is relieved of her obligation to pay for the event only when she locates a substitute and the substitute notifies the Chair or her representative that she will attend in the cancelling party's stead. Persons not following this procedure will be assessed the cost of the event.

G. Failure to pay assessed costs: Membership will not be renewed until all assessed costs have been satisfied.

ARTICLE VIII: CLUB LANGUAGE

A. English is the official club language.

B. German is the secondary language. Any member in a board position or board appointed position who is dealing with German businesses, banks or organizations, and/ or signing contracts written in German on behalf of the AWCH, must have a good working knowledge of German or have a translator present.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS/ CHANGES

A. The guidelines may be amended at any time by a simple fifty percent (50%) majority of the Board of Officers. They are working instructions for the AWCH and up-to-date copies should be made available to members, especially board members. These guidelines and any subsequent changes do not need to be approved by the Hamburg Finanzamt.

B. Members may request changes in the guidelines by presenting a request signed by five (5) AWCH members to the board for consideration. Within 30 days after the next board meeting the board will report its deliberations and decisions to these five members.

C. Rules of Order: The AWCH will be governed firstly by adhering to Deutsches Vereinsrecht (German law for non-profit organizations), secondly by adhering to the AWCH Constitution followed by the AWCH Guidelines, and finally by Roberts Rules of Order.