



Leopoldina
Nationale Akademie
der Wissenschaften

Statutes

On the 5th April 1991, and on the basis of the previous Statutes of 1942, the Senate of the Academy passed Statutes adapted to today's conditions for the scholars' society, which acts in a charitable, non-profit capacity. Some of the passages of these Statutes were modified at the Members' General Assemblies on the 26th April 1993, the 9th April 1995, the 8th December 1998, the 19th October 2003, the 8th December 2009, the 17th September 2015, the 21st September 2018 and the 23rd September 2022. The following version of the Statutes now applies:

§ 1

Name and Seat

The Academy is named »German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina«, and since 2008, it has additionally borne the title »National Academy of Sciences«. It is an international community of scholars that is seated in Halle an der Saale, where it has been registered in the list of associations of the responsible Local Court in Stendal.

Founded in Schweinfurt in 1652, and vested with privileges by Emperor Leopold I in 1687 that were confirmed by Emperor Karl VII in 1742, the Academy is identical with and constitutes the uninterrupted continuation of its predecessor, the »Imperial Leopoldina Carolina German Academy of Natural Scientists«.

§ 2

Nature, purpose and mission

1. The German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina (referred to as the Academy in the following) has traditionally been a mainly natural science and medicine scholars' society. Since German reunification, it has adopted a broader remit in terms of membership and now also addresses scientists from the humanities, the social and behavioural sciences and the engineering sciences.

The Academy's members traditionally come from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. However, thanks to a large number of members outside these countries, it has also become established world-wide.

2. Its mission is that of promoting science in national and international co-operation, traditionally "for the benefit of humankind and nature".

For this purpose, it runs academic events, appoints commissions, and publishes the results obtained. It awards honours and prizes and promotes junior scientists.

With its appointment as National Academy of Sciences, the Leopoldina officially assumes the representation of German scientists in the international committees in which other Academies of Sciences are represented, and it contributes to the science-based consulting of the public and politics. This does not affect the missions or activities of the German Research Foundation, the Max Planck Society or the other members of the alliance.

3. The Academy runs the necessary facilities to pursue these tasks, including its Secretariat, scientific archives and a scientific library.

4. The Academy operates in a charitable capacity. It exclusively pursues immediately non-profit purposes in the sense of the section on “tax-privileged purposes” in the tax code as opposed to profitable activities.

The Academy’s assets may only be used for purposes stipulated in the Statutes. The members receive no subsidies from Academy assets in their role as members. No person may benefit from expenditure that does not serve the Academy’s purpose or from a disproportionately high level of remuneration.

§ 3

Members, honorary members and honorary sponsors

1. Scientists are elected as members who have distinguished themselves by academic achievements of excellence. They are elected by the Presidium, which may be extended for this purpose in accordance with ballot regulations to be passed by the Senate.

All new members are adopted to the Academy as Full Members. They have the duty to actively collaborate with the Academy and enjoy the right of voting and being elected.

Accepting the result of the ballot simultaneously acts as a declaration of membership in the sense of the law of associations.

All persons who are already members when these statutes enter into force and do not feel that they are in a position to actively collaborate may apply for the status of a Corresponding Member. The Presidium rules on the application.

A member may apply to retire from her or his duties for a limited or unlimited period. The Presidium decides on the acceptance of the application. All rights to vote and all duties then expire.

In the event of gross misconduct that is damaging to the Academy’s reputation, a member can be expelled from the Academy. The corresponding procedures are governed by the election regulations.

2. Honorary membership is the greatest honour the Academy awards to members who have distinguished themselves by their Academy and academic achievements. They have a seat and a consultative voice in the Senate.
3. The Academy declares non-members honorary sponsors in honour of their having demonstrated special achievements in their areas of activity and having promoted the development of the Academy to a considerable degree.

§ 4

Sections, classes and district circles

The members of belong, on the one hand, to the section relevant to their subject and on the other, in Austria and Switzerland, to the respective district circle. Additionally, each section is assigned to a class.

The members of the sections, classes and districts elect their spokespersons (Section representatives, Class spokespersons, Regional head).

Details on structuring in accordance with Clause 1 and the members’ belonging to a section, class and district circle are stipulated in regulations to be approved by the Senate.

§ 5

Organs

The Academy’s organs are the Executive Board, the Presidium, the Senate, the Members’ General Assembly and the Secretary General as special representative of the registered association.

Unless regulated by a separate clause in the Statutes, the activities of the organs are carried out in an honorary capacity.

§ 6

Executive Board, Presidium and Secretary General

1. The President and the Vice-Presidents form the executive board in the legal sense. Legally binding statements require the participation of two executive board members.
2. The Presidium consists of the President, up to four Vice-Presidents, four Secretaries and up to three further members. The members of the Presidium are elected by the Senate with a simple majority in a secret written ballot. The period in office of the members of the Presidium is five years. Re-election is permitted once. The members of the Presidium remain temporarily in office until their successors have been elected.
3. The President heads the Academy's affairs. She/he chairs the meetings of the Executive Board, the Presidium and the Senate as well as the Members' General Assembly. The presidential office can be exercised on a full-time basis. With the responsible Federal Ministry's consent, the employment contract will usually be signed by the office-holding president and another member of the Presidium. By decision of the Presidium, and with approval of the funding bodies, an appropriate expense allowance can be paid to those members of the Executive Board who act in an honorary capacity.
4. The Secretary General, who works as a salaried employee, is appointed by the Executive Board on the recommendation of the President. She/he supports the Presidium in heading the Academy's affairs and attends meetings of the Executive Board and the Presidium with a consultative voice. The Secretary General is a special representative within the meaning of § 30 BGB and is authorised to deal with all economic, administrative and personnel matters of the Academy. She/he is bound by the resolutions of the Academy's organs in the performance of her/his activities.

§ 7

Senate

1. The Senate comprises
 - a) a representative for each section;
 - b) one Regional head from Austria and one from Switzerland;
 - c) up to ten further persons with whom the Senate can be supplemented by additional balloting who do not have to be Academy members.

The Senators referred to in a) and b) can be represented in the Senate meetings by elected deputies.

The Senate represents the members in the Presidium and acts as its advisory committee. It elects the members of the Presidium and the honorary members, reviews the accountability report of the Executive Board and decides on its discharge. It approves the election regulations for members, section representatives, Class spokespersons, Regional heads, the Senators and their deputies, the Presidium and the structural regulations for the sections, classes and districts and rules on the expulsion of members.

2. The meetings of the Senate are announced and headed by the President or her or his Deputy, and the members of the Presidium attend the meetings with a consultative voice. Decisions made by the Senate can also be obtained in written form. Minutes are to be written of the decisions made by the Senate and are to be signed by the President and a further member of the Presidium.
3. The Senate decides on the award of Academy honours.

§ 8

Members' General Assembly

1. The members meet in the Members' General Assembly according to the need to do so as stipulated by law or the Statutes. The President is required to invite members to the General Assembly, stating the agenda, and with at least four weeks' notice.

2. Each Members' General Assembly that has been correctly announced is qualified to decide by vote. Decisions on applications are taken with a simple majority, unless required otherwise by the Statutes.
3. Participation in the Members' General Assembly is also possible without being present at the place of the meeting, provided that the exercise of members' rights is ensured by means of electronic communication.
4. Minutes are to be written of the Members' General Assembly and its resolutions that are to be signed by the President and countersigned by another member of the Presidium.

§ 9

Secretariat

The Secretariat handles the Academy's day-to-day affairs and supports its organs. It is headed by the Secretary General. Details are specified in the rules and regulations for the Presidium.

§ 10

Alterations of the Statutes

Alterations of the Statutes have to be prepared and adopted by the Senate. They require a three-quarter majority of the members attending the Members' General Assembly.

§ 11

Dissolution of the Academy

1. The dissolution of the Academy can only be resolved by an extraordinary Members' General Assembly specially announced for this purpose with a majority of two thirds of all members, the votes of whom can also be obtained in written form.
2. In the case of the dissolution or the suspension of the Academy or in the event of its existing purposes being annulled, the assets of the Academy go to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which is required to use them immediately and exclusively for non-profit purposes.