



**Guidelines for the appropriate governance of the  
IPA Freedom to Publish Committee (FtPC)**  
(Revised 14 October 2021)

**1. The International Publishers Association (IPA)**

The IPA is a federation of national, regional and specialist publishers' associations. Its membership comprises organisations from countries in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe and the Americas. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, the IPA represents the interests of the publishing industry in international fora and wherever publishers' interests are at stake.

**2. The Guidelines**

2.1 The present Guidelines were adopted by the IPA General Assembly on 11 April, 2016, and may be amended by the General Assembly pursuant to the Statutes article 25.

2.2 The Guidelines are coherent with the Statutes of the IPA. In case of a conflict between the Statutes and the Guidelines, the Statutes shall prevail.

**3. Constitution**

3.1 The Freedom to Publish Committee shall consist of nine (9) members. Candidates must be nominated by a Full Member, and Full Members may only nominate one candidate for the FtPC. Nominations must be sent to the IPA President, in writing. The nominating Full Member must be in good standing at the time of nomination.

3.2 Full Members of the IPA in good standing may nominate a candidate for the Freedom to Publish Committee by providing the nominee's CV and outlining his/her prior activities in and commitment to the field of Freedom of Expression. The composition of the Freedom to Publish Committee should be balanced in terms of publishing experience, regional representation and gender.

3.3 The Freedom to Publish Committee members shall be appointed for two (2) years by the General Assembly by majority vote, cf. articles 23 and 24 of the IPA Statutes. Only member organizations entitled to vote at the commencement of the General Assembly may vote. Any member organization is permitted to request to watch the counting of votes. Where secret ballots are cast, the result must be recorded and published fully in the Minutes of the General Assembly, including invalid ballots, votes pro, opposing votes and abstentions.

3.4 In order to maintain continuity, at the election in 2016, five (5) members shall be elected for three (3) years. Members of the Freedom to Publish Committee may be reelected.

3.5 The Chair of the Freedom to Publish Committee shall recommend to the General Assembly the replacement of a member of the Freedom to Publish Committee who neglects active participation and/or does not respond to requests for cooperation and/or resigns and/or is unable to serve. The replacement shall serve out the term of the replaced member.

#### **4. Tasks**

4.1 The Freedom to Publish Committee is a Permanent Committee within the IPA framework (Article 11a), and shall enjoy necessary administrative support from the IPA Secretariat. The main objective of the Freedom to Publish Committee is that Freedom to Publish is respected and promoted by all member organizations of the IPA and by the IPA itself. Freedom to Publish is closely connected to the universal human right of the individual to freedom of expression, as defined by the United Nations in Art. 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Freedom to Publish Committee shall ensure that all member organizations of IPA endeavour to uphold and defend the right of publishers to publish and distribute the works of the mind in complete freedom, provided that in so doing they respect all legal rights attached to these works within their own countries and internationally. It is the duty of the Association to oppose steadfastly any attempt or threat to restrict that freedom.

4.2 As a statutory body of the IPA, the Freedom to Publish Committee may make public statements on individual cases of violation of or threat to Freedom to Publish without requiring the agreement of other bodies or officers of the Association. It will inform the Secretariat prior to publication. The role of drafting such statements and informing the Secretariat may be delegated to the Freedom to Publish Committee Chair, who may request the support of the Secretariat. Where the Freedom to Publish Committee or its Chair (as the case may be), has informed the Secretariat of any imminent public statement of this kind, the Secretary General may request the advice of the Executive Committee on the desirability and timing of the publication of such a proposed position that, in the opinion of the Secretary General, could be seriously detrimental to the best interests of the IPA. Should the Executive Committee's view on the desirability of such a public position differ from that of the Freedom to Publish Committee, the Executive Committee may by a 2/3 majority require the delay of the publication of this position by the Freedom to Publish Committee, either for a specified time period or for an unspecified period, provided that a delay for an unspecified time period will only be, at most, until the next General Assembly.

4.3 The Freedom to Publish Committee shall develop and, from time to time, review an IPA Manifesto on Freedom to Publish in consultation with the Executive Committee. This document should be published on the IPA website and generally promoted by IPA in the Freedom to Publish context.

4.4 The Freedom to Publish Committee is responsible for awarding the annual IPA Freedom to Publish Prize, which was renamed the *IPA Prix Voltaire* in 2016. It shall collect information on possible candidates, accept nominations and determine the recipient according to a set of criteria previously determined by the Committee.

4.5 The Freedom to Publish Committee should conduct fact-finding missions in order to inform its decisions and report to the IPA on the situation concerning Freedom to Publish in the relevant territories.

4.6 If – e.g. during the *IPA Prix Voltaire* procedures – confidential information regarding the activities of prize candidates or other individuals is to be shared inside the Freedom to Publish Committee, members are under a strict obligation to keep this information completely confidential.

4.7 The Chair of the Freedom to Publish Committee has a general responsibility to ensure by appropriate measures that the activities of the Committee do not put individuals at any additional risk. Such measures

may include, if necessary, withholding confidential information concerning the activities, whereabouts or other circumstances of vulnerable individuals, including from members of the IPA or the Committee itself. The Chair may ask members of the Freedom to Publish Committee to absent themselves from Committee discussions where a majority of the Committee members present agree that a conflict of interest exists. The Chair may also ask observers to absent themselves during parts of the meeting. If it is the Chair who creates a conflict of interest, then the Chair shall absent him/herself and a Deputy Chair shall be elected by the remaining Committee members and empowered to continue the discussion and deliberations. Where a vote is required, a majority vote of the presiding Committee shall prevail. The Chair or Deputy Chair shall have a normal vote and an extra casting vote in case of ties.

4.8 The Freedom to Publish Committee may request information on Freedom to Publish matters from the Executive Committee, the administration of IPA, or member organizations of the IPA.

4.9 The Freedom to Publish Committee may arrange open meetings for all members and should do so at least once a year. The Freedom to Publish Committee Chair may invite guests to contribute specific expertise to a meeting of the Freedom to Publish Committee as and when required. Their presence may be restricted to non-confidential discussions.

## **5. Budget**

5.1 The Freedom to Publish Committee shall apply to the Executive Committee for an annual budget which reasonably reflects the role of Freedom to Publish as an Object of the Association and takes account of the overall budgetary constraints of the IPA and enables the Freedom to Publish Committee to fulfil its tasks adequately. The Executive Committee, when examining the application and recommending the approval of the budget, pursuant to the IPA Statutes, Article 16, no. 1, lit. *i*, shall disclose the budget allocated to the Freedom to Publish Committee.

5.2 The Freedom to Publish Committee shall report to the General Assembly and the Executive Committee on how the allocated funds are spent.

## **6. Voting and decisions**

6.1 A decision by the Freedom to Publish Committee requires a majority of the votes of its members. All members, including the chair, who were entitled to vote at the commencement of a meeting may vote during the meeting. In case of a split decision, the Chair of the Freedom to Publish Committee has a second, casting vote.

6.2 A quorum shall consist of five (5) members of the Freedom to Publish Committee who can vote.

6.3 No member organization is entitled to vote on a decision directly concerning the same member organization and/or Freedom to Publish matters regarding the state in which it is established.

6.4 The meetings of the Freedom to Publish Committee shall be minuted. Minutes are to be made available upon written request by any IPA member organization. Sections of the minutes containing confidential information or information which could put individuals (e.g. Freedom to Publish Prize candidates) at risk may be withheld in accordance with points 4.6 and 4.7, above.