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1. OBJECTIVES


Within the above overall purpose the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) will have the following specific objectives:

- a. To promote legitimate interests of the Indian community as a whole and of specific groups resident in particular countries.
- b. To promote the common cultural heritage of India abroad.
- c. To mobilize professional, financial and intellectual resources of the community of Indians abroad for their mutual advancement and for the development of their country of origin and the country of their residence.
- d. To organize interaction between communities of Indians abroad on a global level to deliberate and decide on common issues and problems facing them, including assimilation and adaptation within the host society.
- e. To provide a forum at periodical intervals to discuss, debate and decide on common problems and issues facing groups of Indians abroad and initiate measures to redress their grievances.
- f. To disseminate regularly information on global, regional and national developments affecting Indian community abroad as a whole or substantial parts thereof.
- g. To further the interaction between Indian people and other communities at global level in promoting world peace, progress and ecological harmony.
- h. To develop channels of communication between groups of Indians resident in different countries and between them and India.
- i. To raise funds through contributions and other means on regular basis and at special occasions for promoting social and cultural activities at a global level as well for the relief and rehabilitation of groups of Indians affected by natural and other calamities.
- j. To constitute Think Tanks and Task Forces of Indians abroad on particular issues of interest to the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) or to India.

2. DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES PERMEATING GOPIO

The directive principles which should permeate all structures and work of GOPIO are:

- a. GOPIO should address problems and issues of the community and refrain from involvement with individual complaints and/or political parties.
- b. No one country should dominate the decision-making process in GOPIO. Besides GOPIO Chapters and Councils, other organizations should be provided access to bring common problems and issues of mutual interest before GOPIO.

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- c. There is a need for flexibility and an experimental approach in view of different status of development of organizations of Indians in various countries.
- d. GOPIO organizational structure should encourage wider participation while ensuring responsible decision-making by representative institutions where possible.
- e. The principles of GOPIO shall be applied uniformly and universally.
- f. Books and financial records of GOPIO, including those of Councils, shall be kept for up to seven years. They would be made available to members of GOPIO upon request and on payment of expenses for photocopying, handling and postage.

3. ACTIVITIES OF GOPIO

In realization of objectives of GOPIO, GOPIO will engage in the following types of activities:


- a. Conduct campaigns in media and with other organizations to focus attention on specific problems affecting community of Indians abroad.
- b. Act as an advocacy group in support of causes of people of Indian origin.
- c. Undertake regular and periodical publication activity.
- d. Raise funds for specific activities of GOPIO.
- e. Undertake studies or commission studies on specific problems and issues affecting Indians abroad.
- f. Act as a liaison between groups of Indians in specific countries and national governments, Government of India and international organizations in realization of the objectives of GOPIO.

4. STRUCTURE

4.1 GOPIO shall have a five tier structure:

- a. International Council
- b. Executive Council
- c. Board of Advisors
- d. National Council
- e. GOPIO Foundation

4.2 COUNCILS: For specific activities, there will also be a Human Rights Council, a Business Council, a Cultural Council, an Academic Council, a Health Services Council, a Youth Council, a Women's Council, a Media Council, and a Science & Technology Council.


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4.3 GLOBAL CONVENTION: GOPIO will organize once in every two years, a Global Convention of People of Indian Origin, at a place and time decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the Chairman of GOPIO.

- a. Person of Indian Origin (PIO) shall be a person who is a citizen of a country other than India. Non-Resident Indian (NRI) is a citizen of India residing in another country.
- b. The Global Convention will provide a platform for exchange of ideas and experiences for People of Indian Origin from different parts of the world. It may adopt resolutions expressing support or concern of People of Indian origin on issues which interest them. It will make recommendations to the Executive Council of GOPIO on issues which require further study, action or GOPIO commitment.
- c. It will be GOPIO policy to encourage broad participation in GOPIO Conventions. All organizations of people of Indian origin whose objectives and principles are consistent with objectives and principles of GOPIO will be eligible for participation in GOPIO Conventions.
- d. The meetings of the Global Convention will be presided over by the International Chairman of GOPIO and in his/her absence by the President of GOPIO. The Agenda for the Global Convention will be prepared by the Executive Council in consultation with the International Chairman of GOPIO. It will be open to any participating member organization to suggest items on the agenda for discussion at Global Conventions.
- e. All participants of the Global convention will pay their own travel and other expenses, save in exceptional cases where the Executive Council may decide otherwise.
- f. Elections shall be held in accordance with provisions noted in section 11 herein under.

4.4 INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL: It shall be the main policymaking body of GOPIO. It is the organ which will elect the International President, Executive and senior Vice Presidents. It will also ratify the recommendations of the Executive Council for the positions in Board of Advisors, GOPIO Philanthropic Foundation and the chairpersons of all other Councils.

- a. The International Council shall be chaired by the International Chairman. The International Council will discuss and approve annual budget and accounts prepared by the Executive Council.
- b. It will be responsible for giving shape to the guidelines given by the Global Convention and will direct the Executive Council to take appropriate action to implement various resolutions passed by the Global Convention.
- c. It will meet once annually and at other times as and when decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the International Chairman.
- d. It shall have a maximum of 120 Delegates. Two-thirds of the delegates will be from the Chapters and one-third from the Life Members. 80 delegates shall be from chapters to represent the International Council and 40 delegates shall be elected from Life Members.


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This amendment shall be applicable four (4) years after its approval by the International Council.

4.5 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: The Executive Council shall be responsible for the ongoing work of GOPIO between the meetings of the Global Conventions. It will execute all decisions of the Global Convention and prepare for all meetings of the Global Convention.

- a. The Executive Council shall consist of the International President, Executive Vice-President, Senior Vice President and nine International Coordinators, one from each of the following regions:
 - i. Oceania and the Pacific
 - ii. North America
 - iii. Central and South America
 - iv. The Caribbean
 - v. Europe
 - vi. Africa
 - vii. Middle East
 - viii. South Asia
 - ix. South East Asia
- b. The International Chairman will be ex-officio member of the Executive Council.
- c. The candidates for the executive council, such as Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President and International Coordinators shall be Permanent Residents of their respective overseas countries except India for at least five years or Citizen of overseas country.
- d. All members of the Executive Council shall be elected as per GOPIO By-laws. However, candidates for the position of International President must have held an elected position at the international level for at least one full term and shall be a Person of Indian Origin (PIO).
- e. Individuals cannot be elected or appointed to the same position more than two (2) times.
- f. In the composition of the Executive Council, countries with NRI/PIO population exceeding 3,000,000 may have up to 3 positions.
- g. The Executive Council will report to the International Council at the Global Convention on the activities of GOPIO International. The Executive Council shall meet at least once a year or as needed.
- h. The Executive Council shall prepare annual budgets and accounts and present to the International Council for approval.

4.6 BOARD OF ADVISORS: It shall have an advisory role and its membership shall represent “Who’s Who” of the Indian Diaspora who are committed to the ideals of GOPIO. It will have members nominated and approved by the Executive Council from among the GOPIO members and eminent

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political and civic leaders, diplomats, persons of art & letters, and philanthropists, etc. The Immediate Past Chairman of GOPIO International shall coordinate its activities.

5. NAME AND PURPOSE

The Global Organization of People of Indian origin (abbreviated as GOPIO) is a secular, nonpartisan, non-sectarian, not-for-profit global organization engaged in prompting wellbeing of non resident Indians and people of Indian origin enhancing cooperation and communication between groups of Indians living in different countries and in furthering their cooperation with India.

6. GOPIO OFFICERS: Officers of the Organization shall be:

- a. International Chairman shall be the head of the organization. He/she will preside over the meetings of the Global Convention and International Council. He/she will provide overall leadership to GOPIO Conventions, International Council, and help the Executive Council in convening GOPIO Conventions and meetings of the International Council. He/she will be an ex-officio member of the Executive Council. He/she will be consulted by the President of GOPIO on all important matters.
- b. The outgoing International President shall assume the office of International Chairman of GOPIO subject to endorsement by the majority of International Council members present and voting.
- c. International President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the organization. He/she will be responsible for planning and execution of programs and activities of GOPIO and liaison with other organizations engaged in similar activities. He/she will present state of the organization reports to the Global Convention and the International Council. He/she will represent GOPIO to the third parties in accordance with GOPIO policies. He/she will lead all deputations and delegations of which he/she is a member. In the absence of the chairman he/she will preside over the meetings of the Global Convention. He/she will consult the Chairman on all important matters and keep the Chairman fully informed about the activities of GOPIO. The candidate for the position of president must have served for at least one full term in the Executive Council.
- d. The Executive Vice President will perform all functions of the President in his/her absence. He/she will be responsible for preparing and presenting financial reports to the meetings of the Executive. He/She shall have administrative duties such as supervision of various Secretaries, Treasurers, Auditors and Councils. The candidates for the position of Executive Vice President must have served for at least one full term as Vice President or International/National/Area Coordinator.
- e. Senior Vice President shall be directly elected by the International Council. He/she shall be in charge of Chapters and other responsibilities assigned by the International President. The candidates for the position of Senior Vice President must have served for at least one full term as Vice President or International/National/Area Coordinator.

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- f. Executive Trustee of GOPIO Foundation will be ex-officio member of the Executive Council as defined in clause 12g.
- g. International (Regional) Coordinators are elected by the delegates in the region provided there are ten delegates with five chapters delegates in “good standing”, otherwise, shall be appointed by the Executive Council.
- h. **Chief of Board of Advisors:** To ensure stability and continuity within the organization, the outgoing International Chairman of GOPIO, after a two-year term, shall become the Chief Advisor of the Board of Advisors, subject to endorsement of majority of Executive Council present and voting.

7. NATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL

- a. Each country with five (5) chapters in good standing shall have a National Coordinating Council. Membership to the National Coordinating Council is limited to Chapter Presidents and the Area Coordinators in that Country while the International Coordinator for that Region shall be an Ex-Officio member of the respective National Coordinating Council.
 - b. **NATIONAL COORDINATORS:** For each country having at least ten (10) chapters in good standing there shall be a National Coordinating Council headed by a National Coordinator appointed by the Executive Council in consultation with the Chapter Presidents and Regional Coordinator for that region.
 - c. **AREA COORDINATORS:** Area Coordinators can be appointed by the International Coordinator in a Country where there are more than five (5) chapters to coordinate the work of at least 4 Chapters. This is intended to encourage the Area and National Coordinators to expand GOPIO’s reach among the Diaspora.
 - d. **CHAPTER PRESIDENTS:** Each Chapter shall elect its own Executive Committee consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant/Joint Secretary and Treasurer. A Chapter must have at least 15 members.
8. **EXECUTIVE TRUSTEE OF GOPIO FOUNDATION:** The Board of Advisors Coordinator after two-year term shall become the Executive Trustee of the GOPIO Foundation subject to a majority of assenting vote by the Executive Council members present and voting.
9. **GENERAL:** The Executive Council must ensure that all candidates for the positions of National Coordinators and above are Life Members of the GOPIO International and are qualified to hold office under the legal stipulations of “non-profit organizations,” Tax Regulations and Banking Laws as applicable.


10. APPOINTED OFFICERS

- a. **SECRETARY:** There can be more than one secretary to serve the needs of the organization at the discretion of the Executive Council depending upon various functions. The Executive

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Council shall design a Job Description for each position. These appointments shall be duly ratified by the two-thirds of the majority of the Executive Council present & voting.

- i. The Secretary shall record and distribute minutes of the meetings to the appropriate members within one month of the date of the meeting to which the minutes pertain; shall mail or e-mail agenda and all other types of communication to the appropriate members; shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the president for the functioning of GOPIO. The number of secretaries shall be determined by the president of GOPIO International in consultation with the Executive Council. One of the secretaries shall be the historian of GOPIO.
- b. **TREASURER:** There can be more than one Treasurer to serve the needs of the organization at the discretion of the Executive Council depending upon various functions. The Executive Council shall design a Job Description for each position. These appointments shall be duly ratified by the two-thirds of the majority of the Executive Council present & voting.
 - i. The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of all funds belonging to the organization and shall be solely responsible for such funds or securities of the organization. The Treasurer shall cause to be deposited in a regular business bank or trust company all the funds of the organization except that the Board of Directors may cause such funds to be invested in such investments as shall be legal for a non-profit corporation in this state.
 - ii. The treasurer shall maintain full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements of funds, and shall give quarterly or as required render written reports of the finances of the organization and such reports shall be physically affixed to the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee/General body. The Treasurer shall exercise all duties incident to the office of Treasurer.
- c. **INTERNAL AUDITOR:** There can be more than one Internal Auditors to serve the needs of the organization at the discretion of the International President depending upon various functions. Executive Council shall design a Job Description for each position. These appointments shall be duly ratified by the two-thirds of the majority of the Executive Council present & voting.
- d. **COUNCIL CHAIRS & CO-CHAIRS:** Each Council Chair shall be appointed by the International President in consultation with the International Chairman and after duly ratified by the Executive Council by the two-thirds of the majority of the Executive Council present & voting. Chair and Co-Chair of the same council should be from different countries as far as possible. Co-chairs should be appointed by International President at the recommendation of Chapter Presidents/Area Coordinators/National Coordinators and the respective Council Chair.
- e. **COMMITTEES:** Each new committee and its committee members shall be appointed by the International President in consultation with the International Chairman and for specific purpose, with assigned responsibilities and for duration as appropriate. The appointments, before being made, shall be duly ratified by the two-thirds of the majority of the Executive Council present by voting.

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11. ELECTION COMMITTEE AND ELECTION PROCEDURE

- a. The election of the GOPIO Executive Council shall be conducted during the biennial meeting of the International Council in accordance with the GOPIO By-laws.
- b. The Executive Council shall appoint a nomination/election committee consisting of three members of the Executive Council and/or past Presidents, who are not themselves candidates for any elective position for the current election or from among any other individuals of outstanding merit. These three members shall elect a chairperson of the committee.
- c. The nomination/election committee shall invite nominations by electronic mail from eligible delegates.
- d. An eligible delegate is either an active life member (attended a GOPIO International function in the preceding 3 years) of GOPIO International or an authorized representative of a GOPIO chapter in good standing (refer clause 20b).
- e. All nominations shall be submitted in writing on the prescribed form duly signed and accepted by the nominee at least 30 days prior to the biennial meeting of the International Council.
- f. Withdrawal of nominations must be received in writing at least 20 days prior to the biennial meeting of the General Council.
- g. The nomination/election committee shall compile a list of all nominations and announce at least 15 days prior to the biennial election.
- h. A nominee shall contest election for only one elected office in this election.
- i. Nomination from the floor shall be permitted only if there is no previously nominated candidate for a specific office by the prescribed deadline.
- j. The nomination/election committee shall be responsible for conducting the elections by e-mail or in person as determined by the International Council.
- k. The person receiving the majority of votes for a designated position shall be declared winner. However, in terms of President and Executive Vice President, the persons cannot be from the same country or a region. Therefore, if both President and Executive VP candidates elected are from the same region, the Election Committee will invalidate the election of the Executive Vice President and the person getting the next highest votes from another region will be declared as elected.
- l. In the event no candidate receives majority vote (50% plus one of those present for voting), the top two candidates shall face a run-off election on the same day.
- m. The name of the chapter delegate(s) shall be submitted by the chapter president through the National coordinator 60 days prior to the election.


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- n. In the absence of any designated chapter delegate at the time of elections, only the chapter president shall be eligible to vote in place of the designated delegate.
- o. The elections shall be conducted according to the Protocol approved by the Executive Council before each election. The protocol shall be in accord with these by-laws.
- p. Electronic mail shall be the preferred mode for communication.
- q. The decision of the nomination/election committee shall be final and binding. Any such decision can be challenged within 60 days at the International Council meeting after the end of the convention at which the elections were conducted. The International Council is empowered to overrule the decision of the nomination/election committee, provided at least half of its total members vote to do so by mail, E-mail or in person.


12. GOPIO INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

- a. The GOPIO Foundation shall act in an advisory capacity to the Executive Council. The Foundation shall be responsible for the coordination of raising, managing and disbursing funds collected for charitable and educational causes in India as well as in other parts of the world.
- b. The Foundation shall be composed of 8 voting members, called trustees excluding the GOPIO President, chairman and the treasurer who will be ex-officio members. Every year, the executive committee will appoint one half of the Foundation members for a term of two years. The Trustees will be responsible for all the Foundation activities and will provide a yearly report to the Executive Council of all its activities.
- c. Except for ex-officio members, a voting member of executive council shall not be a voting member of the Foundation and vice versa. If a person is elected or appointed as a voting member of both these bodies, he/she shall have to relinquish one of the positions.
- d. The Foundation shall meet as deemed necessary. The notice of the Foundation meeting and the quorum required shall be the same as that of the Executive Council. The Foundation Trustees can make a decision to distribute up to \$5,000 to a charity. However, any amount above \$5,000 has to be pre-approved by the Executive Council. The limit of disbursement by the Foundation Trustees can be raised by a decision of Executive Council.
- e. An annual report of its activities and a financial report of the Foundation shall be submitted by the Executive Trustee to the Executive Council.
- f. The Executive Director of the Foundation: The immediate past Coordinator of the Board of Advisors shall become the Executive Trustee after due ratification by the Executive Council.
- g. The Executive Trustee shall be member of the Executive Council and will also perform any other duties as assigned by the Executive Council.

13. GOPIO COUNCILS: GOPIO Councils shall be established by GOPIO International Council at the recommendation of the Executive Council to serve the diverse interests of the global Indian community. Refer to Appendix II: "GOPIO Councils".

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- 14. TERM:** The term of all officials shall be a maximum of two (2) years duration with re-appointment to the same office for a maximum of one (1) more term. The term of all appointees shall terminate with the election of the new Executive Council.
- 15. IMPEACHMENT:** The officials of the GOPIO can be impeached by the International Council for misdemeanor and for gross and willful violation of GOPIO constitution. Impeachment proceedings can be initiated by the Executive Council or at least five members of the International Council. The office-bearer concerned will be provided a written statement of the charges against him/her and given thirty days to reply to the charges. The impeachment charges and replies from the person charged will be circulated to all members of the International Council at least 30 days before the meeting of the International Council at which they are to be discussed. Impeachment decision can be made only with the three-fourth (3/4) majority of the International Council present and voting in a meeting with prior notice concerning this agenda item.
- 16. PATRONS:** Persons who have made outstanding contributions to the cause of GOPIO may be honored as Patrons. All patrons will be invited to Global Conventions and will be kept informed about the activities of GOPIO.
- 17. AMENDMENTS:** Amendments to these By-Laws shall be made only with the approval of the two-third (2/3) majority of the members of the International Council present and voting. The amendments may be initiated by the Executive Council or by five voting members of the Executive Council acting together. If the amendments are initiated by five voting members, then the members concerned shall send them in writing to the Executive Committee Council at least 30 days in advance of the Council meeting at which they are to be considered. Whether the amendments originate with the voting members or the Executive Council, the Executive Council shall circulate them to the members of the Council along with their own recommendations at least 15 days in advance of the International Council meeting at which they are to be considered.
- 18. SEAL:** The Executive Council shall provide a seal for the purpose of the Council and shall determine the manner in which it shall be used.
- 19. OFFICER YEAR:** The officer year of the GOPIO shall be the same as the calendar year.
- 20. HEADQUARTERS OF GOPIO:** The headquarters and the location of the other organs of GOPIO will be decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the GOPIO Chairman.
- a. **QUORUM:** Quorum for taking decisions by the International Council shall be 20% of its membership plus one and for Executive Council shall be 50% plus one. Membership includes registered delegates and active life members.
 - b. Any life member who has participated in any scheduled GOPIO activity during the preceding three (3) years, at any function or event organized at the international level, is deemed an active member.
- 21. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:** English will be the official language of GOPIO.

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22. DISSOLUTION: The GOPIO may be dissolved with the approval of the three-fourths majority of the Executive Council members present and voting at an extra-ordinary meeting specially called for this purpose. In the case of dissolution, the Executive Committee shall donate the net assets of the GOPIO to an organization whose objectives are similar to the objectives of GOPIO. In case of dissolution of any defunct GOPIO chapter, all assets and funds in the bank account shall be transferred to a nearest GOPIO chapter of good standing in consultation with Immediate Reporting Officer (Area/National/International Coordinator).

23. POLITICAL AFFILIATION: No official of GOPIO shall hold an elected political or partisan office.

24. GOPIO INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP: GOPIO membership shall be divided into four classes as follows:

- I. Life Members
- II. Associate Members
- III. Affiliates – Associations/Organizations
- IV. Honorary Members


I. LIFE MEMBERS: Chapters are encouraged to enroll Life Members for GOPIO International.

- a. If the life membership is originated by the chapter, GOPIO International shall pay 20% of life membership fee to the chapter in good standing chosen by the life member. If the life membership is not originated by the chapter, GOPIO International shall pay 15% of life membership fee to the chapter of good standing chosen by the life member. Same rule applies to Associate Membership.
- b. Life membership fee is decided by the Executive Council. The current rate is US\$1500 (Silver), US\$2500 (Gold) and US\$5000 (Platinum) for developed countries and one-half for developing countries.

II. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: GOPIO chapter members who accept positions at international level either have to be life member of GOPIO International or become Associate International Members. Associate Members shall be entitled to all the privileges of life membership as long as they continue to pay annual membership fee of US\$150.

III. Affiliation means and include any overseas Indian Association/Organization that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- a. the organization has been in operation for at least one year;
- b. has adopted and functions under a duly written constitution and/or By-laws;
- c. elects its officers at regularly held meetings as laid down in its Constitution/By-laws;
- d. is a "Not for Profit" organization;
- e. subscribes to the objectives of the GOPIO By-laws;
- f. has a minimum of 15 members;
- g. agrees to pay annual GOPIO affiliation fee of \$100 as required from GOPIO chapters, refer Appendix I, C-vii;
- h. annual affiliation fee payable at the beginning of the affiliation;
- i. affiliation is subject to approval by the GOPIO International Executive Council.

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IV. HONORARY MEMBERSHIP: An individual who has distinguished himself/herself in any artistic, scientific, educational or humanitarian activities by rendering outstanding services to the Indian Diaspora shall be invited to join GOPIO as an Honorary Member if there is a unanimous decision of the Executive Council. Honorary Members shall be exempt from all dues, but shall be entitled to all privileges of membership except the right to hold elected office or vote in an election of officers.

25. AWARDS: Awards shall be in compliance with GOPIO International Community Service Awards (CSA) criteria and shall be approved by the Executive Council/Awards Committee in advance. The Community Service Awards (CSA) criteria can be modified by the Executive Council as becomes necessary. In addition, special awards may be given as per the approval of Executive Council.

APPENDIX – I

GOPIO CHAPTERS


GOPIO would facilitate city, regional and national chapter development for a global network of all NRIs/PIOs. To achieve that objective, GOPIO would encourage opening of chapters everywhere, instilling a culture of service among the NRIs/PIOs worldwide and making GOPIO as an international service organization.

A. STARTING A CHAPTER

- i. There must not be a GOPIO Chapter within a 10 mile radius of your local area unless it is in another state, or the NRI/PIO population demographics dictate otherwise. Area Coordinator, National Coordinator or the International Coordinator shall guide the new chapter as per documented By-laws, Policies and Procedures.

B. THE PROCESS OF STARTING A CHAPTER

- i. Any five people of Indian Origin (PIOs/NRIs) of like-minded nature can initiate formation of a GOPIO Chapter by submitting a Letter of Intent (Form G/FRM/304) to the Area Coordinator/National Coordinator/International Coordinator or GOPIO International.
- ii. On receipt of Letter of Intent (LOI), the Area Coordinator/National Coordinator/International Coordinator or GOPIO International shall officially authorize the formation of the Chapter.
- iii. The Chapter shall be fully functional after the authorization and should strive to expand its membership to 10 members in six months after formation and 15 members in 1st year after formation (minimum number of members for a chapter).
- iv. Use GOPIO Bylaws, policies and procedures on chapter functioning to elect officers.
- v. Chapter incorporation, under the laws of the country, if needed. Also, obtain tax exempt status, if needed.
- vi. Chapter progress is formally reviewed by the Area Coordinator/National Coordinator /International Coordinator, approximately 3 months after organization of the chapter to

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ensure that the new chapter has met all obligations of local laws and has increased membership to a minimum of fifteen in one year.


- vii. For the sake of uniformity, the chapter will be named with a city and area only after the word “GOPIO,” e.g., GOPIO Los Angeles South-West. In cases of a large metropolitan area, there can be multiple chapters within that metropolitan area with chapter names of that city identified with suffix of specific areas such as North, South, South-East, or West. There shall be clearly defined areas of operation for each such chapter even within ten (10) mile radius without territorial conflicts.

C. CHAPTER OFFICIALS AND WORKING DETAILS

- i. Each GOPIO Chapter will elect an Executive Committee consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and other committee members for a term of two years. No individual can hold the same office for more than two terms. National Coordinator is allowed to make exceptions on terms of Chapter Officers in the interest of the organization.
- ii. GOPIO chapters need to maintain change, continuity and challenge as a hallmark for GOPIO chapter formation.
- iii. **Change:** Change should bring in new volunteers into position of organizational responsibility. Encourage people to move up the ladder in the organization.
- iv. **Continuity:** Experience gained at one position is used at the next level.
- v. **Challenge:** The new position should present leadership challenge to the holder, particularly when one moves to the position of president. Also, it should be a challenge for the new and less experienced in the organization to learn more and take more challenging volunteering responsibilities.
- vi. No two (2) members of the chapter Executive Committee shall be blood relatives that include spouses.
- vii. **Chapter Membership Fee:** Individual members in a chapter will pay an annual fee prescribed by the chapter Executive Committee. The chapter shall remit \$100 on an annual basis to GOPIO International.
- viii. If there are multiple chapters in a country, the fee should be decided by the chapter presidents in consultation with the National Coordinator.
- ix. Membership fees shall be uniform for all chapters in a country.

D. A GOOD STANDING CHAPTER

- a. A chapter is deemed to be in Good Standing, if it:

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- i. Follows GOPIO International By-laws, Policies and Procedures as they relate to chapters.
- ii. Participates in all GOPIO wide projects, committee(s) and Councils.
- iii. Communicates all GOPIO issues to GOPIO International through the Area/ National/International Coordinators and to local membership.
- iv. Has an elected and structured Executive Committee and holds regular meetings at least quarterly. The GOPIO chapters may have different starting dates for their respective terms as per chapter's commencement dates. If the Executive Committee has failed to conduct election of new officers at the expiration of the two year term. National Coordinator/International Coordinator in consultation with GOPIO International President can appoint an ad-hoc president for up to three months during which new executive committee shall be elected.
- v. Sends Activity Report to Immediate Reporting Officer/GOPIO Int'l, as applicable regularly every 3 months.
- vi. The Chapters under compliance shall receive a designation of "Certified GOPIO Chapter" and shall accrue all privileges authorized by GOPIO International.
- vii. GOPIO International retains the right to "Decertify" that Chapters that are found to be non-compliant of these By-laws after a 30-day warning of rectification.


E. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL CHAPTERS & GOPIO INTERNATIONAL

- i. Local chapter has its own officers and is run and managed at the local level.
- ii. A chapter in "good standing" will have the voting rights in the GOPIO International Council according to the following sliding scale:
 - Up to 15 members - 1 delegate
 - 16 to 25 members - 2 delegates
 - 26 to 50 members - 3 delegates
 - 51 + members - 4 delegates
- iii. **Whom to Contact:** Area Coordinator / National Coordinator / International Coordinator and/or GOPIO International President.

APPENDIX – II

GOPIO COUNCILS

GOPIO International has nine Councils, namely, Human Rights, Business, Cultural, Academic, Media, Health Services, Youth, Women and Science & Technology to serve the diverse interests of the global Indian community.

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Each GOPIO Council shall conform to the following guidelines:

- i. Each Council shall consist of a chairperson and a number of co-chairpersons with regional representation as deemed necessary.
- ii. The chairperson shall be appointed by the International President of GOPIO in consultation with the Executive Council.
- iii. The co-chairpersons shall be appointed by the President of GOPIO in consultation with the Council Chairperson.
- iv. The term of all appointees shall coincide with the term of the Executive Council.
- v. The chairperson shall provide plan of activities and periodic reports to the International President and Executive Vice President and to other appropriate bodies within GOPIO.
- vi. Chairperson shall obtain prior approval of the Executive Council for holding conferences, seminars and symposium.
- vii. Each council shall report to the Executive Vice President, in the absence of the Executive Vice President Chairman, shall report to the Senior Vice President.
- viii. Banking and handling of finances of each council shall be integral to GOPIO and shall be consolidated for the calendar year for accounting and tax purposes.
- ix. Each council shall file all financial accounting to the Treasurer.
- x. All press statements and reports of each council shall be provided to the Secretary General (alternatively Executive Vice President) for GOPIO records.
- xi. Each member of a council must be a member of a GOPIO chapter and/or GOPIO International Life member.
- xii. Awards given by each council shall be in compliance with GOPIO International Community Service Award (CSA) criteria and shall be approved by the Executive Council in advance.

The following are the GOPIO Councils:

A. GOPIO HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

- i. To actively monitor all aspects of human rights conditions and treatment of persons of Indian origin (PIOs) and non-resident Indians (NRIs), and to seek prompt and full remedy and redress from the respective governments, the United Nations, the Government of India, human rights agencies operating locally and globally, and forums of local and international jurisprudence, using “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights” adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948 and all

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subsequent amendments and changes as the basis for fair and equitable treatment for all peoples.

- ii. To monitor and address human rights conditions including, but not limited to, physical, social, economic, cultural, political, religious, and artistic conditions affecting PIOs and NRIs in various countries.
- iii. To engage the participation and to support efforts of any and all local Indian and non-Indian organizations and groups, where possible, without compromising their safety and well-being, to compile and report all human rights abuses perpetrated against PIOs and NRIs.
- iv. To recognize those among NRI/PIO human rights advocates who have made notable achievements and for their community service.

B. GOPIO BUSINESS COUNCIL


- i. To encourage and promote increasing levels of business investments by and among NRIs/PIOs in various parts of the world.
- ii. To develop and conduct business and investment seminars, forums, symposia, trade exhibitions and conferences at regional and global levels to facilitate networking among investors and potential investment countries and selected industries.
- iii. To facilitate more awareness among non-Indians of the potentials and benefits of investments and trade with India and PIO countries.
- iv. To recognize those among NRIs/PIOs in the business community who have made notable achievements and for their community service.

C. GOPIO CULTURAL COUNCIL

- i. To develop, enhance and encourage continued promotion and preservation of the Indian culture and heritage among NRIs/PIOs on community, regional and global levels.
- ii. To facilitate increased communications, dialogue, exchanges and travel among individuals, groups and institutions involved in teaching, performing and promoting the Indian culture and heritage.
- iii. To actively promote the richness and value of the Indian culture and heritage by holding events in collaboration with other cultural organizations worldwide.
- iv. To recognize those among NRIs/PIOs who are actively involved in cultural activities and have made notable achievements, and for their community service.

D. GOPIO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

- i. To identify, recognize and link persons involved in Indian Diaspora studies and writings, and by identifying and linking academic institutions actively engaged in such studies, as

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a means of promoting and furthering Indian Diaspora studies and establishing a global network beneficial to NRIs/PIOs.


- ii. To develop, maintain and enhance respective directory of academic institutions, scholars, writers by category of works, and those who are the recipients of internationally recognized awards for their respective work on the Indian Diaspora.
- iii. To plan, coordinate and hold conferences, seminars, symposia and forums on issues related to the Indian Diaspora, both regional and international levels, including global conferences on behalf of GOPIO International as become necessary.
- iv. To recognize those among NRIs/PIOs academicians who have made notable achievements and for their community service.

E. GOPIO HEALTH SERVICES COUNCIL

- i. To cater to the increasing health services needs of the growing population of non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) community by monitoring the health trends, statistics and reports among this group and encouraging community involvement in seeking such services for improving health conditions in the community.
- ii. To foster collaborative health seminars and services for the benefit of the non-resident Indian (NRIs) and persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) on health related issues and services that are of current interest and concern.
- iii. To provide, where possible and expedient, guidance and referrals on health services based on categories, region and other pertinent factors.
- iv. To recognize those among NRI/PIO health services providers who have made notable achievements and for their community service.

F. GOPIO YOUTH COUNCIL

- i. To cater to the growing population and needs of the non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) youths by providing community service programs that addresses the pertinent issues and interest of the NRI/PIO youth.
- ii. To foster collaborative forums for dialogue and exchanges among non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) youths to maintain their interest and participation in the Indian Diaspora, now and in the future.
- iii. To encourage inter-group relations among non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) youths on local, regional and global levels for better understanding, cooperation and community service.
- iv. To recognize those among NRI/PIO youth who have made notable achievements in their respective fields of work and for their community service.

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G. GOPIO WOMEN'S COUNCIL


- i. To cater to the growing population and needs of the resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) women by providing community service programs that addresses the pertinent issues and interest of the NRI/PIO woman.
- ii. To foster collaborative forums for dialogue and exchanges among resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) women to maintain their interest and participation in the Indian Diaspora, now and in the future.
- iii. To encourage inter-group relations among non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) women on local, regional and global levels for better understanding, cooperation and community service.
- iv. To recognize those among NRI/PIO women who have made notable achievements in their respective fields of work and for their community service.

H. GOPIO MEDIA COUNCIL

- i. To actively monitor local, regional and global news of the growing population and needs of the non-resident Indian (NRIs) and persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and provide items of interest and concern to GOPIO Executive Committee for deliberations and action where necessary.
- ii. To provide timely news releases on instructions from GOPIO Executive Committee on current events that affect non-resident Indian (NRIs) and persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)
 - c. To collaborate with local, regional and global GOPIO officers, chapters and committees for news conferences and other media activities to promote GOPIO and its efforts.
- iii. To recognize those among NRI/PIO media who have made notable achievements in media and journalism, and for their community service.

I. GOPIO SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

- i. To create awareness among NRIs/PIOs on latest developments in Science & Technology.
- ii. To develop and conduct Science & Technology forums, seminars and conferences at regional and global levels.
- iii. To maintain links and collaborate with Government of India, Ministries of Science & Technology and Heavy Industries etc for the purpose of Science & Technology.
- iv. To maintain links and collaborate with governments and agencies of other countries for the purpose of Science & Technology.

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- v. To maintain links and collaborate with international institutions and research organizations, academia and individuals for the purpose of Science & Technology.
- vi. To recognize those among NRIs/PIOs who have made notable achievements in Science & Technology and for their community service.

APPENDIX – III


CRITERIA FOR GOPIO SERVICE AWARDS

Preamble: The **GOPIO Community Service Awards (GOPIO CSA)** would be given for outstanding community service, public service and/or significant charitable or philanthropic contributions of benefit to the community.

The GOPIO Community Service Awards (GOPIO CSA) are neither in conflict nor in competition with any international, regional or country awards.

The GOPIO Community Service Awards are given in recognition of outstanding services to the community, society and humanity. The acquisition of wealth, business achievements and positions, academic scholarship, or achievements in any other field of human endeavor is not part of the selection criteria.

- A. Recognition:** For outstanding community service, public service and/or significant charitable or philanthropic contributions of benefit to the community.
 - i. The award recipient must have a broad-based, continuing commitment to community service, public service and/or significant charitable or philanthropic contributions of benefit to the community, as reflected in a variety of activities, programs and initiatives which have served the needs of the Non-Resident Indian (NRI) / People of Indian Origin (PIO) community. The recipient must show evidence of a true partnership with the NRI/PIO community.
- B. Eligibility:** Non Resident Indian/Person of Indian Origin.
 - i. Members of the Executive Committee, Executive Council or task committee, councils of GOPIO International, and members of GOPIO chapter Executive Committees are not eligible.
- C. Geography:** One or two recommended candidates per region as determined by GOPIO International.
- D. Selection:** A GOPIO chapter and/or the GOPIO Regional coordinator/Vice President can recommend up to one candidate each, with one alternate recommendation. The selected candidate must agree to attend the award ceremony to personally receive the award.
 - i. GOPIO International can also seek nominations from NRIs/PIOs through GOPIO newsletter, E-mail promotions, press releases in the media, and by other promotional means. However, the Regional Vice President and/or the Chapter President would be involved in the selection process as applicable to all other candidates.

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- ii. Recommendation must be in written form, using the prescribed format/form, and must include a full resume, bio information, photograph and suitable references or supporting documents.
- iii. GOPIO Community Service Awards Selection Committee would make the final selection out of the list of recommended nominees. The Committee would include the Vice President/ Regional Coordinator for the selection of awardees from a particular region.
- iv. Nominations do not guarantee selection for the awards, and nominees should not be promised otherwise.
- v. Cut-off date for receipt of recommendations to be set by GOPIO Int'l.

E. Character: The recommended candidate must have earned the recognition, respect and trust of the NRI/PIO community, and be above and beyond reproach.

F. Notification: The recommended candidates, if selected, would be notified in writing by GOPIO International. Should the selected candidate decline or cannot attend the award ceremony, then the second recommended candidate could be considered.

- i. The recommended candidates not selected for the awards would be notified by GOPIO International with a copy of the notification to the recommending GOPIO chapter and the Regional Coordinator/Vice President in writing, and would be done in an expedient manner.

G. Acceptance: The recipient must be present at the awards ceremony to receive the award.

- i. The awards are to be given in an appropriate, commemorative form, such as a plaque or certificate, with GOPIO logo and the names of the issuing officers.

H. Time Schedule: Cut-off dates are to be based on the following:

- Selection
- Approvals
- Notification
- Acceptance
- Confirmation

The various awards to be given by GOPIO shall be decided by the Executive Council (EC). EC shall also decide the criteria. Councils and Chapters giving any awards must confer with EC before making any commitments. Refer appropriate GOPIO policies for various awards.

END