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[GOPIO Bylaws as amended by GOPIO General Body at the New Jersey Convention on April 28, 2024](#)

1. NAME AND PURPOSE

The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (abbreviated as GOPIO) is a secular, non-political nonpartisan, non-sectarian, not-for-profit global organization engaged in promoting the wellbeing of PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN and NON-RESIDENT INDIANS, enhancing interaction and communication between these groups living in different countries and in furthering their linkage with India.


2. OBJECTIVES

The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) shall have the following specific objectives:

- a. To promote legitimate interests of the People of Indian Origin (PIOs)/Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) as a resident in countries outside India.
- b. To promote the common cultural heritage of PIOs/NRIs.
- c. To mobilize professional, financial and intellectual resources of the community of PIOs/NRIs for their mutual advancement and for the development of their country of origin and the country of their residence.
- d. To organize interaction between PIOs/NRIs 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 PIOs/NRIs and initiate measures to redress their grievances.
- f. To disseminate regularly information on global, regional and national developments affecting PIOs/NRIs as a whole or substantial parts thereof.
- g. To further the interaction between PIOs/NRIs and other communities at global level in promoting world peace, progress and ecological harmony.
- h. To develop channels of communication between groups of PIOs/NRIs 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, cultural and developmental activities in India and at a global level as well for the relief and rehabilitation of PIOs/NRIs affected by natural and other calamities.
- j. To constitute Think Tanks and Task Forces of PIOs/NRIs on particular issues of interest to the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) or to India.

3. DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES PERMEATING GOPIO

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

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

4. 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 PIOs/NRIs.
- b. Act as an advocacy group in support of causes and concerns of PIOs/NRIs.
- 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 PIOs/NRIs.
- f. Act as a liaison between PIOs/NRIs in specific countries and national governments, Government of India and international organizations in realization of the objectives of GOPIO.


5. GOPIO INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP: GOPIO membership shall be divided into **five** classes as follows:

- I. Life Members
- II. Associate Members
- III. Affiliates – Associations/Organizations
- IV. Honorary Members
- V. League of Legend

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

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- a. If the life membership is originated by the chapter, GOPIO International shall pay 25% 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. The same rule applies to Associate Membership. Life membership from India can be only by returned PIOs/NRIs, parents and siblings of PIOs/NRIs.
 - b. Life membership fee is decided by the Executive Council. The current rate is:
 - i. US\$1500 (Silver).
 - ii. US\$2500 (Gold) - Free registration at GOPIO Int'l conferences for 5 years.
 - iii. US\$5000 (Platinum) - Privileges as per Gold member plus preferred seating at GOPIO Int'l events for 10 years and
 - iv. US\$10,000 (Corporate) - Privileges as per Gold plus preferred seating at GOPIO Int'l events for 10 years.
 - v. Corporation Membership should be represented by an individual designated person by the Corporation.
 - vi. Life members shall not be refunded their membership fee upon their resignation, termination or death.
 - c. GOPIO Life membership is subject to review and approval of GOPIO Executive Council within 30 days of receipt of membership application. GOPIO Life membership privileges and voting rights to be effective 60 days after approval of application and receipt of payment. If no written approval is issued, the Life membership shall be considered automatically approved by default within 90 days of the payment.
 - d. A life member will be deemed active if he or she has completed any of the below listed activities:
 - i. Any life member who has participated in any scheduled GOPIO International activity including virtual meetings during the preceding two (2) years, at any function or event organized at the international level.
 - ii. Attended two GOPIO chapter meetings anywhere in the world during the preceding 12 months.
 - iii. Attended two major programs, including virtual conference calls, organized by any GOPIO chapter during the preceding 12 months.
 - e. A list of all active and non-active Life Members will be maintained with proper identification, e.g. with asterisk (*) for non-active Life Members.
 - f. Any non-active member who attends the General Body Meeting becomes an active member.
- II. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP:** GOPIO chapter members who accept positions at international level either have to be life members of GOPIO International or become Associate International Members. Associate Members shall be entitled to all the privileges of life membership, except voting rights at the General Body Meetings, as long as they continue to pay an annual membership fee of US\$100. The Treasurer will maintain a list of all Associate Members. EC can waive the fee of a full-time student(s), if a position is assigned to him/her. An associate member who has not paid his/her membership fee within three months of appointment shall be deemed to have relinquished his/her position.

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III. Affiliates–Associations/Organizations means and includes 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 Bylaws.
- c. Elects its officers at regularly held meetings as laid down in its Constitution/Bylaws.
- d. Is a “Not for Profit” organization.
- e. Subscribes to the objectives of the GOPIO Bylaws.
- f. Has a minimum of 15 members.
- g. Agrees to pay annual GOPIO affiliation fee of minimum US\$100 as required from GOPIO chapters,
- h. Annual affiliation fee payable at the beginning of the affiliation.
- i. Affiliation is subject to approval by the GOPIO International Executive Council.

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.

V. **LEAGUE OF LEGENDS:** Will include Life Members, who have been involved with GOPIO activities at international level for more than 15 years and have made significant contributions to GOPIO or society at large to be approved by the Executive Council upon recommendation of its specially designated committee.


6. STRUCTURE

GOPIO shall have six-pronged structure:


- A. General Body
- B. Executive Council
- C. Board of Advisors
- D. GOPIO Foundation
- E. GOPIO Chamber of Commerce and Industries (GCCCI)
- F. Chapters

A. **GENERAL BODY:** It shall be the main policy making body of GOPIO. It will elect the International President, Executive and Vice Presidents, the Global Ambassador and International Coordinators-at-large. It will also endorse/elect the Chairman of GOPIO in the General Body meeting-


- i. The General Body shall be chaired by the GOPIO International Chairperson. The General Body will examine the annual financial statement as well as discuss the annual budget and accounts prepared by the Executive Council.

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- ii. It will be responsible for giving shape to the guidelines given by the Global Biennial Convention and will direct the Executive Council to take appropriate action to implement various resolutions passed by the Global Convention.
 - iii. It will meet once annually and at other times as and when decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the International Chairperson.
 - iv. General Body meeting can also be called by GOPIO Chairperson if 15% or more of the GOPIO International delegates (Active GOPIO Life Members and chapter delegates), as determined at the last convention election, send a request in writing for such a meeting. The Chairman can schedule such a meeting with 30 days' notice for an electronic meeting or 90 days' notice for in person meeting.
 - v. **Quorum:** Quorum for taking decisions by the General Body shall be 15% of its registered chapter delegates and active life members present and voting.
 - vi. If a quorum is not met at a scheduled meeting, the meeting can adjourn and a rescheduled meeting can conduct the business meeting and any resolution passed must have a minimum majority (50% +1) of the required quorum shall be deemed valid.
- B. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:** The Executive Council (EC) 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 GOIPO International President, Executive Vice-President, Vice President, Global Ambassador, two International Coordinators-at-Large, ten 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 (without French speaking countries)
 - v. Europe
 - vi. Africa
 - vii. Middle East
 - viii. South Asia
 - ix. North & Southeast Asia
 - x. Francophone countries (Mauritius, Reunion and Madagascar and other French speaking countries other than France)
 - b. The GOPIO International Chairperson, Executive Trustee of GOPIO Foundation and Chief of Board of Advisors and Chairman of GOPIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE and INDUSTRIES (GCC) shall be ex-officio (voting) members of the Executive Council. In addition, the Secretary and Treasurer are voting members of the EC. A former president shall become International Chairman only with the approval of the General Body.

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- c. The candidates for the Chairman, Executive Council, such as President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, GOPIO Global Ambassador and International Coordinators shall be Permanent Residents of their respective countries of domicile except India for at least five years or citizen of a country other than India (except for International Coordinator for South Asia). The candidate must have resident status of his/her respective country of domicile except India and must be living in that country for preceding three consecutive years and maintain it during his/her tenure as Executive Council member.
- d. All members of the Executive Council shall be elected as per GOPIO Bylaws. However, candidates for the position of International President must have served as a member of the Executive Council for at least one full term.
- e. Individuals cannot be elected to the same position more than two (2) times.
- f. In the composition of the Executive Council, countries with NRI/PIO population of varying size will have the following representations (excluding Ex-officio and appointed members).
 - Up to one million - two positions
 - One million to two million - three positions
 - Two million to three million - four positions
 - Three million and above - five positions
- g. A country with larger NRI/PIO population may have National Coordinator appointed by the EC, provided it has at least ten chapters in good standing. Also, the EC can appoint an Area Coordinator with at least 5 chapters in good standing in that geographical area. They serve as non-voting members in the Executive Council.
- h. The GOPIO International President, shall report to the General Body whenever they meet and at the Global Convention on the activities of GOPIO International.
- i. The Executive Council shall prepare annual budgets and accounts and present them to the General Body for approval at least 2 weeks before the commencement of the General Body meeting.
- j. The Executive Council shall meet as and when needed either in person or via teleconference/videoconference. The meeting may be initiated in writing using e-mail (or electronic media such as WhatsApp) either by the International President or by the International Chairperson or at the request of five or more members of the EC.
- k. 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.
- l. **Quorum:** Quorum for Executive Council shall be 50% plus one of the voting members.

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m. If a member is absent in three consecutive meetings without reasonable cause, he/she shall forfeit voting rights for three months. After show cause notice, he/she may exercise voting rights three months after resuming attendance.

n. If any Executive Council member, is absent from three (3) consecutive General Body Meetings of the GOPIO International, he/she would be disqualified from running for an elective position.

C. 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 political and civic leaders, diplomats, persons of art & letters, and philanthropists, etc. The Chief of the Board of Advisors shall call its meeting and coordinate its activities.

Chief of Board of Advisors: To ensure stability and continuity within the organization, the outgoing International Chairperson of GOPIO, shall become the Chief Advisor of the Board of Advisors, subject to endorsement of two-thirds majority of Executive Council present and voting.

GOPIO COUNCILS: GOPIO Councils shall be established by GOPIO General Body at the recommendation of the Executive Council to serve the diverse interests of the global Indian community. Refer to Appendix II: “GOPIO Councils”. The Council Chair shall be a life member and Co-chair shall be at least an Associate or chapter member.


D. GOPIO INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

a. The GOPIO International 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. Executive Trustee of GOPIO International Foundation: The Chief of Board of Advisors after one or two terms shall become the Executive Trustee of the GOPIO Foundation subject to a majority of assenting vote by the Executive Council members present and voting. The Executive Trustee is a voting member of the Executive Council.

c. The Foundation shall be composed of 8 voting members, called Trustees excluding the GOPIO President, Chairperson and Treasurer who will be ex-officio members. Every two year, the executive council will appoint Foundation members for a term of two years. The Trustees will be responsible for all the Foundation activities and the Executive Trustee will provide regular reports to the Executive Council of all its activities.

d. 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.

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- e. 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 to the same or any other charity must be approved by the Executive Council. The limit of disbursement by the Foundation Trustees can be raised by a decision of Executive Council.
- f. An annual report of its activities and a financial report of the Foundation shall be submitted by the Executive Trustee to the Executive Council **at least 2 weeks before the General Body meeting.**
- g. The Executive Trustee of the Foundation: The immediate past Chief of the Board of Advisors shall become the Executive Trustee after due ratification by the Executive Council. If no suitable person is available, the Executive Council may nominate someone from its list of Life Members. The Executive trustees shall be limited to two terms (each term consisting of two years).
- h. The Executive Trustee shall perform any other duties as assigned by the Executive Council.

E. GOPIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (GCCCI)

7. GOPIO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) will serve as a non-geographical international unit under GOPIO International with representation in GOPIO General Body according to chapter rules., i.e. representation according to its membership. For more details, refer to Appendix IV,

GOPIO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) will serve as a non-geographical chapter of GOPIO:

- 7.1 To create a worldwide networking opportunity for people of business who are of Indian origin,
- 7.2 To encourage and promote increasing levels of business investments by and among NRI/PIOs in various parts of the world including India,
- 7.3 To bring businesses in India closer to Diaspora businesses and to network and facilitate cooperation and joint ventures,
- 7.4 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,
- 7.5 To facilitate more awareness among non-Indians of the potentials and benefits of investments and trade with India and within and among the PIO countries,
- 7.6 To recognize those among NRIs/PIOs in the business community who have made notable achievements and for their community service,
- 7.7 GCCCI will create its own categories and get their own annual and Life Members based on a fee schedule established by themselves from time to time. For an initial period only, these shall be for one year from its official launch, as determined by GOPIO Executive Council. there is special discount on the fee as specified in Appendix IV on GCCCI Bylaws and Modality of Operation.
- 7.8 Those who become GOPIO Life Members through the GCCCI will also become Life Member of GOPIO Chamber of Commerce and Industry for that one special price. On an ongoing basis, as with other Chapters 25% of the GOPIO Life Membership fee


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from all those becoming GOPIO Life Member through GCCI (except for already discounted fee) will be given exclusively for GCCI. GCCI may organize its own programs in different cities around the world. However, it can be initiated only by GCCI members with permission from the Chairperson of GICC. Such units will also work closely with the local GOPIO Chapter and may also send a representative to the local chapter managing committee.

- 7.9 After an initial two-year period, the Chairman, two Co-chairs and five Directors-at-Large will be elected by GCCI Members. The regional Presidents will also be elected if there are more than 15 members in each such region. For those regions, which have not reached the minimum 15 members, the president will be appointed by GCCI Chairman with the consent of the GCCI Intl Executive Committee.
- 7.10 The Chamber membership fee will be decided by GCCI Executive Committee. As is the case in other GOPIO Chapters, all the matters relating to the GCCI will be decided by their own Executive Committee.
- 7.11 GCCI will also have representation in the GOPIO General Body similar to the way all GOPIO Chapter delegates are selected.
- 7.12 GCCI Chairman will be ex-officio and appointed member of GOPIO Executive Council. GOPIO Chairman and President will also be ex-officio Members of GICC Executive Committee.

8 GOPIO OFFICERS: Officers of the Organization shall be:


- a. GOPIO International Chairperson shall be the head of the organization. He/she will preside over the meetings of the Global Convention and General Body. He/she will provide overall leadership to GOPIO Conventions, General Body, and help the Executive Council in convening GOPIO Conventions and meetings of the General Body. He/she will be an ex-officio voting member of the Executive Council and GICC Executive Committee. He/she will be consulted by the President of GOPIO and GICC Chairperson on all important matters.
- b. The outgoing GOPIO International President shall assume the office of International Chairperson of GOPIO subject to endorsement by the majority of the General Body members present and voting. If that person is not available or General Body wants another person as the Chairman, it may endorse and elect one of the previous International Presidents.
- c. GOPIO 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 the state of the organization reports to the Global Convention and the General Body. 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 Chairperson, he/she will preside over the meetings of the Global Convention. He/she will consult the Chairperson on all important matters and keep the Chairperson fully informed about the activities of GOPIO. The president shall have the authority to change and/or further assign responsibilities as required of his/her reporting personnel in consultation with the Chairperson. The candidate for the position of president must have served for at least one full term in the Executive Council.

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- d. The Executive Vice President will perform all functions of the President in his/her absence. He/she shall have administrative duties such as supervision of GOPIO Councils and other duties as per the decision of the Executive Council. The Executive Vice President shall be elected by the General Body. The candidates for the position of Executive Vice President are a Life Member in good standing for at least 2 years.
- e. Vice President shall be elected by the General Body. At the discretion of the Executive Council, he/she shall be in charge of Chapters and other responsibilities assigned by the International President. The candidates for the position of Vice President are a Life Member in good standing for at least 2 years.
- f. GOPIO Ambassador shall be elected by the General Body. He/she shall be in charge of reaching out to Indian Diaspora communities and work with all GOPIO officers to promote GOPIO interest including initiating chapters in countries where GOPIO does have a presence. Will work closely with International Coordinators and Vice President to initiate such chapters in all countries and regions where there is no GOPIO presence. The candidates for the position of Global Ambassador are a Life Member in good standing for at least 2 years.
- g. International (Regional) Coordinators are elected by the delegates in the region provided there are ten or more delegates with five chapters delegates representing three chapters in “good standing”, otherwise, shall be appointed by the Executive Council. The candidate for the position of International (Regional) Coordinator is a Life Member in good standing for at least 2 years.
- h. **International Coordinators At-Large:** Life Members will be represented by two Members-at-Large in the Executive Council elected from the body of active Life Members of the General Body. They will also be given additional responsibility as and when needed by the Executive Council and the President. To be elected as a Member-at-Large, one has to be a Life Member for at least two years.
- i. **Political Affiliation:** Officials at chapter, council, regional or international level shall not be elected or appointed to political office. GOPIO shall not appoint any person who is holding or contesting a political position. Political position here shall mean any municipal, city, state of national government position for which one gets paid a remuneration.

9 NATIONAL/AREA COORDINATOR

- a. **National Coordinators:** For each country having at least ten (10) chapters in good standing there shall be a National Coordinator appointed by the International Coordinator in consultation with the Chapter Presidents and Life Members for that region. He/she has to be a Life Member/Associate of GOPIO International. A National Coordinator is a non-voting member of the E.C.
- b. **Area Coordinators:** Area Coordinators can be appointed by the E.C. at the recommendation of Regional International Coordinator for five to nine chapters to coordinate and facilitate joint programs of the area chapters. He/she will be appointed in consultation with the Chapter Presidents and Life Members from that region. An Area Coordinator is a non-voting member of the E.C.

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- c. He/she has to be at least an Associate Member of GOPIO International. This is intended to encourage the Area and National Coordinators to expand GOPIO’s reach among the Diaspora.
- d. **Chapter Elections:** The National and Area Coordinators’ responsibilities include looking at the chapter progress and see that each Chapter shall elect its own Executive Committee consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant/Joint Secretary and Treasurer, in accordance with GOPIO chapter policies in Appendix I.

10 GENERAL

a. Headquarters of GOPIO

- i. GOPIO International is a US registered non-profit organization, subject to US laws, with headquarters in the New York area.
- ii. The headquarters and the location of the other organs of GOPIO will be decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the GOPIO Chairperson.

b. **LOGO:** The Executive Council shall provide a seal logo for the purpose of the Council and shall determine the manner in which it shall be used.

c. **Official Year:** The official year of GOPIO shall be the same as the calendar year.

d. **Official Language:** English will be the official language of GOPIO.


e. **Legal Team:** GOPIO International shall have legal team with representation in all regions, if feasible.

f. **Intellectual Property:** All intellectual property belongs to GOPIO International that includes all documents, database, photographs, assets, websites, newsletters, contents, financial statements, minutes of meetings, records etc. Such GOPIO property can be retrieved or accessed by GOPIO at any time, with no access or use by official upon expiration of term or termination.

g. **Proprietary Information and Data:** All GOPIO E.C. officials have to sign a statement that they will not use or transfer GOPIO International’s proprietary information and data to other parties.

h. **Financial Accounting of Major Events:** Financial accounting of all major events to be completed by the convener or coordinator within 90 days of the event. Those who did not comply will not be eligible to contest election or for appointment for any position at GOPIO International. If 75% GOPIO Intl./ Major events expenses are NOT met by the organizers locally, the convener or coordinator still has to give an account and if the convener/coordinator does not provide the accounts in 90 days to GOPIO International, it will not bar the person from contesting an election or appointed to the E.C.


i. **Requirement for Members of Executive Council:** If an elected or appointed voting member of Executive Council does not bring two Life Members or initiate two GOPIO chapters or a combination

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of the two (i.e. one Life Member or one new Chapter) during the term of two years, that person will not be qualified to run for an office or re-appointed in the Executive Council. This requirement does not apply to the appointed positions, General Secretary, Treasurer, Global Compliance Coordinator, Associate Secretary, Associate Treasurer, Council Chairs, Chair Bylaws/Constitutional Amendment Committee and Chair of Chapter Review Committee.


11 APPOINTED OFFICERS

- a. **General Secretary:** He/She shall be the principal administrative officer of GOPIO International and will coordinate activities that serve the needs of the organization (such as deployment of skills, resources, etc.). The General Secretary and his/her team (comprised of the Associate Secretaries) will work closely with the Chairman and President of GOPIO, GICC and also other members of the Executive Council. He/She will also communicate with the Global Compliance Coordinator and others in GOPIO regarding chapters, membership, dues, activities, validation and all other related issues. The candidate for the position of General Secretary will be a Life Member in good standing for at least 2 years. He/She will be appointed on a merit basis by the Executive Council and shall be entitled to vote at the Executive Council Meetings.
 - b. **Associate Secretary:** There can be one or more Associate Secretary to serve the needs of the organization at the discretion of the Executive Council depending upon various functions. The Executive Council shall create a Job Description for each position. These appointments shall be duly ratified by the Executive Council. The Associate Secretary will 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 communication to the appropriate members; shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the president and General Secretary for the proper functioning of GOPIO. The number of Associate Secretaries shall be determined by the GOPIO President and General Secretary in consultation with the Executive Council. One of the Associate secretaries shall be the historian of GOPIO.
- c. **Global Compliance Coordinator:** Will coordinate with Vice President, International Coordinators and Chapter Review & Validation Committee to assist the chapters and GOPIO/GICC Life Members to follow compliance related aspects of GOPIO's automation. He/she will serve as the liaison between GOPIO's International and Area Coordinators, guide them in their activities, and coordinate deployment of skills and resources. He/she will also communicate with Chapter Presidents regarding chapter status, membership, dues, activities, and all other issues related to chapter guidelines and validation. He/she will be appointed by the Executive Council and shall be entitled to vote at the Executive Council Meetings.
- d. **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 Treasurer must be a Life Member of GOPIO. 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

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funds of the organization except that the Executive Council may cause such funds to be invested in such investments as shall be legal for a non-profit corporation. The Treasurer shall be entitled to vote at the Executive Council Meetings.


- 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 Council/General body. The Treasurer shall exercise all duties incident to the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall prepare quarterly financial reports and make them available to members on request.
 - iii. All payments from \$200 to \$1,499 can be made only with the approval of the President. Any amount of \$1,500 or more has to be approved by the Executive Council.
 - iv. President can be reimbursed expenses incurred by him/her, within preceding 120 days, with the approval of GOPIO International Chairperson, if the amount is below \$1,500. If the amount is \$1,500 or more, then the Executive Council approval is required.
- e. 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. 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.
- f. External Auditor:** A certified public accountant from the USA shall examine the financial records and business transactions of GOPIO International that he/she is not affiliated with and shall (publish) provide an annual financial report. An independent auditor shall be used to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure the integrity of the auditing process.
- g. Chapter Review Committee:**
The Chapter Review Committee. This is an ongoing committee, consisting of a Chairperson who has to be a Life Member and two members, which reviews the compliance of a chapter and certifies it to be in good standing. Those chapters in good standing can have the voting rights at the General Body Meeting as well as at the elections. The Chapter Review Committee will work closely with GOPIO Vice President and International Coordinators to make sure of the chapter compliance. The number of delegates eligible for each complied chapter will be determined by the Chapter Review Committee according to membership verification as per the by-laws. After a new GOPIO chapter is admitted, the Chapter Review Committee will evaluate its performance before recommending (or denying) it as a qualified chapter before the end of the 4-month period as a “start-up chapter.” If a chapter has arrears for previous years, the chapter has to pay the total arrears to have voting benefits for all previously assigned delegates or a minimum of \$100 for one delegate during each year when arrears are owed. At the validation, such chapter can have only one delegate that year. Chapter voting rights can be restored after the chapter provides information of its membership to the validation Committee. See Appendix 1, Section C. viii for more details.

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Although appointed by the Executive Council, the Chapter Review Committee will provide its regular reports of the chapter validation to the Chairman who in turn will share it with the Executive Council. The chairman will also invite the qualified chapters to nominate chapter delegates to the General Body.

A member of the Chapter Review Committee cannot contest or nominate a person for any position in the Executive Council.


- h. Council Chairs & Co-Chairs:** Each Council Chair shall be appointed by the International President in consultation with the GOPIO International Chairperson and Executive Vice President in-charge of the Councils' responsibility and after duly ratified by the Executive Council by the majority of the Executive Council present & voting. Co-chairs shall be appointed by International President at the recommendation of Executive VP who should consult Chapter Presidents/Area/National/International Coordinators and the respective Council Chair. Chair and Co-Chair of the same council shall be from different countries as far as feasible.
 - i. Membership Requirement of Appointees:** Appointees for the position of General Secretary, Treasurer, Global Compliance Coordinator, Chair of Chapter Review Committee or Internal Auditor has to be a Life Member of GOPIO International. There are no term limitations for these appointments.
 - j. Committee/Task Force:** Each new Committee/Task Force and its members shall be appointed by the International President in consultation with the International Chairperson and for specific purpose, with assigned responsibilities and for duration as appropriate. President shall also consult the International Coordinator before appointing a committee chair from his/her region. The appointments, before being made, shall be duly ratified by the two-thirds of the majority of the Executive Council present by voting. The Committee chair has to be an Associate or Life Member of GOPIO International.
 - k. 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. They shall be appointed by the Executive Council.
- 12 **TERM:** The term of all elected officials shall be a maximum of two (2) years duration with re-election to the same office for a maximum of one (1) more term. The term of all elected officials/appointees shall terminate with the election of the new Executive Council, but the appointees to the administrative positions (General Secretary, Treasurer, Global Compliance Coordinator, Internal Auditor) will continue till they are re-appointed or new persons appointed to replace them.
- 13 **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 Chairperson of GOPIO International.
- a.** Person of Indian Origin (PIO) shall be a person who is a citizen of a country other than India, born in India or outside India of Indian ancestry. Non-Resident Indian (NRI) is a citizen of India residing in another country as defined by the Government of India.

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- 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 Chairperson 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 Chairperson 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 Clause 13 of these Bylaws.


14 **NOMINATION/ELECTION COMMITTEE AND ELECTION PROCEDURE**

- a. The election of the GOPIO Executive Council shall be conducted before the biennial meeting of the General Body in accordance with the GOPIO Bylaws.
- b. The Executive Council shall appoint a nomination/election committee consisting of three members of the General Body or any other individuals of outstanding merit. They must not be candidates for any elective position for the current election. These three members shall elect a chairperson of the committee or E.C. will appoint a Chairperson at the time of appointment. The committee will work with the GOPIO Chairman to conduct the election.
- c. The nomination/election committee shall invite nominations by electronic mail from eligible delegates.
- d. An eligible delegate can vote in the election. An eligible delegate is either an active life member of GOPIO International or an authorized representative of a GOPIO chapter in good standing.
- e. All nominations shall be submitted in writing on the prescribed form duly signed and accepted by the nominee at least 45 days prior to the biennial meeting of the General Body. The nomination/election committee shall compile a list of all nominations and announce to all those nominated at least 38 days prior to the biennial election.
- f. Withdrawal of nominations must be received in writing at least 30 days prior to the biennial meeting of the General Body.


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- g. The nomination/election committee shall compile a list of all eligible candidates (nominations) and announce at least 25 days prior to the biennial election to the General Body.
- h. A nominee shall contest election for only one elected office in this election.
- i. The nomination/election committee shall be responsible for conducting the elections by electronic voting- If for any reason, the election could not be conducted as planned for any of the remaining positions, the Election Committee must complete the election by electronic or e-mail voting within sixty days of the announced date. (To be decided by EC)
- j. 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.
- k. 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 at the Biennial General Body meeting or at a later date to be conducted by Election Committee.
- l. The name of the chapter delegate(s) shall be submitted by the chapter president to GOPIO Chairman 35 days prior to the election.
- m. In the absence of any designated chapter delegate at the time of the Biennial General Body Meeting, only the chapter president can assign a designated delegate or delegates.
- n. 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 Bylaws.
- o. Electronic mail shall be the preferred mode for communication.
- p. The decision of the nomination/election committee shall be final. The General Body is empowered to overrule the decision of the nomination/election committee, provided at least half of its total members vote to do so by e-mail or in person.
- q. In the event that the biannual elections are not held as scheduled, the current EC shall continue until the new elections are held.
- r. The newly elected Executive Council shall take office immediately after the election. The outgoing EC shall hand over all the relevant documents and accounts within thirty days.

15 **AWARDS:** Awards shall be in compliance with GOPIO International Community Service Awards (CSA) criteria and Professional Achievement Award (PAA) and shall be approved by the Executive Council/Awards Committee in advance. The criteria for Community Service Award (CSA) and Professional Achievement Award (PAA) can be modified by the Executive Council as becomes necessary. See Appendix III on these awards. In addition, special awards may be given as per the approval of the Executive Council.

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- 16 **DISSOLUTION:** The GOPIO may be dissolved with the approval of the three-fourths majority of the Executive Council members present and voting at an extraordinary meeting specially called for this purpose. In the case of dissolution, the Executive Council shall donate the net assets of 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 the nearest GOPIO chapter of good standing in consultation with Immediate Reporting Officer (Area/National/International Coordinator).
- 17 **LIABILITY & INDEMNITY INSURANCE:** The Executive Council of GOPIO International and all GOPIO chapters shall have liability and indemnity insurance cover. The Executive Council of GOPIO International shall have indemnity insurance specifically against error, omission or decision making by GOPIO Executive Council member in regular conduct of official duties. All GOPIO Chapters are responsible for their own liability coverage. GOPIO International bears no legal liability for the acts of the Chapters and Chapter members.
- 18 **IMPEACHMENT:** The officials of the GOPIO can be impeached by the General Body for felony or misdemeanor and for gross and willful violation of GOPIO Bylaws. Impeachment proceedings can be initiated by the Executive Council or at least fifteen members of the General Body. The office bearer concerned will be provided with 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 GOPIO International General Body at least 30 days before the meeting of the GOPIO International General Body at which they are to be discussed. General Body meetings can be held virtually by Virtual or other media server. However, voting has to be taken in secret vote using an online secret vote. Impeachment decision can be made only with the two-third (2/3) majority of the International GOPIO International General Body present and voting in a meeting with prior notice concerning this agenda item. An impeached official will lose the right to hold any more position in GOPIO Executive Council.
- 19 **SUSPENSION AND CANCELALTION OF:**
- a. **LIFE MEMBERSHIP:** Life Members who are working against GOPIO can be suspended by a majority vote of the Executive Council for two months. A show cause notice of charges will be given to such Life Member and will be given thirty days to reply to the charges. If there is no satisfactory response or no response at all, the Executive Council can remove such Life Member by 2/3 majority of the Executive Council. The removed member will forfeit the membership fee.
 - b. **CHAPTER AFFILIATION:** Chapter members who are working against GOPIO can be suspended by a majority vote of the chapter Executive Committee of the Chapter for two months. A show cause notice of charges will be given to such Chapter member and will be given thirty days to reply to the charges. If there is no satisfactory response or no response at all, the Executive Committee of the Chapter can remove such Chapter member by 2/3 majority of the chapter Executive Committee.

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20 AMENDMENTS: Amendments to these Bylaws shall be made only with the approval of the two-third (2/3) majority of the members of the General Body 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 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 General Body along with their own recommendations at least 15 days in advance of the General Body meeting at which they are to be considered. Amendments on proposed amendments can be made at the General Body. However, no fresh amendments from the floor can be made by the General Body Meeting.

APPENDIX – I

GOPIO CHAPTERS


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

STARTING A CHAPTER

There must not be a GOPIO Chapter within a 10 miles 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 Bylaws, Policies and Procedures.

A. 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 (LOI) to the Area Coordinator/National Coordinator/International Coordinator or VP of GOPIO International.
- ii. On receipt of Letter of Intent (LOI), the Area Coordinator/National Coordinator/International Coordinator or VP of GOPIO International shall officially authorize the formation of the Chapter after EC approval and payment of the admission fee prescribed by the EC.
- 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 to get one delegate representation).
- 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.

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- vi.** Chapter progress is formally reviewed by the Chapter Review Committee approximately 4 months after submitting a Letter of Intent and admitted by EC after paying the admission fee as a “Start-up Chapter” and, if satisfied, the Charter Review Committee shall send its recommendation to the Executive Council. The “start-up-chapter” becomes an official chapter after payment of annual dues and formal approval by the Executive Council.
- 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. For countries, states and provinces with smaller NRI/PIO population, the newly formed chapter may use those names after as its chapter (For example (GOPIO-Reunion, GOPIO-CT, GOPIO-Queensland, etc.)
- viii.** Chapter in India can be started only by returned PIOs/NRIs, parents and siblings of PIOs/NRIs or those NRIs/PIOs who moved to India for employment and/or business.

B. CHAPTER OFFICIALS AND WORKING DETAILS


- i.** Each GOPIO Chapter shall elect an Executive Committee consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary and Treasurer and other committee members for a term of one year or two years. No individual can hold the same office for more than four years or two terms. GOPIO International or National Coordinator is allowed to make exceptions on terms of Chapter Officers in the interest of the organization with the approval of International Coordinator and International President.
- 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 a 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 on more challenging volunteering responsibilities.
- vi.** No two members of the chapter Executive Committee shall be blood relatives that include spouses. The spouse of a chapter or GOPIO council executive, or area/national/International Coordinator shall not qualify for the appointment or election to chapter executive committee, council chair or co-chair, or area/national/ Coordinator or International Coordinator position for at least one full term after blood relative's completion of his/her term.

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- vii. **Chapter Membership Fee:** Individual members in a chapter will pay an annual fee prescribed by the chapter Executive Committee.
- viii. If there are multiple chapters in a country, the fee should be decided by the chapter presidents in consultation with the International Coordinator.
- ix. Membership fees shall be uniform as much as possible for all chapters in a country.
- x. **Financial Accounting of Major Events:** Financial accounting of all major events of the chapter to be completed by the convener or coordinator within 90 days of the event. Those who do not comply will not be eligible to contest an election or appointment for any position in the chapter.
- xi. All duly approved Chapters have delegates to the General Body of GOPIO International.

C. A GOOD STANDING CHAPTER

- a. A chapter is deemed to be in Good Standing, if it:
 - i. Follows GOPIO International Bylaws, Policies and Procedures as they relate to chapters.
 - ii. Participates in all GOPIO wide projects, committee(s) and Councils.
 - iii. Communicates all community issues/concerns to GOPIO International through the Area/National Coordinator/International Coordinator.
 - 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 its term, the two-year term, the National Coordinator or International Coordinator in consultation with GOPIO International President and Vice President in charge of the chapters can appoint an ad-hoc president for up to three months during which new executive committee shall be elected.
 - v. Pays annual dues to GOPIO International and sends Activity Report to Immediate Reporting Officer/GOPIO Int'l, as applicable regularly every 6 months, i.e., June 30th and Dec. 31st each year.
 - vi. The Chapters under compliance shall receive the designation of “Certified GOPIO Chapter” and shall accrue all privileges authorized by GOPIO International.
 - vii. Chapter(s) not in compliance for “Good Standing Chapter” shall be notified by the Immediate Reporting Officer/GOPIO Int'l as applicable. GOPIO International retains the right to “Decertify” that Chapters that are found to be non-compliant of these Bylaws after a 30-day warning of rectification.

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- viii. If a chapter has arrears for previous years, the chapter has to pay the full amount for it to have the benefit of previous assigned delegates or a minimum of \$100 for one delegate during each year when arrears owed. If the chapter goes through the later route, for the current year, when arrears are paid, the chapter is eligible for only one delegate. If the chapter claims to have more than 30 members, it has to send the list to the Chapter Review Committee to get additional delegates in the later years. Those chapters which do not want to go through this route can seek membership only by applying as a new chapter and the waiting period of good standing applies.
- ix. No chapter member shall conduct activities detrimental to the good standing of GOPIO in writing to news media or correspondence otherwise.

D. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL CHAPTERS & GOPIO INTERNATIONAL

- i. A 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 General Body according to the following sliding scale:
 - 15 members or more - 1 delegate.
 - 31 members or more - 2 delegates
 - 51 members or more - 3 delegates
 - 101 members or more - 4 delegates
 - 201 members or more - 5 delegates
- iii. The chapter shall remit US\$100 per delegate on an annual basis to GOPIO International as per the above delegate chart at the beginning of the financial year, i.e., 1st July of the calendar year. For a chapter to be in good standing, the chapter will have to pay all arrears, if due.
- iv. **Whom to Contact:** Area Coordinator / National Coordinator / International Coordinator and/or GOPIO International President.
- v. All changes to officers by election or otherwise must be provided to the Immediate Reporting Officer with contact details within 30 days of changes.


APPENDIX – II

GOPIO COUNCILS

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

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.


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- ii. The chairperson shall be appointed by the International President of GOPIO at the recommendation Executive Vice President and after consultation with GOPIO International Chairperson and after approval by the Executive Council.
- iii. The co-chairpersons shall be appointed by the President of GOPIO at recommendation of the Executive Vice President in consultation with the Council Chairperson and International Coordinator of the region from where the Co-Chair name is proposed.
- 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 symposiums.
- vii. Each council shall report to the Executive Vice President. In the absence of the Executive Vice President, the Council shall report to the 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 General Secretary (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/Associate member. GOPIO Council chair has to be a Life Member; Council Co-Chair has to be an Associate Member or member of a GOPIO Chapter.
- 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 subsequent amendments and changes as the basis for fair and equitable treatment for all peoples.

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- 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 CULTURAL COUNCIL NETWORK

- 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.

C. GOPIO ACADEMIC COUNCIL NETWORK

- 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 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.

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D. GOPIO HEALTH & WELLNESS COUNCIL NETWORK


- i. To cater to the increasing health & wellness 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 & wellness seminars for the benefit of the non-resident Indian (NRIs) and persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) on health & wellness related issues that are of current interest and concern.
- iii. To provide, where possible and expedient, guidance and referrals on health & wellness based on categories, region and other pertinent factors.
- iv. To recognize those among NRI/PIO health & wellness providers, who have made notable achievements and for their community service.

E. GOPIO YOUTH COUNCIL NETWORK

- 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.

F. GOPIO YOUNG PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

- i. To cater to the growing population and needs of the non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) young professionals.
- ii. To foster collaborative forums for dialogue and exchanges among non-resident Indian (NRI) and persons of Indian Origin (PIO) young professionals 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) young professionals on local, regional and global levels for better understanding, cooperation and community service.

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- iv. To recognize those among NRI/PIO young professionals who have made notable achievements in their respective fields of work and for their community service.

G. GOPIO WOMEN COUNCIL NETWORK


- 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 NETWORK

- 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).
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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 NETWORK

- 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 promoting Science & Technology ventures.

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- iv. To maintain links and collaborate with governments and agencies of other countries for the purpose of Science & Technology.
- 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.

J. GOPIO COUNCIL ON SENIORS

- i. To promote activities and welfare of the Diaspora Seniors and to develop networking among them.
- ii. To study issues of seniors of Indian origin in different countries and suggest ways to improve the quality of their life.
- iii. Organize tours and travels for seniors of Indian origin in different countries.
- iv. Organize regional and national conferences in cooperation with the Indian Diaspora senior groups.


APPENDIX – III

CRITERIA FOR GOPIO SERVICE AWARDS AND PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS


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. **GOPIO Professional Achievement Awards (GOPIO PAA)** would be given for outstanding achievement in public service and recognition in Profession, Business and Entrepreneurship.

The GOPIO Community Service Awards (GOPIO CSA) and Professional Achievement Awards (GOPIO PAA) 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 in this category.

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- A. Recognition:** For outstanding community service, public service and/or significant charitable or philanthropic contributions of benefit to the community. For professional achievement, the recipient must be already recognized in that field.
- i. For CSA, 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.
 - ii. For Professional Achievement Award (PAA), the recipient must have already been recognized by their professional societies and who has achieved name recognition for the Indian Diaspora community.
 - iii. Both categories can also consider young professionals below 35 as a separate category.
- B. Eligibility:** Non-Resident Indian/Person of Indian Origin/ Indian Nationals or others who has rendered services to Indian diaspora and or promoted the society at large.
- 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.
 - 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 and Professional Awards Selection Committee, or chapter/regional and national committee as appropriate would make the final selection out of the list of recommended nominees. The Committee would include the International Coordinator/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.

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- v. The cut-off date for receipt of recommendations is to be set by GOPIO Int'l. E.C. or the Chapter E.C, if the awards are given by the chapters.

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

- i. **Notification:** The recommended candidates, if selected, would be notified in writing by GOPIO International/Regional or its chapters. Should the selected candidate decline or not be able to attend the award ceremony, then the second recommended candidate could be considered.

F. 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 the GOPIO logo and the names of the issuing officers.

G. 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). The EC shall also decide the criteria. GCCI and GOPIO Councils and Chapters giving any awards must confer with EC before making any commitments. Refer appropriate GOPIO policies for various awards.


APPENDIX – IV

GOPIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE and INDUSTRY (GCCCI) BYLAWS AND OPERATIONAL MODALITY

A. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

GOPIO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) will serve as a non-geographical chapter of GOPIO International to:

- a. create a worldwide networking opportunity for people of business who are of Indian origin,
- b. encourage and promote increasing levels of business investments by and among NRI/PIOs in various parts of the world,

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- c. bring businesses in India closer to Diaspora businesses and to network and facilitate cooperation and joint ventures,
- d. 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,
- e. facilitate more awareness among non-Indians of the potentials and benefits of investments and trade with India and within and among the PIO countries,
- f. recognize those among NRIs/PIOs in the business community who have made notable achievements and/or for their community service.

B. GCCI COMPOSITION AND RELATION WITH PARENT BODY GOPIO

GENERAL BODY OF GCCI:


It shall elect its Executive Committee and shall consist of:

1. Life and Regular Annual GCCI Members, GCCI
2. GCCI Chapter Delegates and,
3. Delegates from affiliated chambers.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF GCCI*:

It shall be composed as follows:

1. Chairman GICC
2. Co-Chair GICC
3. Co-Chair GICC
4. GOPIO International Chairman (Ex-Officio)
5. GOPIO International President (Ex-Officio)
6. Regional President (North America)
7. Regional President (South America)
8. Regional President (Caribbean)
9. Regional President (Europe)
10. Regional President (South-East Asia)
11. Regional President (Middle East)
12. Regional President (Africa)
13. Regional President (Oceania)
14. Regional President (South Asia)
15. Regional President (Francophone)
16. Director-at-large (Membership)
17. Director-at-large (Programs)
18. Director-at-large (Administration & Management)

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19. Director-at-large (Public Relations)
20. Director-at-large (Liaison with other Chambers)

*GOPIO-Executive Committee appointed positions until GCCI Life-membership numbers reach a minimum of 50.

GCCI will be a non-geographical chapter of GOPIO International, with its own categories Sponsor/Life Members and annual members based on a fee schedule. GCCI **will be** further subjected to all bylaw amendments and policies through the GOPIO General Body and its working details through GOPIO **Executive Council**, till GCCI Council of Delegates reaches a membership rostrum of 50 members, it will then elect its Chairman, two Co-Chairs and five Directors-at-Large. In addition, each region (as specified in GOPIO constitution) will elect its own President if the delegate from the region reaches 15.

C. MEMBERSHIP

GCCI will create its own categories and get their own annual and Life Members based on a fee schedule established by themselves from time to time. Refer www.gopio.net and www.gopio.com for application *form*.

Maintaining membership in good standing status - One attends at least one international program in 2 years or at least two local GCCI chapter meetings (in person or virtual) in two years.

GCCI OFFICERS


GCCI Executive Committee will consists of a Chairman, two Co-Chairs, Regional Presidents and five Directors-at-Large. Directors-at-Large will take up responsibility for things such as Membership, Programs, Administrative Matters, Publicity and Public Relations and Liaison with other Chambers and Govt. agencies, GCCI Chair will also be a member of GOPIO Executive Council. GOPIO Chairman and President will serve as ex-officio voting members of GCCI Executive Committee.

D. GCCI WORKING MODALITY

On an ongoing basis, as with other Chapters, 25% of the Life Membership fee from all those becoming GOPIO Life Member through GCCI will be used exclusively for GCCI activities. GCCI will keep its own Life Membership and Annual fee in its own bank account. GCCI will also keep half of the combined GOPIO / GCCI Life Membership fee. In the case of a Sponsor Member, GCCI will keep 2/3rd in its own account.

GCCI will organize its own programs in different cities around the world through GCCI chapters. However, the chapter can only be initiated by a GCCI Sponsor/Life member with permission from the Chairperson of GCCI. Such a unit will also work closely with the local GOPIO Chapter and may also send a representative to the local GOPIO chapter managing committee.

E. GCCI Chapters

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Each GCCI chapter will be named after neighborhood/town/city (such as GCCI-Flushing, GCCI-Little India LA or GCCI-Edison). When the GCCI chapter reaches a minimum of 10 Life/Sponsor/Annual members, it can designate a delegate to the GCCI General Body. For each additional 10 members. GCCI chapter can designate a delegate to a maximum of five delegates. Each chapter will elect its own officers consisting of President, VP. Secretary and Treasurer. The chapter membership fees will be decided by the chapter Executive Committee. Each authorized chapter will deposit \$100 at the approval of Letter of Intent (LOI) acceptance by the GCCI Executive Committee and \$100 annual fee. Each chapter with good in standing has the right to vote in the GCCI General Body. A GCCI Chapter can be initiated with four people signing a Letter of Intent (LOI) and sending it to GCCI Chair/Co-Chair/Regional President and after approval by the GCCI Exec. Committee, the chapter sends in the admission fee. The GICC chapter can then officially be launched or inaugurated.

GCCI programs and activities will be managed by and Executive committee. consisting of-GCCI Chair and two Co-Chairs, Regional Presidents and up to five additional elected/appointed Director-at-large.

F. GCCI ELECTION

After reaching a total of 50 Sponsor/Life Members, the Chairman, Co-chairs and five Director-at-Large will be elected by GCCI delegates. Each Regional President will be elected by delegates from the region if there are more than 15 delegates in each such region or appointed by the GCCI Executive Committee if elections are not held for any region.

Any revision in GCCI membership fee will be decided by GCCI Executive Committee and is subjected to approval by GOPIO Executive Council. As is the case in GOPIO Chapters, all the matters relating to the GCCI Chapters will be decided by GCCI Executive Committee. GCCI will also have representation in the GOPIO General Body similar to the way all GOPIO Chapter delegates are selected.


G. GCCI NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

GCCI National Organization can be set up in a country, with a minimum of 5 chapters in a country or more than 10 delegates with a combination of GCCI Life members and chapter/chamber delegates. They will elect a president for the country who will coordinate activities of common GCCI interest in the country. The country set up will work with the GCCI President from the region for common regional coordination.


In case of any conflict within GCCI Executive Committee or non-functioning of the GCCI Executive Committee, GOPIO Executive Council has the ultimate authority to take over the functioning of GCCI and appoint new officers till the next election.

H. RELATIONS WITH OTHER CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

GCCI works with other Chambers of Commerce to promote common goals and interests. By making one time affiliation fee of \$250, such Chambers can be an official member and will be listed in GCCI website. In addition, by making an annual contribution of \$100, such chambers can get a delegate

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representation at GCCI General Body. Each such Chamber will have one vote in GCCI General Body, which elects its Chairman, Co-Chairs, President of a region and President of a national unit.

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APPENDIX – V

PRIVACY AND LEGALS

Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) International values individual’s privacy and follows current best practice guidelines to ensure individual privacy is protected.

Generally, any information collected by GOPIO International is provided by the individual when one chooses to stay up to date. This normally includes the person’s name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail and any preferences chosen by the individual in registering one’s membership on the prescribed form or creating their profile. This information helps GOPIO customize the individual’s online experience to suit their interests and passions. GOPIO will not share the individual’s information with anyone else, except where legally allowed, or required (such as for donations to GOPIO chapters or GOPIO International and petitions). GOPIO does not store credit card information.

When the individual comments on GOPIO’s content, the individuals are acknowledged that their comments will be published with their name, city and country. GOPIO does not allow anonymous comments. GOPIO International is moderated and any comments that are defamatory or otherwise inappropriate will be removed.

GOPIO International reminds and encourages the individual not to disclose any personal information when commenting on content. Participants acknowledge that GOPIO International cannot control the use of information one posts publicly on their site or social media.

When organizing a petition, GOPIO International will collect information required by the petition.

Subscriptions

All e-mails and GOPIO News Bulletins sent via automated mailing lists will clearly identify GOPIO International or its representative as the sender and will include a suitable method for unsubscribing.

Disclosure of Information


Personal information provided to GOPIO International, and information collected by GOPIO chapters will not be disclosed to any other third party except where legally required.

In the case of credit card transactions, the IP address of the visitor may be recorded, however this information will not be used or disclosed except where legally required.

General Information

If one’s got something to say, GOPIO International would like to know about it. GOPIO would encourage provide feedback directly to any current Executive Council member by using their e-mail address on the current monthly GOPIO News Bulletin.

Copyright and Trademark

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