

# Criteria for Full Membership of Dóchas

## 1. Membership Applications

- (i) Applications for membership shall be made in the manner outlined in Article 5 of the Articles of Association, a copy of which shall be furnished to each applicant.
- (ii) Where the Board considers that an applicant does not meet all the criteria for membership but with assistance and time will do so the Board may assist that applicant to attend to those matters which require attention before the Board can recommend the applicant to the General Assembly for admission to membership.<sup>1</sup> The Board shall make it clear to the applicant that the giving of assistance by it is no assurance that the General Assembly will in due course admit the applicant to membership.
- (iii) Where the Board is satisfied that the applicant at (ii) above is attending to the matters identified by the Board and otherwise continues to be suitable in time for admission to membership, in order to better acquaint the applicant to the affairs of Dóchas, the Board may invite the applicant organisation to participate in all events organised by Dóchas (including attending and participating as a guest (but not voting) at General Assemblies save for matters where only members ought to be present in the meeting). Such participation may be on such terms as the Board prescribe (including without limitation the payment of costs of participation on an equivalent basis to members of Dóchas).

## 2. General Criteria for Applicant Organisations

- (i) The applicant Non-Governmental Development Organisation (NGDO) should be non-profit making, humanitarian and non-partisan in its aims.
- (ii) The applicant NGO should exercise its activities at a national, or in any case at a wider than local level.
- (iii) A significant part of the applicant's work should be concerned with development, (such as projects, development education, emergency aid or volunteers).
- (iv) The organisation should be headquartered in Ireland, or, if it is not, the Irish branch should have substantial powers of decision-making in its own right, including control and disposal of funds and appointment of personnel.
- (v) The organisation should be established in Ireland for at least two years.
- (vi) Copies of constitution, audited accounts, and annual reports for the two most recent years and any other relevant documentation shall be furnished on request to the Board and if necessary to the General Assembly.
- (vii) The existing members must be satisfied that the aims, objectives and practice of the applicant organisation reflects the spirit and intention of Dóchas as well as complying with the criteria set out above, and that it has indicated acceptance of the following policy statements:
  - (a) NGDO Charter – Basic Principles of Development and Humanitarian Aid NGDOs in the European Union

---

<sup>1</sup> Note Article 5 (h) states if an applicant for membership does not meet the criteria the Board "shall" turn them down.

- (b) Code of Conduct on Images and Messages
- (c) Irish Development NGOs Code of Corporate Governance

**Applications for Full Membership are brought to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for approval usually in May each year.**

All applicants must agree to comply with Dóchas policies as and when they apply to them.

**Important:** If an organisation is eligible to be a Full Member it cannot apply for Associate Membership, with one exception: where an organisation is committed to meeting the criteria for Full Membership they may become an Associate Member while so doing, but for no longer than two years.

### **3. Criteria for Continuing Membership**

- (i) All Dóchas members must submit Annual Audited Accounts for the previous financial year to Dóchas by 30 June each year at the latest. For the purpose of calculating membership fees these should clearly show the organisation's voluntary income figure.
- (ii) Members must pay their Annual Membership fee within 30 days from the date on which the invoice is issued. Failure to do so will incur a penalty of 10% of the amount due in membership fees, or a minimum of €50.
- (iii) Members failing to pay their Annual Membership fee in the required 30 days from the date on which the invoice was issued shall have their membership reviewed by the Board.
- (iv) Members failing to attend three successive Annual General Assemblies shall have their membership reviewed by the Board.
- (v) Members failing to report to Dóchas on their adherence to Dóchas Codes of Conduct shall have their membership reviewed by the Board.
- (vi) Following the process outlined in (iii) or (iv) above and (ix) below Members failing to pay outstanding Membership fees in the time prescribed by the Board or failing to attend 3 successive Annual General Assemblies may forfeit membership.
- (vii) All unpaid subscriptions and contributions imposed on members remain payable for a former member. In the event that an organisation decides to re-apply for membership in the future any outstanding fees must be paid before any new application for membership can be considered.
- (viii) Members must continue to comply with the general requirements for membership, and demonstrate a continuing interest in active co-operation and involvement with Dóchas and its work.
- (ix) Article 5(j) of Dóchas constitution stipulates that 'Subject to the prior approval by a two-thirds majority decision of Members of the Company in General Assembly, the Board may at any time by notice in writing
  - i. Require any Member whom they in their absolute discretion deem unfit or unsuitable to be a Member to withdraw from the Company and such member shall cease to be a Member of the Company upon service upon it of such notice

OR

- ii. Suspend any Member, provided that the reasons for such suspension and the conditions on which the suspension may be revoked are notified to the Member concerned
  
- (x) Any member organisation which appears to have ceased to comply with the requirements of Sections 2 or 3 of these criteria, or which by its activities or orientation is considered to bring Dóchas into disrepute shall have its membership reviewed under the terms of Article 5 (j) of the Articles of Association and may have its membership forfeited.

**Note:** Criteria for membership and continuing membership may be amended by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly convened on three weeks' notice, which notice shall include details of the proposed changes.