



# World Glaucoma Association

## The Global Glaucoma Network

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#### Officers

F. Lerner (AR)  
*President*  
K. Martin (UK)  
*Immediate Past President*  
T. Aung (SG)  
*Past Past President*  
N. Gupta (CA)  
*President Elect*  
P. Healey (AU)  
*Treasurer*  
A. Sit (US)  
*Assistant Treasurer*  
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*Executive Vice President*  
K. Mansouri (CH)  
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#### Governors

N. Kizor-Akaraiwe (NG)  
V. Lingam (IN)  
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#### Executive Office

Irene Koomans  
Marije de Graaf

**Meeting** : Statutes Committee  
**Date** : Wednesday, October 27, 2021  
**Time** : 10-11:30 pm (CEST)  
**Location** : Online via Zoom  
**Present** : Paul Healey, Norbert Pfeiffer, Simon Skalicky, Arthur Sit (chair). *Executive Office:* Kaweh Mansouri, Irene Koomans (minute taker)

### Minutes

#### 1. Research Committee

The WGA Foundation has accumulated substantial financial reserves that could jeopardize the tax-exempt status in Switzerland. The Executive Committee has been advised by tax consultants to increase the spending of the WGA Foundation on (fundamental) research into glaucoma. It requests the Statutes Committee to draft an outline for a new Research Committee, as an opportunity to spend more money in line the mission and goals of the World Glaucoma Association (WGA).

Arthur drafted a document with talking points. Main considerations in the following discussion:

- Based on his experience at the American Glaucoma Society (AGS) you need a fairly large committee to handle the workload.
- Simon Skalicky mentions conflict of interest/at arm's length issue: an applicant works at an institution where a Research Committee member also works. Can be resolved with a 2<sup>nd</sup> group approving the grant.
- All agree the following for the WGA: the Research Committee will review and score applications with recommendation to Board of Governors. The decision to award a research grant will be by the Board of Governors. Any conflicted Governors will excuse themselves from the vote.
- Larger groups usually tend to receive more funds. The WGA Research Committee will aim to provide niches/certain areas of the world funding. Language in the Regulations will be along the lines of 'special consideration for the developing world'.
- The amount of available funding will need to be determined each year. Paul expects 50-250k USD in a good year and mentions that 50-100k USD is more realistic. Irene to check with Swiss tax consultant



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what would be recommended to spend our financial reserves on, is research preferred over education?

- Kaweh adds that we need to increase our spending, to avoid paying negative interest and possible fines from the Swiss tax authorities.
- The available amount should not be communicated externally.
- As to committee members, Kaweh suggests that 3 of them should come from the AAB, others should already be active in the WGA committees.
- The research grant(s) should be directed to early career ophthalmologists, up to 10 years after finishing their glaucoma fellowship or residency.
- The language for the regulation on the Research Committee should leave sufficient room for the Board of Governors to operate.
- The AAB mentorship program that is currently being developed should complement the Research Committee nicely. If a grant is denied, the mentorship program could work as a back-up.
- Salary of PI is not necessarily excluded.
- As the WGA is a charity, the WGA will claim no intellectual property rights. Acknowledgement will be required.
- Grant applications should be within the basic aim of the WGA, with global impact. The WGA goals will have to be included in the scoring of the application.
- The decision to award grants annually will be up to the Board of Governors

### 2. Optometric society memberships

- Member applications are covered by Article 3.4 of the WGA Statutes, which states: “(...) The Board reserves the right to reject an application without giving reasons.”
- All applications are reviewed individually, taking local expertise into account.
- Optometric societies can apply to become a member, but the WGA will not actively reach out to these groups.

### 3. Cleanup of Regulations vs Statutes

- There is inconsistent language in the Regulations regarding the election of Officers and President-Elect.
- The Statutes have been updated in 2019, the Regulations need to be updated as well.
- Several articles refer to ‘elected’ where this should be ‘approved’.



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- The Regulations stipulate that both President and President-Elect have to be elected by the General Assembly.
- At the General Assemblies in 2017 and 2019, the vote has been for the President-Elect and Governors, no Officers.
- Governors are eligible to be officers after one year of service on the Board of Governors (Regulation 2.1), which seems to imply that Officers have actually been reviewed by the General Assembly at an earlier stage.
- Norbert mentions that there should be an escape route, if the President-Elect is not up to the President job in the 2 years they have been President-Elect. Or if they should pass away.
- The timing of the General Assembly vote should be taken into consideration. However, an electronic vote is allowed.
- All agree to continue this cleanup offline after the meeting.