

Naturvetarna Constitution

§ §1. NATURVETARNA (THE SWEDISH ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS)

Naturvetarna (the Swedish Association of Professional Scientists) is a trade union for academics within the science field. It is a member of Saco and politically unaffiliated. The activities of Naturvetarna are, at all levels, based on the involvement of its members¹.

Naturvetarna operations are based on the values that characterize a democratic state as expressed in the Swedish Constitution, the UN Declaration on Human Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Naturvetarna' s tasks are to:

- Safeguard and promote members' union, professional and collective interests.
- Work to achieve high levels of quality in science education and research.
- Work to ensure that the knowledge and skills of Naturvetarna are used well by society.

§ 2. MEMBERSHIP

Membership is granted by the Central Executive Board. Members must either be studying or have graduated with a degree in the sciences or equivalent education at university level² or hold a position that requires the equivalent competence.

During the first three months of membership there is no entitlement to individual qualified advice or service provision.³

Members undertake to:

- Show loyalty to the union and to its Constitution.
- Show solidarity on the labour market and respect agreements that have been entered into.

Members must also:

¹ For example, local workplace associations are vital to mobilising membership commitment.

² Normally not vocational training colleges.

³ Examples of such services include negotiation assistance at the workplace or career advice. The Union, at central or local levels, determines whether qualified advice may be given even if the time period qualification has not been fulfilled. Student members are entitled to help as concerns, for example, summer jobs or internships, however only after the first three months of membership.

- Report any change of workplace and employment situation to the union.
- Student members must report when they begin employment.

Cancellation of union membership must be carried out in writing and will enter into force at the beginning of the month following the cancellation.

Members who, in spite of reminders, do not pay their membership fees may be excluded from the union.

Members who act in breach of the Constitution or are not loyal to the union may be excluded.⁴ The decision regarding exclusion pursuant to this paragraph may, at the request of the excluded member, be examined by the Congress or Union Council. Such requests must be submitted to the union no later than three weeks after exclusion decision.⁵

Individuals who reapply to join the union must have settled any debts to the union. Members who have been excluded due to disloyalty may only be re-admitted after a special decision by the Central Executive Board.

Congress may appoint a person who has made great contributions to the union as an Honorary Member.

§ 3. FEES

Congress establishes the level of membership fees. The Union Council may take decisions on extra fees or changes to membership fee levels.

§ 4. UNEMPLOYMENT AND INCOME INSURANCE

Members of Naturvetarna should also join the unemployment insurance fund Akademikernas a-kassa (AEA). Membership in any other unemployment insurance fund is not compatible with membership of Naturvetarna.⁶

Members of Naturvetarna automatically belong to the Naturvetarna income insurance system. Income insurance acts as a complement to the benefits received from AEA and is paid out if members become unemployed and all the conditions for benefits are fulfilled in accordance with current regulations.

§ 5. CONFLICT FUND

The trade union holds a conflict fund in order to be able to support members financially in cases of labour market conflicts. Special Statutes apply for the conflict fund.

§ 6. ELECTED POSITIONS

⁴ For example threats and violence against employees or elected officials of the union are regarded as disloyalty and form grounds for exclusion.

⁵ Members who request a reassessment of an exclusion decision remain as members until the matter is finally assessed within the union. During this period the member is covered by the collective union benefits, e.g. income insurance, but is not entitled to individual services.

⁶ Membership of AEA is a prerequisite for coverage by Naturvetarna income insurance.

Naturvetarna, in their elected bodies, will endeavour to reflect the composition of the membership.

Only members may hold elected positions such as Congress delegate, Union Council member, Central Executive Board member, Nominations Committee member and elected auditor. If a member cancels membership or is excluded, elected positions cease immediately. For other assignments, the Central Executive Board may grant exceptions from the membership requirement.⁷

§ 7. ASSOCIATIONS

There are professional associations, student council and doctoral candidate councils within Naturvetarna. The collective name associations is used for all these bodies in the Constitution.⁸ These associations work in an advisory capacity to the Central Executive Board.

The purpose of these associations is to monitor and drive forward specific professional issues. The Central Executive Board determines the establishment of new associations and approves their statutes.

Association statutes must contain:

- The purpose of the association.
- Any membership fees.
- AGM regulations.

Other requirements as stated in the Naturvetarna Constitution:

- That amendments to the Association Constitution must be approved by the Central Executive Board
- Terms for dissolution

An association is regarded as active when it engages in activities directed towards association membership, organises AGMs and provides annual operational and financial reports.

If an association intends to submit a request or give an external statement or response on a matter of principle⁹, this must be carried out in consultation with the Central Executive Board.

§ 8. CONGRESS

The Naturvetarna Congress is the highest decision-making body in the union. At the Congress, every membership delegate present has a vote.

⁷ This applies, for example, when an HQ employee carries out an assignment for Congress or in various bodies or when a non-member represents Naturvetarna members at workplaces based on agreements.

⁸ In addition there are local workplace associations within the union, however the concept association in the Constitution does not include these.

⁹ Important in principle concerns important issues that have not be previously regulated or issues that exert considerable effect on several associations.

Congresses are normally held at three-year intervals in the period 1 October - 31 December. The Central Executive Board may call extraordinary congresses if circumstances suggest this measure. An extraordinary congress must be called if at least one third of the number of delegates, two of the three union auditors or at least one tenth of the membership request such in writing.

Extraordinary congresses must be held within 60 days of the request being filed at the union. Extraordinary congresses may carry out by-elections.

§ 9. DELEGATES AND MANDATE PERIOD

Delegates to Congress are appointed by the union members.¹⁰ Delegates for the entire Congress period, are appointed before 1 June of the year the Congress is to be held.

The union is divided into six constituencies for election of congress delegates:

South: Blekinge, Skåne and Halland counties

West: Västra Götaland and Värmland counties

East: Södermanland, Östergötland, Jönköping, Kronoberg, Kalmar, Gotland, Örebro and Västmanland counties

Stockholm: Stockholm County

Mid-Sweden: Uppsala County

North: Dalarna, Gävleborg, Västernorrland, Jämtland, Västerbotten and Norrbotten counties.

Residents of other countries may choose the constituency they wish to belong to.

All members and associations are entitled to nominate candidates.¹¹

There are 55 mandates to each Congress. Of these, 5 must consist of student members. The Union Student Council appoints these 5 delegates.

Each constituency returns a number of delegates that reflect the relative size of the constituency, consequently the number of delegate places is distributed using the d'Hondt Method.¹² A similar number of deputies is also elected. The number of Congress delegates is allocated according to the constituency membership level as

¹⁰ Members who are members of the Central Executive Board, auditors or employees of the union or who are a member of the Nominations Committee may not be appointed as delegates.

¹¹ Student members may not be nominated as candidates, however student members are entitled to nominate and to vote.

¹² The d'Hondt Method means that the membership of the constituencies is divided by a series of divisors, with the highest comparative number providing one mandate, after which a new comparative number is calculated. The divisors are $m + 1$ when m is the number of mandates already awarded.

per 31 December of the year before the election. The electorate consists of all members of the relevant constituency. Place of residence determines the constituency an individual belongs to.

§10. NOTIFICATION

Notification to attend Congress and of any changes to the Constitution will be sent out eight weeks in advance of the Congress date.

The Congress programme and other documentation will be distributed at least four weeks in advance of the Congress.

Notification and other documentation for an extraordinary Congress will be distributed at least two weeks in advance. Congress delegates will receive all documentation, deputies receive the notification and the Congress programme.

§11. CONGRESS PROGRAMME

Congress will, in addition to election of meeting officials and other formal matters:

- a) Establish a voting list.
- b) Process the Management Report, adoption of Income Statement and Balance Sheet for the Union and the Conflict Fund, take decisions as concerns any deficit or surplus according to the Balance Sheets adopted, accept the Audit Report concerning Union operations and Conflict Fund and deal with the issue of discharge from liability for the Board.
- c) Establishment of framework budget, membership fees and operational focus for the period up to the next Congress.
- d) Processing of other motions to the Congress.
- e) Processing of motions plus Central Executive Board comments.
- f) Election of Board Chair and at least eight and at most ten other Board members.
- g) Election of three auditors plus personal deputies.
- h) Any fees or remunerations for the Board and other elected officials.
- i) Election of Chair of Nominations Committee and four other Nominations Committee members.
- j) Adoption of instructions for elected auditors and Nominations Committee.

Motions to Congress must be filed at least 13 weeks before the Congress.

Matters not on the Congress programme may only be discussed if at least three quarters of the delegates present vote to do so. Such matters to be submitted at the opening of the meeting.

Only matters stated in the notification may be dealt with by extraordinary congresses.

§ 12. RIGHT TO ATTEND

Members of the Central Executive Board, the Nominations Committee, Auditors and officials who are employed at the Union may participate in Congress discussions but

not in decisions. Other union members are entitled to attend Congress discussions in plenary unless Congress takes a decision forbidding this.

A representative of each active local association will be specially invited to the Congress. These representatives possess rights of attendance and expression in plenary sessions but are not permitted to participate in decisions.

§ 13. VOTING

Majority decisions apply in all Union decision-making bodies unless otherwise agreed. Open voting is used with the exception of election of individuals where a closed ballot is always used. The Chair has the deciding vote in all matters except the election of individuals which, in the event of a tie, are determined by drawing lots. Proxy voting is not permitted. During closed ballots at Congress, voting slips must state as many names as there are positions to fill in order to be valid.

§ 14. CENTRAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Central Executive Board leads union operations in accordance with this Constitution and the decisions of Congress.

The Central Executive Board consists of the Chair and at least eight and at most ten other Board members. One of these members must be the student representative.¹³ The Board itself elects a first and second Deputy Chair.

There is a quorum when at least half of the members are present.

Board tasks:

- To implement Congress decisions.
- Promote union objectives and operations.
- Prepare Congress matters in accordance with §10.
- Appoint individuals as signatories for union financial operations.
- Manage union and Conflict Fund funds and property.
- Submit Conflict Fund accounts to the Auditors before 1 April each year.
- Take decisions in accordance with this Constitution unless otherwise stipulated.
- Employ and dismiss the Executive Director.

§ 15. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The election of the Central Executive Board and auditors, as well as officials at Congress and in the Central Council, are prepared by a Nominations Committee consisting of five members. The Nominations Committee will also make proposals for remuneration for the Board and other representatives and the scope of the assignments as Chair and member of the board.¹⁴ The Nominations Committee's

¹³ The student representative must be a student when elected to the Board.

¹⁴ Other officials are defined as the Auditors and Nominations Committee.

proposal for student representative to the Central Executive Board will be established in consultation with the Student Council.

The Nominations Committee proposal will be completed no later than 7 weeks before the Congress date.

In the event of differences in the interpretation of rules for fees and remuneration, the Nominations Committee has an obligation to submit its interpretation of these issues.

§ 16. FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL YEAR

The Union financial and operational year is the calendar year.

§ 17. AUDITORS

To audit Union accounts and Board management of the Union, three auditors and the same number of deputies will be appointed, of which one auditor and one deputy must be an authorised public accountant.

§ 18. CENTRAL COUNCIL

The Central Council meets on the years when there is no Congress. Matters to be discussed there include:

- a) Any by-elections for Board or nominations committee.
- b) Changes to membership fees.
- c) Examination as concerns exclusion cases.
- d) Report from Board on operations and follow-up of Congress decisions.
- e) Report from Board on union finances.
- f) Audit Report.

If matters under points a - c are to be dealt with in the Central Council, written information must be distributed no later than three weeks before the meeting. The Chair of Central Council is appointed from among the delegates.

The Central Council consists of one representative from each active association and the two congress delegates from each constituency who achieved the highest number of votes in the Congress election. As replacements for Congress members who cannot participate, the individuals who received the next highest number of votes will be appointed and so on.

The Central Executive Board members and one of the elected auditors will participate in the Central Council and the Nomination Committee will also be invited.

The same requirements for formal documentation at the Congress apply for matters relating to items a - c.

§ 19. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Decisions concerning amendments to this Constitution will be made by Congress. A majority of at least two thirds is necessary plus that the matter has been stated in the Congress notification and Congress programme.

§ 20. DISSOLUTION OF THE UNION

An identical decision by two consecutive Congresses, of which at least one must be the ordinary Congress, is required to dissolve the union. A two-thirds majority is necessary.

Upon dissolution, the union assets will be disposed of by decision of the Congress that took the final decision on the dissolution of the Union.

Statutes of the Conflict Fund

§ 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Conflict Fund is to provide the Union with a good financial foundation as concerns its work with members' social and financial interests. Members who have paid their membership fees are entitled to support from the Fund.

§ 2. FUNDS

Funds are contributed to this Fund to the extent determined by Congress.

§ 3. MANAGEMENT

The Fund is managed by the Central Executive Board. The Board will submit a report on the Fund at every Congress. The union auditors examine the accounts and management of the Fund.

§ 4. UTILISATION

These funds may be used during a conflict that affects union members or which is important to the Union in some other manner. The Conflict Fund may also be used to cover legal costs in labour law disputes.

§ 5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Conflict benefits are paid after application, the Board determines the latest date of application. Conflict benefits are the equivalent of the member's highest net loss of salary due to the conflict.¹⁵ The Central Executive Board determines other application regulations when managing conflict benefits.

§ 6. AMENDMENT TO STATUTES

¹⁵ Salary also includes commission but not bonus and overtime.

The same regulations apply to amendments to these Statutes as to amendments to the Naturvetarna Constitution.