

Constitution of the International Society for the Study of Early Medieval England

1. Name and purpose.

The International Society for the Study of Early Medieval England (ISSEME) is intended to advance knowledge of the Anglophone cultures of early medieval Britain in a worldwide context.

- a. ISSEME thus supports the study of the histories, material and lived cultural productions, languages, and literatures of early medieval England, along with those of its contacts; and likewise the study of their scholarly and popular legacy in the later medieval and modern worlds.
- b. It shall enact this purpose by providing venues for teachers and researchers to discuss and disseminate work related to the study of early medieval England, and by supporting its members' ongoing development as teachers and researchers.
- c. The fulfilment of ISSEME's purpose thus requires an open and equitable exchange of knowledge, and as such ISSEME shall strive to create and maintain a scholarly environment free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.
- d. The name of the society may be altered through the constitutional amendment process described under §4(d) below.
- e. ISSEME is incorporated as a nonprofit educational charity in the United States of America, and is subject to the provisions of U.S. tax laws.

2. Membership. Membership in ISSEME is open to all individuals with an interest in advancing its purpose.

- a. **Regular membership.** In general, regular membership may be gained through direct application to ISSEME, through its website or other publicly accessible means.
 - i. **Benefits of membership.** ISSEME members in good standing shall be entitled to propose presentations for the biennial conference; to vote in all general Board elections and referendums; to stand for election to the Board, or to propose candidates for election; and to receive all general notices and publications issued by ISSEME to its full membership.
 - ii **Professional Conduct.** All ISSEME members must abide by our professional conduct policy, as posted on the ISSEME website and circulated regularly to the membership.
 - ii. **Membership dues.** Members shall remain in good standing through the regular payment of dues in support of ISSEME's purposes.
 1. The schedule of dues shall be graduated according to the means and employment status of individual members, with special consideration made for current students, contingent faculty, and retired members. Appeal for special consideration in other cases may be made to the Executive Director.
 2. The amount of dues shall be reassessed biennially, with all changes approved by vote of the Board.
- b. **Life membership.** ISSEME may confer Life Membership on individuals who have rendered especially distinguished service to the field. In general, candidates for Life Membership will be at or near retirement at the time of nomination.
 - i. Nominations for Life Membership may be submitted to the Board in advance of each biennial General Meeting. Candidates for Life Membership need not be Regular Members at the time of their nomination.
 - ii. Life Membership shall be conferred at a General Meeting, following a majority vote of the Board and Officers. The Board and Officers may constitute a special panel to advise this decision.

iii. Life Members will enjoy all benefits of Regular Membership, and shall not be subject to the payment of dues.

c. **Rescinding of membership.** In certain circumstances, Regular or Life Membership in ISSEME may be rescinded.

i. In general, the rescinding of membership shall only be considered in cases of professional malfeasance by members whose behavior demonstrably violates ISSEME's professional conduct policy, thereby hindering the organization's fulfillment of its purpose. Such behavior might include plagiarism, harassment, sexual misconduct and/or malfeasance in the conduct of ISSEME business.

ii. Rescinding of membership shall require the vote of three quarters of the Board and Officers. In cases where the membership of an Officer or Board member is at issue, a special panel shall be constituted of ISSEME members adjudged to be without conflicts of interest in the case.

3. Governance. Ordinary business of ISSEME shall be conducted by its Officers (Executive Committee) and Board (twelve members elected by the membership, see below 3.b).

a. **Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee of ISSEME shall consist of the following Officers: a President; one or more Vice Presidents; an Executive Director; a Deputy Executive Director when applicable; a Treasurer; a Webmaster; and a Publications Director. With the exception of the Vice President(s) and the Deputy Executive Director, all Officers are appointed for a six-year term.

i. **Period of service.** The term of each Officer shall begin immediately upon the Board's confirmation of their appointment.

1. Each six-year term will be considered to elapse at the third regular (biennial) Board election following their appointment.

2. Outgoing officers may continue to serve on an interim basis until successors are confirmed by the new Board.

ii. **President.** The President of ISSEME shall oversee the organization of the biennial conferences, and serve as a public face of ISSEME.

1. The President shall be elected from among the members of the Board, by members of the Board, for a six-year term.

2. No President may serve more than two consecutive terms.

iii. **Vice President(s).** Each President may nominate one or more Vice Presidents. Vice President(s) serve as primary advisors and liaisons for the President in the arrangement of upcoming conferences and associated ISSEME business.

1. Each candidate for Vice President must be proposed by the President and endorsed by majority vote of the Board. A Vice President should normally be an ISSEME member, but need not be an elected Board member.

2. The term of each Vice President shall begin upon their approval by the Board, and end on December 31 following the conference they organized.

3. Holders of other ISSEME offices may serve as Vice President when appropriate.

iv. **Executive Director.** The Executive Director of ISSEME shall oversee the Society's management and coordinate the activities of its Officers and Board.

1. The Executive Director shall communicate regularly with the Officers, Board, and membership regarding all developments of significance to ISSEME, and shall at least once each year convene the Officers and Board for a business meeting.

2. The Executive Director shall be elected from among the members of the Board, by members of the Board, for a six-year term.
 3. The Executive Director's term of office shall continue for six years, with the possibility of reappointment for a second six-year term.
 4. The Executive Director may, when appropriate, simultaneously hold the office of Treasurer.
 5. The Executive Director may nominate a Board member to serve as deputy and delegate some of their tasks to the deputy. The deputy must be endorsed by majority vote of the Board. The term of the deputy ends with that of the Executive Director who nominated them.
- v. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for ISSEME's finances, including book-keeping, dues records, and tax payments.
1. Each year, the Treasurer shall make a report to the Officers and Board of ISSEME's finances, including its assets, major expenditures, and coming liabilities.
 2. The Treasurer shall assess the dues structure yearly, and propose any changes to the Officers and Board for a vote.
 3. Each new Treasurer shall be nominated by the Executive Director from among the members of the Board and appointed by vote of the Board.
 4. The Treasurer's term of office shall continue for six years, with the possibility of reappointment. Outgoing Treasurers shall coordinate with their successors in the preparation of the yearly report for their final year in office.
 5. The Treasurer, with the aid and oversight of the Board and Officers, shall be responsible for ensuring ISSEME's compliance with all relevant law governing the taxation and financial activity of an educational charity. In general, the Treasurer must therefore be based within the United States, for the purposes of tax compliance.
- vi. **Webmaster.** The Webmaster shall be responsible for maintaining ISSEME's website, including membership and dues management software, secure and in good working order, and for keeping the website up to date.
1. Each new Webmaster shall be nominated by the Executive Director and appointed by vote of the Board. The Webmaster should normally be an ISSEME member, but need not be an elected Board member.
 2. The Webmaster's term of office shall continue for six years, with the possibility of reappointment. Outgoing Webmasters shall coordinate with their successors in the handover of all relevant passwords, etc.
 3. Holders of other ISSEME offices may serve as Webmaster when appropriate.
- vii. **Publications Director.** The Publications Director will supervise the production of ISSEME proceedings volumes and all publications associated with the Society.
1. Each new Publications Director shall be nominated by the Executive Director and appointed by vote of the Board. The Publications Director should be an ISSEME member, but need not be an elected Board member.
 2. The Publications Director's term of office shall continue for six years, with the possibility of reappointment. Outgoing Publications Directors shall coordinate with their successors in the handover of all ongoing publications.
 3. Holders of other ISSEME offices may serve as Publication Director when appropriate.
- b. **The Board.** The governing Board of ISSEME shall consist of twelve members in good standing, elected by the full membership to serve for four-year terms.

i. Members of the Board are charged with the creation and maintenance of programs and structures in service of ISSEME's purpose, with representing the needs of ISSEME's membership, and with aiding the Officers in the conduct of ISSEME business.

1. Members of the Board will be expected to take part in the evaluation of publications for ISSEME's publication awards. Officers may be exempt from that obligation so as to keep the workload reasonable.

2. With the advice and consent of the Officers and full Board, individual Board members may constitute such panels and task forces as are necessary for the conduct of their duties. Such Board-run panels may include other ISSEME members and/or non-ISSEME members (such as representatives of other learned societies) when necessary, and as approved by the Board and Officers.

3. Board members may also be tasked with liaising with other programs and societies where appropriate.

ii. Elections for the Board shall take place every two years. Each Board member's term shall begin on the first of the month following the election. A Board member may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

iii. Insofar as possible, Board terms should be staggered so that half the Board is renewed in any given election. If a Board position falls vacant more than a year before the next election, the Executive Director may hold a by-election to fill it. A Board member elected in a by-election will serve out the remainder of the vacated four-year term.

iv. Prior to each upcoming election, the Executive Director shall issue a call for nominations. Any member may submit a nomination, or self-nominate. To be eligible for election, candidates must be members in good standing of ISSEME, and must confirm that they are able and willing to fulfil the duties of a Board member, and that they will uphold and abide by the organization's professional conduct policy.

v. The Board and Officers will assemble the nominations into a slate of at least two candidates for each coming vacancy, with the goal of ensuring full and equitable representation of ISSEME's multiple constituencies and demographics.

vi. In addition to the twelve elected members and the Executive Committee, the Board may also include *ex officio* members who represent publications and projects officially associated with ISSEME. *Ex officio* members shall constitute full members of the Board.

vii. All votes of the Board will be decided by a simple majority unless otherwise stated. In the case of a tie, a poll will be conducted of the President, the Executive Director, and the Treasurer. The matter will be decided by a simple majority of this poll.

c. **Removal from office.** Any Officer or Board member who ceases for a significant period to fulfil the duties of their office, or whose behavior violates the professional conduct policy or otherwise comes to constitute a significant impediment to ISSEME's purpose, may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the other Officers and Board.

i. A Board member who has been removed from office may stand again for election, but no Officer so removed may be again eligible for similar service.

ii. Currently serving Officers and Board members may, for good cause, request a leave of up to six months; in such cases, the Officers and Board shall appoint a suitable interim appointment. Such a leave shall not constitute grounds for removal from office.

4. Conduct of business.

a. **Annual business meetings.** Each year, the Executive Director shall convene the Board and Officers for discussion of ISSEME business.

i. In advance of the meeting, written reports will be provided by:

1. The President and Vice-President(s) on the latest and upcoming biennial conferences;
2. The Treasurer, on ISSEME's finances;
3. Members of other relevant working groups and task forces on any current initiatives.

ii. Following the meeting, the Executive Director will circulate a summary report of the year's business to the full membership.

iii. The annual meeting may be conducted partly in person or fully remotely; in all instances, it shall be made possible for Officers and Board members to attend remotely.

b. **Elections.** All votes of the full membership shall be conducted electronically, through whatever means the Board deems most secure, equitable, and efficient. The results of all votes shall be provided to the membership in a timely fashion. Deviations from the election timetable described in this Constitution shall be made only in extreme and unforeseeable circumstances, and the membership must be promptly made aware of such alterations and the reasons for them.

c. **Biennial conferences.** It shall be the duty of the President and Vice-President(s) to organize a conference dedicated to ISSEME's purpose in the summer of each odd-numbered year.

i. At least two and up to six years in advance, the President shall solicit proposals from members for venues for upcoming conferences. A nomination for one or more Vice-Presidents shall be part of each proposal.

ii. After preliminary inquiries into each proposal, the President shall bring eligible candidates before the Board and Officers for approval at an annual business meeting (or, in extraordinary circumstances, at a meeting specially convened for this purpose).

iii. Selection of venues shall always take into consideration the needs of ISSEME's international membership, and should be structured so as to ensure as many members as possible can participate within a four- to six-year timespan.

iv. The Vice-President(s) in charge of each successful proposal shall coordinate with the President, Executive Director, and Board to create programming, including a call for papers, that ensures maximum and equitable participation by ISSEME's members and advances the society's purpose. The relevant Vice-President(s) may establish special panels for the evaluation of abstracts and other proposals.

v. Each biennial conference shall include a general meeting of ISSEME's membership, coordinated by the Executive Director. Members may propose agenda items to the Board or Officers in advance of this meeting. This meeting is for the purpose of discussion; all votes shall be taken electronically, as stipulated under §4(b) above.

d. **Ratification of the Constitution, and amendments.**

This Constitution shall be ratified by simple majority vote of the voting membership.

Amendments to this document shall be ratified by the vote of two-thirds of the voting members in a referendum in which at least half the membership casts a vote.

i. Any two Board members may propose a Constitutional amendment.

ii. If ISSEME members propose an amendment, but the Board declines to bring it forward for a vote, the Executive Director shall advance the amendment to a vote if said amendment is supported by the petition of at least twenty-five ISSEME members in good standing.

5. Affiliation with other groups.

In general, ISSEME's Officers, Board, and members shall promote effective working relationships with any organization whose work is compatible with ISSEME's purpose.

6. Dissolution of ISSEME.

In the event of ISSEME's dissolution, all remaining assets shall be disbursed to a nonprofit scholarly organization compatible with ISSEME's purpose, according to a three-fourths vote of the Board and in compliance with all relevant law.