

CAAT's Rules and Regulations to accompany its Articles of Association

Below is a list of rules, regulations and procedures that explain, in further detail than the articles of association, how CAAT runs and makes decisions as a non-hierarchical organisation. These rules and regulations can be altered by Steering Committee as and when they see fit as long as they don't conflict with the articles of association.

1. Consensus Decision Making
2. Emergency Decision Making
3. Types of supporters
4. Election of Steering Committee members (Directors)
5. Procedure at Steering Committee meetings
6. Expectations of Steering Committee members
7. Quorum for General Members Meetings
8. All policies and procedures (see <http://www.caat.org.uk/handbook>)

1. Consensus Decision Making

a. Why consensus?

Consensus decision making is a process based on respect, trust, co-operation and mutual aid to discuss issues and find solutions that are agreeable to all parties within an organisation. For CAAT consensus decision making is meant to empower individuals while meeting the group's needs, sharing decision making power equally and adapting to all members' needs.

b. Necessary conditions for consensus to work

Unlike other methods for making decisions, consensus is not merely limited to a voting system or debating rules. Instead consensus is imagined as a process to creatively find a solution that everyone supports, or at least can live with. Due to the nature of this process, there is a major emphasis not just on rules, but on ethos. Therefore points on ethos and process must be respected by all participants. In simple decisions at CAAT Steering Committee, the step-by-step process is not formally followed, however the ethos drives even an informal version of the process.

i) Commitment to reach consensus: *consensus can require a lot of commitment and patience to make it work.* All members of Steering Committee must be willing to be both honest about what is and is not desirable and be willing to actively listen to what all other SC members have to say. Everyone must treat all issues with an open mind and be willing to change their position, including being open to alternative and creative solutions and to continually reassessing the situation. Consensus decision making is not always the easiest model, and requires persistence and a willingness to allow the process to run its course to find stronger and more creative final decisions.

ii) Trust, respect and openness: *we all need to be able to trust that everyone shares our commitment to creating true consensus decisions.* This includes being able to trust people not to abuse the process or to manipulate the outcome of the discussion. Openness and honesty about our views are necessary to correctly inform each other; this means openly discussing issues and not exaggerating a point. Consensus is not about winning the argument; instead better information allows the group to make better choices.

iii) Sufficient time: *for making decisions and for learning to work by consensus.* Taking time to make a good decision now can save wasting time revisiting a bad one later.

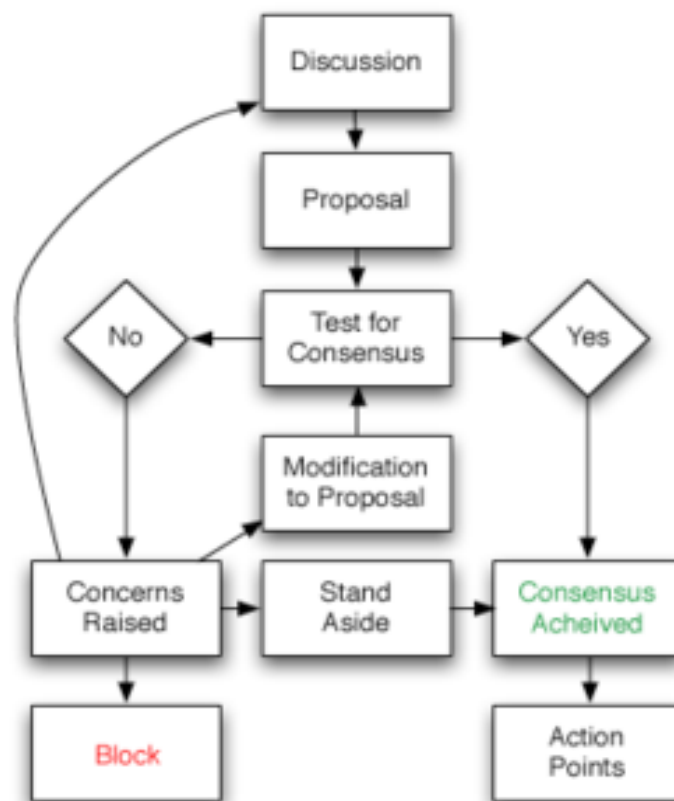
iv) Clear Process: *it's essential for everyone to have a shared understanding of the process that the meeting is using.* All new Steering Committee members should have the process explained to them; this document should form part of the handbook. Whilst some new members may be familiar with Consensus, CAAT's version should always be made clear and throughout people should feel able to ask questions about the process.

v) Active participation: *if we want a decision we can all agree on then we all need to play an active*

role in the decision making. This means listening actively to what everyone has to say, voicing thoughts and feelings about the matter and pro-actively looking for solutions that include everyone. Whilst the role of the facilitator is important, everybody involved is responsible for the process and for the decision.

vi) Positive Attitude towards disagreement: *inclusivity and creativity both stem from respect for disagreement amongst participants.* Central to every consensus decision making process is space given for dissent. Whilst the pressure to reach consensus can often lead participants to keep their misgivings to themselves, it is precisely from these misgivings that creative and interesting solutions often spring. Make sure everyone feels safe and confident enough to speak their opinions, even if it means lengthening a discussion.

vii) Good facilitation: *every session should have at least one facilitator in order to keep the process running smoothly.* Good facilitation helps the group to work harmoniously, creatively and democratically. Facilitators should have the support of all participants. Theirs is not an easy job and requires the consent and help of everyone. Throughout the process the facilitator should try to make clear the stage in the process that the group is working on and summarise any key information, however this task is not purely limited to one facilitator, the entire group is responsible for the running of the process. CAAT also has a role of Secretary whose tasks among others are to take minutes and distribute papers. The group may also create temporary roles such as a timekeeper, hand watcher or mood watcher.



c. The Process

Step 1: Introduction and Clarification

- **Explain** the issue at hand, any information collected should have been circulated with enough time for all participants to understand and analyse the issue. The facilitator will normally ask for someone to introduce the subject and any paper prepared in advance at this point.
- **Clarify:** the issue, all relevant information can be scrutinised.
- **Aims** for the discussion should be agreed.

Step 2: Discussion

- **Explore** the issue, gathering initial thoughts and reactions. Remember to be honest and keep

an open mind; do not just jump to conclusions. Make sure to assume good faith about the positions of others.

- **Collect ideas**, these should still be ideas, not proposals, allow the discussion to flow first. Ideas should be informed by issues raised. There are lots of techniques which may be used to facilitate the discussion (go-rounds, working in smaller groups, mind maps) which may help this process if the group wants to make use of them.

Step 3: Look for Proposals

- **Anyone** can make a proposal, they should take into account the stage of the discussion and everyone's views, a summary of any emerging impressions of the views of the room may be useful.
- **Clear and concise** proposals are essential to allow the group to all understand the position and what they are discussing.
- **Synthesise** the ideas suggested to find the solution that finds a common ground while taking into account concerns. Remember there isn't necessarily a perfect solution and 'good enough' is sometimes the best result.

Step 4: Discuss, clarify and amend the proposal

- **Discuss** the proposal, any concerns should be raised. If the issue is complex then this may take some time and patience is required to allow everyone to understand and reflect on the issue and the decision in front of them.
- **Clarify** any issues, making sure that the proposal covers what needs to be decided.
- **Amend** the proposal if there is a situation to improve it and make it more acceptable to the group. If it becomes clear that there are strong reservations about the proposal then it might be possible to amend it to take these issues into account

Step 5: Test for agreement

- **State** the proposal again, clearly and concisely so that everyone is clear on what is being decided.
- **Check for reservations**, these hopefully have already been identified but there is always space to express any concerns. There are a number of ways of expressing some level of disagreement, the group should always work to minimise these, the group may wish to rethink the proposal even if there are no blocks, but there are stand asides or reservations.
- **Declare reservations**; if a member is willing to support the proposal but wishes to register their concern then they may wish to have these recorded in the minutes. This is different to standing aside.
- **Standing aside** is an option open if a member cannot support the decision but they do not want to stop the group going ahead.
- **Blocking** is where a member has a fundamental disagreement with the core of the proposal at hand. This stops the proposal in its track. Every member has the right to block a decision at any time. This is a huge responsibility to entrust everyone with, therefore it must be treated carefully and never abused. It is important that all participants feel entitled to block a decision they feel runs contrary to the principles of the group. The presence of such a strong objection suggests that the situation should have been addressed earlier and hopefully there should not be a situation where a block actually has to be used.
- **Check for active agreement**, if there are no blocks then consensus should be established by checking for the opinion of the room. We use the 'jazz hands' signal to express our approval.
- **If consensus has not been reached**, either due to blocks or lack of active agreement then the group should return to step 2, discussing the issue and repeating the process until either a consensus can be found or a change in the process is deemed necessary. In some circumstances the process may need to be changed to allow a decision to be reached. This could in rare circumstances mean introducing an alternative double block or voting system to enable a decision to be made. Indeed in extreme circumstances a failure to agree a consensus may require splitting or ending the group.

Step 6: Implementation

- **Action points** should be agreed and tasks allocated, these should be recorded in the minutes.

d. A note on hand signals

Hand signals are a useful tool in consensus decision making, though their importance is sometimes exaggerated, more important is the ethos and process in consensus, the hand signals are a matter of convenience.

The signals that we should all be aware of are:

One hand raised means that you wish to make a point.

Both hands raised means that you have a direct response to the current discussion, this may allow you to 'jump the queue' and therefore should be used responsibly, it must be directly relevant, often this means a piece of information that resolves a question.

Jazz hands or nodding your head indicates agreement, this means that you do not have to speak to agree, but this instead allows you to indicate your view to the group and may help establish the views of the group without everyone having to speak.

2. Emergency Decision Making

Where the staff need to take an action relating to the running of the organisation beyond what has been agreed by Steering Committee, they may either a) consult via the Steering Committee group email list giving a date by which the majority would need to respond by, or b) in exceptional circumstances, consult with at least two members of the Emergency Decision making panel, with the decision being communicated to the rest of SC as soon as practically possible. These latter have the power to decide on the next course of action. This may include consultations by telephone or calling an unscheduled Steering Committee.

3. Who is a supporter of CAAT?

Anyone who supports the aims of CAAT may be deemed to be a supporter.

4. Appointment of Steering Committee members (Directors)

The CAAT Steering Committee comprises of enough members to ensure the organisation is quorate at meetings. Steering Committee members are also Company Directors and are appointed as such to Companies House once they are recruited.

Every other year Steering Committee will review the make up of Steering Committee members and decide what areas of specialisation, skill, diversity or location are lacking then advertise for new Steering Committee members focusing on these areas.

Half the non-Staff Steering Committee members, that have been serving on Steering Committee for the longest, will stand down, but can re-apply if they wish to stay. To re-apply the SC member will need to write a brief statement explaining why they wish to stay and what they believe they bring to SC.

Steering Committee positions will be advertised in a range of relevant places, depending on the skills or characteristics CAAT wishes to recruit.

If there are not enough non-staff SC members at any time during the year CAAT can make the choice to either recruit immediately, taking into account the specialisation, skills, diversity or location gaps on SC, or wait until the next recruitment biennial period to fill this vacancy.

A SC recruitment process will involve:

- agreeing the SC role description
- putting together a recruitment panel of three (at least one non-staff and one staff SC member,

- could include someone from outside SC) and agree the recruitment schedule
- advertise the posts in places where CAAT are most likely to attract applications with the specialisation, skills, diversity or location needed asking applicants to submit a CV and cover letter and making it clear the specific skills or characteristics CAAT is looking for
- current SC wishing to re-stand will submit their statements to the rest of SC via the panel
- the panel reviews the CVs and cover letters from new applicants alongside the statements from re-standing SC members.
- Shortlisted applications that the panel wish to interview and the re-standing statements are then emailed to all of SC (except those re-standing) for agreement
- any issues that can't be agreed over email should be brought to the next SC meeting (SC re-standing will exit the room for this discussion).
- the panel will then decide on interview questions and process, invite the agreed shortlisted candidates to interview and make the final selection.
- references will be obtained for new Steering Committee members
- successful applicants will be inducted and invited to the next SC meeting
- unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback
- any re-standing SC members not offered their place back on SC will be invited to a meeting with the panel to explain their decision

5. Procedure at Steering Committee meetings

Steering Committee meets four times each year in London, with further meetings being called by Steering Committee or the Emergency Decision-making Group if required. Facilitation is rotated. The Facilitator of the subsequent meeting is appointed at the previous Steering Committee meeting. Decisions are made by consensus (see above). The meetings address matters of policy, long-term planning and general guidance of the campaign.

Policy development and long term planning should not be lost to management issues; the Steering Committee should take its role as a policy developing body seriously.

Rules of conduct at meetings:

- * Keep your speech respectful, use hand signals to indicate you want to speak and either use them or nod your head to indicate agreement with a point made. Don't interrupt a speaker.
- * Suspend judgement and listen.
- * Speak up - remember not everyone has perfect hearing.
- * If you need to enter or leave the room during the meeting, do so quietly.
- * Don't eat crisps or other noisy food, drink alcohol, during the meeting.
- * Mobile phones should be switched off or in silent mode, and should not be used during a meeting.

If any member feels any other member's behaviour during a meeting is offensive, they should express that immediately. The facilitator should respond to this, and should count on the backing of all other members at the meeting. The person causing the offence can be asked to leave if necessary, for a short period, or for the rest of the meeting, with the agreement of the meeting.

6. Role of Steering Committee members

Specific responsibilities include:

- * setting general policy;
- * undertaking long term planning and developing a campaign strategy;
- * agreeing the annual and quarterly prioritisation;
- * approving the annual budget;
- * reviewing the monthly accounts;
- * sitting on recruitment panels;

* for non-staff, sitting on the Disciplinary, Grievance and Emergency Decision-making panels and the Staff Support Group, as necessary

New Steering Committee members will be inducted by one staff and one non-staff Steering Committee member.

Steering Committee members are expected to attend all meetings. It can be decided by Steering Committee that those who fail to attend 3 out of 4 meetings without good reason have forfeited their seat.

Steering Committee members are required to adhere to the highest standards of conduct in the performance of their duties. In respect of their interaction with others, they are required to:

- be mindful of conduct which could be deemed to be unfair or discriminatory;
- treat the staff, volunteers, supporters and fellow Steering Committee members in accordance with CAAT's procedures;
- adopt a team approach and recognise that all those involved with CAAT have a common purpose, that is, the success of the campaign.

Steering Committee members should conduct themselves so as to reflect positively on CAAT. When attending external meetings or other events on behalf of CAAT, writing or speaking about CAAT, it is important for Steering Committee members to be ambassadors for the campaign. If wishing to use CAAT's logo, or other design resource, for any kind of communication Steering Committee members should first seek approval from the staff member(s) responsible for communication at CAAT.

The non-staff members of the Steering Committee act as the employer of the staff.

7. Quorum for General Members Meetings

All Steering Committee members (Company Directors) are also Company Members. So all matters concerning both Company Directors' and Company Members' duties and obligations are to be discussed and decided at Steering Committee meetings. Quorum for any Members meeting is therefore the same as quorum for Steering Committee meetings.