

Internal Rules - Sing Out Brussels!

## **I. GENERAL RULES**

### **ARTICLE 1 - PURPOSE AND LEGAL SCOPE OF 'SING OUT BRUSSELS!' INTERNAL RULES**

The purpose of these internal rules is to lay down the day-to-day operation of Sing Out Brussels!. Any proposal for a change to these rules must be submitted to and approved by the General Assembly. This document complements the statutes of the ASBL Sing Out Brussels! as submitted to the Belgian Official Journal.

This text is part of the ongoing work of Sing Out Brussels to define its objectives, mission and values within the framework of the strategy developed the Board. These values are as follows: our ambition for musical quality; enjoying what we do; commitment to our activities, activism, respect, open-mindedness and a spirit of community.

### **ARTICLE 2 - DEFINITIONS**

In these internal rules, the following should be understood as:

"Association" and "ASBL" (not for profit organisation): Sing Out Brussels! ASBL

"Choir member": member of ASBL Sing Out Brussels!

"Board" (CA): Governance board of ASBL Sing Out Brussels!

"GA": General Assembly of Sing Out Brussels!

"JT": Joy Team

### **ARTICLE 3 - AMENDMENT OF THE RULES**

These rules are adopted and modifiable by the General Assembly of the ASBL Sing Out Brussels !.

## **II. CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP**

### **ARTICLE 4 - AUDITIONS AND RECRUITMENT**

Each candidate must audition with the choir conductor before being accepted into the choir. The format of the audition is determined by the choir's conductor. The singers are selected according to the following criteria: vocal quality, commitment to the objectives of the project and the vacancies available in each section. Being part of an LGBTQI+ sub-community is not a criterion of membership. On the other hand, the choir can target the LGBTQI+ community and in particular certain sub-communities in its recruitment campaigns, in order to ensure the widest diversity within the group.

The final selection of candidates is made jointly by the choir's conductor and the Board, after consulting the 'person of confidence' and the section leaders. Decisions are made by consensus. If no consensus can be found, the candidate is not accepted.

### **ARTICLE 5 – PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES**

1. By joining Sing Out Brussels! all singers commit to a presence at rehearsals of at least 75%, as well as at 'work weekends'.
2. Singers should inform their section leaders if they are going to be absent.
3. Singers who fail to attend 75% of rehearsals may be disallowed from singing in concerts. Such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the choir's conductor according to the conditions he/she defines, and after consultation with the Board and the sections leaders (cf article 18.8)
4. By joining Sing Out Brussels!, singers commit to taking part in all planned concerts at the time of their (re-)enrolment.
5. Prior to each concert, particularly for those who join the choir during the course of the term, the Board we ensure as early as possibly the numbers of singers who will be present (for artistic and logistical reasons).

### **ARTICLE 6 - CAPACITY AND AGE**

Any capable 18-year-old plus can become a choir member.

### **ARTICLE 7 - MEMBERSHIP FEE**

1. The choir member will pay an annual membership fee upon registration.
2. The Board fixes the annual fee on a yearly basis, taking into account the budget forecasts. The Board decides on the formulas proposed to the choir members. A scale of payment plans or student discounts are possible.

3. A student is defined as any person taking day classes, with a minimum of 20 hours per week. Proof of student status is requested by the Board.
4. Exceptionally, the Board may apply a social rate for the benefit of a choir member. Any choir member in financial difficulty can ask the Board to benefit from an exceptional reduction for social reasons. The Board decides whether or not to grant the social tariff according to the elements provided and sets the conditions, including duration.

#### **ARTICLE 8 - INSURANCE**

1. The status of 'choir member' is strictly individual. It allows the choir member to benefit from the insurance "accidents and civil responsibility" subscribed by the association for any accident which would occur during one of the activities organized by the association in Belgium and abroad, according to the conditions of the insurer. The insurance policy is available on the association's website;
2. The association cannot be held responsible for offenses committed by its choir members or by third parties in the course of its activities.
3. The association is not responsible for the theft or deterioration of the personal belongings of the choir members in the course of its activities.
4. In the event of an accident during an activity, the choir member must notify the relevant official as soon as possible, who will help them to complete a declaration for the insurance.

#### **ARTICLE 9 - PAYMENT**

1. When registering, the choir member is invited to pay the annual subscription, either in cash to the treasurer of the ASBL, or by bank transfer to the ASBL's account. Payment must be made within 15 days of registration.
2. The treasurer of the ASBL may decide to offset the debts and credits of a same choir member.

#### **ARTICLE 10 - DEFAULT ON PAYMENT**

1. If payment is not made, a reminder is sent every fortnight until payment of the debt.

2. Beyond the third reminder and on the decision of the Board, the choir member may be prohibited from participating in activities until full payment of the debt is made.
3. The Board can initiate all the necessary legal steps to recover the amounts due and unpaid. The financial means used to recover the debt can not be disproportionate in relation to the amount of the debt.
4. The Board may also decide unilaterally to cancel or terminate the registration for the activity, without renouncing the right to prosecute the choir member to obtain the payment of the annual subscription and the sessions to which it has participated.

#### **ARTICLE 11 - CANCELLATION AND TERMINATION**

The annual fee is never refunded.

#### **ARTICLE 12 - CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

1. The Board of the ASBL can suspend immediately and temporarily any choir member if it considers said member to be infringing the statutes or the internal rules of the ASBL. The Board must justify its decision by gathering the testimonies of at least two choir members present at the time of the alleged incident.
2. The Board of the ASBL convokes in a reasonable time-frame the suspended choir member and the person responsible for their suspension. The Board decides whether to end or prolong the choir member's temporary suspension under the conditions laid down by the statutes or asks the General Assembly of the ASBL to give its decision on exclusion.
3. The suspension or exclusion of a choir member does not give a right to any refund. Suspension and exclusion also implies ending access to the association's rehearsal space, as well as exclusion from Facebook and Whatsapp groups (cf article 14).

#### **ARTICLE 13 - DATA AND PRIVACY POLICY**

1. Upon registration, the choir member provides the necessary personal data, guarantees their accuracy and informs the Board if any changes to their data should occur during the season.

2. Upon registration, the choir member can provide a picture ID in a digital or analog format. The association has no rights on this image which is provided for internal use only.
3. The data collected during registration and recorded in a digital file are destined for internal usage of the ASBL and/or the usage of the insurance company with which the ASBL has signed a contract. Only the Board has access to this data. The Board can share it with heads of Joy Teams the sections leader only for administrative reasons. Each choir member has access to their data. The choir member can ask for their data to be modified or deleted in compliance with the law of 8 December 1992 relative to the protection of privacy concerning the processing of personal data, updated by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the EU, which entered into force on 25 May 2018.
4. The Board of the ASBL takes all the appropriate measures, of organisational or technical nature, to ensure the protection of the data.

#### ***ARTICLE 14 - IMAGE REPRODUCTION RIGHTS***

1. During activities organised by the ASBL or to which the ASBL takes part, pictures, videos and other digital media representing the choir member may be recorded.
2. By belonging to the ASBL, the choir members agree to the public use of these pictures, videos and digital media.
3. The pictures, videos and other media published on the website, the social media and other publications of the ASBL are the exclusive property of the ASBL and cannot be used for another purpose without prior authorisation of the Board of the ASBL. Any infraction may be subject to a lawsuit.
4. No financial compensation can be claimed in counterpart of any publication. The ASBL is not authorised to sell these images or their rights.

#### ***ARTICLE 15 - COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA***

1. The choir ensures that all communication is available in three languages (French, Dutch and English).
2. The choir sends a newsletter via email to the choir members at least once a month.

3. The choir communicates on Facebook via a public Facebook page and a closed Facebook group for members only. The group is managed by two members of the Board. The page is managed by the Communications Joy Team (cf article 17). There is also a whatsapp group in which two members of the Board can communicate to choir members.
4. Access to the Facebook and Whatsapp groups is limited to the choir members. At the start of each new season, the choir members who do n't renew their membership are removed from the groups by its admins.
5. [Rules](#) published on the Facebook group will explain its functioning. Only publications concerning the life of the choir will be validated. The admins ensure that the values defined in the association's statutes are respected inside the group. They can delete posts or comments.
6. The choir also communicates via accounts on other social media (such as Instagram, Youtube or WhatsApp). The management of these accounts can be delegated to JT Communication (see article 19).

### **III. INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE CHOIR / FUNCTIONING**

#### ***ARTICLE 16 – GENERAL STIPULATIONS – ORGANISATION AND OPERATION***

Any person active in the organisation of the ASBL has an exemplary behaviour reflecting the statutes and internal rules as well as the objectives, missions, and values defined as part of the strategy developed by the Board (cf article 1)

Community life within the association is conducted in a spirit of dialogue and kindness between members, within the management structures and between the members and these structures.

In line with the statues (articles 19.7 and 8) the Board may create any organ, function or committee that it judges useful, and can determine how it be composed, its name and its role. Furthermore, in line with the article 22.3, the Board, this set of regulations can be used to settle any questions not fully answered by the statutes, or where it is judged necessary by the Board. The Board deems it necessary to set out the functioning of the following organs and functions: The Governance Board itself, the choir's conductor, the Joy Teams and the 'person of confidence', the section leaders and the choir members.

## **ARTICLE 17 – THE BOARD**

Extracts from the statutes of the association: *The board is composed of three and up to seven directors, who serve at least the functions of chairman, treasurer and secretary. The board appoints a vice-chairman from among its members.*

The Board is responsible for the management of the association, notably for its schedule of activities and its implementation with a view to reaching its social aims as an association and validating its strategy. The Board has and exercises any competence in order to manage and represent the association. It's set-up, competences and operation are defined by the statutes (articles 18 and 19).

At the end of its mandate, respecting the statutes and in preparation for installing a new Board , the Board proposes a list of new administrators - potential or already involved - to present them for elections during the General Assembly. The candidates will be sought according to the different necessary skills for the smooth running of the Board.

The Board meets at least once a month.

Steps are taken to ensure the Board is composed of an uneven number of members. Its decisions are taken by consensus. Where this is not possible, voting is conducted by simple majority. Where there is a tie, the President has the deciding vote.

In a participative perspective, the Board can entrust, on a voluntary basis, specific tasks to certain choir members, within "Joy Teams" each with a specific theme, created by the Board to support the running of the activities of the ASBL during the season.

Board members are responsible for the transmission of knowledge and experience between the administrator (manual, training, coaching ...) in order to ensure the continuity of the activities and the homogeneity of the project.

The Board communicates on its decisions in full transparency, while protecting the privacy of the choir's members. Once validated by the board members, the reports are shared publicly in the closed Facebook group. The Board provides information sessions punctually, to enable free speech during each season.

The Board is empowered to take all decisions, in accordance with the social purpose of the ASBL. It may poll choir members to verify that they are present in sufficient numbers for the success of an event or performance. In all cases, the Board is sovereign in the final decision making.

The Board works closely with the choir conductor. The choir conductor is invited to Board meetings as an advisor.

### ***ARTICLE 18 – THE CONDUCTOR***

1. The board selects the conductor in line with the budget approved by the general assembly.
2. The conductor is exempt from payment of the annual fee.
3. The conductor receives remuneration for their services. A written agreement between the Board and the conductor governs the terms of this remuneration.
4. The Board may dismiss the conductor, under the conditions defined by the agreement signed between the choir conductor and the Board (CA).
5. The conductor may resign, even during the season, according to the conditions defined by the agreement signed between the choir conductor and the Board
6. The appointment, dismissal and resignation are made in writing.
7. The conductor conducts the choir. In this capacity, they are responsible for the musical management of the choir, the management of the rehearsals and the musical program of the internship weekends and the rehearsal days (usual or extraordinary), in respect of the values, the missions and the objectives of the ASBL.
8. In agreement with the Board and taking into account the opinion of the Section Leaders, the conductor may decide that a choir member cannot participate in a concert if they find that the person is not ready musically.
9. Exceptionally, if the choir conductor cannot be present at an audition, rehearsal or concert, they may be replaced by another choir conductor or vocal coach.
10. The choir conductor is not part of the Board or the Joy Teams, but participates in the meetings by invitation and has an advisory role. The conductor also exercises the responsibilities set out in articles 4 and 19.



## **ARTICLE 19 - THE JOY TEAMS**

1. In order to distribute certain tasks and in the spirit of participation, the Board delegates a whole series of activities to the 'Joy Teams' (JT), composed of volunteer choir members.
2. The heads of the Joy Teams are named by the Board. These JT leaders do not sit on the Board. In the absence of a suitable candidate, a member of the Board can temporarily fill the role. The leaders of each Joy Team coordinates the running of their Joy Team and chairs the meetings.
3. The head of each Joy Team composes their team from a list of volunteers supplied by the Board or from spontaneous applications. They ensure that applicants are willing to commit and have the necessary skills for the functioning of the JT.
4. Each Joy Team is made up of a minimum of three and a maximum of seven choir members. Each Joy Team aims to have a uneven number of members. A choir member can only be in a maximum of two Joy Teams.
5. Joy Teams take their decisions by consensus. Where this is not the case, votes are taken by simple majority. Where votes are tied, the JT leader casts the deciding vote.
6. Each Joy Team is linked to a Board Member, who is part of that JT, and who ensures that the work done by the Joy Teams is in line with the mission, values and objectives defined in the strategy approved by the Board. Each member of the Board can be a member of a maximum of two Joy Teams.
7. Each JT can appoint project managers from its ranks to carry out certain tasks. These project managers can engage other singers, whether or not they are in the JT.
8. Each JT can request that people outside the choir perform certain tasks. The Board's agreement must be sought if these people are paid.
9. The Creative JT meets at least once a month. The other JTs meet at least once every two months.

10. The Joy Teams communicate their decisions in full transparency through e.g. written reports, or verbal communication, whilst respecting the privacy of member.

11. The responsibilities of the Joy Teams

**The Creative JT** is responsible for implementing the artistic vision of the choir in line with the mission, values and objectives defined in the strategy approved by the Board. The JT develops a coherent, overarching artistic project, spanning at least one term, and incorporating a guiding thread and a message for the different concerts. All its tasks are carried out in consultation with the conductor. This includes:

- The choice of repertoire, sourcing scores, and ordering arrangements.
  - Gauging the opinion of the choir members in the selection of repertoire and the artistic project.
  - Writing the script, staging, costume-design, choreography, set-design, the interpretation (full choir, reduced, soloists etc.) and the choice of repertoire for each concert.
- The Creative JT takes care of the execution of this artistic project, once the budget is approved by the Board.
  - The JT chooses at least one project manager for the staging (stage director) and a head of choreography. In contact with the singers, the head of each project is the sole interlocutor during the rehearsals leading up to concerts.
  - Reserving venues or additional tech material (lighting and sound) comes under the remit of the Board.
  - To ensure that rehearsals are well organised (timing, monitoring of learning, choreography), the JT is in constant contact with the conductor,
  - The conductor takes part in the meetings by invitation as an observer. However, the conductor has the right of veto if, for musical reasons, a song, score, choreography or staging is not acceptable to guarantee the highest possible quality of the shows.

**The Communication JT** : carries out the external communications capacity as delegated by the Board. This capacity includes the management and activity of the ASBL's social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Youtube etc.), the management and organisation of the ASBL's website, the design of visual and graphic media for events, the translation of texts into French, Dutch or English, or marketing. The JT also has the responsibility for taking and disseminating photos and audio and video recordings. It is also responsible for press relations.

**The Strategy JT** proposes a vision and long-term strategic plan for the ASBL and submits it to the Board for validation. Its work is carried out in consultation with the other Joy Teams. The JT ensures that its vision and strategic plan are applied in all decisions taken by the ASBL, in order to ensure consistency of action.

**The Community Building JT** strives to maintain a community spirit within the choir by organising events. The JT takes responsibility for welcoming new choir members, presenting the mission of the choir and taking on suggestions. This JT develops the work programmes for the two weekend workshops per term, which are subsequently validated by the Board and the conductor. It also takes care of practical details and organises activities for the evening and breaks. Selection and reservation of the venue of the workshops remains the responsibility of the Board. For the purpose of events planned by the Board and in venues reserved by the Board, the JT, on the Board's request, takes charge of the itinerary, reception and catering for the choir members, as well as for welcoming the audience members. During trips outside of Belgium, the JT coordinates transport and accommodation, and proposes cultural/leisure activities.

12. If the Board deems it useful, it can look for volunteers to establish other Joy Teams and / or to suspend Joy Teams. These modifications must be validated by the Annual General Meeting and incorporated into these Internal Regulations.

#### ***ARTICLE 20 – THE PERSON OF TRUST***

1. At the beginning of the season, the Board designates a person of trust and communicates their name to the choir members.
2. This person is neutral in their relationship with the Board, any other group in the choir or choir members and will be the designated contact for any choir member who wishes to -anonymously or not- share an issue concerning the life of the group or the operation of the choir.
3. This person helps to prevent conflicts by staying attentive to the group's life and receptive to testimonies they receive. They relay any potential problem to the Board.
4. To ensure their neutrality, the person of trust is not a member of the Board or any Joy Team.
5. In case of major conflicts, the choir members can request the Board to resort to external mediators. The Board is obligated to grant this request if it comes from at least a third of the choir members. In other cases, the Board evaluates the opportunity of such a mediation.

## **ARTICLE 21 – THE SECTION LEADERS**

In agreement with the Board, the conductor may ask certain choir members to take on the responsibility of section leader(s) (one or more choir members per section), on a voluntary basis. At the beginning of each term, one or two leaders are nominated as leaders of each section, on a voluntary basis. The conductor assigns the following tasks to these section leaders:

- The musical supervision of the section
- To relay to the conductor or the Board any remarks from the choir members;
- The organisation of sectional rehearsals;
- The maintenance of singers' motivation and the atmosphere of the section;
- The integration of new singers in the section.

## **ARTICLE 22 – THE CHOIR MEMBER**

1. In exercising choir activities, each choir member agrees to:
  - Respect the statutes and regulations of the ASBL.
  - Respect the decisions taken by the Board of the ASBL and its general assembly
  - Respect the values, mission and objectives of the ASBL and refrain from all forms of discrimination based on gender, sex, race or ethnicity, nationality or origin, sexual orientation, social background, political opinions, age, disability or religion;
  - Take care of the equipment made available;
2. The choir member conducts themselves responsibly allowing for the smooth running of the activity:
  - Attend rehearsals (in case of absence, the choir member is expected to warn the section leader); weekend retreats and concerts as defined in Art. 5;
  - Respect the timetables of the activity;
  - Assist with setting up / storing the infrastructure and organisation of events;
  - Respect the instructions of the conductor and other leaders.
  - In order to encourage attentive work, the use of mobile phones is not allowed during rehearsals, except in case of emergency. The choir leader may ask choir members to part with their smartphone at the entrance of the rehearsal room.
- The consumption of alcohol and / or drugs is prohibited during rehearsals. Choir members who are inebriated may be temporarily suspended by decision of the conductor and / or the Board.

3. Each choir member is responsible for their participation in rehearsals and workshops/retreats, for learning the repertoire, and for their personal vocal quality. In the event of a breach, in agreement with the Board and in consultation with the section leaders, the conductor may decide that a choir member will not participate in a concert. On the other hand, a choir member can decide not to participate in a concert if they do not feel able to do so, in agreement with the conductor and the section leader(s).
4. The choir members who founded the choir do not enjoy any privileges or advantages. Each of them has a voice in the General Assembly, as do all other choir members. Their opinion cannot be imposed on the Board or the Joy Teams.