

Constitution of the Trinity Vincent de Paul Society

1. Establishment and Objectives

1.1 This society shall be known as the Trinity Vincent de Paul Society and hereafter shall be referred to as the Society.

1.2 The Society aims to create activities that help those in socially secluded areas of life, to raise awareness of socially important issues and to fundraise to support these activities.

1.3 The Society aims to promote altruism among its Members and members of the College community, and to provide charity, encompassing every form of aid that alleviates suffering and promotes the dignity and integrity of humankind.

1.4 The Society shall be subject to the guidelines and regulations of the Trinity College Central Societies Committee (CSC).

1.5 The Society is a recognised conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) and subscribes to the principles and objectives as laid down in the constitution of the SVP.

1.6 The Society's name may be abbreviated to 'Trinity VDP' or simply 'VDP' inside College, or 'Trinity SVP' outside of College.

1.7 The Society shall not be dissolved unless two thirds of those present and eligible to vote at a specific Meeting for this purpose so wish.

1.8 At dissolution all funds shall be returned to the Dublin South Central Area Council of the SVP.

2. Affiliation

2.1 The Society shall act in cooperation with the SVP, and in particular with the National Director and the Communications and Information Manager for the Dublin region.

2.2 The Society shall be affiliated to the Dublin South Central Area Council of the SVP and shall send the allotted number of delegates to represent the conference at that Council.

2.3 The Society shall in particular act in association with other college and university conferences to further the aims of the Society.

3. Membership

3.1 A Member of the Society is someone who has registered on the Society's email list and/or in its membership book.

3.2 Any member of College is entitled to Membership of the Society, subject to the regulations of the CSC. Exceptions may be made to include Honorary Members (eg. graduates).

3.3 No membership fee shall be charged to those who wish to join the Society.

3.4 A Member has the right to:

- a) Take part in any activity run by the Society, provided they have met the necessary Garda Vetting and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Training requirements;
- b) Attend any event organised by the Society;
- c) Attend any Meeting of the Society; and
- d) Receive a copy of any Society publication by request to the Secretary, subject to the availability of copies.

3.5 Any Member who has a grievance shall address it by email or in writing to the Secretary and shall be answered within fourteen days, following a discussion by the Committee.

3.6 It is deemed that all Members shall have agreed to abide by the Society's rules, as laid out in this Constitution.

3.7 Any Member of the Society who disregards the rules of the Society or who brings the good name of the Society into disrepute may be expelled from the Society, subject to a two thirds majority by a vote of the Committee.

3.8 Posting of information on CSC notice boards and/or a general email to the Society Membership shall be deemed acceptable notification of Members.

4. Committee

4.1 MakeUp of the Committee

4.1.1 The Committee, which administers the affairs of the Society, shall consist of the General Committee, made up of the Activity Leaders, and the Executive Committee.

4.1.2 The Executive Committee consists of a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Vice President Activities, a Vice President Fundraising, a Public Relations Officer and Volunteer Liaison

4.1.3 All positions on the Committee are honorary in that no salary, fee, stipend or emoluments are paid for the performance of the duties of the officer.

4.1.4 Activity leaders are appointed at the end of term of the preceding year by the outgoing activity leader(s) of the activity in question, in conjunction with the outgoing executive committee of that year.

4.2 Operation of the Committee

4.2.1 The Committee has the duties to uphold the rules as laid out in this Constitution and the guidelines and regulations of the CSC and to take the necessary actions to fulfill these duties.

4.2.2 The Committee shall meet weekly during term at the Weekly Meeting, which is open to all Members. The attendance of the Executive Committee is mandatory at this meeting. If an Executive Committee member is unable to attend, this must be communicated to the Secretary prior to the meeting.

4.2.3 The General Committee shall be required to attend the Weekly Meeting on the first week of each month, during term. If a Committee member is unable to attend, this must be communicated to the Secretary prior to the meeting.

4.2.4 The Committee shall have power to appoint Subcommittees to perform specific functions provided that at least one Executive Committee member serves on each Subcommittee. All decisions and recommendations made by Subcommittees shall be subject to the approval of the Committee.

4.2.5 All Weekly Meetings shall be chaired by the President, or in his or her absence by the Vice President Activities or another member of the Executive Committee as nominated by the President.

4.2.6 Each Member shall have one vote on any motion at the Weekly Meeting.

4.2.7 All members of the Committee shall have access to the committee room.

4.2.8 The Executive Committee shall hold a closed meeting once a week during term. This meeting shall be in addition to the Weekly Meeting. Should any member of the Executive Committee be unable to attend, prior notice must be given to the Secretary.

4.2.9 The officers of the Executive Committee in the presence of each other shall have the power to sign contracts on behalf of the Society, subject to ratification at the next Meeting.

4.2.10 The Executive Committee shall have the power to make decisions outside of term.

4.2.11 Every member of the General Committee shall have a Committee Liaison (the Liaison) from the Executive Committee. The Liaison shall contact their General Committee member once a week. They shall be the first point of contact for their General Committee member, except in the case of child/vulnerable adult protection issues or incidents, where the Vice President Activities shall be their primary contact.

4.2.12 The General Committee shall meet once a month. This meeting shall be chaired by the Vice President Activities, or in his or her absence another member of the Executive Committee as nominated by the Vice President Activities.

4.2.13 The General Committee shall be responsible for the running of Special Activity Events, and other largescale society goings on in collaboration with the Executive Committee. Special Activity Events include, but are not limited to, Christmas parties, sports days, trips.

4.2.14 The General Committee will be responsible for clarifying/ensuring that all volunteers attending their activities are vetted and have attended child or vulnerable adult protection training, as necessary. This is to be done by liaising with the Vice President of Activities and Volunteer Liaison. The General Committee will actively promote and implement child and vulnerable adult protection strategies.

4.2.15 Where any member of the Committee has broken the rules of the Society, been party to financial irregularities, brought the Society's good name into disrepute or is deemed not to be acting in the best interests of the Society he or she may be removed from the Committee through a vote of expulsion by a threequarters majority of those present at a Meeting and who are eligible to vote.

4.2.16 In a case of the resignation or expulsion of a member of the General Committee, the Executive Committee shall nominate a replacement, subject to the approval of the full

Committee. In a case of the resignation or expulsion of a member of the Executive Committee, nominations will open immediately for his or her replacement at an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held within fourteen days. The duties of the vacant position will be discharged by the remaining members of the Executive Committee until a replacement is elected.

4.2.17 Any Member of the Society may be requested to appear before the CSC, or officer or subcommittee of the CSC, to provide information concerning the finances of the Society. If a prima facie case exists that Society funds have been misused or misappropriated, the CSC may ask the Senior Dean to declare the person or persons concerned indebted to College, in which case they may not be permitted to register for the following academic year or to have their degree conferred.

4.2.18 If at any time circumstances arise for which there is no provision in this Constitution, the Committee shall take such action as seems reasonable and necessary. Such action shall be deemed valid unless reviewed at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

4.3 Election to the Executive Committee

4.3.1 Any Member (at the time of the Annual General Meeting) may be elected to serve on the Executive Committee in any capacity.

4.3.2 Members running for a position on the Executive Committee must be nominated by two members of the existing Executive Committee and one Activity Leader.

4.3.3 Nominations for election to Executive Committee positions must be received by the Secretary or President no later than fortyeight hours before the Annual General Meeting.

4.3.4 There is no restriction on the number of times a Member can be elected to the Executive Committee, be it in the same or a different position.

4.3.5 The new Executive Committee shall take office immediately upon their election.

4.3.6 The new Executive Committee shall receive within ten days of their election all books and records of whatever type, and keys, subject to the regulations of the CSC, from the outgoing Executive Committee so as to facilitate the smooth transfer of office.

4.3.7 A member of the Executive Committee is elected for the term of one year upon their election at the Annual General Meeting, or part thereof if elected at a subsequent Extraordinary General Meeting.

4.3.8 Pertaining to elections to the executive committee of Trinity Vincent de Paul, no use of email or text lists pertaining to Trinity Vincent de Paul can be used to campaign on the behalf of, or by any candidate. Prior to announcement of nominations, any form of campaigning is strictly prohibited. Further to this, campaigning in general is discouraged as it is not supported by the ethos of Trinity Vincent de Paul.

5. Officers

5.1 President

5.1.1 The President shall be the head of the Society and represent it (or nominate a proxy) at all relevant functions.

5.1.2 The President shall use his or her office to promote the interests of the Society at all times, to provide leadership in fostering unity within the Society and to direct the Society forward in accordance with the rules as laid out in this Constitution.

5.1.3 The President may advise the rest of the Committee on any matter and shall be available for approach by the rest of the Committee if his or her views are required.

5.1.4 The President, in consultation with the Secretary, shall notify all Members of forthcoming Meetings and set the agenda for the Meeting.

5.1.5 The President, along with the Treasurer, shall be responsible for managing to best effect the finances of the Society and for making financial decisions.

5.1.6 The President shall act as an alternate signatory on the Society's bank accounts.

5.2 Secretary

5.2.1 The Secretary shall, in consultation with the President, set the agenda for all Meetings of the Society.

5.2.2 The Secretary shall take minutes of all Meetings of the Society.

5.2.3 The Secretary shall carry on all correspondence on behalf of the Society or pass on items of correspondence to the relevant Committee member who in turn shall deal with them.

5.2.4 The Secretary shall prepare an annual report for the Annual General Meeting and the CSC.

5.2.5 The Secretary shall hold a copy of the Constitution and shall provide a copy to any Member on request.

5.2.6 The Secretary shall act as an alternate signatory of the Society's bank accounts.

5.3 Treasurer

5.3.1 The Treasurer, along with the President, shall be responsible for managing to best effect the finances of the Society and for making financial decisions. The Treasurer shall also liaise with the Vice President of Fundraising and assist in the planning fundraising income and expenditure.

5.3.2 The Treasurer shall maintain proper books of account for the Society and shall be answerable to the Committee, the CSC and the SVP in the discharge of his or her duties.

5.3.3 The Treasurer shall receive, account for and deposit all cheques and monies in the Society's bank account.

5.3.4 The Treasurer shall be responsible for counting and lodging all monies received at Fundraising events as soon as is practicable. One other Member must always be present with the Treasurer when money is being counted.

5.3.5 The Treasurer shall act as an alternate signatory of the Society's bank accounts.

5.3.6 Subject to the authorisation of the Committee, the Treasurer shall draw and countersign cheques in payment of the Society's items of expenditure.

5.3.7 The Treasurer shall account to the Committee for the purchase, sale and control of the assets of the Society.

5.3.8 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the forwarding of affiliation and other fees to affiliated bodies, within the specified time limits.

5.3.9 The Treasurer shall report on the finances of the Society to the CSC and SVP in accordance with their respective annual financial periods. Additionally, the Treasurer shall present to the Society at the Annual General Meeting a summary of the accounts and a report on the financial standing of the Society relating to the current academic year. These shall be available to all Members upon request.

5.3.10 A member shall be reimbursed for any expense wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred on behalf of the Society and incurred with the knowledge and approval of the Committee.

5.3.11 After the Annual General Meeting, the Outgoing Treasurer shall coordinate with the Elected Treasurer in the planning of the Society budget for the coming year.

5.4 Vice President Activities

5.4.1 The Vice President Activities shall oversee the running of the Society's volunteering activities and shall be the executive point of contact for every Activity Leader, or volunteer, in the case of incident, query, or emergency.

5.4.2 The Vice President Activities shall be responsible for ensuring that all active members are fully vetted by the Garda Vetting Bureau wherever this is necessary. He/She will organise this either through societywide Vetting Drives, or through individual Activity Leaders.

5.4.3 The Vice President Activities shall hold the Society's camera and shall authorise the taking of photographs by Activity Leaders at their relevant activities using only this camera. The Vice President Activities shall take charge of maintaining the Society's collection of photographs in a responsible way.

5.4.4 The Vice President Activities shall chair Meetings in the absence of the President, except when another Member of the Executive Committee has been nominated to do so by the President.

5.4.5 The Vice President Activities shall chair the General Committee meeting once a month, as stated in article 4.2.13.

5.4.6 The Vice President Activities shall act as an alternate signatory of the Society's bank accounts.

5.4.7 The Vice President Activities shall hold a copy of child/vulnerable adult protection protocols to be followed for Special Activity Events, and shall supply the organisers of such events with a copy of said protocol.

5.5 Vice President Fundraising

5.5.1 The Vice President Fundraising shall take charge of the fundraising activities of the Society.

5.5.2(a) The Fundraising Subcommittee shall be elected no later than two weeks after the AGM and will be elected by a vote of active fundraising members. An active fundraising member is defined as a member who has attended at least one fundraising meeting and event in the past year.

5.5.2(b) The Fundraising Subcommittee shall be comprised of the Vice President Fundraising, the Public Relations Officer, an assistant fundraising officer, an event coordinator, and a society liaison.

5.5.2(c) The fundraising subcommittee shall meet on a weekly basis during term time, which is open to all Members.

5.5.3 All monies accruing from fundraising activities shall be disbursed at the discretion of the Executive Committee according to the aims of the Society and the cause for which the money was raised.

5.5.4 The Vice President Fundraising shall hold a key to the Society's room for the duration of his or her time in office, subject to the regulations of the CSC.

5.5.5 The Vice President Fundraising shall act as an alternate signatory of the Society's bank accounts.

5.6 Public Relations Officer

5.6.1 The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for publicising the activities and events of the Society within College, subject to the regulations of the CSC. Publicity includes, but is not limited to, creation and distribution of posters, maintaining online presence, and online graphic design.

5.6.2 The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for maintaining the Society's website, social media accounts, and for producing any Society publications.

5.6.3 The Public Relations Officer shall sit on the fundraising subcommittee.

5.6.4 The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for upholding the impeccable reputation of the Society, and ensuring that all publications, online activity and other publicity is in keeping with the ethos and aims of the Society.

5.7 Volunteer Liaison

5.7.1 The Volunteer Liaison shall act as the society's liaison with Trinity Volunteering, SVP National, and other SVP college conferences.

5.7.2 The Volunteer Liaison shall, in consultation with the VP Activities and SVP National, organise any necessary child/vulnerable adult protection trainings for those who require them.

5.7.3 The Volunteer Liaison shall be responsible for organising the volunteer based Intervarsity and INSMOT weekends and will work with SVP National and other college conferences in this regard wherever necessary.

5.7.4 The Volunteer Liaison shall meet monthly with one or more other SVP Conferences and work to establish and maintain links with them, subscribing to the principles and objectives of the Society as laid out in Article 1.

6. Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings

6.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

6.1.1 The AGM shall be held during the final five week period of Hilary term.

6.1.2 Posting of the details of the AGM on CSC notice boards and/or in an email to the Society Membership seven days before the AGM is deemed acceptable notification of Members.

6.1.3 The AGM shall be open to all members of College, but only Active Members of the Society are eligible to vote. An Active Member is a Member who has participated in at least one activity with the Society throughout the course of the year. Membership shall close fourteen days before the AGM.

6.1.4 Except in the case of amendments to this Constitution, all motions shall be passed by a simple majority of those present and eligible to vote.

6.1.4(a) in the event that two candidates receive an equal number of votes in an election, the winner will be chosen by a coin flip. Before the toss of the coin, each candidate will be assigned a face. The outgoing President will flip a coin and will be witnessed by the outgoing Secretary. The candidate wins the election if their assigned face matches the President's coin flip.

6.1.5 Votes on all motions shall be taken by a show of hands, except in the case of elections to the Executive Committee, which shall take place by a secret ballot. Any eligible voter may demand a ballot on any motion, upon which the chair will appoint tellers, subject to the ratification of the Committee.

6.1.6 The quorum for the AGM is three members of the Executive Committee, a further five members of the Committee and ten Active Members of the Society. The chair shall take responsibility for ensuring this quorum has been reached.

6.1.7 Notices of motions, except in the case of amendments to this Constitution, must be received by the Secretary seven days before the date of the AGM with the names of the Members proposing and seconding the motions. All motions must be proposed by one Member and seconded by another.

6.1.8 The Order of Business at the AGM shall be as follows:

- a) Address by the President;
- b) Minutes of the last AGM or Extraordinary General Meeting;
- c) Hustings by candidates for positions on the Executive Committee, followed by the ballot;
- d) Annual reports from the Secretary and Treasurer;

- e) Notices or motions;
- f) Any other business; and
- g) Announcement of the results of the elections to the Executive Committee.

The schedule of the order of business can be changed each year at the discretion of the committee, provided the content is maintained.

6.2 Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

6.2.1 An EGM may be called at the discretion of the Committee or upon written request of ten Members of the Society.

6.2.2 EGMs may only take place during term.

6.2.3 Insofar as they are applicable to an EGM, the procedural rules for the EGM shall be the same as those for the AGM, as outlined in Articles 6.1.2 – 6.1.7 above.

7. Indemnity

7.1 Every Member of the Society shall be indemnified by the Society against claim, and it shall be the duty of the Society to pay all costs, losses and expenses which any Member shall properly incur, or become liable to, by reason of any contact properly entered into or actions carried out in good faith in the discharge of duties on behalf of the Society and approved by the Committee.

7.2 The amount of which such indemnity is provided shall, as far as the funds of the Society allow, immediately attach as a lien on the property and assets of the Society and have priority over all other claims.

8. Amendments

8.1 This Constitution is binding as and from the date of being approved by both the Society and the CSC.

8.2 This Constitution may be amended by a two thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote at an AGM or EGM.

8.3 Where an amendment to this Constitution has been approved its effect is immediate.

8.4 Notices of such amendments must be received by the Secretary by email and/or in writing fourteen days before the AGM or EGM, and the Membership must be notified, in accordance with Article 3.8 of this Constitution, of the proposed constitutional amendments at least ten days before the date of the AGM or EGM.

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