

# Collective for Academic Freedom, Democracy and Solidarity CLADS

*This is English version is an approximate translation!  
The French original is the official document.*

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## Association bylaws

### Legal form, purpose and location

#### Art. 1

Under the name “Collective for Academic Freedom, Democracy and Solidarity (CLADS)”, hereafter referred to as the Association, a non-profit association is hereby established, governed by the present Articles of Association and by Articles 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code. The Association respects the principles of the [University of Lausanne Charter](#) and the [EPFL Ethics Charter](#). It draws its inspiration from the general principles formulated in the open letter “[For academic freedom, against the repression of students](#)”, sent to swissuniversities in June 2024 by several hundred lecturers/researchers from Swiss universities and colleges. This document is appended to and forms an integral part of the present bylaws.

#### Art. 2

Based on an understanding of the University that is democratic in operation, open in access, critical in the construction of knowledge, opposed to all forms of discrimination, supportive and respectful of human rights and international law, and free from repression of these rights, the Association pursues the following goals:

- to protect the autonomy of higher education universities and colleges, and ensure that these institutions respect the values inherent in the fulfilment of their purposes of research and education;
- to ensure the respect of the academic freedom of lecturers/researchers, and defend them against any infringement of this fundamental freedom in the exercise of their profession;
- to protect and promote the creation of critical knowledge within universities and colleges, and their duty to publicize it in accordance with the critical function that these institutions must embrace;
- to protect data gathered by researchers from seizure;
- to defend the freedom of expression of lecturers/researchers in the public arena, and encourage them to engage with the public, based upon the values that underpin scientific work;

- to defend freedom of expression and assembly for all members of universities and colleges;
- to express and develop active solidarity with members of academic institutions who are in danger, in Switzerland and around the world.

Art.3

The Association's location is in 1015 Lausanne. Its duration is unlimited.

## **Organisation**

Art. 4

The bodies of the Association are:

- the general assembly;
- the committee;
- the accounting auditors.

Art. 5

The Association's funding comes from ordinary or extraordinary membership fees, donations or legacies, and proceeds from the Association's activities.

The financial year begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of each year.

Its commitments are guaranteed by its assets, and exclude any personal liability of its members.

## **Members**

Art. 6

Members of the association may include lecturers/researchers at the University of Lausanne (UNIL) and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), as well as members of the academic, administrative, technical and scientific staff of the two universities, who wish to contribute to the achievement of the objectives set out in art. 2.

Persons in the categories defined in the previous paragraph who are employed by a university established in the canton of Vaud may also be members of the association.

A majority of the association's members must be active at UNIL or EPFL.

The admission of new members is the responsibility of the Committee.

Persons who do not, or no longer, meet the conditions set out in the first two paragraphs, but who share the collective's aims and wish to contribute to its actions, may become supporting members. Their membership is at the discretion of the committee and is not taken into account in the majority described in the previous paragraph. [1]

Supporting members may attend General Assemblies in an advisory capacity. [1]

[1] Paragraphs adopted 05.05.2025

Art. 7

Membership is cancelled:

- by resignation;
- by expulsion for just cause or in the event of serious misconduct.

Exclusion is decided by the Committee. The person concerned may appeal against this decision to the General Assembly.

**General Assembly**

Art. 8

The General Assembly is the sovereign authority of the Association, and is composed of all its members.

It meets at least once a year, convened by the Committee.

Art. 9

The competences of the General Assembly are as follows. It :

- adopts and amends the bylaws of Association;
- elects the members of the committee and the presidency;
- elects the auditors;
- determines the Association's direction and activities;
- approves reports, financial statements and the budget;
- relieves the Committee and the auditors of their duties;
- sets the annual membership fee for individual members;
- decides on other projects on the agenda.

The General Assembly may take up, or be seized of, any matter which it has not entrusted to another body.

Art. 10

The General Assembly is convened by the committee, and communicated to the membership electronically at least 10 days in advance. The announcement is accompanied by an agenda.

The committee may convene an extraordinary General Assemblies as often as necessary, through its own initiative, or upon the request of a fifth of the Association's members. [2]

[2] Adopted by the General Assembly on 05.05.2025

Art. 11

The General Assembly is chaired by the Presidency of the Association. In the absence of the Presidency, the assembly is chaired by another member of the committee.

Art. 12

General Assembly decisions are taken by a simple majority of the members present.

Each member has one vote. Proxy votes are not permitted.

In the event of a tie, the vote of the Assembly chair counts double.

Art. 13

Voting is conducted by raising hands.

Upon the request of at least one member, voting can be done by secret ballot.

**Committee**

Art. 14

The committee consists of a minimum of three members, individually appointed for one year by the General Assembly.

A majority of its members must be active at UNIL or EPFL.

Committee members are eligible for re-election.

The committee allocates the various tasks or functions to be performed among its members.

In the event of a vacancy during its term of office, the Committee may co-opt new members until the next General Assembly.

Art. 15

The committee implements the decisions of the General Assembly and takes the necessary measures to ensure that the statutory goals of the Association are achieved.

It manages and organizes the Association's activities.

It decides on all matters not expressly reserved for the General Assembly.

It meets as often as the business of the Association requires.

Art. 16

The committee is responsible for:

- taking necessary measures to achieve the Association's objectives;
- convening ordinary and extraordinary General Assemblies;
- deciding on the admission and resignation of members;
- deciding on the exclusion of a member;
- ensuring the application of the bylaws of Association, drawing up by-laws and administering the Association's assets.

Art. 17

The committee must include any proposal from a member, submitted in writing at least 48 hours in advance, on the agenda of the (ordinary or extraordinary) General Assembly.

Art. 18

The committee is responsible for maintaining the Association's accounts.

Art. 19

The Association is bound by the joint signatures of one member of the Presidency and one other member of the committee.

**Auditors**

Art. 20

The auditors consist of two persons elected by the General Assembly.

They verify the Association's financial management and present a report to the General Assembly.

**Dissolution**

Art. 21

The dissolution of the Association is decided by the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority of the members present.

By decision of the General Assembly, any assets are to be allocated to an organization with objectives similar to those of the Association.

The present bylaws were adopted unanimously by the 34 members present at the Constituent Assembly held on 11.12.2024 at the University of Lausanne.

On behalf of the Association

Co-president

Julia Steinberger

Co-president

Jamila Sam

Secretary

Mounia Bennani-Chraïbi