



# International House

*Preparing the next generation of global leaders*

## **International House By-Laws of the Residents' Council**

*Amended through August 2019*

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By-Laws of the Residents' Council  
*Amended August 2019*  
**INTERNATIONAL HOUSE**  
**NEW YORK**

**ARTICLE I: RESIDENTS' COUNCIL**

SECTION I. FUNCTION OF THE COUNCIL

The Residents Council is an important resident body and provides extraordinary leadership development opportunities. At its highest levels, it supports International House's mission by helping to develop a diverse and inclusive lifelong community and nurturing an environment in which the values of respect, empathy, and moral courage are paramount.

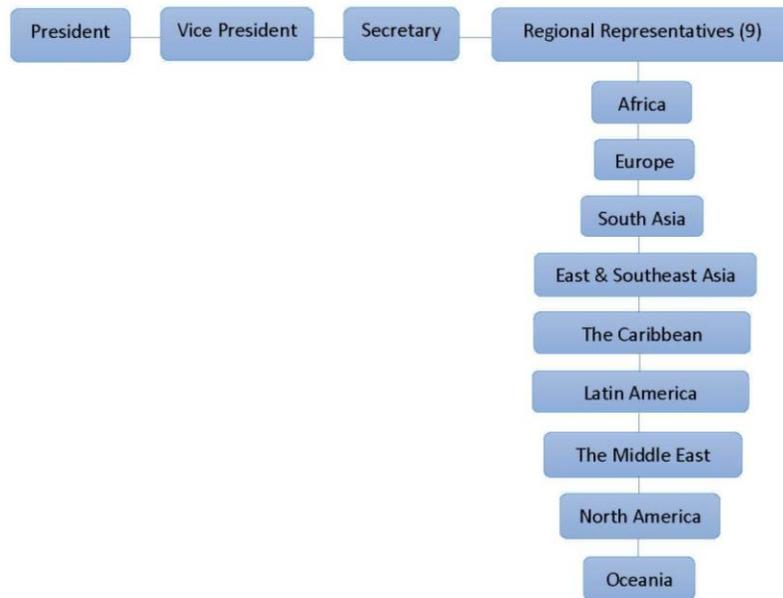
Acting as resident representatives, it shall be the function of the Residents' Council (the "RC") to advise the president of International House, its Board of Trustees, and staff where requested and as outlined elsewhere in these bylaws. It shall further be the function of the RC to conduct resident surveys; to support clear, timely communication between staff and the resident body; to inform the resident body of its decisions; to maintain the integrity and accessibility of its records in alignment with best practices; and to develop work products, conduct townhall meetings, and other functions as outlined in these bylaws.

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SECTION II. COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL

The Council shall be composed of representatives of Resident Members of International House. The representatives shall be elected in accordance with the Election Guidelines. The Council shall be composed of the following: *President, Vice President, Secretary, and nine (9) Regional Representatives*. The Regional Representatives shall represent Resident Members from the following regions: *Africa, East and Southeast Asia, Europe, Latin America, The Caribbean, The Middle East and North Africa (MENA), North America, Oceania, and South Asia*. These regions are subject to periodic review by the Office of Programs & Resident Life who shall also resolve issues as to which region a country falls in.

# Resident Council Structure



## SECTION III. ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT TO THE COUNCIL

Any Resident Member of International House in good standing is eligible for membership of the Council, in accordance with such policy as the Council deems appropriate, and in accordance with such plan as is from time to time approved by the Managing Committee. Electoral procedures for the officers and members for the forthcoming academic year shall be determined by the RC managing representatives from both the President's Office and Office of Programs & Resident life. Resident Members may nominate as a candidate themselves, or one other person, subject to that person's approval.

Residents in good standing who are running for the President position cannot hold any other resident leadership positions at I-House. All other officer positions can manage duplicate positions, under the expectation that their council role does not interfere with their resident fellowship expectations.

The elections shall be held no later than the last business day of the third week of September, in order to ensure resident representation as soon as possible each academic year. Elections shall be conducted by the Office of Programs & Resident Life to ensure that the timetable and procedures are respected. Members of the previous year's Council still residing in International House may be called upon to assist with election promotion.

Each candidate's statement shall be distributed through the Programs & Resident Life Office in order to ensure equitable treatment and to overcome cultural differences regarding electoral procedure. Candidates for election will not be permitted to distribute their own campaign materials

on the Programs & Resident Life Office notice-boards, in mailboxes, in public spaces or in resident rooms. Nor shall mass distribution of campaign messages through e-mail, voice-mail or other means be permitted, in the interests of privacy. Any issues as to the interpretation of these rules shall be resolved by the Programs & Resident Life Office. It is expected that a Meet the Candidates' Night will be held, organized by the Programs & Resident Life Office, when all candidates for election will have a chance to speak to Resident Members and answer their questions.

Each Resident Member in good standing has one (1) vote for the election of each RC position. No more than one (1) vote may be cast by each Resident Member for any one candidate.

The Programs & Resident Life Office shall, in collaboration with the President's Office, facilitate an orientation program for newly-elected Council members which includes team-building, promptly following the elections.

The Council may also decide to hold further elections during its term, in accordance with the term of office, should it deem it necessary to fill positions.

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#### SECTION IV. TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office of a member elected to the Council is until the end of the current academic year and is subject to changes based off the International House calendar. If Council members remain in residence during the summer recess, or the following academic year, they may be called upon to serve and give advice or input on International House policies until such time as the next Council is elected.

- Removal

A Council member may be removed from office for cause by a two-thirds vote of the total Council membership, such vote to be taken at a duly constituted meeting of the Council or by a written petition of a simple majority of his or her constituency, which is presented to a member of the Council favorably acted upon by a two-thirds vote of the total Council membership at a duly constituted meeting of the Council. In addition, if a Council member is no longer in good resident standing, the President's Office may remove a resident from office.

- Absences

Two (2) absences by a Council member from regular Council meetings in one semester shall be grounds for removal from the Council. Written proxy to another member does not constitute attendance. The removal of this member of the Council will be at the discretion of the President of the Council.

- Resignation

Any member desiring to resign from a position or from the Council shall submit his or her resignation to the President of the Council in writing, who shall submit it to the general body of the Council for consideration. Should a member's resignation be accepted, he or she may be replaced in accordance with the procedures for mid-year elections.

- Elections during Year

The Council may decide it is necessary to fill vacancies for RC members at any time during its term of office. In such a case, it shall invite nominations from eligible Resident Members, over a period of not less than two weeks. It shall publicize candidate statements, and all candidates for a post shall be given the opportunity to speak, and respond to Resident Members' questions, at the next suitable regular meeting of the Council. The election shall be publicized at least one week in advance. All Resident Members attending that meeting shall be eligible to vote in a secret ballot form.

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## SECTION V. I-HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Resident Council members serve as the bridge between the administration and the resident population, representing the interests of both the Resident population and the House. Consider this good training for a career in diplomacy.

The primary focus of the Communications Office is to raise visibility for I-House in the public sphere to promote support that will sustain I-House's future. Towards that end, this office also supervises and monitors certain aspects of internal communications between the administration and residents, and works with Residents to share the stories that demonstrate what makes I-House great. Below are some guidelines for internal and external communications that all RC members must adhere to:

### **I. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

There are multiple channels for feedback from individual Residents. All RC members are expected to direct all information or concerns to the appropriate departments so that they may be addressed promptly. Discretion is key.

### **II. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

I-House communications aim to showcase the history of International House, critical elements of the "I-House Experience" for Residents, and the talent and thought leadership of the I-House community. RC members represent the best of our International House resident population. The stories RC members create and promote will help elevate the visibility and reputation of I-House and live in its historical record.

**Ways to engage:**

- Write for the I-House website and blog. These may be used for I-House marketing and donor communications.
- Post reviews on third-party sites like Facebook, Google and Yelp.
- Volunteer for Development & Alumni Relations events.
- Engage with I-House on social media (*See appendix-pg. 14*)

**III. CONFIDENTIALITY**

All RC members are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement provided by the Office of Programs & Resident Life. Confidentiality Agreements ensure that all resident council members deal with confidential information in an appropriate manner. Disclosure of any private information can and will result in the expulsion and termination of a Resident Council member and further affects resident member standing at International House. (*See appendix-pg. 12*)

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**ARTICLE II: DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1. PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL**

The function of the President of the Council will include but are not limited to:

- **RC Management**

The President shall propose RC meeting dates, times and locations. In addition, the President will set the agenda for meetings. Meeting agendas shall be submitted prior to the Programs Office for review. The President will be responsible for reviewing reports presented by At-Large and Regional Representatives. Once reviewed, the President will provide these reports to each department for review (e.g. Report findings on Programming Experience for November 2020 shall be presented to the Office of Programs & Resident Life)

- **Townhall meetings**

In conjunction with the President's Office and Programs Office, the President may be called to host (1) Townhall meeting per semester. President shall submit a date request and booking form to the Programs Office for approval. Representatives from various departments at International House will be present, as their schedules permit, at the Townhall meetings.

- **Special Projects appointed by the President's Office**

Upon the request of the President's Office, the RC President may be called to assist with special projects. These tasks may include analyzing resident engagement for an event, collaboration with Trustees or presenting at a Board meeting. All special projects will be at the discretion of the President's Office.

- **Provides recommendations on overall RC Structure**

The President will provide an end-of-year report providing recommendations for improvement of the roles, duties and overall structure of the Council. This report will detail recommendations for development within the Council and the report will be submitted to the President's Office and staff liaisons for review. The purpose of the report is to help ensure that the RC structure remains relevant and includes any ongoing changes that may appear in resident membership. **A report draft will be due late-February. Final report will be due in April.**

The RC President's report will be reviewed and presented to the Programs Office and President's Office to assist with the transition of the newly elected Resident Council in September.

- **Ceremonial Role**

The President will serve as a leader of the honorary body of residents. This will include interactions with Trustee members, I-House guests and residents. The RC President is expected to abide by all guidelines of the Student Code of Conduct and shall become an ambassador of I-House, agreeing to promote and exemplify I-House's values of Respect, Empathy and Moral Courage.

- **Collaboration with other I-House Departments**

The President of the Council may be invited to sit on departmental or special event meetings. For example, the RC President may be asked to attend a Program Fellow meeting to discuss collaboration tactics and developing outlets to better support the work of the Program Fellows. All departmental meeting requests will be at the discretion and need of the department.

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## SECTION II. VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

The function of the Vice President of the Council will include but are not limited to:

- **Collection of Regional Representative Reports**

The Vice President shall collect and organize all report findings from Regional Representatives to be presented as a final draft to the President of the Council. The Vice President will also serve as organizing leader for the Regional Representatives and will communicate all necessary information and deadlines to those representatives.

- **Community Liaison to Residents**

The Vice President shall serve as a liaison for I-House residents to further engage collaboration opportunities. The Vice President will meet with resident leadership and fellows to discuss upcoming events, opportunities for collaboration with RC members, and communication tactics for promotion to the resident body. Resident leadership may include but are not limited to: Davis Peace Prize/EIF Fellowship winners, Resident Fellows, Peer Counselors, Program Fellows, etc.

- **Performs Role of President in special circumstances**

In special circumstances, the Vice President shall serve as the interim President of the Council and perform tasks related to the Presidential role. If the President of the Council steps down from their position, the Vice President must fulfill the role of President for the remainder of the academic year.

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### SECTION III. SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL

The function of the Secretary of the Council will include but are not limited to:

- **Ensuring meetings are organized and minutes are taken**

The Secretary of the Council shall serve as the primary notetaker for all set meetings with council members. The secretary will reference the meeting agenda provided by the President of the Council to collect notes. The Secretary will act as the reference point for the other At-Large and Regional Representative positions to clarify any information provided at meetings.

- **Maintaining records and correspondence with others**

The Secretary will maintain meeting records and files for the year. This includes all monthly or bi-weekly reports collected by the President. This role will also be responsible for referencing RC By-Laws and group guidelines during meetings. The Secretary is responsible for ensuring proper documentation that aligns with best practices, including consistencies for format and ease of access.

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### SECTION IV: REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Regional Representatives are pertinent for creating community bonds within the diverse layout of International House. The Council consists of (9) Regional Representatives. The Regional Representatives shall represent Resident Members from the following regions: *Africa, East and Southeast Asia, Europe, Latin America, The Caribbean, The Middle East and North Africa (MENA), North America, Oceania, and South Asia*. Each Regional Representative will be responsible for communicating and reporting on the needs of their region within International House. In

collaboration with the Office of Programs & Resident Life, regional representatives will have access to an email list of residents pertaining to their corresponding region.

Regional representatives will have the following duties, but are not limited to:

- Communicating and surveying regional residents on their experience and feedback.
- Working alongside resident leadership to assist with Salon Nights, Cultural Hours, or Holiday events that represent the region.
- Communicating urgent needs of the region to staff and the President's Office (ex: Travel Advisories, Natural Disasters, etc.)
- Collaborating with other regional representatives to maintain a mass holiday list for the House.
- Collaborating with other I-House departments to better support regional residents.

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### **ARTICLE III: MEETING GUIDELINES**

#### **SECTION I. PROTOCOLS FOR INTERACTION WITH THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

At the discretion of the President's Office, the president, officers and other members may be asked to attend meetings of International House's Board of Trustees or its committees or provided opportunities in which to interact with the board. When this occurs, members will observe the following protocols:

- They will discuss items of high-level interest appropriate for board-level conversation. Examples of high-level interest include personal or Council academic pursuits, professional goals, intellectual interests, cultural perspectives, national or international trends, and connection with International House's vision, mission, and values.
- They will not use conversations or presentations as forums to render complaints or grievances. They will recognize that International House has processes in place to resolve complaints and grievances, and honor and support these processes, recognizing that to do otherwise is to misuse trustee time and to neglect leadership development opportunities.
- Any substantive remarks, such as prepared speeches and those related to the development of work products, will be reviewed with the Managing Committee in advance in a timely manner or as outlined elsewhere in the bylaws. No material may be presented to the Board of Trustees that has not been first reviewed by the Managing Committee, or as outlined elsewhere in the bylaws.
- They will understand that networking is encouraged and recognize that "networking" means developing social and professional connections, but that it is not mean asking trustees for a job or project funding.

The Council will seek to create dialogue by asking trustees what trustees think about important issues. They will observe courtesies of professional interaction, acknowledging that trustee schedules and time are precious commodities.

These protocols create the framework for the most meaningful, substantive and impactful discussions that RC members and International House's Board of Trustees can have. They aid the Board of Trustees in its long-term work and are cornerstones to RC leadership development opportunities.

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## SECTION II. MANAGING COMMITTEE

Each year the RC Council shall report to a Managing Committee that will consist of International House staff members. The managing committee shall answer any questions and provide feedback on practices and initiatives. Members of the Managing Committee will meet with the RC Council members at least (1) once per month and will collect all reports provided by the President of the Council for distribution to the appropriate departments. All questions regarding RC Council duties, bylaws and projects should be directed to the Managing Committee for further information. At the discretion of the Managing Committee, members may invite other I-House staff members to meetings to serve as liaisons for projects and resident information.

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## SECTION III. RC COUNCIL MEETINGS

There shall be at least one (1) regular meeting of the Council held each month from October through April. All other meetings shall be held at the discretion of the President of the Council with the approval of a simple majority of the Council. The President of International House shall be invited to attend the monthly Regular and Special meetings of the Council and may request an International House staff member to be present based off the subject of the meeting. The Council may also independently meet with residents as it deems appropriate.

- Special Meetings

In addition to regular meetings, special meetings of the Council may be called at any time by the President of International House, by the President of the Council, or by the written request of no fewer than one-third of the Council members. Written notice of such special meetings, stating the time and the place thereof, shall be sent to each Council member at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.

- Quorum

At the meetings of the Council, a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but in the absence of a quorum, a majority of those present may adjourn

the meeting from time to time until such time as a quorum shall be present. If a quorum is not present, no binding vote may be taken.

- Voting

In order for a vote to be binding, at least two-thirds of the members of the Council must vote. Except as otherwise provided in these By-laws, a simple majority of those members of the Council constitutes a decision of the Council.

A Council member who is entitled to vote yet unable to attend a meeting may vote by a written proxy to another member.

- Meeting Minutes

Copies of the minutes of meetings shall be distributed to appropriate persons by the Secretary. Minutes shall become official when approved at a subsequent Council meeting.

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## **ARTICLE IV. APPENDIX**

### SECTION I. CODE OF CONDUCT

Residents of International House are carefully selected by the Admissions Committee to create a diverse community that is committed to the ideals of cross-cultural exchange, friendship, tolerance, respect, empathy and moral courage.

As a Resident, you are required to maintain standards of conduct that are consistent with the educational and cultural objectives of International House. These standards involve, but are not limited to, the following:

- Respect for the rights of others, especially the right to peaceful study time and rest
- That the use of physical force, sexual harassment and misconduct, stalking, and abusive or defamatory language to members of the community, including staff, is unacceptable.

To ensure the safety and security of all members of our community, and in following with our founding values and principles, all Residents must abide by the policies and procedures contained within the Resident Membership Agreement.

Please be sure to review these resources, and become familiar with important additional policies.

1. All Residents must display their I-House membership on entering the building.
2. Membership cards may not be shared or given to others for use in accessing I-House facilities, benefits or services under any circumstances.

3. Residents must abide by all U.S. federal, state and local laws.
4. Residents must abide by our [Sexual and Discriminatory Harassment Policy](#).
5. Noise that disturbs others is prohibited at all times. Quiet Hours are observed on all residential floors from 11:00 PM to 9:00 AM.
6. Your room may be used for residential purposes only. Because of International House's non-profit status, no commercial or business activities can take place.
7. Residents are to comply with all health and safety related policies including [non-smoking rules](#)(based on New York City and State Laws), fire safety requirements, and [drug and alcohol policies](#) (based on U.S. Federal Laws).
8. Residents should not cause any condition that jeopardizes their safety or the safety of others, or participate in conduct or behavior that endangers themselves or the well-being of any community members. Preparing leaders for the global community.
9. Possession of weapons of any kind, including firearms, knives, explosives, fireworks, ammunition, or dangerous chemicals or any substance or item that any reasonable person would consider to have the possibility of doing bodily harm is prohibited on International House property.
10. Destroying, defacing or damaging I-House property or the property of others is strictly prohibited.
11. Theft or improper use of any property or services owned by I-House or other individuals is prohibited.
12. All Residents are expected to respect and comply with or respond to directions given by staff acting in the performance of his or her duties.
13. Residents are to comply with the [Information Technology Policy](#).
14. Resident members are to comply with the [Guest Policy](#).

Living in a diverse cultural community requires a level of personal leadership and responsibility that we believe each member of our resident community possesses. Lack of compliance with any of these policies may result in immediate termination of your membership and housing privileges. By living within the International House code of conduct, Residents demonstrate their unwavering commitment to the high standards set in I-House's vision, mission and values.

Thank you in advance for your continued cooperation in making International House a preferred place to learn and live.

Should you have any questions or concerns relating to our Code of Conduct please contact:

*Anthony Gordon – Director of Public Safety at 212-280-7673 or [agordon@ihousenyc.org](mailto:agordon@ihousenyc.org)*

## SECTION II. SOCIAL MEDIA

Please “Like” or follow the official I-House NYC channels: @ihousenyc and tag I-House so that we can share your posts.

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/ihousenyc/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ihousenyc>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/ihousenyc>

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-house>

Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpn45WklaEBh6pgg3NEMIQg>

Use of these hashtags consistently will ensure effective collection of I-House stories

#ihouselife

#ihousehistory

#ihousefamily

#ihousealumni

#sundaysupper

#fallfiesta

#ihousenyc

*\*A note about Facebook. Members of the RC traditionally are expected to moderate the academic year’s Facebook Group; the Communications Office will silently observe the group and work with the moderator to address any reported issues\**