



Creating a Coalition
for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
and Becoming a Member of the IFCCD

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HOW CAN ONE CREATE A COALITION FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND BECOME A MEMBER OF THE IFCCD?

A national coalition has an important role to play in the fight for cultural diversity. It is a grouping of civil society that mobilizes for the implementation of cultural policies according to local realities.

Its missions are diverse:

- Act as voice of the cultural sector in national debates on culture, trade, digital;
- Inform, sensitize and mobilize member associations, the public, opinion leaders and public authorities on the societal and commercial issues of cultural diversity;
- Ensure that governments do not make commitments in the area of culture when negotiating trade agreements;
- Support the government's desire to assert its sovereign right to apply cultural policies on its national territory and engage in dialogue on the means to be implemented to make cultural diversity effective;
- Conduct research and foster dialogue among cultural, academic and governmental communities nationally and internationally to enable the best possible conditions for the country's artists, creators and producers to enrich the national cultural heritage in the digital age;
- Collaborate with other coalitions at the regional level (Africa, Europe, Americas, Asia), but also within linguistic areas (e.g., the Francophonie).

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BUILDING A COALITION

While some coalitions are legally structured (statutes, by-laws or constitution), others adopt a more flexible model based on free association.

Key points for building a coalition:

- Include among its members the main organizations of cultural professionals in the country. These organizations are generally a guarantee of success for the coalition because they represent the main categories of cultural professionals in their country, have prior credibility with the government and have structures, bodies or mechanisms that ensure broad participation of their members in the democratic life of the organization;

- Have members representing all cultural sectors of the country: cinema, literature, television, visual arts, music, performing arts, etc;
- Meet a common need of organizations to foster their collaboration;
- Be an independent non-governmental organization;
- Be a united, coherent and cohesive organization capable of speaking with one voice to government. Whatever actions and positions the coalition takes in its campaign for cultural diversity - mobilizing for the creation of a ministry of culture, for an increase in the budget for culture, etc. Members must share the idea that these actions are a priority and legitimate. This is essential to the success of the coalition's actions.

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THE BODIES

Some legislation provides a more or less rigid framework for the role of the bodies. The following suggestions are intended to be adapted where required by law.

The general meeting of members

It is the meeting of all members of the organization and is the basic body of an organization. For some groups, it may be called a congress or other denomination. International organizations rarely hold this type of event every year, but national organizations often do; in some cases it is even required by law.

The annual general meeting enables members to :

- Identify the vision, mission and values of the organization;
- Elect and remove the members of the Board of Directors (the directors) to whom it delegates the management of the organization;
- Ratify or refuse to ratify the by-laws;
- Appoint financial controllers;
- Receive the financial statements and the income statement;
- Approve the action plan prepared by the Board of Directors;
- Receive the activity report prepared by the Board of Directors;
- Raise any issue of interest to its members.

The Board of Directors

Board members act for the good of the organization and not for the interest of their association or for their own benefit. The Board of Directors is empowered to authorize all acts that are not reserved to the general meeting. In addition, the Board of Directors:

- Administers day-to-day business;
- Ensures the realization of the action plan adopted by the general meeting by implementing the necessary activities according to the human and financial resources available;
- Conducts the formation of committees and makes decisions based on their recommendations;
- Decides on political mandates and positions;
- Ensures appropriate public representation for the organization;
- Administers the organization's budgets;
- Ensures the financial health of the organization by balancing revenues and expenses;
- Oversees the hiring and evaluation of staff as required;
- Ensures the organization's compliance with current legislation;
- Ensures that its decisions comply with the internal regulations;
- Establishes enforcement policies for the regulations;
- Prepare and call the annual general meeting and any other meeting in accordance with the by-laws.

The Directors

The traditional model (and often imposed by the legislator) is the following: a president, a secretary and a treasurer.

In alternative models, there may be designated spokespersons on specific issues, with a rotating secretariat and meeting chair. The position of treasurer remains essential to ensure proper monitoring of the organization's finances.

This type of structure makes it possible to share responsibilities, to train members in public representation (accountability) and to value the involvement of members.

In all cases, the roles of each position are set out in the by-laws. The Chair has no more individual authority than any other Board member. The role of the Chair is to ensure that the decisions of the Board are carried out. The Chair acts under the authority of the Board, not the other way around.

Beyond a certain number of members (e.g. 7) the board of directors may delegate, if stipulated by the general regulations, part of its powers to an executive committee composed of at least three members of the board.

By-Laws

- Define the rules of the associative life of the organization;
- Guide the administrators in the performance of their duties;
- Constitute a contract between the members and the organization and the organization and the members.

The Board must ensure that the organization's by-laws do not conflict with applicable national legislation.

By-laws may vary from organization to organization and may evolve over time. It is desirable that they contain the following:

- Definitions and purposes of the organization;
- Membership categories and criteria, expulsion and suspension procedures;
- Functioning related to membership meetings (method of convening, location, quorum, voting, role, etc.);
- Composition and operation of the board of directors (number of directors, election, term of office, functions, meetings, convocations, quorum, powers, executive committee, vacancy and resignation, dismissal, remuneration and contracts);
- Indemnification of officers;
- Constitution and dissolution of committees;
- Fiscal year, accounts, audit;
- Contracts, execution of documents and loans;
- Promulgation, revocation and amendment of by-laws.

Internal policies

They are:

- Established or amended by the Board of Directors to clarify certain sections of the by-laws that are to remain general;
- Endorsed by the general meeting. e.g., membership process, dues and fee structure, per diem policy, expense reimbursement, etc.

Rules and policies are the mechanics of the organization. They should never be the purpose of the journey. Unless there is a specific and exceptional item to be addressed, meetings should devote little time to them and give full space to the development, monitoring, and evaluation of action plans that are the *raison d'être* of a cultural organization.

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VISION, MISSION, VALUES, GOALS

VISION: Represents a desirable future state of the organization or its environment. For example, using its mobilization potential to position culture at the center of government actions.

MISSION: The organization's purpose, the core of its activities. Example: mobilizing civil society to implement cultural policies; developing advocacy for the cultural sector.

VALUES: Beliefs and principles that constitute the culture of the organization. For example: non-discrimination, respect, transparency are the values underlying the execution of our mission.

GOALS: Commitments of the organization in terms of actions to be taken. Objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. They are based on an action plan.

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JOINING THE IFCCD

The IFCCD invites the public and public and private organizations to join the international civil society movement that successfully advocated for the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2005.

If you are a member of a cultural organization, you can join the IFCCD as an associate member. You can also join with other organizations to form a national coalition. Individuals can also lend their support to our cause.

The process can be gradual and it is sometimes easier, for legal and judicial reasons, to become an associate member before creating a national coalition.

To join the IFCCD: <https://ficdc.org/fr/adhesion/>
See [A Movement for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#) to learn more about the history and mission of the IFCCD.

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