

Constitution of the Russian Speaking Association

1. Name

The official name of this recognized student group is: Russian Speaking Association

The acronym or abbreviation of this group is: RSA

2. Purpose and Objectives

2.1 The purpose of the Russian Speaking Association is to provide a community and cultural hub for University of Toronto students united by their shared practice of the Russian language. Given the historical context, the Russian language and its use has spread far beyond the confines of the political entity now known as the Russian Federation. Hence, the RSA seeks to provide a community based on the shared Russian language as opposed to any national or political affiliation. Everyone united by the Russian language is welcome to join and partake in the Association without fear of discrimination based on the culture that they belong to or any characteristics they possess.

2.2 The Russian Speaking Association will enhance the educational, recreational, social, or cultural environment of the University of Toronto by spreading the awareness of Russian culture, and promoting interaction between youth groups from other schools.

2.3 The Russian Speaking Association fundamentally serves a non-profit function within the University of Toronto, and will not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.

2.4 Given the variety of members of the Russian Speaking Association and following the tenets of inclusion outlined in section 2.1, the RSA will prohibit political functions or activities in the context of the club. This is done to establish a safe space for individuals of all backgrounds.

2.5 The Russian Speaking Association operates as an independent entity working within the University of Toronto community subject to the values and policies of the University.

3. Membership

3.1 Executive members with voting privileges shall be currently registered students of the University of Toronto.

3.2 Staff, faculty, or alumni members may hold non-voting executive positions. These nonvoting executive positions shall be limited to a maximum of one (1) or ten per cent (10%) of the full executive body, whichever is greatest. Persons holding these nonvoting executive positions cannot serve as an officer (including financial signing officer) or contact person of the Student Group.

3.3 General Members shall be current students of the University of Toronto. And they are hereby afforded the following rights through a membership:

- The right to participate and vote in group elections and meetings;
- The right to communicate and to discuss and explore all ideas;
- The right to organize/engage in activities/events that are reasonable and lawful;
- The right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex, nationality, race, religion, or sexual orientation;
- The right to be free from censorship, control, or interference by the University on the basis of the organization's philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal or which infringe on the rights and freedoms already mentioned above;

3.4 Members must register with a designated executive by submitting their full name and a valid email address.

3.5 Each general member shall possess the following responsibilities relative to participation in the Russian Speaking Association at U of T:

- 3.5.1 Support the purpose of the organization;
- 3.5.2 Uphold the values of the organization;
- 3.5.3 Contribute constructively to the programs and activities offered by the organization;
- 3.5.4 Attend general meetings;
- 3.5.5 Abide by the constitution and subsequent official organizational documents;
- 3.5.6 Respect the rights of peers and fellow members;
- 3.5.7 Abide by University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines;
- 3.5.8 Abide by the Laws of the Land, including but not limited to the Criminal Code of Canada.

3.6 The Russian Speaking Association values and respects the personal information of its members. It will secure its members' information at all times and will not supply names or other confidential information to third parties.

3.7 The Russian Speaking Association will protect the privacy of member information and must use it only for the delivery of service and not for commercial gain.

3.8 For recognition by the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU), the group must maintain a minimum of 30 members, a total of 51% of membership are UTSU members. The group must also maintain recognition from the Office of Student Life. These requirements are subject to change and should be checked with UTSU annually to ensure qualifications are met.

4. Executive List and Duties

4.1 The executive committee shall be composed of at least three (3) elected officers. These include a President, Secretary, and Vice President. Other positions include Treasurer, Director of Events, Director of Communications and Campus Life Representatives.

4.2 The broad responsibilities of each executive are as follows:

4.2.1 The President shall:

Oversee the operations, management and success of the group and be the spokesperson for the group

Hold signing officer authority along with the Treasurer for financial purposes

Preside over board meetings as well as general meetings

Ensure transition of office to the future Executives

Attend at least 80% of the executive meetings

4.2.2 The Vice President shall:

Assume duties of the President in his/her absence, and be the contact point in case of the President's absence

Oversee various committees

Ensure that all activities and policies of the University of Toronto

In the event of the absence of the treasurer, take on the responsibilities of the treasurer

Attend at least 80% of the executive meetings

4.2.3 The Treasurer shall:

Record all financial transactions of the group

Hold signing officer authority along with the president for financial purposes

Maintain a budget of income and expenses along with receipts

Advise members on the financial position of the group

Prepare an annual budget for the group as well as budgets for specific events.

4.2.4 The Secretary shall:

Make a list of all registered members and maintain the websites and member contact list

Record notes and motions for the meetings
Notify all members of meetings, and handle official correspondence of the organization

4.2.5 The Director of Communications shall:

Manage and oversee communication, both internal and external
Manage the social media pages, and promote the Association through the said pages
Ensure the inclusivity and safety of the environment in the media, and among the members.

4.2.6 The Director of Events shall:

Collaborate with other members of the exec team to create and execute events
Work closely with the Communications branch to promote upcoming events
Maintain a calendar of events and work closely with the treasurer regarding the budget for events.

4.2.7 Campus Life Representatives shall:

Work closely with the Director of Events in organizing events and ensuring the inclusivity between campuses
Work closely with the Director of Communication to ensure equal representation of campuses and departments.

4.3 All the aforementioned executive positions shall be filled through elections, and only the elected members can take on the mentioned roles.

4.4 In the event that some positions remain vacant, the position shall be filled through a hire or given to another member of the executive team, with the approval from the general meeting.

4.5 In the event that directors and the executive team require help in fulfilling their duties, associates can be appointed; however, such positions do not hold executive decision making authority.

5. Termination of Executives or General Members

5.1 Any member of the club who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the club and its members, including repeatedly violating established club rules or non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest, may be given notice of removal. The member up for removal shall have the right to defend his/her actions. A vote will be held at an executive meeting, and a two-thirds majority vote of the current executives present in favor of removal is

required. The member must have the right to an appeal before the general membership, and the majority vote of the general membership will have the final say on the matter.

5.2 The member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club.

5.3 Executive members are subject to the same termination or impeachment process and, as determined by the vote, may lose their executive position along with their membership to the group. Failure to comply with the aforementioned duties could result in termination from the position.

6. Elections

6.1 The executive committee shall strike the Elections Committee and appoint one (1) Chief Returning Officer (CRO) and two (2) Scrutinizers from the general members on the committee to conduct and hold elections in March.

6.1.1 All members of the Elections Committee shall be non-biased in the results of the election and shall be required to disclose any and all conflicts of interest in the election.

6.2 The CRO shall accept nominations only from group members that are registered U of T students for voting positions, and staff, faculty, or alumni members for non-voting executive positions from the general membership before the beginning of March.

6.2.1 Candidates have to be members in good standing and be part of the group for at least one hundred (100) days prior to the nomination period.

6.2.2 Members not registered at the time that elections are announced, shall not run for executive positions during the elections.

6.2.3 Only voting members (as outlined in section 3.3.1) shall have voting rights during the elections.

6.3 The CRO shall choose to conduct the election either via paper ballot or online (through Ulife's recognized election websites)

6.3.1 In the event that a paper ballot method is chosen, the CRO will be tasked with providing each U of T member with a paper ballot on the voting dates and ask the member to place their ballot in an enclosed box.

6.3.2 In the event of a paper ballot, the CRO must also announce the ballot location within a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the election date.

6.3.3 In the event that the CRO, with permission from Ulife, wishes to conduct an online election, the CRO must announce the relevant time, date, and website, to all eligible voting club members at least 2 weeks prior to the official voting deadline.

6.4 In preparation for a tie, the CRO shall select a U of T registered student executive from amongst the executive committee, to cast their ballot and seal it in an envelope.

6.4.1 In the event of a tie for an executive position, one of the two Scrutinizers shall break the seal and count the ballot in order to break the tie.

6.5 After the election is over, the CRO and Scrutinizers shall count the ballots.

6.5.1 The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position.

6.5.2 The CRO and Scrutinizers shall submit a report of the results of the elections to the Executive Committee and general members.

6.5.3 Registered U of T students may not vote by proxy. Non-registered students may not nominate or vote in elections.

6.5.4 Only registered U of T students who have paid any applicable membership fees and have been a member in good standing for 30 days prior to election dates are eligible for voting.

6.6 Candidates who run for a position unopposed must receive a simple and clear majority of the total eligible votes at a valid general meeting in which an election is held to be declared the winner of that election.

6.7 The past executive must ensure the timely and respectful transition of all RSA information and materials post-election to the newly elected executive.

6.6 Term of executive positions shall be from May 1st in the year that the successful candidates competed, until the 30th of April in the year that immediately follows.

7. Finances

7.1. The Treasurer shall keep records of all income and expenses.

7.2. The Treasurer shall present the group's financial health at the annual general meetings.

7.3. The Executive Committee will vote on expenditures of over \$100.00 by majority vote at an executive meeting.

7.4. In the absence of the Treasurer, the responsibilities outlined in sections 4.2.3, 6.1 and 6.2 shall be handed to the Vice President.

7.5. The RSA's executives or members may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.

7.5.1. This is not intended to preclude the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the group, or of charges for specific activities, programs or events, or to prohibit the group from engaging in legitimate fundraising.

7.5.2. The Russian Speaking Association will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization, will not provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization, and will not pay salaries to some or all of its officers.

8. Meetings

8.1 Annual General Meetings (AGMs):

8.1.1 The Russian Speaking Association shall hold general meetings at least twice per year, i.e. once per academic term.

8.1.2 The Executive Committee will announce these dates two (2) weeks prior to holding the meetings.

8.1.3 These meetings are intended to go over the RSA's annual activity plan, financial health and propose or vote on constitutional amendments, if any.

8.1.4 Motions will require 2/3 majority of registered members in attendance for a vote to be cast. The motion with the most votes will be passed.

8.1.5 Minutes of all General Meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes. The aforementioned minutes shall be made available to all the general members.

8.2 Executive Meetings:

8.2.1 The executive committee shall meet on a monthly basis where date and times are to be set by the President with respect to the availability provided by other executive members.

8.2.2 The quorum of executive meetings shall be 2/3 of attending executives.

8.2.3 Each member of the executive committee is expected to attend at least 80% of the meetings. Failure to do so may result in immediate termination.

8.2.4 Minutes of all Executive Meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes. The aforementioned minutes shall be made available to all the executive members.

9. Amendments

9.1 Any registered voting member may propose and vote on amendments to this constitution. The Executive Committee will administer the process of having amendments discussed at general meetings.

9.2 Notice of a meeting called to consider such a resolution shall be given as follows:

9.2.1 Notice of the full text of the proposed constitutional amendment shall be given to each member at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the change;

9.2.2 A summary of the rationale for the proposed amendment shall be given to each member at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the change.

9.3 Constitutional amendments shall require a 2/3 majority to be passed at Annual General Meetings by registered U of T members in attendance.

9.4 The Executive Committee shall formally adopt the new constitution and submit the revised constitution to the respective University offices (i.e. The Office of Student Life, The University of Toronto Students' Union, etc) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.

10. Residual Powers Clause

10.1 Any powers not otherwise distributed or mentioned in this constitution will automatically be held by the President in the interest of the club's peace, order and good governance