



Toronto Science Policy Network (TSPN) Constitution

Last Modified: September 18th, 2024 as per the AGM on July 10th, 2024

1. Name

- 1.1. The official name of this recognized campus group is “Toronto Science Policy Network”.
- 1.2. The acronyms or abbreviations of this group are: “TOSciPolicyNet” and “TSPN”.

2. Purpose and Objectives

- 2.1. The purpose, objectives, mission and/or mandate of organization is outlined here:

The Toronto Science Policy Network aims to provide a platform for students (graduate and undergraduate) as well as post-doctoral researchers to learn more about and engage in science policy. TSPN is open to all disciplines and not bound to one particular department at the University of Toronto and is inclusive of all areas of research. Activities will include workshops, speaker series, public forums, and networking events. TSPN will raise awareness and provide basic training on the topic of science policy for all interested students and postdocs. TSPN will work with the community to advocate for science-based policy and hopes to promote communication on the science behind key policy topics. TSPN will also work towards building a directory of science policy careers adjacent to and outside of academia, as well as providing information and events geared towards finding work in science policy after graduation.

3. Code of Conduct

- 3.1. Any person attending a TSPN event or meeting agrees to abide by the code of conduct below. This code of conduct was adapted from confcodeofconduct.com.

TSPN is dedicated to providing a harassment-free event experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), or technology choices. We do not tolerate harassment of TSPN volunteers or event participants in any form. Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate for any TSPN activities, including meetings, talks, workshops, parties, events, Twitter, and other online media. Individuals violating these rules may be sanctioned or asked to leave the event at the discretion of the event organisers.

4. Membership

- 4.1. Membership to the group is open to all the University of Toronto (U of T) community members (including students, postdocs, staff, faculty, and alumni).
- 4.2. There will be no membership fee.
- 4.3. The classes of membership that exist in the group are as follows:
 - 4.3.1. General Members: A General Member is defined as any U of T student who registers with a designated executive by submitting their full name and a valid email address and attending at least two (2) TSPN meetings or events per academic year. General Members are permitted to run, nominate, and vote in elections and constitutional amendments.
 - 4.3.2. Committee Members: A Committee Member is defined as any General Member who is actively involved in a TSPN subcommittee or working group. Committee Members are permitted to run, nominate, and vote in elections and constitutional amendments.
 - 4.3.3. Executive Members: An Executive Member is defined as any member who is elected to an executive position or who is temporarily assuming duties for a vacant executive position. Executive Members are permitted to run, nominate, and vote in elections and constitutional amendments, so long as they also qualify as general members (e.g. must be a U of T student). If an executive member is not a general member, they will hold a non-voting position on the executive committee.
 - 4.3.4. Associate Members: An Associate Member is defined as an individual who is ineligible or unable to join the group as a General Member (e.g. those not affiliated with the U of T, or U of T staff, faculty, and alumni) and has attended at least two (2) TSPN meetings per academic year.



Associate Members do not have voting rights but are invited to sit on TSPN subcommittees or working groups and to attend all group events.

4.4. TSPN is open to collaboration with external groups associated with science and/or policy.

5. **Executive List and Duties**

5.1. The executive committee shall be composed of ten (10) elected officers: two (2) co-presidents, an internal affairs director, an external affairs director, two (2) co-marketing directors, two (2) financial officers (1 treasurer and 1 fundraising lead), and two (2) executives-at-large. It is the duty of the current year's executive members to seek and prepare the next year's executive. The Executive officers will be elected for one (1) year and may then run for re-election or to any office being vacant.

5.2. The positions of Co-President (2), and Treasurer must be filled at all times. In the case that an inadequate number of nominations are submitted to fill these three (3) positions, the general election meeting will be delayed until nominations are acquired to fill these positions.

5.3. The positions of Co-President (2) must be filled by someone who has previously been involved in TSPN as a Committee Member or Executive Member.

5.4. The group may appoint Directors or Coordinators for various subcommittees (see Section 6) however, such positions do not hold executive decision-making authority. Persons which hold such positions or participate in these subcommittees are considered Committee or Associate Members (see Section 3.4.2)

5.5. The broad responsibilities of each executive position are as follows:

5.5.1. The Co-Presidents shall:

- Oversee the operations, management, and success of the group.
- Be the spokespeople for the group.
- Hold signing officer authority along with the Treasurer for financial purposes.
- Work together to develop overarching annual goals for the group in line with the constitution, create a schedule of potential events and other initiatives for the year based on group brainstorming and input from the network at-large.
- Divide the overseeing of aforementioned events/initiatives and solicit/assign committee leaders from amongst the executive and interested committee members.
- Solicit clear timelines from committee leaders, ensure committees are on-track in the development of events/other initiatives, step-in as requested/necessary.
- Preside over executive meetings as well as general meetings on a rotating, predetermined basis.
- Handle official correspondence of the organization, including U-Life related correspondence.
- Review any official communication prior to release.
- Lead and represent TSPN interests in external discussions including, but not limited to, those with TSPN's Advisory Board, SciPolCanada, and Support our Science
- Submit a final progress report of the year by the end of their term in collaboration with other executives
- Ensure transition of office to the future Executives.
- Fill-in where there may be gaps in other executive portfolios and assist with key tasks that are behind (e.g. sending out newsletters)
- Commit to a two-year term whereby the first year is as acting president of the Executive Committee and the second year is as Past-President on the Advisory Board.

5.5.2. The Co-Marketing Directors shall:

- Develop a marketing strategy in conjunction with the Co-Presidents following the development of the schedule for the year.
- Share the responsibility of overseeing the marketing for various events as well as various platforms.
- Manage and recruit volunteers for the Marketing Committee.



- Coordinate together with the Marketing Committee tasks and activities on social media, which include but are not limited to Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Medium, and YouTube.
 - Adapt existing graphic templates to create posters and/or social media graphics to promote TSPN events in conjunction with members of the Marketing Committee.
 - Maintain regular activity on TSPN social media accounts (including assisting in the promotion of TSPN events and campaigns).
 - Ensure professional conduct and communication through social media and the website.
 - Facilitate any live-streams or live-commentary of TSPN events when necessary.
 - Draft marketing emails regarding upcoming events and programs.
 - Create online event pages for TSPN using Eventbrite.
- 5.5.3. The Internal Affairs Director shall:
- Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts
 - Make a list of all registered and active members.
 - Maintain and manage the TSPN LISTSERV.
 - Schedule regular meetings for the executive committee.
 - Record notes and motions for meetings.
 - Notify all members of meetings.
 - Handle official correspondence of the organization in coordination with the Co-Presidents.
 - Draft and organize newsletters, notifications, and blurbs to the TSPN mailing list.
 - Add and maintain the TSPN Google Calendar of Events.
 - Monitor TSPN general email and respond to inquiries.
- 5.5.4. The External Affairs Director shall:
- Create a relevant contact list of stakeholders to contact for TSPN events (including departments, student groups, and/or external community groups).
 - Foster collaborations and partnerships with other groups, organizations and departments, within the U of T community and beyond.
 - Assist in the coordination of TSPN's public relations campaigns including through traditional media.
 - Assist in the coordination of TSPN's institutional relations and advocacy campaigns including liaising with university administrations, etc.
 - Assist in the coordination of TSPN's government relations campaigns. Coordinate efforts alongside the Fundraising Lead.
 - Contact external stakeholders and groups (e.g. academic societies and non-profits) and U of T departments regarding various events and projects.
- 5.5.5. The Treasurer shall:
- Record and perform all financial transactions of and for the group.
 - Hold signing officer authority along with the Co-Presidents 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.
 - Work with the Fundraising Lead to obtain funding through grant applications and/or collaborations with University of Toronto departments and/or community organizations.
 - Assume responsibilities of Fundraising Lead in their absence.
- 5.5.6. The Fundraising Lead shall:
- Track fundraising application deadlines and work with the External Affairs Director to identify external sources of funding and sponsors (e.g. academic societies, non-profits, etc.) for different events and projects.



- Coordinate with the Treasurer and Co-Presidents regarding the amount of funding needed for the academic year.
- Be responsible for obtaining funding through grant applications and/or collaborations with University of Toronto departments and/or community organizations.
- Write drafts for funding applications, solicit edits from other executive team members, and submit funding applications.
- Work with the Treasurer to complete Reports after events as needed by sponsors.

5.5.7. The Executive-at-Large (2) shall:

- Assist in the logistical organization of TSPN events or initiatives - duties may include outreach to potential speakers, reservation of event spaces, and creation of promotional materials.
- Assist other executive members in their roles.
- Communicate with TSPN volunteers on Slack to provide updates regarding TSPN events

5.5.8. In addition to the specific responsibilities associated with their positions, all Executive Members shall:

- Ensure TSPN remains non-partisan.
- Assist with planning and execution of at least one TSPN event, which includes identifying and communicating with speakers, reviewing marketing material, drafting event blurbs, writing event summaries and as needed managing volunteers.
- Appoint members to the Advisory Board.
- Provide feedback and input regarding TSPN activities with the Co-Presidents which will be reported to the Advisory Board.
- Assist with funding applications, including budgets, written reports and proposals.
- Assist with the responsibilities for positions currently unfilled on the Executive Committee.
- Temporarily appoint an Executive-At-Large or Committee Member to an Executive Member position if the position is unfilled until a by-election can be held.
- Assist with writing a final report on TSPN for the year, which includes a final progress report of the year by the end of their term.

5.6. The group may recruit volunteers to assist with specific tasks associated with different executive positions, such as writing and sending newsletters and writing grant applications.

6. Committees

6.1. Committees facilitate the running and management of different TSPN projects and tasks.

6.2. Committees are spearheaded by TSPN Volunteers and Executive Members. Any volunteer participating or leading a committee is considered a Committee or Associate Member (See section 4.3).

6.3. All members are welcome to join and participate in any committee.

6.4. The following committee will exist year-round:

6.4.1. 6.4.1. Marketing Committee which shall:

- Be led by the Co-Marketing Directors
- Maintain activity on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn
- Re-tweet and share relevant tweets and posts
- Develop text for tweets and respond to comments and feedback on social media
- Assist with event promotion on social media
- Create and design graphics for events
- Post event recordings and summaries to YouTube and Medium



- 6.5. The Executive Committee will create a non-binding list of possible committees to share with volunteers during the Fall AGM. This can include but is not limited to tasks or campaigns such as budget reviews, memo writing, building community partnerships, or event organization.
- 6.6. Additional committees can be formed at any point to develop and manage different projects and events.

7. **Advisory Board**

- 7.1. The TSPN Advisory Board will consist of up to 9 members, including a minimum of one University of Toronto faculty member, one science policy leader, and one former TSPN executive member.
- 7.2. The Advisory Board is the primary source of external guidance for TSPN on budget decisions and large projects. The Board members (including a Chair) will be appointed by the TSPN Executive Committee. Each Advisory Board member will serve a two- or three-year term, with the possibility of extension and a temporary leave of absence.
- 7.3. The Executive Committee will host an open call for nominees on the internal Slack Channel for a period of at least 2 weeks during August and April of each year. Possible board members will be selected by majority vote by the Executive Committee at the next TSPN executive meeting.
- 7.4. The full board shall consist of:
 - Up to 2 faculty members from the University of Toronto.
 - Up to 2 science policy leaders.
 - At least 2 former TSPN executive members.
 - Current TSPN Co-Presidents.
 - The immediate Past-Co-Presidents of TSPN.
- 7.5. All TSPN Advisory Board members have voting rights, except for the current Co-Presidents.
- 7.6. There will be a minimum of three (3) Advisory Board meetings per calendar year. Meetings will be at least 60 minutes and up to 120 minutes in length. Meeting minutes will be taken by one of the Co-Presidents. Meeting minutes will be made available to the board and the TSPN Executive Committee within one week following the meeting. The quorum of Board meetings shall be 50%+1 of members. Proposed meeting timeline is as follows:
 - September: Co-Presidents presents the new budget and plan for the year and introduces the new Executive Committee and Advisory Board Members. The Chair of the Advisory Board is appointed by majority vote. Advisory Board meeting dates will be set for the year.
 - October: Co-Presidents provides update on progress (team and events).
 - January: Advisory Board reviews fall activities and evaluates the upcoming winter plan.
 - April: Advisory Board reviews winter activities and evaluates the summer plan. Advisory Board provides budget recommendations & broad discussion on board engagement.
 - May/June: Current TSPN Executive Committee and Advisory Board conduct a Year in Review, discuss transition plans and review executive summaries before the Summer AGM.
- 7.7. The Co-Presidents will draft meeting agendas to be approved by Chair of the Advisory Board at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. The Chair is responsible for sharing the final agenda with the Advisory Board and Executive Committee 1 week before the next Advisory Board meeting. The Chair will preside over Advisory Board meetings and ensure all rules and procedures are observed by all members.
- 7.8. Board members shall be selected based on the following criteria; however, members are not required to meet all requirements to be nominated or selected to the Advisory Board:
 - Knowledgeable of and support TSPN's long term goals of continuity and building science policy capacity.
 - Have demonstrated an interest and/or knowledge in Canadian science policy through contributions to the academic, industry or public sectors within their area of expertise, and/or efforts.



- Knowledgeable of student governance within the University of Toronto.
- 7.9. Members of the Advisory Board shall:
- Attend at least 75% of scheduled meetings.
 - Provide expert advice, mentorship, and guidance with TSPN's future initiatives.
 - Inform TSPN of upcoming opportunities in the science policy space as it relates to the professional development of the TSPN membership, and/or potential collaborations with external entities.
 - Advocate for and support funding applications and/or Research Ethics Board Applications within the University of Toronto.
 - Leverage their network to help support TSPN goals and activities.
 - Review TSPN executive documents/summaries for bigger projects, such as large-scale campaigns or surveys.
 - Review proposed budget and scheduled programming, with an eye towards identifying pitfalls or risks associated with projects/timelines.
- 7.10. Board members who fail to meet their responsibilities will be asked to resign by a majority vote at a TSPN Executive meeting, which must be seconded by a majority vote by active Board members.
- 7.11 The Advisory Board shall have no standing subcommittees. If one is deemed necessary for a particular initiative, the Executive Committee may create a temporary subcommittee whose membership will be discussed at a next Advisory Board meeting.

8. Termination of Membership

- 8.1. Any member of the club who commits an act negatively affecting the club and its members, (including non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest) or fails to execute their responsibilities and/or TSPN's mission, may be given notice of removal.
- 8.2. The member up for removal shall have the right to defend their actions.
- 8.3. A two-thirds majority vote of the current members present in favor of removal is required. The member must have the right to an appeal before the general membership, and a majority vote of the general membership will have the final say on the matter.
- 8.4. The member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club.
- 8.5. Executive members are subject to the same termination or impeachment process and, as determined by the vote, will lose their executive position along with their membership to the group.

9. Elections

- 9.1. The executive committee shall strike the Elections Committee and appoint one (1) Chief Returning Officer (CRO) from the general members on the committee to conduct and hold elections in the summer. All members of the Elections Committee shall be unbiased in the results of the election and shall be required to disclose any and all conflicts of interest in the election.
- 9.2. The CRO shall accept nominations only from group members that are also registered students at U of T for candidacy of voting executive positions from the general membership before the beginning of the nomination period. The CRO shall accept nominations only from group members that are also registered students at U of T for candidacy of voting executive positions from the general membership before the beginning of the nomination period. The positions of Co-President and Treasurer must be held by voting members (i.e. U of T students). Candidates have to be members in good standing and be part of the group for at least one month prior to the nomination period. The nomination period will open for two (2) full weeks.
- 9.3. The voting period will be open for one (1) full week following the closing of the nomination period.
- 9.4. Each member of the organization shall be entitled to one (1) vote except the President who shall only vote in the event of a tie.



- 9.5. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position. The CRO shall submit a report of the results of the elections to the Executive Committee and general members.
- 9.6. Only General Members, Committee Members, and Executive Members in good standing are eligible for voting.
- 9.7. Terms of executive positions shall last for one year, starting and ending with elections in the summer semester.
- 9.8. By-elections may be held throughout the year to fill any vacant positions on the Executive Committee. The nomination period for any by-election will be open for two (2) weeks before the voting period is opened for one (1) full week. By-elections will be conducted based on the guidelines and rules listed for a regular election.

10. **Finances**

- 10.1. The Treasurer shall keep records of all income and expenses. The Treasurer shall present the group's financial health at the annual general meetings. The Executive Committee will vote on expenditures of over \$250.00 by majority vote at an executive meeting.
- 10.2. Any disbursement of in any form requires two (2) signing authorities: the Co-Presidents and the Treasurer. A cheque made out to one of the aforementioned parties must be approved by the other two signing authorities.
- 10.3. Within 1 (one) week after the conclusion of a TSPN event or initiative, the organizing members must submit a fully costed report to the treasurer.
- 10.4. The group's executive or members may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the charges for specific activities, programs or events, or to prohibit groups from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, the group 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.

11. **Meetings**

- 11.1. Annual General Meetings:
 - 11.1.1. The group shall hold general meetings at least twice per year: (i) before the end of the executive team's term, where they will present a summary of the past year's events & budget. (ii) In late summer or early fall, where the newly elected executive team will propose a tentative list of events and campaigns for the year with a proposed budget.
 - 11.1.2. General meetings require a notice of their time, location, and agenda to be sent to members two (2) weeks prior to holding the meetings. These meetings are intended to go over the group's annual activity plan, financial health and propose or vote on constitutional amendments, if any. Motions will require 2/3 majority of members in attendance for a vote to be passed. The motion with the most votes will be passed.
- 11.2. Executive Meetings:
 - 11.2.1. The executive committee shall meet monthly, where date and times are to be set by the executive committee. The quorum of executive meetings shall be 50%+1 of executives.
 - 11.2.2. Minutes from all executive meetings are to be made available to all executive members and committee members within seven (7) days of the meeting being held.

12. **Amendments**

- 12.1. Any registered U of T members may propose and vote on amendments to this constitution. The Executive Committee will administer the process of having amendments discussed at general meetings.
- 12.2. Constitutional amendments shall require a 2/3 majority to be passed at Annual General Meetings by registered U of T members in attendance.
- 12.3. The Executive Committee shall formally adopt the new constitution and submit the revised constitution to the respective University office (U-Life) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.

