



EAST LONDON MALAYALEE ASSOCIATION (ELMA) **CONSTITUTION/ BYE LAWS**

As adopted on 11 November 2023

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The East London Malayalee Association (ELMA) is governed in its constitutional arrangements by its bye-laws, which determine the powers of Executive Committee who are the office bearers of the Association and of the General Body. Originally all decisions were made through a quarterly or annual or term meetings of members or General Body or Executive Committee, but as the Association advances and the work and complexity of its activities is being increased, the Executive Committee agreed that this bye-laws becomes a necessity which imposes particular responsibilities for governance, management and administration of the affairs of the Association in the long term and to achieve its objectives.

These Constitution / Bye- laws are the set of instructions of how the Association should perform, setting out the process or rules for various aspects of its activities.

PREAMBLE:

We, heirs of a rich heritage of Kerala, India, to maintain the great values of that heritage and establish a forum for the contribution of the unique culture and tradition of the people from Kerala to the enrichment of the British and Keralites Society, do ordain and dedicate this constitution for the East London Malayalee Association.

- I.
- i. This organization shall be called "ELMA (East London Malayalee Association)," and is hereunder referred to as the "Association."
 - ii. It shall be a non-political, non-profit, secular organization to provide common platform to various members, member organisations and interested individuals and to coordinate cultural, educational, social, economic and community affairs of the people of Kerala origin residing in its areas of operation.
 - iii. The term 'secular' is defined as the institution or organization or Association that is not sectarian based on religion, sex or political affiliations.
 - iv. The location of the office or registered address would be decided by the Executive Committee of the relevant time.

II. Objectives.

The objectives of the Association are:

- To provide a forum for its members to meet and exchange views;
- To foster friendship and understanding among its members;
- To provide opportunity for literary, cultural and entertainment activities;
- To provide opportunity for members – men, women and children - to participate and take leadership in the activities of the Association;
- To promote the well-being of new arrivals to its Area of Operation, to make their ingress to Keralites life in its Area of Operation as smooth as possible and to be of service to those who are in need; and
- To cooperate with other organizations in programs of common interest.
- To secure the solidarity, unity and co-operation of any target communities for the betterment of their social, cultural and educational development of the members and their families as the community in general and the upliftment of the children and women.
- To celebrate important days and festivals of Kerala such as Onam, Christmas, Easter, etc.
- To work for the overall development of the disadvantaged sections of the community and society in general and promote the traditional practices, moral values and cultural standards that form the corner stone of the social development of the target group.
- To work for the promotion of a just and humane social order based on democracy, freedom, liberty, fraternity and equality; and the moral, spiritual and ethical values that form the crux of any healthy society.
- To promote Human rights, humanitarian aid and peace and disarmament.
- To promote the social integration and cultural integration of the members as well as the target community with specific programmes and schemes
- To explore and integrate with the great culture of the United Kingdom
- To provide opportunities to develop the talents of the community members including the children and youngsters.
- To represent the interest of Kerala/Malayali community in its Area of Operation and/or in the wider Kerala Community in UK.
- To foster friendship and understanding between Keralites and others
- To organize and co-ordinate activities for the purpose of contributing to Kerala's development
- To raise, solicit and receive funds, charities and donations to carry out the above and other worthy humanitarian causes of Keralites or others who are needy in United Kingdom and Kerala.

III. Basic Policies.

The Association shall be governed by the following policies:

1. The Association shall be non-profit, non-sectarian, non-political and non-commercial.

2. Neither the name of the Association nor the name of any member in his or her official capacity with the Association shall be used in any connection with any commercial concern or with any political interest or for any purpose inconsistent with the objectives of the Association.
3. When the Association cooperates with other groups in projects and programs of common interest, persons representing this Association in such matters shall not make any commitments that might bind the Association, unless specifically authorized by the Association.
4. In the event of the dissolution of the Association, its assets shall be distributed as shall be decided in the last meeting of the general membership, which is duly called as prescribed in Sec. 1 of Article VII.

IV. Membership, Privileges and Dues.

1. There shall be four kinds of members:
 - A. Members. Anyone belonging to any of the following categories is eligible for membership in the Association.
 - (i) Keralites,
 - (ii) Malayalam speaking people,
 - (iii) Descendants of Keralites,
 - (iv) Persons related to Keralites and their descendants.

Only members who are eighteen years of age or older, and residents of East London Boroughs, any previous residents of these boroughs who are in the UK and were members of the association at such times and completed at least four years co-operation with the association by taking part in its activities at least once in every year, are eligible to vote and hold any elected office of the Association except those who hold office on adoption of this Constitution/bye laws. All members are expected to adopt the standards of dignity, fairness and integrity.

- B. Associate Members. Any person who are from the neighboring Boroughs within Greater London and Essex shall subscribe to the objectives of the Association as outlined in clause II, but ineligible for becoming members identified in IV. 1.A shall be eligible for associate membership.
 - C. Honorary Members: Any person, who has rendered a conspicuous and outstanding service to the Kerala community within the Associations area of operation, may be nominated to Honorary Membership on recommendation by the Executive Committee and approved by the then President and Secretary. Honorary membership shall be exempt from all dues, right to vote and hold elected office of the Association except for

the Advisory committee.

- D. Proviso Members: Any person, who are eligible under the IV1.A., but not eligible to vote and hold elected office due to them not completing four years of membership in the association or any person/s who left the Association due to any conflict or got revoked their membership or parted from the Association and those who wish to rejoin the Association, shall be eligible for proviso membership. These membership wouldn't give them any right to vote, nominate or hold any elected office of the Association until they complete four years in this membership and is dependent on the conduct of the member during these period. Conferring of full membership under IV 1.A., IV 1. B, or IV.1.C. is the discretion of the Executive Committee of the relevant time.

2. Membership.

- (a) The membership year for all annual members shall be one year from the date of enrollment and will expire on the anniversary date of the membership unless renewed prior to the anniversary date by paying the membership fees. An Action to revoke membership may be initiated for non-payment of the dues for more than 6 months or non- renewal within 6 months though not compulsory and the Executive Committee shall provide a reasonable opportunity for the affected member to respond, in person or in writing, to show cause why membership should not be revoked. The decision to pursue revocation of membership proceedings rests with the Executive Committee following a fair and careful review of the request and supporting documentation, which would be final.
- (b) There shall be three categories of membership:
 - (i) Family annual membership (husband, wife and children under age of 18),
 - (ii) Individual annual membership,
 - (iii) Associate Organisational membership: Any socio-cultural and secular organization of Keralites located in Association's Area of Operation is eligible to apply for Associate membership as per IV. 1B, provided they abide by the rules set by the Association and approved by the Executive Committee.
- (c) All membership fees and privileges shall be set and periodically adjusted by the general body of the Association upon recommendation of the executive committee if varied from IV.4 below.

- (d) Any grievances relating to membership shall be brought to the attention of the General body or to the Executive Committee in writing who would then constitute a disciplinary committee as mentioned in clause IV.5 below to consider such grievances and provide their recommendations to the Executive Committee for their final decision.
- 3. Individuals may be enrolled any time of the year for the annual membership. However, only those members whose memberships are valid on August 1 of any year shall be eligible to be nominated to any office of the Association and to participate in the election of executive committee members during the same year. All the executive members are required to maintain valid membership status while in office and should have completed at least four years of membership in the association or participation in the events with exception to the Executive Committee which adopts this Constitution/Bye- laws of the Association.
- 4. Annual family membership fee shall be £25(Twenty pounds), individual annual membership fee shall be £10(Ten pounds) and associate organisational annual membership fee shall be £ 150 (one fifty pounds) payable at the time of application or on renewal. All membership or renewal applications are considered by the Executive Committee and the Executive Committee have the right to reject or approve such applications for membership/renewal which would be final.
- 5. Membership of all categories can be revoked if an organization/individual has been found of violating the Constitution and / or by-laws of the 'Association'. A written notice/intimation of at least twenty-one (21) days specifying the alleged charges be given to the member/ organization by the Secretary prior to the commencement of action contemplated under this Section. The Executive Committee shall constitute a disciplinary committee of at least three members who are qualified to be members under IV.1A and an organisation /individual whose membership has been cancelled as per this clause is not entitled to receive any unexpired portion of the annual dues.

V. Administration.

- 1. The association shall be administered and managed by an Executive Committee comprising:

all officers of the Association as described in V.2 below;
- 2. The Association shall have six elected/nominated officers as listed below:
 - (a) President,
 - (b) Vice-President,
 - (c) Secretary,

- (d) Joint Secretary,
- (e) Treasurer,
- (f) Joint treasurer

3. The following procedure shall be used in the nomination and election of office bearers and committee members :

- (a) Nominations must be called by the Secretary before a month of the proposed election date. Each nomination should be proposed and seconded for each post by members who remain on the membership roster and accompanied by the proposer's, seconder's and nominees names and written confirmation that they endorse the nomination.
- (b) Nominations must be made by other members, though self-nomination may also be accepted.
- (c) If there are multiple proposals for any posts of office bearers and if such nominations are continued, election process needs to be considered to conduct election either by online poll or voice vote or secret ballot as decided by the then Executive committee.
- (d) If there are no nominations received for all or any of the posts or no valid nominations received, the Executive committee shall place the any such nominations received before the General body for approval or require the General body to nominate for any such vacant posts.
- (e) A plurality of votes decides the outcome of the election. Any tie shall be broken by coin-toss.

4. The term of office of the elected officers shall be from concluding the election process and for a term of two years. All Association documents shall be transferred to the new executive committee on them assuming the office within a period of two weeks of them being elected or after two weeks after the annual Onam Celebration event or at the earliest which should not go beyond a month. The current Committee shall remain in power until the newly elected Committee officially takes charge and not more than two weeks of the new committee being elected.
5. No member of the Association shall serve for more than two consecutive full terms in the same position, except for those in the Advisory Committee.
6. The term of any elected member shall automatically expire if that person shall cease to be a resident in the areas of operation or in the neighbouring Boroughs.
7. If, in the judgement of the Executive Committee, an executive committee member fails to discharge his or her duties or acts to the detriment of the Association, that member may be removed from the position by a two-thirds majority decision in a duly called executive committee meeting. The aggrieved party, however, may appeal the decision to the general body.
8.
 - (a) The Executive Committee may fill all vacancies for the following:
 - (i) the Coordinators as described in Clause VI.1;
 - (ii) three other persons for the advisory committee from which a person could be elected as Chairman who will be the Advisor to the Executive Committee provided, they have either been an office bearer or a qualified professional or are eligible under Clause IV 1C above, and
 - (b) Should a vacancy arise in any of Executive Committee positions, it shall be filled by nomination/election at a duly called general body meeting of the Association in accordance with Clause V.3 above or if it is for a short term less than 6 months or within the term of the existing Executive Committee, the Executive

committee could fill such vacancy in the interest of the Association.

9.
 1. The Executive Committee shall transact all business including:
 - (a) Approval of the program for the year;
 - (b) Meet at least once in a quarter of the year;
 - (c) Selection of depository for Association funds;
 - (d) Provision of an annual audit of activities/ accounts;
 - (e) Smooth running of the Association.
 - (f) Manage administration of the Association and take direct responsibility of its programmes
 - (g) Hold assets of the Association and use them for the welfare of the target groups served by the Association
 - (h) Receive and make payments and acquire and dispose of any wealth of the association in the interest of the Association or for its benefit.
 - (i) Plan programmes and policies for Association and to mobilise resources
 - (j) Mortgage, sell or alienate any property of the Association for the benefit of the Association or in the interest of the Association.
 - (k) Elect or appoint any casual vacancy of office bearers of the association from among the members.
 - (l) Appoint and terminate staff of the Association and its projects and decide their salaries and other terms and conditions of such employment.
 2. Any member of the Executive committee absent in the meetings of the Executive Committee consecutively for three times without intimating satisfactory reasons will cease to be a member of the Executive Committee and will only be allowed to continue should the other Executive Committee members unanimously or by majority decides otherwise.
 3. All decisions in the Executive Committee are to be taken on a majority of the members present and in the event of a tie, the President can exercise his casting vote. Any decisions require immediate /urgent consideration would be done by President and Secretary/ Treasurer.
10. The duties of the President shall include among others:
 - (a) Preside over all the general body, executive committee meetings and other functions;
 - (b) Serve as spokesperson for the Association or appoint a spokesperson for the Association
 - (c) Coordinate work of the standing committees and ad hoc committees and receive reports of the respective committees.
 - (d) Give directions to other office bearers regarding the running of the association and any work to be undertaken by/for the association/ad-hoc committees.

(e) Represent the Association either jointly with Secretary and other office bearers or individually and to appoint any office bearers to represent the Association at specific times.

(f) To do any act or deeds for the betterment of the Association

11. The duties of the Vice-president shall be:

(a) Assist the president in his/her duties;

(b) Perform the duties of the president in his/her absence; and

(c) Advise and assist standing committees, subcommittees and ad hoc committees with the President or as advised by the President.

12. The duties of the Secretary shall be:

(a) Convene the general body at the request of the President or the Executive Committee;

(b) To Record the minutes of the meetings or to assign it to any Executive Committee members;

(c) Help the president in coordinating the activities of the Association and various committees;

(d) Keep an official roster containing the addresses and telephone numbers of all the members.

(e) To manage the day to day affairs of the Association according to the directions of the President and resolutions of the Executive Committee.

(f) To implement the decisions of the Executive Committee and report such progress to the President and the Executive Committee

(g) To attend all legal proceedings for and against the Association jointly with other office bearers or severally.

(h) To initiate communications and correspondences of the Association.

(i) To administer petty cash of the Association and approve of all such receipts and payments.

13. The duties of the Joint Secretary shall be:

(a) Assist the Secretary in his/her duties;

(b) Perform the duties of the Secretary in his/her absence;

- (c) Advise and assist standing committees, subcommittees and ad hoc committees as advised by the Secretary or President; and
- (d) Assume such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Secretary or the Executive Committee.

14. The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- (a) Collect and disburse the operating funds as directed by the President, Secretary or Executive Committee;
- (b) Maintain a complete record of all income and expense of the Association and to make the records available to President, Secretary or Executive Committee and to the members upon directions by the Executive Committee;
- (c) Submit the interim/annual financial statement of accounts to the President, Secretary or Executive Committee as and when requested and present two year term financial statements to the end of term Annual General body after seeking approval from the Executive Committee;
- (d) To prepare and present statement of accounts to the General Body when directed by the Executive Committee;
- (e) To keep all funds of the Association comprising of membership fee, contributions, advances, grants, donations, sponsorship money, loans in the Association's bank/building society account and operate jointly by President or Secretary except the petty cash to a maximum of £500 (Five hundred pounds only) such petty cash vouchers to be approved by the Secretary.
- (f) Secure checks issued in the name of the Association countersigned jointly by the treasurer and president or secretary.
- (g) Have general supervision over funds of the Association and to see that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are maintained;
- (h) To render whenever required, an accurate account of the financial condition of the Association to the President, Secretary or Executive Committee.

15. The duties of the Joint Treasurer shall be:

- (a) Assist the Treasurer in the performance of his/her responsibilities in such a manner and to such extent which is necessary;

- (b) Perform such further duties as may be designed by the Treasurer and/or Executive Committee;
 - (c) Perform the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence;
 - (d) Assist standing committees, subcommittees and ad hoc committees as directed by the President, Secretary or Treasurer; and
 - (e) Assume such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Secretary or the Executive Committee.
16. (a) The executive committee shall meet quarterly and at such other times as it deems necessary. Notice shall be given to all members prior to the date of the meeting, in writing, by telephone or by other electronic media and if possible prior to two weeks or reasonable time of the meeting except when an emergency meeting is required .
- (b) Any emergency decision of the executive committee shall be taken by receiving their opinion through any medium of communication by the President after determination by the majority of the office bearers that an emergency situation has arisen and that it is impossible to convene a regular executive committee meeting. The executive committee shall keep a record of the deliberations. The decision may be ratified in the following executive committee meeting.

VI. Coordinators.

- 1.
- (a) There shall be ten Coordinators or more appointed by the Executive Committee as exercising their discretion:
 - (i) Membership Coordinator;
 - (ii) Finance Coordinator;
 - (iii) Public relations and Publicity Coordinator;
 - (iv) Literary services Coordinator;
 - (v) Youth liaison Coordinator
 - (vi) Sports activities Coordinator;
 - (vii) Social services and Charitable Activities Coordinator
 - (viii) Web Site maintenance Coordinator.
 - (ix) Women's Forum Coordinator.
 - (x) Annual Events /Special events Program Coordinator
 - (b) The functions of these coordinators except the Advisory Committee, shall be outlined by the Executive

Committee.

2. The Executive Committee may appoint ad hoc committees as it may deem necessary to perform specific tasks.
3. An Executive Committee meeting shall be called if possible within two weeks if any five members of the committee shall request in writing to the President stating reasons for such meeting.
4. The President and Secretary shall be ex officio members of all committees except Advisory Committee.

VII. General body meetings.

1. The Executive Committee shall arrange at least once general body meetings a year. The annual meeting of the Association shall be held on or after Onam Celebrations, at which time nominations /elections shall be conducted and results shall be announced. At least 14 days' notice shall be given for a general body meeting.
2. A general body meeting of the Association shall be called if half of the voting members of the Association request such a meeting in writing to the Executive Committee, and such meeting shall be convened no later than four weeks from the time the request is received.
3. The quorum of the General Body meeting is one-fourth of the existing members.

VIII. Restricted Funds.

The Association may maintain RESTRICTED FUNDS.

(a) Membership Fund.

The membership fees collected may be deposited in a restricted fund. Only the interest and dividend income from this fund may be used by the executive committee for administrative expenses.

(b) Special Funds.

The Association may create and maintain SPECIAL FUNDS. Deposits to and withdrawal from the funds shall be made only with the approval of the general body of the Association.

IX. Equal opportunity

1. The Association provides equal opportunity to all Malayalee community members to work in the Executive committee and Association activities irrespective of their gender and faith.

2. The President, Secretary and Treasurer are posts open to all association members who have completed four years as a member of the Association and will be nominated/elected as per Clause V.3. These post can be held by male or female members who are above 18 years or above and preferably to those who could help the Association by their beneficial experience in the UK for more than 6 years. Candidates are welcome from anywhere in Association's Area of Operation.
3. Executive committee members should represent various specified areas of Association's Area of Operation if possible.

X. Resignation

The Executive Committee is expected to finish the term of two years with no change. Full authority is bestowed upon the Committee by the general body. However, if a member in the Executive Committee wishes to resign from the post due to unavoidable circumstances, such as physical illness, transfer, personal/family problems etc, she/he should give a written resignation letter to the President stating the reasons clearly. The matter will be discussed in the next Executive Committee meeting and final decision will be reached.

XI. Dissolution

The association can be dissolved by a decision of the whole Executive Committee and of the General body with 3/4 majority of the members present and voting. On dissolution, the assets of the association shall be handed over to any other similar association after liquidation and clearance of the liabilities.

XII. Official Language

Malayalam and English shall be the official languages of the Association.

XIII. Amendments to the Constitution.

This constitution may be amended at any general body meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the members and voting, provided notice of any proposed amendment shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is voted upon.

XIV. Effective Dates of Constitution and any Amendments.

No written constitution or byelaws were validly adopted or followed by the Association on its inception when the Association relied on conventional practices. Whereas it is advisable to have a written constitution and the Executive Committee along with the majority members have agreed on the General meeting held on 11 November 2023 so that, this Initial constitution is prepared which shall take effect thereon.

XV

Board of Advisors

1. The Advisory Committee can be constituted as follows:

- (i) The committee shall have three members, consisting of either previous two office bearers of the Association or two others who are either professionals or of well reputation/good standing in the Association selected by the Executive Committee from the members and the Advisor elected.
- (ii) The term of such Advisory Committee member shall be two years and could be replaced the Executive Committee unless the then Executive Committee decides to extend their term. The Executive Committee may re-elect any member of this committee for subsequent terms.
- (iii) The chairman of the Advisory Committee shall be Advisor as per clause V. 2g.

2. Functions:

- a) The role of the Board of Advisors shall be strictly limited to advisory in nature without any executive power.
- b) The members of the Board of Advisors shall individually and collectively provide wise advice and counsel to the Executive Committee on a regular basis on matters related to
 - a. Planning, fund-raising, and community relations
 - b. Enabling the organization to achieve its goals and protect public interest
 - c. Determining which programs are consistent with the organization's mission and monitor their effectiveness
 - d. Ensuring legal and ethical integrity.
 - e. Enhancing the organization's public standing.
 - f. Other responsibilities as directed by the Executive Committee.

3. Meetings

- a) The President shall call meetings of the Board of Advisors, as and when required and hold meetings with Chairman of the Advisory Committee or invite the Chairman to Executive Committee to provide his/her wise advice to the Committee.
- b) There is no requirement to accept such advise and the Executive Committee shall deliberate on it to accept it or reject it.

4. Removals and Resignation

- a) If, in the judgement of the Executive Committee, a member of the Board of

Advisors fails to discharge his or her duties or acts to the detriment of the Association, that member may be removed from the position by a two-thirds majority decision in a duly called Executive Committee meeting. The aggrieved party, however, may appeal the decision to the general body.

- b) A member of the Board of Advisors can choose to resign at any time and the Executive Committee shall have the authority to fill all vacancies in the Board of Advisors.

XVI. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. All members shall faithfully and fully abide by every decision made by the Association or by the Executive Committee until such time as the decision is amended or revoked.
2. No press release in the name of the Association may be made without the prior sanction of the President or person authorised by the Executive Committee.
3. Save as may be permitted by the Executive Committee, no member shall give the address of the Association in any advertisement, or use the Association's address, or the Association's premises, for any purpose

XVI. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS.

In cultural and entertainment activities organized by the Association where admission is restricted by tickets, members will have priority over the others and can avail discounts of such terms decided by the Executive Committee from time to time. There will also be activities to which participation or attendance will be restricted to members only.

XVII. THE EMERGENCY FUND.

The Association may maintain an emergency fund. The objective of the fund is to extend financial and other support to Keralites in emergency situations.

Definition of Emergency:

Emergency includes death, accident or any other crisis situation as determined by the committee administering emergency fund payments.

Eligibility Conditions:

Primary beneficiaries of the fund are current members of the Association. Secondary beneficiaries are individuals eligible to become members according to the constitution of the Association.

Administration of the Fund:

The emergency fund shall be administered by a committee made up of the current office bearers of the Association.

XVIII AVAILING OF MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

To be eligible to avail the membership discount benefits for any functions organized by the Association, the membership should be active for at least six months from the date of the said event.

XIX. MEMBERSHIP IN THE EVENT OF SEPARATION

In the event of members who have undergone divorce or separation, both spouses can contact Association to update their status. Both spouses will continue to hold all membership privileges provided half of the membership fee being paid for the remaining period of the year by each of them.

This Constitution was adopted at the General body and Executive Committee Meeting
on....11 November 2023.....

PresidentLIJO OOMMEN.....

SecretaryBASTIN K MALIAKAL.....

Treasurer BINU LUKE.....

Vice PresidentDHANYA KEVIN.....

Joint SecretaryJENNIS RENJITH.....

Joint TreasurerHAREESH GOPAL.....

Advisor/Chairman of Advisory CommitteePIUS THOMAS.....