

# General Information about the IPSO ExCom for Candidates Running for Office

## INTRODUCTION

If you're considering running for IPSO office, you may be interested to know what it actually entails. You'll find the specific duties of each officer in the Role Descriptions. This document has been devised to help you form a general view of functioning, commitments and perks.

## COMMUNICATION

Given that the ExCom officers are spread out across the world, and don't see each other at work every morning, maintaining fluid communication is particularly important. Reliability and responsiveness are important.

There are 5 channels of communication that the ExCom uses at different intervals. ExCom officers are not expected to communicate or work on weekends, except for the monthly Saturday Zoom meetings, or unless there are urgent circumstances (rare).

### *Phone Calls*

Phone calls (over wifi), whether planned or spontaneous, are used when specific information needs to be conveyed quickly from one ExCom member to the other. These happen on an as-needed basis and are not that frequent.

### *WhatsApp ExCom Group*

This channel is used for short, quick communication on matters that need to be attended to rapidly, with everyone's knowledge. There are intervals where this group may be relatively inactive, and then flurries of activity responding to a specific need. The WhatsApp ExCom group is usually checked daily.

### *Email*

Emails are used to communicate more substantial matters that require thought and deliberation: to present documents, projects, proposals, etc. Like WhatsApp, there are intervals where emails may be relatively inactive, and then there are flurries of activity responding to a specific need. It is expected that ExCom members will be reasonably up to date on all emails and, if the matter pertains to them, will reply within 48 hours.

## *Zoom Meetings*

Beginning with the pandemic, and more regularly since 2021, the IPSO ExCom decided to meet once a month on Zoom on Saturdays at 17h00 Central European Time. That day and time were chosen to accommodate the countries and time zones the current members of the ExCom are in. The specific dates for each monthly meeting are set well in advance (Doodle poll to everyone on the ExCom) to allow everyone to plan ahead of time. These meetings are used to talk about matters in real time conversation, that allows for natural communication and space for discussion.

## *ExCom Annual Meeting*

Once a year, all 12 members of the ExCom get together in-person for their Annual Meeting, per Article 6.1.(c) of the Constitution. The meeting is held once a year in any of IPSO's three regions; the location and date are determined by the ExCom well in advance of the Annual Meeting, subject to the regional associations' congresses and IPSO's regional needs. The meeting lasts 4 full days, from 09:00 to 17:00, with a lunch break. It's a valuable occasion that allows the whole team, which is spread out all over the world, to meet and socialize in person, to update each other thoroughly on what's happened in each role, and to discuss challenges, projects, budget and policy issues for the future in depth. As Harriet Wolfe recently wrote about the Asia-Pacific Congress in New Delhi, 2023: "Meeting in-person affords us the opportunity to build relationships and trust in ways that can be difficult to achieve virtually. When we come together face to face and experience each other, we are given the opportunity to say what we might not otherwise feel comfortable or confident saying online. Meeting with other psychoanalysts in the room allows us to have an embodied experience and to pose questions to fellow participants in a way that reduces the risk of misinterpretation, especially across language differences."

## **TRAVEL**

Some travel is inherent to all roles on the ExCom, with some positions travelling more than others. Generally, the Presidents travel the most, then the Vice-Presidents, and the Editors and Treasurers travel the least. If a choice must be made, senior officers take priority in travelling.

Decisions on who will be travelling where are led by the President and taken by the entire ExCom based on available budget, personal circumstances and representational needs. ExCom officers' lively and engaged presence at scientific events has a direct positive impact on IPSO membership, involvement and the creation of new events.

All airfares and transportation to and from the destination airports for IPSO related business are reimbursed. Additionally, there is a monetary allowance per-night-spent-at-destination (called a *per diem*) sufficient to cover hotel costs, meals, and in-congress transportation.

ExCom tickets must be bought well in advance to find advantageous prices for IPSO. Tickets for Latin American ExCom members may be cheaper if acquired from outside Latin America, by the Treasurers, of another ExCom member.

#### *Travel engagements that all ExCom officers must attend*

- **ExCom Annual Meeting:** As mentioned above, it takes place once a year and lasts 4 days. It's usually adjacent to one of the regional congresses: European Psychoanalytical Federation Congress, American Psychoanalytic Association Meeting, *Congreso de la Federación de Psicoanalistas de América Latina*, Asia-Pacific Congress, or to the IPA/IPSO Congress. If budget and personal circumstances allow, it is recommendable for ExCom officers to also attend the regional congress the Annual Meeting is adjacent to.
- **IPA/IPSO Congress:** This Congress takes place at the end of July every two years and is IPSO's biggest scientific event. The location rotates between the IPA/IPSO Regions: it is in Latin America (Cartagena, Colombia) in 2023, will be in Europe (location to be announced) in 2025, then in North America (location to be announced) in 2027., etc.

#### *Travel engagements that some ExCom officers should attend*

- **Regional Congresses:** Budget and personal circumstances allowing, the Presidents should attend as many of all the regional congresses as possible; the Vice-Presidents should attend their regional congresses; all ExCom members living within the region of a regional congress, regardless of their role, should attend it, too.
- **IPSO-specific Events:** Budget and personal circumstances allowing, all ExCom members living within the region of an IPSO-specific Event, regardless of their role, should attend it.

#### *Notes on travel for newly elected ExCom officers in 2023*

- **IPSO Business Meeting:** All newly elected ExCom officers must be physically present at the IPSO Business Meeting, that will take place on Thursday, the 27<sup>th</sup> of July in Cartagena, Colombia, in order to take office. There will be an informal get-together/dinner immediately after the IPSO Business Meeting with all the members of the 2021-2023 and 2023-2025 ExComs
- **ExCom Annual Meeting:** The 2023 ExCom Annual Meeting will take place in Cartagena, Colombia, and will be split into two parts: A) a one-day meeting of the current 2021-2023 ExCom on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July; and B) a three-day meeting of the new 2023-2025 ExCom, from the 30<sup>th</sup> of July to the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, at a hotel in Cartagena where all the 2023-2025 ExCom will be staying for the meeting.
- **Reimbursement and *per diems*:** Since newly elected officers must attend the ExCom Annual Meeting, IPSO will reimburse half their travel costs to Cartagena, and they will receive a full *per diem* for the nights of the 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> of July and the 1<sup>st</sup> of August.

## TIME COMMITMENT

It is not easy to calculate the average amount of time ExCom officers spend on working for IPSO since many different factors come into play. Most of the time it's manageable.

There are moments of relatively quiet lull, and sometimes moments of intense activity; there may be a week where one does fairly little, and a week where one might be working a great deal for IPSO.

The time commitment also depends quite a bit on each individual's personal investment, flexibility, sense of duty, work ethic, and on the team's generativity: at the beginning of each new IPSO administration there is often a wealth of great ideas for projects that then has to be contrasted with what is actually feasible time-wise.

One fairly consistent impression of ExCom officers is that IPSO office is more involved than what than they expected, but doable if one is organized. Each individual running for office should think about their personal circumstances and whether they will allow to reasonably take on the responsibilities inherent to holding office. Although it is exciting to take on many different projects, it is usually a good idea to plan to leave some empty space in one's schedule in order not to be overstretched when things get busy.

ExCom officers do not sign a formal contract of service; however, Bylaw 5.B. states that candidates running for ExCom Office must provide: "A statement by the proposed nominee, indicating their willingness to serve through the end of their term, regardless of whether or not they graduate during their term of office.", and Bylaw 5.B.(b) states: "For all IPSO ExCom officers the term of office is four (4) years". It is therefore expected that those who run for office, and are voted by the IPSO membership to be on the IPSO ExCom, will honour that commitment.

## A REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Serving on the IPSO ExCom offers many advantages and broadens horizons considerably. IPSO office propels one into the international team of a relatively large organization with many moving parts, and usually entails the following benefits.

### *Values*

Many people find satisfaction in endeavouring to honour values such as personal responsibility, gratitude, a sense of duty, and a willingness to make some sacrifices to contribute where one can be useful. IPSO office is a good setting to put these values into practice as opportunities abound to refine and improve existing projects, as well as to create and operationalize new ones.

### *Relationships*

One of the pleasures of serving on the ExCom is that it often results in the fostering of warm and lasting friendships. Thinking, creating, working and socializing together for four years encourages the formation of strong bonds with like-minded officers with whom one has many shared experiences and challenges. ExCom office also means fairly regular contact with IPSO members all over the world, and gives rise to a good deal of networking, both scientifically and personally, as one discovers pleasantly surprising affinities with colleagues both near and far.

### *Team work*

Working on the ExCom is an excellent terrain to develop team work skills, as the ExCom relies on each one of its members in order to be able to function properly. To make IPSO scientific events and programs happen, there is a combination of online/in-person work, that happens in smaller groups, with members or with the whole ExCom, that is both stimulating and challenging. Additionally, for people who work solely in private practice, being on the ExCom can provide an enriching team environment that counterbalances the solitude of the consulting room with patients all day.

### *Travelling*

One aspect that all ExCom officers find rewarding is the opportunity to travel for IPSO, to discover congresses, societies and regions with very different psychoanalytical cultures, that are at the same time so similar. For many people it is a degree of international psychoanalytic exposure that they have never had so intensely before, and greatly appreciate. As Mark Twain wrote in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869): “Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.”

### *Institutional knowledge*

For many people, how the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA), the European Psychoanalytical Federation (EPF), the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA) and the *Federación de Psicoanalistas de América Latina* (FEPAL), function and what the relations between the organizations are, is quite opaque. And non-Latin Americans may not even know of the existence of the large and lively candidate organizations in that region: the *Organización de Candidatos de América Latina* (OCAL) and the *Associação Brasileira de Candidatos* (ABC). IPSO office plunges its ExCom members into institutional relations and affords a host of illuminating knowledge, historical, current and strategic for the future of psychoanalysis.