

# **GREATER ATLANTA TELUGU ASSOCIATION (GATA) BYLAWS**

## **PREAMBLE**

Whereas the need exists for cohesive action on the part of the people of Telugu origin residing in the Greater Atlanta area, including people residing in Georgia, it is hereby resolved that a non-profit organization be formed to establish Telugu literacy and cultural activities, to build and maintain a Telugu library, to create and promote understanding and cooperation between Telugu and all peoples, to provide financial aid to philanthropic educational and scientific institutions, and to perform any other charitable activities related to the scope of these activities.

These Bylaws govern the affairs of the **GREATER ATLANTA TELUGU ASSOCIATION INC.**, a non-profit organization (**GATA**) organized under the Georgia corporation laws and all other applicable state or federal laws, as they may be from time to time amended (the Law).

## **1. ORGANIZATION**

### **1.01 : NAME AND INCORPORATION**

GATA was established in 2010. The original Articles of Organization were filed with the State of Georgia on October, 2010.

### **1.02 : GATA AREA ( GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF GATA)**

The area represented by the GATA shall be the Greater Atlanta area and all other parts of Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee states (**GATA Area**).

### **1.03 : PRINCIPAL OFFICE**

The principal office of GATA shall be located within the State of Georgia. The GATA Founding Members (FM) or Governing Board shall determine the physical location and mailing address of the office. GATA shall not have other offices anywhere else. The current Executive Committee (**EC**) may change the mailing address or the location of the office of GATA to any other location within the State of Georgia upon the advice and consent of the current FM.

### **1.04 : REGISTERED OFFICE AND REGISTERED AGENT**

GATA shall comply with the requirements of the Law and maintain a registered office and registered agent in Georgia. The registered office may, but need not, be identical with GATA's principal office in Georgia.

### **1.05 : OFFICIAL CORPORATE SEAL AND LOGO**

The EC shall maintain a corporate seal. GATA Logo represents Indian culture and heritage, and it gives future direction for the Atlanta Telugu community and also the entire Indian Community, residing in US.

### **1.06 : AFFILIATION**

GATA shall not be affiliated with, or a member of, any other national or international Telugu associations/organizations unless such membership has been deemed appropriate by either the Governing Board or General Body and is approved by the majority vote of such affiliation or membership.

### **1.07 : MEETING/EVENT VENUES**

The location of GATA meeting and event venues shall be determined by the Chief Coordinator of GATA upon the advice and consent of the EC.

## **1.08 : FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of GATA shall begin on January 1st and end on December 31st of each year.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

### **2.01 : GENERAL**

The objective of GATA is to establish Telugu literacy and cultural activism, to build and maintain a Telugu library, to create and promote understanding and cooperation between Telugu and all peoples, to provide financial aid to philanthropic educational and scientific institutions, and to perform any other charitable activities related to the scope of these activities, including but not limited to:

1. To preserve, maintain, and promote social and cultural heritage of the Telugu speaking people living in the GATA Area.
2. To assist, advance, organize, and promote cultural, literary, educational, socio-economic, health, and community affairs of the Telugu speaking people.
3. To serve the local communities, encourage Telugu youth to become involved in local humanitarian service acts, and to foster friendship between Telugu people and other non-Telugu speaking people.
4. To promote and address women, youth and senior citizen issues in the context of cultural, literary, educational, socio-economic, health and community affairs of the Telugu-speaking people in the community.
5. To create opportunities for the cultural exchange between people living in the USA, India and rest of the world wherever people of Telugu origin resides.
6. To encourage awareness and promote Telugu culture among Telugu youth.
7. To serve as a central resource for all social, cultural, and humanitarian issues related to the Telugu community in the GATA Area.

### **2.02: COLLABORATION**

GATA's Governing Board shall collaborate with other non-profit organizations on Telugu literary, social, cultural and educational activities so long as their objectives are in line with those of GATA as written in these Bylaws. Any proposed collaborative work where GATA funds, members and/or manpower will be involved requires that a well-defined plan accompanied by a contract be proposed to and approved by the Governing Board, prior to the signing of GATA as a party.

### **2.03 : FINANCIAL**

GATA's Governing Board shall raise, solicit, collect and disburse funds, charities and donations for social, cultural, educational and humanitarian purposes either directly or in cooperation with other registered non-profit organizations in the USA and abroad. Exceptions to this may be made with a majority vote of the Governing Board.

### **2.04 : NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION (IRS CODE)**

GATA's Governing Board shall carry out all, and only, such lawful activities which a non-profit organization organized for non-political, non-religious, non-sectarian, social, literary, cultural, humanitarian and educational purposes within the meaning of Sec. 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) is required to do.

The EC shall maintain an updated and complete list of all the financial records and assets of GATA within the meaning of Sec. 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The FM will ensure that all the activities of GATA fall within the definition of a non-profit organization (non-political, non-religious, social, literary, cultural, humanitarian and educational purposes) as defined by Sec. 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under which GATA was registered.

#### **2.05 : NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The organization and its members shall not discriminate against any individuals on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, education, occupation, sexual orientation, and age.

### **3. AMENDMENT OF ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION OR BYLAWS**

#### **3.01 : SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS TO AMEND**

A. Any GATA Life or Patron member may, at least two months prior to the General Body meeting, submit by registered/certified mail, proposals to amend the Articles of Organization and Bylaws to the Chief Coordinator (CC) along with an explanation of such need for the amendment.

B. Such proposal for a change to the Articles of Organization may be brought before the General Body upon a majority vote of the Governing Board or by a petition to the Chairperson or signed at least by one third of the Life Members of GATA.

C. Any member of the Governing Board (FM) may also submit before the General body proposals to amend the Articles of Organization and Bylaws as long as such proposals are approved by the Governing Board upon considering a satisfying explanation of such need for the amendment.

D. The Chief Coordinator shall provide members with notice of the proposed amendments via e-mail or mail and additionally post such notice on the GATA website at least four weeks prior to the General Body meeting.

E. Prior to any vote of the Governing Board, proposed amendments may be referred, for further review, to the Articles of Organization and Bylaws Committee appointed by the Governing Board, as deemed appropriate.

#### **3.02 : VOTE BY GENERAL BODY AND APPROVAL**

A. The Articles of Organization can be amended only by the General Body with a simple majority of quorum, as tallied by the Chief Coordinator or his/her appointee, at a properly called General Body meeting approving the amendments.

B. The approved Amendments shall be communicated via e-mail or postal mail, and additionally via the GATA website, within four weeks of such approval.

C. After adoption, the amendment or change shall become effective immediately, unless otherwise specified in the measure adopted.

D. Any such adopted amendment is considered final upon its adoption.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

#### **4.01: DEFINITION AND PRIVILEGES**

There are three different types of membership in GATA, as defined below:

**A. Annual Memberships:** Are applicants who have paid the prescribed annual membership dues and enjoy all privileges of GATA membership, except any ability to run for any organizational positions (EC) other than ad-hoc or sub-committees. This

membership is valid from the date of the application approved to December 31st of the succeeding year. The following are sub-types:

1. **Family Membership:** Is defined as an individual, his or her spouse, and their children of 17 years or less. The annual dues need to be renewed every year to maintain membership status. Extended or close family such as parents, in-laws etc. living under the same roof cannot be considered under the Family Membership but can participate in GATA events by paying prescribed fees. Children of Family Members are encouraged to become either Student or Individual Members as they turn 18 years of age.

2. **Individual Membership:** Is defined as membership by an individual. The annual dues need to be renewed every year to maintain membership status.

3. **Student Membership:** Is defined as membership by a student 18 years or more in age, either attending any local academic institution or residents of GATA Area, with a valid student identification card as one individual. The annual dues need to be renewed every year to maintain membership status.

**B. Life Membership:** Applicants who have been approved by majority vote of the Governing Board and have paid the prescribed Life Membership dues. Life members enjoy all privileges of GATA membership, including voting privileges and the ability to run for any organizational position.

1. The life membership dues shall be a onetime payment. An individual Life Membership may be converted into a Family Life Membership by paying an additional fee (the difference between the Family Membership and Individual Membership).

2. The Governing Board shall approve or disapprove of a Life Membership application within 90 days of receiving the application.

3. Life Members can hold their membership in GATA, as long as GATA exists as an organization.

**C. Patron Membership:** is an individual or family applicants, aged 18 or older, who have donated to GATA an amount equaling or exceeding \$5,000 to the Life Membership Fund. In addition to enjoying all of the rights and privileges of Life Membership, such members also obtain the distinction of being Patron Members.

#### **4.02 : GENERAL NOTES AND LIFE MEMBERSHIP FUNDS**

A. Life members may be entitled to special privileges as determined by the Governing Board.

B. The Governing Board is authorized to change membership dues for new members as appropriate as conditions demand from time to time.

C. No business entities, institutions or organizations are or will be accepted as any kind of members.

D. Money received from Life Membership dues and Patron contributions are to be kept in a single risk-free trust fund (**Life Membership Fund**) or Certificates of Deposit (**CDs**) that are approved by the FM.

E. The Life Membership Fund will be kept in accounts under the control of the FM.

F. Only the chairperson or FM has the signing authority for these funds.

G. If a loan or payment from these funds is ever necessary, the Chairperson shall take the approval from the majority of the coordinators in an EC meeting.

H. Only the interest accrued from these funds can be used for operating expenses of GATA with the approval of the Governing Board. The chairperson shall transfer the interest upon a formal request from the EC.

I. If no request is made for such funds transfer, the interest shall be added to the principal and shall not be carried over to the next year.

#### **4.03: ELIGIBILITY**

Any Telugu speaking or Telugu origin person, aged 18 years or older, is eligible to apply for membership in GATA, provided that he/she:

A. Subscribes to the objectives of GATA and agrees to abide by the Articles of Organization and Bylaws of GATA.

B. Pays the dues, fees, and assessments established for their class of membership by the Governing Board (GB) as they may be amended from time to time.

C. Submits a complete GATA's membership application form.

D. Resides in the GATA Area.

#### **4.04 : MEMBERSHIP DUES CUT-OFF DATES**

Annual membership dues are payable in April (usually at the Ugadi function) but accepted throughout the year. Annual, Life and Patron Membership dues or donations must be paid no later than July 31st (**Cut-Off Date**) to become eligible to vote during the following year.

#### **4.05 : LIMITATIONS, DUES, FEES, AND ASSESSMENTS**

All members shall pay the dues, fees, and assessments established for their class of membership by the Governing Board as they may be amended from time to time. The Governing Board will publish the current schedule of dues, fees and assessments on GATA'S web site at [www.myGATA.org](http://www.myGATA.org). Whenever the Governing Board votes to change the dues, fees and assessments for membership in GATA, the Chief Coordinator shall also notify all of the members. Any annual member may renew membership by paying the prescribed dues, fees, and assessments prescribed from time to time by the Governing Board and submitting an application for renewal of membership. GATA Membership is not transferable, and membership dues are not refundable for any class of membership.

#### **4.06 : MEMBERSHIP VERIFICATION**

The Governing Board reserves the right to verify any or all new membership applications. If the Board determines that additional information is required for any or all applicants, then it may seek a copy of government issued valid ID, such as a Driver's License or Passport of that particular applicant. The applicant shall provide his/her valid ID upon the request of the Governing Board. If the applicant refuses to provide a proof of Identification, then his/her application shall be rejected and the application fee will not be refunded. Such fee will instead be applied towards processing. A disclaimer shall be printed on the membership application form.

#### **4.07 : MEMBERSHIP FORMS AND PROCESSING**

A. The Governing Board shall approve a proper application form for membership. Any changes to the form shall be approved by the Governing Board.

B. Membership forms will be available on GATA website ([www.myGATA.org](http://www.myGATA.org)) in PDF format and also be available at various GATA events' registration desk on a printed format.

C. All the membership applications along with payments are submitted to the Chief Coordinator or Financial coordinator.

D. The Chief Coordinator (CC) shall submit all the membership fees to the Financial coordinator along with the details for deposit and accounting purpose.

E. The Chief Coordinator shall submit a list of new applicants to the Governing Board and to the Membership Verification Committee on a monthly basis.

F. No approvals or denials are notified to the applicant prior to the verification of their applications by the Governing Board.

G. All membership forms will be evaluated by the Membership Verification Committee (one of the sub-committees established by the FM) processed and duly informed to the potential members of their decision within 90-days of receipt of such form.

#### **4.08 : MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY:**

A. It is member's responsibility to provide a valid mailing address, primary and/or secondary email address, and a Home Telephone or Cell Phone number along with the submitted membership application.

B. Any membership application without the above data (detailed above in paragraph (A) of this Article) will be rejected, and any accompanying fees will be classified as an event admission price paid, should such funds be received during a GATA event, with any and all remainder, or the whole of the funds in the case of a regular application, deemed an anonymous donation.

C. It is member's responsibility to keep the Chief Coordinator (CC) of the GATA informed if there is any change of his/her (member's) address, email and telephone contacts.

D. Any member that fails to provide/update his or her valid postal and/or email address waives his or her right to receive any official or unofficial notifications of GATA.

#### **4.09 : DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

A. Activities against the purposes and objectives of the organization as defined in the Articles of Organization and Bylaws shall constitute grounds for suspension and/or revocation of membership. These allegations shall be communicated to the member by the EC by email and/or by a certified mail. The accused member shall then be entitled to a hearing by the Governing Board on such charges. To secure a hearing, the accused member shall send a request in writing by certified mail to the Chairperson of the FM. The Governing Board shall call a hearing within thirty (30) days from the receipt of the request for hearing. Failure by the accused member to participate in the hearing shall result in automatic suspension or revocation of membership. The Governing Board or a committee designated by the Governing Board to handle a matter involving sanctioning, suspension, or expulsion may not take any action against a member without giving the member adequate notice and an opportunity to be heard. To be deemed adequate, notice shall be in writing and delivered at least 15 days prior to the hearing. However, shorter notice may be deemed adequate if the Governing Board or a committee designated by the Governing Board to handle a matter involving sanctioning, suspension, or expulsion determines that the need for a timely hearing outweighs the prejudice caused to the member and if a statement of the need for a timely hearing is included in the notice. If mailed, the notice shall be sent by email and/or certified mail.

B. The Governing Board may impose reasonable sanctions on a member, or suspend or expel a member from GATA, for good cause after a hearing.

C. Good cause includes the default of an obligation to GATA to pay fees or dues, or a material and serious violation of the GATA's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, policies, or of state or federal law.

D. Crimes Involving Moral Turpitude: Conviction of a member for any criminal offense involving moral turpitude shall constitute reason for automatic revocation of membership. In such a case, a notification letter of revocation to the affected member shall be required, and no hearing shall be required.

E. The Governing Board may delegate powers to a standing or ad hoc committee to conduct a hearing, make recommendations to the Governing Board, or take action on behalf of the Governing Board.

F. The Governing Board, or any committee designated by the Governing Board to handle a matter involving sanctioning, suspension, or expulsion, may impose sanctions, suspend a member, or expel a member by vote of a majority of the Governing Board, or such authorized committee, who is present and voting.

#### **4.10 : RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Any member may resign from GATA by submitting a written resignation to the Chief Coordinator. The resignation will be processed by the Governing Board, and the member will be informed of the decision within 30-days of the receipt of such letter. A member's resignation shall not relieve the member of any obligations to pay any dues, assessments, or other charges that had accrued and were unpaid prior to the effective date of the resignation. The decision of the Governing Board is final in all such situations.

#### **4.11 : REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP**

A former member may submit a written request for reinstatement of membership. The Governing Board or up on the request of the Governing Board, the Election Committee designated by the Governing Board to handle the matter may reinstate membership on any reasonable terms that the Governing Board or the Election Committee deems appropriate.

#### **4.12 : TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in GATA is not transferable or assignable. Membership automatically terminates upon the dissolution of GATA or the death of a member. In case of separation/divorce, the family membership is automatically converted to two individual memberships for the original family members (individual and spouse). Thus, either of them has a right to resign only their individual membership.

#### **4.13 : VOTING PRIVILEGES**

A. Each Life Member and Patron Member, as a member in good standing (and who paid their membership dues by cutoff date), shall have one vote. In Family memberships, each spouse shall have one vote. Any new life member is not allowed to contest or vote in the immediate elections of their membership year (Should provide valid proof).

B. Only current Annual Members that have been members for three consecutive membership terms shall be eligible to vote(Need to provide proof), provided that such members have met the requirements of these Bylaws, particularly Section 4.04.

C. In case of divorced or legally separated families, the voting rights shall remain with the original partners unless advised otherwise by them in writing after the date of separation or divorce with mutual consent.

D. Student Member or anyone under age 18 shall not have any voting privileges.

#### **4.14 : WAIVER OF INTEREST IN GATA'S PROPERTY**

All real, personal, and intangible property, including all documents, data, literature, books, decorations, banners, presentations and improvements located on the property, acquired or developed by GATA shall be owned by GATA.

A member shall have no interest in any property of GATA.

Each member hereby expressly waives the right to require partition of all or part of the GATA's property.

### **5. FINANCES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

#### **5.01 : FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

GATA's income shall be derived from the membership dues, from charitable donations and grants from members, corporations, vendors, foundations/friends of GATA, and from varieties of other revenue generating events, functions and fund raisers. The EC shall demonstrate utmost responsibility in managing and maintaining GATA's funds and assets. This information will be passed on to the successive EC when new election terms begin, with full details and necessary supporting documents. The EC shall present/submit a written annual financial report to the General Body during the Annual General Body meeting. All funds of the GATA shall be deposited to the credit of GATA in banks, trust companies, or other depositories that the Governing Board approves/selects.

#### **5.02 : CATEGORIES OF FUNDS**

GATA funds shall be categorized and maintained as follows:

A. **General Funds:** These funds are generated from annual membership dues, GATA functions, gifts, or donations when such functions, gifts and donations generate revenues to be used expressly for general or unrestricted purposes. These funds may be utilized to fund GATA's day-to-day activities or any purposes necessary for fulfilling the goals and objectives of GATA.

B. **Restricted Funds:** These funds are generated and received expressly for specific purposes or given by donors for specific causes.

1. These funds may be used only for the purposes for which they are collected and/or as stipulated by the donors.

2. Life Membership dues and Patron Membership donations are treated as restricted funds, and only the interest income from these funds may be accessed for the support of GATA's day-to-day activities.

C. **Endowment Funds:** These funds may be created to provide a long-term financial strength to GATA.

1. Endowment funds may be restricted depending upon the nature of the fund and the wishes of the donor.

2. Endowment funds shall be maintained in a separate investment account. Only the interest income of the restricted endowment funds may be accessed for the purposes specified by the endowment donors.

3. The interest income of the endowment funds may be accessed for the general support of GATA's activities.

4. Only under extenuating circumstances, following the recommendation of the EC, the GB, by a majority vote may authorize the use of a portion or the whole endowment fund for supporting GATA.

### **5.03 : OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS AND ASSETS**

The EC shall be accountable to the GB for all funds collected on behalf of GATA.

A. Any such funds shall remain under the control of the EC and shall be dispersed in consultation with and recommendations of, the chairperson of any GATA subcommittee following normal business practices of GATA in meeting its entire financial obligation for any day to day activities necessary to keep the organization functional.

B. All invoices received in the name of GATA or expenses incurred on behalf of GATA shall have to be claimed within 6 weeks from the date of incurring any such expense. Payment of any such invoices received above shall have to be accompanied with a detailed statement that includes purpose for which such expense was incurred.

C. All the payables over \$500 per incident or per single vendor or individual must be approved by the EC.

D. The Chief Coordinator or the Financial coordinator is authorized to issue checks on behalf of GATA. However, no check can be issued without proper receipts and written documentation with statement of purpose.

## **6. GOVERNING BOARD**

### **6.01: COMPOSITION, DEFINITION AND PRIVILEGES**

The **Governing Board** consists solely of the FM and with the approval of FM any one previous Chief coordinator can be included as a part of the board. For all matters regarding GATA, Governing Board is and shall act as the GATA Board of Directors.

### **6.02 : FINANCIAL COMPENSATION AND PERSONAL GAINS**

A. Members of the Governing Board are prohibited from receiving any financial compensation from GATA and are forbidden to gain financial benefits by virtue of their elective offices within GATA.

B. Tangible services offered, such as food provided at GATA events and programs, are exempted from (A) above if vendors are approved by a majority of the Governing Board or the EC, in accord with section 8.05 of these Bylaws.

C. Violation of this policy will result in an immediate suspension followed by an inquiry by a committee appointed by the Governing Board.

D. This special committee, appointed by the majority of the Governing Board shall remove the member(s) under investigation if the evidence justifies such removal.

## **7. FOUNDING MEMBERS (FM)**

### **7.01 : DEFINITION AND COMPOSITION OF BOARD**

A. The FM shall consist of seven (7) members. (Tangirala S. Reddy, Chief Founder and other founding members are; Satya Karnati, Gireesh Meka, Sai Gorrepati, Prasheel Gukanti, Umesh Muthyala and Karunakar Asireddy).

B. Out of these seven members active four (4) FM shall be nominated to the existing Governing Board (GB) for the long term benefit of the organization for a period of Five Years.

### **7.02 : ROLE**

Each governing board member (GB) may have a specifically identified or defined long-range area of focus objective, such as:

Social, Cultural, Disciplinary and Conflict Resolution, Finance, Membership Drive, Fund raising, Community Outreach. Periodical reports will be submitted to rest of the FM members. A member of GB shall attend each of the EC meetings as an observer and report to the rest of GB in order to be current with the activities of the EC and GATA organization in general.

### **7.03 : MEETINGS and ATTENDANCE**

A. GB shall have a minimum of 4 meetings in a 12-month period.

B. Every member of GB is expected to participate in all the meetings called. Any possible absence may be conveyed in advance to rest of members or attempt should be made to be available via telephone.

C. Non-participation in THREE consecutive meetings or 50% of the total meetings without proper cause and excuse by the GB is reason for review and replacement with a suitable candidate as recommended by FM.

### **7.04 : FORMATION**

A. The GB will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair by a majority vote every year among themselves, and such positions shall have a term of one (1) year.

B. Chair and Vice-Chair positions must be filled within two weeks after the election results are announced.

C. No GB Chair can serve more than one consecutive year.

D. Chair or his/her designee will attend GATA EC meetings.

E. The Vice Chair will perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence.

F. The Vice-Chair automatically succeeds to Chair following the end of the current Chair's term.

### **7.05 : DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES OF GB**

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. The GB's main responsibility is fiduciary in nature. GB Chair will periodically review the financial status, budget, assets, membership lists etc. along with Chief Coordinator, and Financial coordinator of GATA and share the information with rest of FM members and GB.

2. The GB shall oversee the function of the organization, ensuring that the core values and purposes of the organization are reflected in the operational process.

3. The GB shall perform the task of developing public policy that adequately promotes the values of the organization and also ensures that all interaction with the wider community is conducted in a manner that is in keeping with Articles of Organization & Bylaws.

4. The GB develops a long range vision and strategy for GATA that fills the needs of the community in the context of an ever changing dynamic environment. This will be presented to the Founding members and Governing Board as part of "State-of-the-Association" report.

5. The GB will oversee the mission; provide a vision; a long-range planning; financial viability including fundraising, and conflict resolution of GATA affairs, but not daily and routine operations of GATA. However, for each program or function one GB member shall over-see all the activities and update to GB and FM if necessary.

6. The GB is responsible for ensuring smooth transition when a new EC takes office, sale of GATA capital assets when needed, and guiding the EC as mentors to ensure that GATA is governed as per the GATA Articles of Organization and Bylaws.
7. At the beginning of the current term, the EC will present a schedule of planned events to the GB.
8. The EC and GB will work in harmony to review issues and any activities that are not on the original schedule, and which has not been presented to the GB and FM. The interests of GATA as an organization will be held high by the EC and GB in performing their respective roles.
9. In addition, under special circumstances, the EC should present all information requested by the GB should the GB feel it is necessary to obtain such information within reasonable bounds.
10. The EC should present a brief "State-of-the-Association" report to the Governing Board (GB) twice during their one-year term.
11. GB members may also represent GATA to enhance the image of GATA in other national organizations when such requests are made.
12. GB ensures that GATA as an organization does not involve, engage, or actively participate in any local, national, or Indian political party activities, such as support, fund raising, canvassing, etc., on behalf of GATA. However any political leader from India will be honored as per our customs and norms.
13. GB envisages maintaining a liaison with local, state and national government agencies to facilitate such activities that will be beneficial to the Telugu community here and abroad.

## **8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)**

### **8.01 : DEFINITION - EC**

The EC will consist of a maximum of Nine (9) members. For the next ten years (10) years of GATA the committee shall be appointed by FM and GB, past EC and Outgoing Chief Coordinator based on his/her services to GATA. The eligibility to contest for the position of Chief coordinator elect shall have a minimum of three (3) years of experience as a coordinator. If no candidates are available with required experience, then the EC and GB shall approve the nomination of the candidate for Chief coordinator elect based on his/her service to GATA or total experience with GATA.

### **8.02 : COMPOSITION AND OFFICEERS.**

The EC consists solely of the following GATA office-holders:

1. Chief Coordinator
2. Chief Coordinator (Elect)
3. Women Coordinator
4. Education Coordinator
5. Financial Coordinator
6. Technology Coordinator
7. Cultural Coordinator
8. Event Coordinator
9. Sports Coordinator

All the members of EC and Chairperson of GB nominated person shall be the only officers of GATA.

### **8.03 : MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE**

- A. The EC shall have a minimum of six (6) meetings in a 12-month period.
- B. Every member of EC is expected to participate in all the meetings called.
- C. Any possible absence may be conveyed well in advance to rest of members via text group and/or email or attempt should be made to be available via telephone.
- D. Non-participation in THREE consecutive meetings or 50% of the total meetings without proper cause and excuse by the EC is reason for review and replacement with a suitable candidate.
- E. The Election Committee operating during that year will make an appropriate recommendation to the Governing Board, which will implement such recommendation.

### **8.04 : TERM OF AN EC MEMBER**

- A. An EC member is elected for a 1-year term.
- B. No EC member can serve two consecutive terms in the same position.

### **8.05 : CONTRACT SERVICES/GOODS**

- A. No Governing Board member or committee shall authorize, pay, or reimburse any party for any contract for services or goods involving expenditures in excess of \$2,000.00 (two thousand) unless such services or goods are first approved in advance by a majority of the EC.
- B. Any Governing Board member or committee seeking approval for a good or service involving expenditures in excess of \$500.00 shall put such requests out for a competitive bid that is open to the public. Upon receipt of all bids within a reasonable time, the EC will consider at least two bids before selecting any vendor for the provision of such goods or services. The EC reserves the right to select a bid other than the lowest bids for consideration and selection, provided there is a valid and reasonable justification. Anytime bids other than the lowest bids are selected by the EC for final approval.
- C. Any contract or event costing more than \$2,000 must be approved by the Governing Board in advance.
- D. The Chief Coordinator will have discretionary authority to spend up to a total of \$1,000 per his/her and must inform EC within four weeks of the expenditure.

### **8.06: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EC MEMBERS**

#### **A. EC Duties and Responsibilities**

- 1. Within 30 days of taking office, the Executive Committee shall present a schedule of planned events along with preliminary budget figures to the Governing Board.
- 2. The EC shall not engage in any activity that is not on the schedule, and which has not been presented to the Governing Board.
- 3. The EC should present a brief "State-of-the-Association" report to the Governing Board twice during their one-year term.
- 4. In addition, under special circumstances, the EC should present all information requested by the GB should the GB feel it is necessary to obtain such information.
- 5. Under special circumstances, items not on the schedule can be approved by majority vote of the Governing Board.
- 6. The EC shall strive towards a balanced budget and exercise fiscal restraint.

7. The EC shall pass at least the minimum opening balance (carried over from the previous term) to the succeeding team.
8. The EC shall not commit to any long term liabilities or financial obligations upon the GATA.
9. The EC is responsible for setting all procedures relating to GATA day to day operations and managing events in compliance with the Articles of Organization and Bylaws of GATA.
10. EC shall communicate any significant changes in operating procedures within 30 days of the EC decision to all members by posting on the GATA website, by e-mail, text or mail.
11. The EC may refer issues that could not be resolved by the EC to the GB. If that is not resolved, FM will try for a resolution.

#### **B. Chief Coordinator**

1. The Chief Coordinator is the head of GATA and bears the overall responsibility for its image, viability, vitality, financial well-being and actions of GATA.
2. The Chief Coordinator shall maintain due oversight on all activities of GATA.
3. Though the Chief Coordinator is the head of GATA, he/she shall not take any unilateral decisions.
4. If there is any conflict that arises surrounding any decision of the Chief Coordinator, resolution of such conflict shall be determined by the EC in a majority vote. Any vote of the EC is appealable by an EC member to the Governing Board, and the determination of the Governing Board is final.
5. The Chief Coordinator shall report activities of the organization at EC and General Body meetings.
6. The Chief Coordinator shall:
  - a) Preside over all EC and General Body meetings;
  - b) Appoint volunteers as necessary to carry out logistical tasks for GATA events.
  - c) Represent GATA before public, act as an executive officer of GATA and perform all other functions attributed to this office.
  - d) The Chief Coordinator will implement all the decisions made by the Governing Board and abide by the Articles of Organization and Bylaws of GATA.

#### **C. Chief Coordinator (Elect)**

1. The Chief Coordinator-Elect shall assist the Chief Coordinator in the performance of the day-to-day activities of GATA and will assume the duties of the Chief Coordinator in the absence of the Chief Coordinator.
2. The Chief Coordinator-Elect shall automatically succeed the Chief Coordinator without further nomination or election to the office of the Chief Coordinator the following year.

#### **D. Financial Coordinator**

1. The Financial coordinator is the custodian of GATA's funds and assets. He/She shall manage the finances and assets according to the policies set forth by the Governing Board.
2. He/She will keep accurate journal entries of receipts and expenditures, and present financial reports at EC and General Body meetings.
3. He/She shall keep the Governing Board informed of the financial status of GATA throughout the year as necessary.

4. The Financial coordinator will submit an annual budget to the Governing Board within four weeks of the start of his/her term.
5. The Financial coordinator is also responsible to have the GATA accounts reviewed by an outside auditor and filing appropriate tax returns to government agencies in timely fashion.
6. The Financial coordinator acknowledges all donations made to GATA through a Thank You Note and promptly issues official receipts to all those who donate funds so that the donors can take advantage of any tax benefits to the extent allowed by law.
7. The Financial coordinator presents a financial report to the General Body at the annual General Body meeting.
8. The Financial coordinator or Web Coordinator (in the absence of the Financial coordinator), shall sign checks issued by GATA up to a maximum of five hundred (\$500) US dollars.
9. However, the Chief Coordinator and the Financial coordinator will sign checks for amounts larger than five hundred US dollars up to a maximum of five thousand US dollars (\$2,000) per incident/individual/entity.

#### **E. Technology Coordinator**

1. The Technology Coordinator shall be responsible in performing all duties incidental to the web and email.
2. He/She will perform other duties as delegated by the Chief Coordinator or the EC.

#### **F. Cultural Coordinator**

1. The Cultural Coordinator is responsible in organizing, coordinating and scheduling the cultural performances.
2. He/She shall work closely with the Chief Coordinator and the Cultural Committee in selecting the programs and performances.
3. He/She makes recommendation of programs or performances by the local or external talent to the EC.
4. The EC has final authority in approving or rejecting any proposal made by the Cultural Committee or Cultural Coordinator. However, the EC is required to have reasonable cause in cases of its denial of any program or event.
5. If there is any conflict that arises regarding the planning or cancelling of a program or event, resolution of such conflict shall be determined by the EC in a majority vote. Any vote of the EC is appealable to the GB, and the determination of the GB is final.

#### **G. Sports Coordinator**

1. The Sports Coordinator is responsible in organizing, coordinating and scheduling the sports events.
2. He/She shall work closely with the Chief Coordinator and other officers in selecting the sports events.

### **9. GENERAL BODY**

#### **9.01 : ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The General Body consists of all Life, Patron Members as well as any Annual Member meeting the requirements of Section 4.13(b) of these Bylaws.
- B. The General Body is the supreme authority of GATA in all matters, as provided in the Articles of Organization and these Bylaws.

C. The Chief Coordinator should refer major disputes to the GB for resolution if the EC cannot resolve them first.

D. If, in turn, the GB cannot resolve such matters to the satisfaction of all parties involved, the FF may recommend resolution by the General Body and call for an emergency General Body meeting.

E. Only the Chairperson of the GB is allowed to call for an emergency General Body Meeting.

F. A minimum of a three-week notice is required for any emergency meeting of General Body.

G. All members with valid contact information must be notified of any such emergency General Body meeting by either email or regular mail.

H. The decision of the General Body is final and binding on all parties to the dispute.

I. No more than two General Body Meetings shall be called per any one GATA fiscal year.

## **10.00 : VACANCIES DUE TO UNFORESEEN SITUATIONS**

Any vacancy due to termination, resignation, death, incapacitation, or any other reason resulting in the non-availability of a Governing Board member, shall be filled by a Life Member with a majority vote of the Governing Board in a scheduled meeting. The term of such position shall remain as the original term.

## **10.01 : TRANSFERING DUTIES TO NEW OFFICE BEARERS**

Possession of any physical properties that GATA owns shall be handed over to the new officers within three business days after the new term starts, and the newly elected officers shall work together with the outgoing committee to achieve a smooth transition. All outgoing or transitioning members of the prior term's Governing Board must turn over to the new office holders all documents and items proper to the position within two weeks of the new term. The outgoing Chief Coordinator and Financial coordinator SHALL transfer all the bank accounts to the incoming Chief Coordinator and Financial coordinator within two weeks of the new term.

## **11. MEETINGS**

### **11.01 : PROXIES**

No proxies are allowed for any EC, FM, Governing Board (GB), or General Body meetings or elections.

### **11.02 : GENERAL BODY MEETINGS**

A General Body meeting shall be held at least once a year, but no later than May 15th of any current year. All eligible members shall be notified of all General Body meetings by e-mail or mail, and such notice shall also be published on the GATA web site, at least two (2) weeks before each General Body meeting.

The purpose of the General Body meeting is to consider the following regular agenda:

1. Chief Coordinator's Report.
2. Approval of previous General Body meeting minutes.
3. Financial coordinator's Report.
4. Any other matters deemed necessary by the Governing Board.
5. New items.
6. Elections may be conducted, if necessary.

No new items may be added to a finalized agenda. If any Life Member desires to add an item to a future agenda, it shall be supported by minimum of five coordinators.

#### **11.03 : SPECIAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

The Chairperson of the GB shall convene a special General Body meeting within sixty days if fifty one percent of the voting members of GATA request such a meeting in writing and if such a request is supported by a signed petition indicating purpose of such a meeting. The chairperson of GB, upon a majority vote of the Governing Board, may call for a special General Body Meeting to resolve any major dispute.

#### **11.04 : QUORUM FOR GENERAL BODY MEETING**

A. The quorum for General Body meetings shall be not less than one third members eligible to vote in GATA elections, as per Section 4.13 of these Bylaws.

B. If quorum cannot reasonably be met as above in (A), then the Chairperson of the GB shall implement protocols from the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

#### **11.05 : QUORUM AND VOTE - EC/FF/GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS**

A. The quorum for the EC, FF, or Governing Board meetings shall be a simple majority of those same respective bodies.

B. If quorum cannot reasonably be met as above in (A), then the chair of such meeting shall implement protocols from the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

C. Each EC member has one vote when any proposal is put forth at EC meetings.

D. In Governing Board meetings, each member has one vote when any proposal is put forth for vote.

E. All decisions should be based on the majority vote, subject to quorum requirements.

#### **11.06 : MINUTES**

A. The minutes of each General Body, Governing Board, EC meeting shall be recorded by the Chief Coordinator, shall implement protocols from the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, and shall be submitted to the corresponding body, within five business days after the meeting is held, for approval at the next corresponding Body's meeting. Irrespective of the approval, passed resolutions are effective immediately unless otherwise specified in the resolutions that were adopted.

B. The minutes of each GB meeting shall be recorded by the Vice Chair or one of the members of GB, designated by the Chair of GB, and submitted within five business days after the meeting is held for approval at the next meeting of the GB. Irrespective of the approval, passed resolutions are effective immediately unless otherwise specified in the resolutions that were adopted.

### **12. RULES AND PROCEDURES**

A. The Governing Board shall set the rules and procedures for administering and managing the affairs of GATA in accordance with the Articles of Organization and Bylaws.

B. The rules and procedures set by GATA and any changes to them shall be communicated to the members as needed by email and posting on the GATA web site within 30 days from the date of changes were made.

C. The rules contained in the latest edition of the "Robert's Rules of Order", in effect at the time, shall govern the conduct of all meetings of GATA in all cases where they are applicable and consistent with the Articles of Organization, these Bylaws, or any applicable state or federal law.

D. The Chief Coordinator shall ensure that a copy of such Rules of Order are always available during any official meeting of the GATA EC, Governing Board and General Body, for easy reference.

### **13. REMOVAL OF A FOUNDING MEMBER OR GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER**

#### **13.01 : MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

A. If any member of the Governing Board (GB or FM) does not fulfill his/her fiduciary duties as required or acts contrary to the objectives and rules of the Articles of Organization and Bylaws or disrupts the functioning of the organization consistently with an ulterior motive; upon receiving sufficient information and after notice of hearing, such member may be suspended until further notice by the Governing Board.

B. No member shall conduct himself or herself in boisterous, disrespectful, unruly, and unparliamentarily manner in any GATA meeting. Such behavior can be cause for a disciplinary action as decided by the Governing Board.

C. The Governing Board shall reserve the right to reinstate any member's position one time upon satisfying assurances or clarifications. However, where needed, such member may eventually be voted out of office by a two-thirds majority of members present at a regular or special General Body meeting.

#### **13.02 : TARDINESS**

A. EC members who are absent for three consecutive EC meetings without prior notification to the rest of EC members and approval of the Chief Coordinator may be removed from EC with a two-thirds majority vote of the Governing Board. Exceptions may be made in special extenuating circumstances. It is the EC member's responsibility to seek an excuse for his/her absence at any scheduled meeting.

B. GB members who are absent for three consecutive GB meetings without prior notification to the rest of GB members and approval of the GB Chairperson may be removed from GB with a two-thirds majority vote of the Governing Board. Exceptions may be made in special extenuating circumstances. It is the GB responsibility to seek an excuse for his/her absence at any scheduled meeting.

#### **13.03 : DELIBERATE VIOLATION.**

Membership of any member may be revoked for deliberate violation of the Articles of Organization and Bylaws of GATA. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, it shall be a violation of the Bylaws of GATA for any member to knowingly or intentionally engage in conduct which is intended to compete with or cause harm to GATA or which, in the opinion of the Governing Board in its sole discretion, is likely to injure the reputation of GATA.

#### **13.04 : CRIMES INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE**

Conviction of a Governing Board member for any criminal offense involving moral turpitude shall constitute reason for automatic revocation of his/her position. No further notice or hearing is required in such cases.

### **14. COMMITTEES**

#### **14.01 : COMMITTEE CREATION PROCESS**

A. The Chief Coordinator with the consent of EC and GB shall appoint all Standing Committees, other than in the cases of 1) the Audit Committee, and 2) the Membership

Verification Committee, and select a Chairperson to carry out the variety of tasks, functions and initiatives of GATA.

B. The EC shall also have the power to dissolve or reconstitute committees that were created by the EC and GB, partially or entirely with a majority approval of the EC.

C. The Audit Committee and the Membership Verification committees are appointed by the Chairperson of the GB, upon the consent and approval of the GB.

D. At least one person from the GB shall be a member of the Membership Verification Committee.

E. Chief Coordinator and the Chairperson of the GB may appoint Sub-Committees and Ad-Hoc Committees based upon the need from time to time.

#### **14.02 : STANDING COMMITTEES**

A. The Chief Coordinator shall appoint the Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the following suggested Standing Committees, except Cultural Committee, upon the consent and approval of the EC and GB:

1. Advisory Committee
2. Audio/Video Committee.
3. Budget and Finance Committee.
4. Community Services Committee.
5. Cultural Committee.
6. Food Committee.
7. Literary Committee.
8. Marketing and Volunteers Committee.
9. Media and Public Relations Committee.
10. Membership Drive Committee.
11. Registration Committee.
12. Senior Citizens Committee.
13. Special Events Committee.
14. Spiritual Committee.
15. Web and Internet Committee .
16. Women's Committee.
17. Youth Committee.

B. The Cultural Coordinator shall be the Chairperson of the Cultural Committee. The Chief Coordinator shall appoint the Vice-Chair and other members in Cultural Committee with the consent and approval of EC.

C. Each standing committee shall have no fewer than three members.

D. The incoming Chief Coordinator shall have the responsibility of appointing committee members to fill positions where terms have expired, along with filling any vacancies.

E. No individual should serve on more than two standing committees.

F. A member of a committee who is absent, without notice, from two consecutive meetings during a calendar year may be subject to removal from the committee by the majority vote of the remaining members.

G. A committee member may be removed by a two-thirds vote of that committee when in its judgment the best interest of the GATA would be served by removal.

## **15. BOOKS, RECORDS AND ARCHIVAL**

### **15.01 : REQUIRED BOOKS AND RECORDS**

The Financial Coordinator of EC shall keep correct and complete books and records of account. The Financial coordinator shall submit all financial records including the bank statements timely to the Chief Coordinator for filing. The GATA's books and records shall include:

A. A file-endorsed copy of all documents filed with the Georgia state relating to the GATA, including, but not limited to, the articles of Incorporation, and any articles of amendment, restated articles, articles of merger, articles of consolidation, and statement of change of registered office or registered agent.

B. A copy of the Bylaws, and any amended versions or amendments to the Bylaws.

C. Minutes of the proceedings of the EC, Governing Board, General Body, and any committees.

D. A list of the names and addresses of the members, ECs, officers and any committee members of the GATA.

E. A balance sheet showing the assets, liabilities, and net worth of the GATA at the end of the five (5) most recent fiscal years.

F. A financial statement showing the income and expenses of the GATA for the five (5) most recent fiscal years.

G. All rulings, letters, and other documents relating to the GATA's federal, state, and local tax status.

H. The GATA's federal, state, and local information or income tax returns for each of the GATA's five (5) most recent years.

I. All books and records shall be archived with proper filing procedures in electronic and paper form (as appropriate). External archival resources such as data storage companies may be engaged as the situation demands. The intent is to provide easily achievable, retrievable yet safe storage mechanisms for years to come.

#### **15.02 : INSPECTION OF RECORDS**

Any Life Member of GATA may request of the Governing Board, in writing with statement of purpose, to personally inspect any of the books and records detailed in Article 15.01 above. Within 30 days receipt of such request, the Governing Board will make a determination regarding whether the stated purpose is valid and reasonable. If such request is determined by the Governing Board to be found valid and reasonable, the request will be conditionally approved.

The Governing Board shall have the right to provide or deny such requests whenever the stated purpose is deemed invalid or unreasonable, or if the intent of inspection is not clearly established by the requesting party. The Governing Board shall have the right to define the venue and conditions for such activities.

Once approved, the EC will work to accommodate the request within 30 days. The Life Member shall abide within the scope of the conditions and venue set forth in the approval. If the approval requires that GATA create copies for the requesting Life Member, the EC may require payment from such Life Member to reimburse GATA for the reasonable costs accrued accommodating the request, and Life Member's receipt of such copies may be contingent upon receipt of payment first.

## **16. WEBSITE**

### **16.01 : DOMAIN CONTROLLER**

The www.GATA.org domain shall be administered by the GB. The Chair of the GB shall be the **Domain Controller**. When his/her term ends, he/she shall transfer the administrator rights to the incoming GB Chair. The GB Chair shall provide full FTP/upload access to the Web and Internet Committee Chair. If any dispute arises, the Governing Board shall make an appropriate and final decision to resolve such dispute.

#### **16.02 : WEBMASTER AND WEB SITE**

The Web and Internet Committee's chairperson shall also act as the GATA **Webmaster**. Maintenance, modification, or updating of the www.GATA.org website shall be performed solely by the Webmaster and only on an as needed basis, by the written request of the EC or Governing Board, or upon a formal request made by the Chief Coordinator or the GB Chair.

The Webmaster shall not update or modify the website without prior such approval. If any such request is disputed by at least three other members of the EC or Governing Board, the Governing Board shall determine whether such modification is necessary by a simple majority. When a proposed change is in dispute, the Webmaster shall not affect any changes with regard to the disputed issue until such issue is conclusively resolved by the Governing Board.

### **17. DISSOLUTION**

#### **17.01 : DISSOLUTION PROCESS**

GATA may be dissolved by members of GATA in accordance with the Georgia Non-Profit Corporation Act or subsequent applicable law. In the event of dissolution, FF and GB shall, after paying or providing for the payment of all liabilities, dispose of all the assets in accordance with the law governing dissolution of tax-exempt organizations. The net assets of GATA shall be transferred or contributed to an organization which shall have in effect tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, with purpose similar to that of GATA as determined by the FF and GB.

### **18. INDEMNIFICATION**

#### **18.01: INDEMNIFICATION OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS**

A. To the extent permitted and in the manner prescribed by applicable state and federal law, GATA hereby waives and disclaims any and all duty to indemnify and advance expenses for any person who was or is threatened to be made a named defendant or respondent in a proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, arbitrate, or investigative, including all appeals, because that person is or was a director, trustee, officer, employee, or agent of GATA.

B. Further, should any person who is or was a director, trustee, officer, employee, or agent of GATA be found liable to another party due to actions or inactions during his or her term as director, trustee, officer, employee, or agent of GATA, wherein such actions involve:

1. the improper receipt of a personal benefit,
2. the willful or intentional misconduct in the performance of the person's duty to the enterprise, or
3. the breach of the person's duty of loyalty owed to the organization; or an act or omission not committed in good faith that constitutes a breach of a duty owed by the person to the organization,

C. and wherein GATA also is or was made a party to such action, GATA hereby reserves the right to bring such director, trustee, officer, employee, or agent of GATA to court to seek out indemnification for GATA's costs in such matter. Such costs may include, but are not limited to, any costs for attorneys' fees, discovery, judgments, or any other court-related costs that pertain to such malfeasance by the director, trustee, officer, employee, or agent of GATA. This paragraph illustrates what remedies GATA may seek out in such cases but is by no means to be interpreted as exhaustive or restrictive of GATA's legal or contractual rights or remedies. GATA hereby reserves all rights and remedies in such matters.

**ANNEXURE - 1**

**GATA OFFICIAL LOGO AND CORPORATE SEAL**

The Chief Coordinator shall maintain a corporate seal, use only for official business purpose. He/She shall transfer the seal to the incoming Chief Coordinator within three business days after his/her term ends. GATA Logo represents Indian culture and heritage, and it gives future direction for the Atlanta Telugu community... in fact to entire Indian Community, residing in US.

The official logo shall not be altered or modified without the approval of the General Body.

**ANNEXURE - 2**

**SUMMARY OF GATA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

Life Membership	\$150
Annual Membership (Single)	\$15
Annual Membership (Family)	\$25
Patron	\$5000