



**Interim Constitution  
of the World  
Indigenous Nations  
Higher Education  
Consortium  
- WINHEC**

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# Interim Constitution of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium - WINHEC

## 1. Name

- 1.1 The name of the consortium shall be " World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium - WINHEC" (**WINHEC**).

## 2. Vision

- 2.1 The vision of WINHEC is as follows:

"We gather as Indigenous Peoples of our respective nations recognising and reaffirming the educational rights of all Indigenous Peoples. We share the vision of all Indigenous Peoples of the world united in the collective synergy of self-determination through control of higher education. Committed to building partnerships that restore and retain indigenous spirituality, cultures and languages, homelands, social systems, economic systems and self determination."

From the Declaration on Indigenous People's Higher Education,  
5 August 2002, Kananaskis, Alberta, Canada.

## 3. Object and Goals

- 3.1 The object of WINHEC is to provide an international forum and support for Indigenous Peoples to pursue common goals through higher education including but not limited to:
- (a) Accelerating the articulation of Indigenous epistemology;
  - (b) Protecting and enhancing Indigenous spiritual beliefs, culture and languages through higher education;
  - (c) Advancing the social, economical, and political status of Indigenous Peoples that contribute to the well-being of indigenous communities through higher education;
  - (d) Creating an accreditation body for indigenous education initiatives and systems that identify common criteria, practices and principles by which Indigenous Peoples live;
  - (e) Recognising the significance of Indigenous education;
  - (f) Creating a global network for sharing knowledge through exchange forums and state of the art technology;
  - (g) Recognising the educational rights of Indigenous Peoples;
  - (h) Protecting, preserving and advocating indigenous intellectual property cultural rights, in particular the reaffirming and observance of the Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples, June 1993; and

- (i) Promoting the maintenance, retention and advancement of traditional indigenous bodies of knowledge.

#### 4. Powers

4.1 To further the above goals WINHEC is to have the following powers:

- (a) To arrange conferences for members of WINHEC and other interested persons for the general dissemination and critical discussion of matters pertaining to WINHEC's goals;
- (b) To facilitate the exchange of ideas, staff, structures and programmes between the members of WINHEC;
- (c) To act as a proponent and voice for indigenous peoples on issues pertaining to higher education;
- (d) To arrange meetings of an educational character for the benefit of and to be attended by indigenous peoples and/or people entering the field of indigenous peoples higher education research;
- (e) To identify and develop new areas of research and encourage the formation of international teams for specific tasks, for example, the formation of a world indigenous accreditation authority;
- (f) To act on the principles advanced and endorsed by a world indigenous accreditation authority established or promoted by WINHEC;
- (g) To encourage industrial, governmental and academic support of indigenous peoples research;
- (h) To liaise with, co-operate with and give general support to any other charitable institution with similar objects and powers;
- (i) To secure funds from appropriate bodies to support indigenous peoples higher education research, programmes and activities;
- (j) To promote indigenous methodologies of research in particular the ownership, control, access and possession of such research;
- (k) To hold an annual meeting of the Executive Body of WINHEC; and
- (l) To organise and hold a triennial meeting of WINHEC.

#### 5. Membership

5.1 Membership of WINHEC shall be open to the following persons:

- (a) Indigenous higher education institutions;
- (b) Associations of indigenous higher education institutions;
- (c) Indigenous divisions of mainstream higher education institutions; and



(d) Any other persons or institutions as agreed by the Executive Body.

5.2 The members of WINHEC are from the recognised indigenous nations of the following regions:

- Hawaii
- Alaska
- New Zealand/Aotearoa
- Australia
- Canada
- Mainland United States of America
- Saamiland

(together, the **Regions**).

5.3 The Regions may be extended to include additional regions which encompass indigenous nations as agreed by the Executive Body from time to time.

## 6. **Triennial WINHEC Conference**

6.1 The members of WINHEC shall meet every three years at a location and on a date as decided by the Executive Body. At the triennial conference the following matters shall be dealt with:

- (a) The appointment of the representatives to the Executive Body;
- (b) The appointment of the Executive Chair and two Co-Chairs;
- (c) The report of the Executive Chair including a financial report; and
- (d) Any other matters as determined by the Executive Body.

## 7. **Executive Body**

7.1 The Executive Body of WINHEC (the **Executive Body**) shall comprise of fourteen persons comprising two representatives for each Region nominated by the members from that Region (collectively, the **Representatives**).

7.2 In addition the Executive Body shall have the following positions:

- (a) Executive Chair;
- (b) Co-Chair; and
- (c) Co-Chair.

7.3 The Executive Chair and the Co-Chairs shall:



- (a) be appointed every three years at the World Conference by a majority decision of all the members;
- (b) hold office for three (3) years; and
- (c) be re-elected only once in that office.

## **8. Annual Meeting of Executive Body**

- 8.1 The Executive Body shall meet annually on a date and at a location to be determined by the Executive Body.
- 8.2 The fiscal year of WINHEC shall end on 31st December. The Executive Chair shall be required to present a general report together with an account of the income and expenditure of WINHEC to the Executive Body members at their annual meeting.

## **9. Voting at WINHEC Meetings**

- 9.1 Each member of WINHEC shall have one vote in meetings of the members of WINHEC. Each member of WINHEC shall have the right to vote on:
  - (a) the election of the two Representatives to serve on WINHEC's Executive Body representing the Region of that member (and no other Region or other Representatives);
  - (b) the appointment of the Executive Chair; and
  - (c) the appointment of the two Co-Chair's.

## **10. Power to Appoint**

- 10.1 The Executive Body shall have the power to co-opt members as it seems fit, but no co-opted member shall have the right to vote. The Executive Body shall have the power to appoint temporary members of the Executive Body in the event of a Representative or one of the Executive Chair or Executive Co-chair being unable to continue their office.
- 10.2 The Executive Body shall have the power to appoint and elect an Advisory Board and to set up task forces or other such groups in furtherance of WINHEC's objectives.
- 10.3 The Executive Chair and the two Co-Chairs shall have the collective power to appoint and engage additional managerial and administrative support positions.

## **11. Head Office**

- 11.1 The Head Office shall be located in the same state or country where the then current appointee to the Executive Chair resides. Upon a new Executive Chair being elected to that position the outgoing Executive Chair shall ensure that all materials, documents, files, data and any other property whatsoever that belongs to WINHEC and is held at the former Head Office is transferred to the location of the new Head Office.

## **12. Voting at Executive Body Meetings**

- 12.1 In meetings of the Executive Body each member of the Executive Body shall have one vote each. The Executive Chair shall not have a casting vote. All resolutions shall be



passed by no less than seventy-five (75) per cent of those in attendance of a properly constituted meeting.

### **13. Quorum for Executive Body**

13.1 The quorum for an Executive Body meeting shall be no less than 50% of the Executive Body members.

### **14. Amendment to Constitution**

14.1 Each proposed change in this Constitution shall be notified to the Executive Chair in writing at least one month before any meeting of the Executive Body. The Executive Chair shall notify the members of the Executive Body of the proposed change(s) at least two weeks before the Executive Body meeting. The proposed change(s) must have support, in writing, of at least seventy-five (75) per cent of the Executive Body.

14.2 No amendment shall be made to any of the provisions of this Constitution, in particular the Object and Goals (clause 3), the provisions of this clause 14, or the dissolution provisions (clause 15), which would cause WINHEC to cease to be a charity by law.

### **15. Dissolution**

15.1 WINHEC shall be dissolved if a petition for dissolution is approved by seventy-five (75) per cent of the Executive Body members at an annual meeting of the Executive Body.

15.2 In the event of dissolution surplus funds, property and assets (if any) shall be distributed to recognised charitable educative institutions or associations with common or similar goals to WINHEC as decided by the Executive Body.

### **16. Retirement and Replacement**

16.1 If a member of the Executive Body who is appointed as a Representative retires from their post before they have completed their term in office, then the other remaining Representative of that Region may appoint a temporary replacement to carry on the duties of the retiring Representative until such time as the members of that Region have appointed a replacement.

16.2 If the Executive Chair retires from their post before they have completed their term in office, then one of the Co-Chairs shall be appointed by the Executive Board to assume the role of Executive Chair until the appointment of a new Executive Chair in accordance with clause 9.1.

16.3 All members of the Executive Body shall hold office for as long as they are mandated to do so by the members of the Region appointing them. All members of the Executive Body shall notify the Executive Body one year in advance of retirement from the Executive Body and each Region of members shall forward the name of the elected replacement to the Executive Body as soon as it is known.

**Signed on**

**2002**

**By the delegates to the Annual Executive Board Meeting of WINHEC, 9-10 November 2002, Todd Park Campus, Wananga o Aotearoa, Porirua, Wellington**