



## **The Society for Interdisciplinary Placebo Studies Constitution and By-Laws**

### **1. Name**

The name of the group shall be *The Society for Interdisciplinary Placebo Studies, Inc.* (hereinafter "SIPS").

### **2. Aims**

The aims of SIPS are to:

- a. The organization is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- b. To promote communication and cooperation between research centers and scholars around the world in order to facilitate rapid dissemination of research results and theoretical ideas concerning placebo studies.
- c. To use multidisciplinary tools (e.g., neuroscience, psychology, cognitive science, history, anthropology, and philosophy) to examine the physiological and psychological mechanisms underlying placebo effects, and to develop ethically acceptable methods to harness the placebo effect to improve healthcare outcomes.
- d. To maintain a website (<https://www.placebosociety.org/>) that describes SIPS and its aims, as well as the criteria for membership in the organization.
- e. To maintain a web-based membership contact list to disseminate information and raise questions within our scholarly community. Communications via this contact list will be managed by the Secretary/Treasurer, and usage of the contact list will be restricted to members of the Society.
- f. To host international conferences at which new research results and theoretical ideas can be presented.
- g. To maintain an electronic journal and online database entitled, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Placebo Studies (JIPS)* (<https://jips.online>) to provide an efficient means for tracking and disseminating publications relevant to placebo studies.
- h. To promote empirical, conceptual, and ethical understanding of the placebo effect among academic researchers, healthcare professionals, and the general public.

### **3. Powers of SIPS**

SIPS shall have the power to:

- a. Raise funds via donations, grants, subscriptions, annual dues, and any other fees the Steering Committee judges to be necessary to achieve the aims of SIPS.
- b. Employ paid workers to assist in the attainment of the aims of the organization.

- c. Rent or purchase property and equipment necessary to achieve the aims of SIPS.
- d. Affiliate with any local or national group or association that the Steering Committee decides is appropriate, and disaffiliate from any group or organization if continued affiliation is, in the Steering Committee's view, against the interests of the organization.
- e. Do any other lawful things that will further the aims of SIPS.

#### **4. Membership**

- a. Historically, SIPS was founded by placebo researchers at a 2014 Brocher Foundation workshop in Geneva, Switzerland. Following this workshop, 9 members of SIPS were elected to serve as the organization's founding Steering Committee.
- b. Membership in SIPS is open to anyone interested in placebo studies who provides contact information to the Secretary/Treasurer and pays the annual dues.
- c. Membership dues are set by the Steering Committee and are tiered into three levels (with descending annual dues payments) as follows: (a) general member, (b) post-doctoral fellow, (c) student.
- d. All members will have an equal vote in any matters put before the membership.

#### **5. Steering Committee**

- a. SIPS will be governed by a Steering Committee comprised of eight members.
- b. Steering Committee members will serve for a term of four years.
- c. Steering Committee members can serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms (i.e., a total of eight consecutive years). However, after a four-year absence from the Steering Committee, a person can stand for re-election to the Steering Committee.
- d. The only exception to section 5c above is if an insufficient number of qualified candidates stand for election. In this unusual circumstance, current members of the Steering Committee may stand for election and exceed two terms to keep the Committee fully staffed.
- e. Steering Committee elections will occur every two years, with four members being elected in each election cycle.
- f. Prior to the elections, nominations for the Steering Committee will be solicited from the SIPS membership. Members can nominate themselves; and they can also nominate more than one person. The call for nominations will stay open for a minimum of 14 days.
- g. The current Steering Committee has an obligation to encourage and work actively to ensure that the set of nominees is diverse in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and area of academic specialization.
- h. Nominated persons must submit a CV and a letter of interest to the current Steering Committee who will determine whether the potential nominee has sufficient interest and experience in placebo studies that he or she should serve as an effective committee member.
- i. Elections will occur by on-line balloting. Polling for the election will be open for a minimum of 14 days.

- j. Each member will be allowed to cast up to four votes in favor of their preferred candidates.
- k. The four candidates who receive the highest number of votes will be elected to the Steering Committee.
- l. In the event of a tie, a second election will be conducted among the tied candidates, with each SIPS member now allowed to vote for only one candidate.
- m. In the event of a casual vacancy on the Steering Committee (e.g., a member of the Committee resigns before his or her term has expired), the Steering Committee members will appoint a person from the SIPS membership who will serve on the Committee until the next scheduled election.
- n. The Steering Committee may appoint any persons it so chooses as advisors. However, advisors will not have voting rights.
- o. The Steering Committee may form sub-committees to work on specific projects. However, sub-committees shall not enter into any legal or financial agreement without prior authorization from the full Steering Committee.

#### **6. Steering Committee Meetings**

- a. Steering Committee Meetings shall occur at least once per year.
- b. A quorum for Steering Committee Meetings shall be 5 members of the Committee.
- c. Steering Committee Meetings may be held in person, or by video or audio conference call.
- d. Motions will be passed if they receive a simple majority of the Steering Committee votes cast.

#### **7. President and Secretary/Treasurer**

- a. The President and Secretary/Treasurer of SIPS must both be members of the Steering Committee.
- b. The President and Secretary/Treasurer will be appointed by consensus of the Steering Committee Members.
- c. If the Steering Committee cannot reach consensus, a vote of the general membership of SIPS will be taken to determine which of the proposed candidates will fill the office.
- d. If elections are needed, they will occur by on-line balloting. Polling for the election will be open for a minimum of 14 days.
- e. The President and Secretary/Treasurer will each serve for a term of four years.
- f. In the event of a casual vacancy for the posts of President or Secretary/Treasurer (e.g., a resignation before the term has expired), the Steering Committee members will appoint a person from within the Steering Committee to complete the term.
- g. The President and the Secretary/Treasurer can each serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms (i.e., a total of eight consecutive years). However, after a four-year absence from the post, a person can once again stand for re-election to President or Secretary/Treasurer.

## **8. Rules of Proceedings at all Meetings**

- a. All members shall have an equal vote.
- b. All motions shall be decided by a simple majority of the ballots cast. The President of SIPS will not ordinarily cast votes during Steering Committee meetings. The President will only cast a vote in the event of a tie.
- c. There shall be only two exceptions to this simple majority rule. First, a two-thirds majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for the adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws; and second, any potential future decision to dissolve SIPS will also require a two-thirds majority – see the Amendments and Dissolution sections below for details.

## **9. Funds and Finances**

- a. All funds shall be devoted to furthering the objectives of SIPS.
- b. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes described in section 501(c)(3). No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- c. A bank account may be opened in the name of the organization.
- d. All expenditures shall be approved by simple majority of the Steering Committee.
- e. The financial year shall run from January 1 to December 31.

## **10. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws**

- a. Proposed amendments should be circulated to the membership no fewer than 14 days before the date of the vote.
- b. Voting shall be held open for a minimum of 14 days.
- c. Amendments to this Constitution and By-Laws shall be passed if they receive a simple majority of those who cast a ballot.

## **11. Dissolution**

- a. A resolution to dissolve SIPS must be passed by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.
- b. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue

- c. Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.
- d. Any assets held by the organization after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be donated to an organization with similar aims, but subject to the restrictions in section 11(b) above.
- e. The Steering Committee will be responsible for determining which organization will be the recipient of any remaining funds.
- f. The decision of which organization will receive the remaining funds will be determined by a simple majority of the Steering Committee members.

## **12. Adoption**

- a. Adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by SIPS Members.
- b. The signatures below of the eight current members of the Steering Committee certify that a two-thirds majority of the ballots cast by SIPS members has supported the adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws.

This Constitution and By-Laws was adopted on: May 29, 2021

Signatures:

John Kelley  
Jens Gaab  
Ben Colagiuri  
Luana Colloca  
Andrea Evers  
Karin Jensen  
Irving Kirsch  
Katja Weimer

Printed Names:

John Kelley (President)  
Jens Gaab (Secretary/Treasurer)  
Ben Colagiuri  
Luana Colloca  
Andrea Evers  
Karin Jensen  
Irving Kirsch  
Katja Weimer