biotechnology
students
association

Statutes

14.03.2024

Fachverein
Verband der
Studierenden
an der ETH

STATUTES OF THE BIOTECHNOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION

1. GENERAL

ART. 1 LEGAL FORM, NAME, HEADQUARTERS

[1] The name "Biotechnology Students Association" (BSA) refers to an association in accordance with Art. 52ff and Art. 60ff of the ZGB. The association is a section of the “Verband der Studierenden an der ETH” (VSETH) as specified by Art. 14 of the VSETH statutes. The VSETH statutes and the “Reglement über die Fachvereine des VSETH (Fachvereinsreglement)” are superordinate to the BSA statutes. Headquarters of the BSA are located in Basel.

ART. 2 PURPOSE

[1] The purpose of the association is to protect and represent the interests of students belonging to the Department of Biosystems Science and Engineering (D-BSSE) of ETH Zurich. This includes enabling and supporting services for biotechnology students and maintaining friendly relations with other student associations. Furthermore, the association aims at establishing sector-specific industry contacts.

[2] The BSA is prohibited from participating in political or religious activities that are not directly related to its interests as laid out in Art. 2 Abs. 1.

ART. 3 BUSINESS YEAR

[1] The business year lasts from 1st January to 31st December.

[2] The length of a term of office is one semester according to the academic calendar of ETH Zurich.

2. MEMBERS

ART. 4 MEMBERSHIP

[1] The association consists of regular and associate members.

[2] Regular members are all VSETH members assigned to the BSA according to Art. 1 and Art. 2 of the “Fachvereinsreglement”.

[3] Associate membership can be obtained, in accordance with Art. 3 of the “Fachvereinsreglement”, by persons who are not eligible to become regular BSA members. The admission of associate members is decided by the BSA board after receipt of a written application. Associate members are not automatically members of the VSETH.

ART. 5 RIGHTS

[1] Members are given suffrage according to Art. 7 and Art. 8 of the "Fachvereinsreglement":

a. Only regular members of the BSA may be elected as delegates in the VSETH.
b. Only regular members of the BSA belonging to the category "a" according to Art. 4 of the VSETH statutes (Bachelor and Master students as well as students undergoing education for teaching) have passive voting rights for presidency, roles in university politics and for delegations in the D-BSSE.
c. Associate members of the BSA do not have active voting rights for the BSA board as well as for delegations of the BSA in the VSETH and at the D-BSSE.
d. Associate members have passive voting rights for the BSA board with exception of presidency and roles involving university politics, provided they are enrolled in a degree program at ETH Zurich.
e. There can be no more than two (2) associate members on the board of the BSA.

[2] All members have the right to inspect official documentation, and the right to submit proposals and requests to the board or general assembly.

ART. 6 OBLIGATIONS

[1] The members are obligated to not counteract the purpose of the association.

[2] Every member is asked to attend the general assemblies convoked by the board.

ART. 7 WITHDRAWAL

[1] The withdrawal of regular members from the BSA follows automatically with the withdrawal from the VSETH.

[2] Associate members announce their withdrawal in written form to the board.

[3] Withdrawal is assumed automatically upon non-payment of the semester fees.

ART. 8 EXCLUSION

[1] Reasons for exclusion of a member from the BSA may include, but are not limited to, violation of statutes or actions that damage the image of the BSA.

[2] Regular members can be excluded by the delegates' council of the VSETH ("Mitgliederrat", MR) according to the process described in Art. 6 of the VSETH statutes. This procedure is initiated upon request from the VSETH board or upon submission of a petition to the BSA general assembly and acceptance of the petition by the BSA general assembly. Every BSA member is eligible for submission of such a petition.

[3] The general assembly may directly exclude an associate member from the BSA upon submission of a petition. Every member of the BSA is eligible for submission of such a petition.

[4] The affected member is to be informed of the petition by registered letter or e-mail with read receipt ten (10) days prior to the general assembly.

ART. 9 MEMBERSHIP FEES

[1] Membership fees for regular members are determined and collected exclusively by the VSETH.

[2] Associate members are required to pay a semester fee of 20 CHF for students enrolled at a university (excluding PhD students) and 40 CHF for other persons directly to the BSA.

3. FINANCES

ART. 10 RESOURCES

[1] The income of the BSA consists of the resources assigned to it by the VSETH in accordance with the "Fachvereinsreglement" of the VSETH.

[2] The BSA may exploit other income sources, such as benefactor contributions, revenues from services or events, or donations.

ART. 11 LIABILITY

[1] BSA obligations are covered by the association's assets.

ART. 12 BUDGET

[1] Every board and commission member is responsible for the adherence to their budgetary item and has it at their disposal in the interest of the BSA. The board and commission members are required to account for their expenses.

[2] The board may decree non-budgeted expenses up to 1000 CHF per business year for extraordinary business affairs. With support of the treasurer, this amount increases to 6000 CHF per business year. The treasurer decides in the case of a vote tie and only one vote is permitted per board member.

ART. 13 REIMBURSEMENT

[1] Board activities are honorary and board members do not receive any financial compensation. In justified exceptions, the board may reimburse individual board members for expenses related to the execution of their office. These expenses are to be verified.

4. BODIES

ART. 14 BODIES

[1] The BSA consists of the following bodies:

a. the general assembly
b. the board
c. the commissions
d. the financial auditors
e. the delegates

5. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ART. 15 REGULAR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[1] A regular general assembly is to take place every semester and must be held within the first 30 days of the semester.

[2] The board is responsible for the organization and proper execution of the regular general assembly.

ART. 16 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[1] An extraordinary general assembly is to be convoked if decided by either 20% of all regular members, or the board, or the business audit committee of the VSETH ("Geschäftsprüfungskommission", GPK), or the associations' council ("Fachvereinsrat", FR). This requires a written request stating the pending business affairs.

[2] The board is responsible for the organization and proper execution of the extraordinary general assembly.

ART. 17 CONVOCATION AND EXECUTION

[1] Regular general assemblies are to be announced to all members of the BSA by the board at least seven (7) days in advance.

[2] Extraordinary general assemblies are to be announced by the board at least seven (7) days in advance. The convocation and execution of an extraordinary general assembly is independent of the semester schedule.

[3] The announcement of a regular or extraordinary general assembly must be sent to all members. It contains all impending business affairs along with the necessary background information.

[4] Non-members (who otherwise are not eligible to attend) may attend the general assembly as guests upon invitation by the board. However, they are not eligible to vote.

[5] All decisions and election results determined at the general assembly must be recorded. Meeting minutes are kept and made public. They must be approved at the subsequent general assembly. Revisions to the minutes must be requested and taken within a month after the general assembly. Minutes are handed in to VSETH according to Art. 15 "Fachvereinsreglement".

ART. 18 ELECTIONS AND DECREES

[1] A properly convened general assembly shall constitute a quorum if at least as many members entitled to vote and not belonging to the board are present as there are members of the board. If this is not the case, the general assembly is dissolved and must be postponed to a later date during the semester.

[2] If the association has less than 40 regular members, then the general assembly is always competent.

[3] The board members have the right to vote.

[4] Voting occurs via hand signal. Upon request by a member, elections may also be held via secret vote.

[5] Transfer of voting rights is not permitted.

[6] Elections and decrees are resolved by the absolute majority.

[7] For the following business affairs, a two-thirds majority is required:
   a. Exclusion of members.
   b. Revision of statutes.
   c. Dissolution of the association.

ART. 19 BUSINESS AFFAIRS

[1] The general assembly sanctions the accounts of the last financial period, as well as the budget for the following financial period, and it discharges the board of the BSA of liability.

[2] All board members are generally obligated to participate in the general assembly and report on their activities. In case of absence, another board member may act as substitute and give the corresponding activity report.

[3] The regular general assembly elects the board and the financial auditors for a term of office of one semester. Re-election is permitted.

[4] All board members are elected individually unless the general assembly agrees on an alternate election procedure.

[5] Postponed elections are permitted at an extraordinary general assembly.

[6] The decisions of the general assembly are binding for all association members and bodies.

6. THE BOARD

ART. 20 MEMBERS

[1] Board members include:
   a. The president
   b. The treasurer
   c. The commissioner for student affairs and university politics
   d. The commissioner for public relations
   e. One or two commissioner(s) for social events
   f. The commissioner for IT and infrastructure
   g. The commissioner for industry relations

[2] The board may call in independent collaborators without voting rights.

[3] The board has the right to elect interim board members in between two regular general assemblies. Interim board members possess the same voting rights as regular board members.

[4] Accumulation of board positions is permitted if a position cannot be filled otherwise. However, presidency, treasury and university politics (student affairs) may never be combined.

ART. 21 OBLIGATIONS

[1] The board acts on behalf of the association.

[2] The board governs the association as an executive power. It conducts business and implements the decisions of the general assembly.

[3] Every board member is obligated to officially represent the decrees of the board.

[4] The board possesses all authoritative competences not transferred to other bodies via these statutes, and not in conflict with the VSETH regulations.

ART. 22 BOARD MEETINGS

[1] Board meetings can be attended by any member of the BSA as well as invited guests. Assembly dates are communicated to the interested person in advance.

[2] The board meets at least three times per semester.

[3] The quorum is reached if at least half the board members are present. The president decides in the case of a vote tie. Only one vote is allowed per board member.

[4] Every board member may convoke board meetings.

[5] Every board member is obligated to participate in board meetings and report on their activities.

[6] Meeting minutes are recorded and need to be approved by the board. The approved minutes can be viewed by all members of the BSA, the VSETH and the D-BSSE upon request. Exceptions are made for confidential information which is to be kept separately yet still submitted to the GPK of the VSETH. Minutes are handed in according to Art. 15 “Fachvereinsreglement”.

ART. 23 CONSTITUTION

[1] The board constitutes itself and governs the distribution of duties.

[2] Offices are handed over at the first board meeting following a general assembly.

[3] In case of the president’s absence, the vice-president has all rights and obligations of the president.

ART. 24 PRESIDENT

[1] The tasks of the president include organizing board meetings, keeping correspondence with the VSETH, maintaining relations with other student associations, overseeing the other board members.

[2] The president is authorized to sign contracts, manage the financial accounts and sign finance-related documents in the name of the BSA.

ART. 25 VICE-PRESIDENT

[1] A member of the board is voted to the role of vice-president at the first board meeting after the general assembly. The vice-president must be a regular member of the BSA and cannot be the president nor the treasurer.

[2] In the case of absence of the president, the vice-president will take over the position for the time of their absence.

ART. 26 TREASURER

[1] The tasks of the treasurer include creating and keeping track of the budget, paying for all events of the BSA, storing the receipts for every money transaction, and managing financial accounts in the name of the BSA.

[2] The treasurer is authorized to manage the financial accounts and to sign finance-related documents in the name of the BSA.

ART. 27 COMMISSIONER FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS AND UNIVERSITY POLITICS

[1] The tasks of the commissioner for student affairs and university politics include managing the exam preparation data base, performing student evaluations of the Master's program, and being the contact person for students regarding any study-related issues.

ART. 28 COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

[1] The tasks of the commissioner for public relations include managing the webpage and social media accounts of the BSA, serving as external contact person of the BSA, keeping track of the BSA e-mail inbox, and ensuring compliance with the corporate identity (CI) guidelines of the VSETH.

ART. 29 COMMISSIONER FOR SOCIAL EVENTS

[1] The tasks of the commissioner for social events include maintaining and organizing social events involving the BSA.

ART. 30 COMMISSIONER FOR IT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

[1] The tasks of the commissioner for IT and Infrastructure include maintaining and creating IT services for the BSA, ensuring that all rooms under the responsibility of the BSA are kept in order, keeping track of the members lists, and ensuring data privacy according to the respective laws and VSETH regulations.

[2] The responsible person for IT and Infrastructure automatically is the responsible person for IT ("Organisationsinformatikverantwortlicher", OIV) towards the VSETH. This responsibility can be delegated to any other board member if considered necessary.

ART. 31 COMMISSIONER FOR INDUSTRY RELATIONS

[1] The tasks of the commissioner for industry relations include keeping correspondence with companies, organizing company visits and sponsors, and informing BSA members about career-related events.

7. COMMISSIONS

ART. 32 FOUNDATION

[1] The general assembly may appoint commissions. It determines the rights and obligations for each commission.

[2] The BSA is liable for the obligations and actions of its commissions.

ART. 33 COMMISSION REGULATIONS

[1] The commission regulations govern the organization and activities of the commissions.

[2] The commission regulations are passed by the general assembly. They are subordinate to the BSA statutes.

ART. 34 COMMISSION MEMBERS

[1] The general assembly elects commission members for one term of office.

[2] The commission president is to be determined by the general assembly.

ART. 35 ORGANIZATION

[1] The term of office corresponds to that of the BSA board unless the commission regulations state otherwise.

[2] The commissions provide the board of the BSA with their meeting minutes.

[3] At the end of their term of office, the commissions provide an activity report as well as a budget report in the event of independent accounting.

ART. 36 FINANCES

[1] Accounting is the responsibility of the BSA treasurer.

[2] The commission account is part of the BSA account and is audited by the BSA auditors.

[3] BSA contributions are recorded in the budget report.

[4] The earnings and expenses of all commissions are part of the accounts of the BSA.

8. FINANCIAL AUDITORS

ART. 37 CONSTITUTION

[1] The financial auditing team consists of at least two BSA members. Board members, commission presidents and commission treasurers may not be part of the financial auditing team.

ART. 38 OBLIGATIONS

[1] The financial auditors review the accounts of BSA and its commissions after the end of the business year.

[2] They report at the next general assembly and, in case of proper accounting, request discharge of liability for board and commission members.

[3] If necessary, an intermediate revision is possible.

9. DELEGATES

ART. 39 DELEGATION

[1] The BSA may appoint delegates in various committees to represent the interests of the BSA and its members.

ART. 40 UNIVERSITY POLITICAL COMMITTEES

[1] The BSA appoints student representatives to the following committees:

a. Teaching commission (“Unterrichtskommission”, UK) at the D-BSSE of the ETH Zurich
b. Department conference (“Departementskonferenz”, DK) at the D-BSSE of the ETH Zurich

c. Selection committees (“Berufungskommissionen”) at the D-BSSE of the ETH Zurich
d. Associations’ council (“Fachvereinsrat”, FR) of the VSETH
e. Delegates’ council (“Mitgliederrat”, MR) of the VSETH

ART. 41 DELEGATES

[1] The delegates are elected for a period of one semester by the general assembly.

[2] The BSA president is automatically a delegate at the FR and also at the MR.

[3] The vice-president is automatically a deputy delegate at the FR.

[4] President and vice-president may have a previously appointed BSA member represent them at the MR and FR. Their rights are temporarily transferred to the appointed person.

[5] The BSA board sends additional delegates to represent the association at the MR according to the respective regulations by the VSETH (Art. 17 VSETH Statutes).

[6] The commissioner for student affairs and university politics is typically a delegate at the UK representing the interests of students in the MSc Biotechnology program. The general assembly elects the remaining delegates of the BSA to represent Biotechnology students at the DK, UK, or selection committees.

ART. 42 REPORTS

[1] All BSA delegates are obligated to report to the board at board meetings and to the members at general assemblies.

10. CLOSING PROVISIONS

ART. 43 STATUTE REVISIONS

[1] These statutes may be revised upon request by a two-thirds majority at a regular or extraordinary general assembly. Every member may request changes to the statutes.

[2] The draft which has been approved by the GPK beforehand must be sent to all BSA members at the latest along with the invitation to the general assembly at which the revised statutes are to be approved.

ART. 44 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

[1] The dissolution of the association can be decreed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members where the election turnout must be at least 40% of all regular members.

[2] In any event, this affair must be announced fourteen (14) days in advance.

[3] Upon dissolution of the BSA, the assets are turned over to the VSETH until an association or organization with similar goals is formed.

ART. 45 COMMENCEMENT

[1] The underlying statutes were approved at the inaugural assembly on 23rd October 2009. The revisions at hand were approved by the general assembly on 14th March 2024.