

MP 005: Issue 2

Regulations and Guidelines for Overseas Chapters

Approved by Council

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Scope

These Guidelines describe the rules for Society members living outside the UK to set up local arrangements (Chapter) for meetings and communications with each other in their region. It defines the constitutional position and the framework within which the Chapter must operate to be recognised by The Society.

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Associated Documents: MP009

1. Introduction

In the United Kingdom The Royal Photographic Society has an organisation structure based on geographical areas known as 'Regions'. A 'Region' provides a means and focus for members to organise local events and meetings and gives members an opportunity to communicate with each other via meetings and newsletters. A Chapter serves a similar purpose for members resident outside the UK. The UK Regional Organisations are self-funding but some facilities and services are provided free of charge by The Society. Similar support will be given to a Chapter.

2. Constitutional Position

- 2.1 The Chapters are recognised as providing part of the services and support The Society offers to its members. Each Chapter is a financial entity completely separate from The Society and operates to the rules set out herein in order to be recognised as a Chapter and to use The Society's Corporate Identity in connection with its activities.
- 2.2 Unlike a Special Interest Group or Region, the financial status of an Overseas Chapter is independent of The Royal Photographic Society. The Society accepts no liability for financial undertakings, debts or contractual arrangements entered into by a Chapter. Nonetheless a Chapter must comply with National and Local Laws concerning charities and finance (tax, donations and legislation) in their country. The Chapter constitutional position is defined in this document and in The Royal Photographic Society Bye Laws, Rules and Guidelines. The Chapter Organiser is responsible to Council for the running of the Chapter.
- 2.3 Only officers of a Chapter may represent The Society to the local members but may not represent The Society to third parties without prior agreement of The Society's Council.
- 2.4 The Royal Photographic Society Coat of Arms or Corporate Image must not be used on business or personal introduction cards because it may give rise to a misleading impression that the bearer is in some way a representative of The Society. (See also section 10, Corporate Identity).

3. Formation of a Chapter

- 3.1 A Chapter may only be set up after formal approval by Council.
- 3.2 Members (normally a minimum of 15) wishing to form a Chapter shall elect an Organiser, Secretary and a Treasurer. These shall be the officers of the Chapter. The secretary will then apply to Council requesting that the Chapter be recognised.

4. Organisation and Administration

4.1 Role of the Chapter Organiser

The Organiser's role is to help The Society to be more available to the membership and to provide the Society with feedback, advice and guidance. In particular: -

- To represent Chapter business and interests to The Society in the UK.
- To be the friendly personal and local point of contact for the membership – particularly with respect to new members and/or prospective members of The Society.
- To organise and/or facilitate the organisation of events in their Chapter.
- To assist in the recruitment of new members.
- To welcome members from states/countries/regions close to the organising Chapter.

4.2 Administration

- 4.2.1 The Chapter Organiser shall be elected each year at an Annual General Meeting of the Chapter.
- 4.2.2 The eligibility of the Chapter Organiser to hold this post must be ratified by Council.

- 4.2.3 The organisation of the Chapter is at the discretion of the Chapter Organiser. However, It is recommended that there should be a committee of at least three - the Chapter Organiser, a Secretary and a Treasurer.
- 4.2.4 A written Constitution for the Chapter must be prepared defining the objectives and administration. The Constitution must be submitted to Council for approval.
- 4.2.5 An Annual General Meeting should be held to allow the Chapter membership to influence policy on events, composition of the committee and the services the Chapter provides for them. At this meeting the accounts should be presented and the committee and officials elected.
- 4.2.6 All officers and committee members must be current members of The Royal Photographic Society. It is recommended that members of the committee should spend no more than 8 years on the committee, before standing down for at least one year and the Officers may serve for 6 years.

4.3 Communications with The Society

All communications with The Society must be in English. It is essential that the Chapter Organiser is able to fully understand communications from The Society and able to write unambiguously and clearly in the English language.

4.4 Annual Report

An annual summary of the Chapter's activities should be sent to the Director General when requested. This is to allow for preparation of The Society's Annual Report and to provide Council with an annual overview of the Chapter's activities.

4.5 Events and Activities

- 4.5.1 Chapter activities should be focused on meeting the particular needs and interests of the members in the Chapter. It is accepted that the number and type of events may differ widely from one Chapter to another.
- 4.5.2 The Royal Photographic Society is a learned society and an educational charity with the objectives of promoting the art and science of photography. A Chapter is expected to reflect this in its activities.
- 4.5.3 A Chapter should aim at quality in its activities. Society events need to be special and educational. Note: Talks, workshops, field events and discussion meetings have an educational element. Mutual benefit from co-operation with camera clubs and other bodies as appropriate should be encouraged.

5. Attendance Policy

The Society has educational charity status and cannot exclude members of the public from events and meetings.

6. Provision for the Disabled

- 6.1 It is Society policy that wherever possible Society events and activities will cater for all participants regardless of their physical limitations. It is however recognised that in some situations such as field trips this will not always be practical. Chapters that run regular field events should aim to cater for the physically impaired and/or elderly at least once a year.
- 6.2 In situations where the attendance of a carer is essential no admission charge should be made for the carer. However, the carer would be expected to pay for food and accommodation.
- 6.3 The minimum requirements for disabled members are:

- Wheel chair access i.e. no steps to negotiate, and doors wide enough for wheelchairs to pass through (this requires a standard 30inches/760mm wide door with room to manoeuvre on the other side).
Note: Level access also caters for the visually impaired.
- Disabled toilet facilities.
- A hearing loop or as a minimum a public address system.

The publicity for an event should make it clear whether the event is suitable for the disabled.

Further advice and guidance can be obtained from The Society's Headquarters, including contact details of members who have specialist knowledge in this area.

7. Insurance

Chapter Organisers must ensure that appropriate levels of insurance cover for public liability insurance are in place for each event and /or activity.

8. Financial Arrangements

8.0 Chapter Finance

- 8.0.1 Each Chapter is required to be financially self-funding.
- 8.0.2 Funds may be raised by a levy on the members of the Chapter, charges for events and /or sponsorship (See sponsorship below).
- 8.0.3 Chapter assets do not form part of the assets of The Royal Photographic Society.
- 8.0.4 The following statement must be included on all business letters and communications involving financial transactions.

'This Chapter is a limited agent for The Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain but without any authority to incur financial liability for that Society'

8.1 Bank Account

- 8.1.1 The Officers of the Chapter are responsible for setting up a bank account identified as belonging to the Chapter, which is clearly defined as independent of The Society and which conforms to local best practice and legal requirements.
- 8.1.2 The Society will not accept liability for the finances of a Chapter.
- 8.1.3 It is required that:
 - The Chapter operates a bank account
 - The Chapter Organiser and Chapter Treasurer are the account's designated signatories.
 - As a guide, cheques drawn for amounts under £250, or equivalent, may be signed by one of the designated signatories.
 - Cheques above £250 or equivalent must have two signatures.

8.2 Accounting Records

- 8.2.1 Income and expenditure must be recorded. A statement of accounts showing all transactions must be provided at the Chapter AGM.
- 8.2.2 A copy of the accounts is to be forwarded annually to The Director General.

8.3 Financing of Events and Budgeting

The Chapter must budget to at least break even or make a small profit. Funding for events is not

provided from Society central reserves. See also section 9.2

Note: A Chapter may run a few major events with well-known speakers which appeal to a wide audience with a ticket price to make a profit which can be used to create an operating fund. Such events can be publicised widely to non-RPS members in the press and through local camera clubs.

8.4 Sponsorship

Sponsorship by reputable companies in the photographic materials/equipment field is suggested as a possible means of funding or promoting Chapter events and/or activities. However, Society policy precludes the endorsement of any particular company or product. Care must be exercised when entering into sponsorship arrangements to ensure The Society remains un-compromised. It must never appear that The Society offers exclusivity in any way with respect to one sponsor's products or services. If there is any doubt at all on the propriety of a proposed sponsorship this must be discussed with the Director General at an early stage and before undertaking any commitment. This will prevent embarrassment for the Chapter at a later stage should The Society exercise its right of veto.

9. Support from The Society

- 9.1 The Society will provide administrative support to assist a Chapter to operate. This includes information on members living in the same area, space in the Journal to advertise events and space on The Society's web site.
- 9.2 Financial support will not normally be provided from Society funds. A Chapter may apply for financial support for a specific event or activity which is in support of The Society's mission and objectives, e.g. an event promoting or supporting The Society's Distinctions. Such an application will require a business plan and must be approved in advance by Council.

10. Corporate Identity

- 10.1 It is particularly important that Chapters of The Royal Photographic Society present a uniform and professional image at all times and especially so in stationery and literature; Chapters must follow the design guidelines for literature and letter headings etc.
- 10.2 Care must be exercised in the use of the Corporate Image of The Society. It must be used in accordance with style guidelines and as set out in MP009 (Corporate Identity Guidelines). It may not be used on bank cheques and business cards.
- 10.3 Where infringement occurs or is perceived to have occurred, permission to use the Corporate Identity will be withdrawn by The Society.

11. Personal Data

- 11.1 Personal data held by the Chapter must only be used for the conduct of the business of the Chapter and must not be distributed to a third party.
- 11.2 Suitable precautions must be taken to prevent un-authorised access to data held on computer files.