

BYLAWS

The National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture

Originally Adopted: May 28, 2018

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ARTICLE I. NAME, DEFINITION, and AUTHORITY

The organization shall be called the National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture, hereinafter referred to as the Initiative or NICH.

While the scope of Consumer Horticulture is ever changing, the following provides an overview of many, but not all, activities related to this field:

- A. The cultivation, use, and enjoyment of plants, gardens, landscapes, and related horticultural items to the benefit of individuals, communities, and the environment. These activities rely on the understanding and application of the art and science of horticulture.
- B. Gardens encompass the growing of all plants; whether one or many, indoors or outdoors, and includes ornamentals, edibles, natives, or crops.
- C. Landscapes encompass the integration of the essential features of larger gardens with horticultural items to create artistic environments that are shared across the community.
- D. Horticultural-related items encompass the tools and technologies that benefit gardeners or promote a greater pleasure of gardening itself. These include garden sculpture, structures such as sheds, patios, hardscapes, tools, masonry, and water features such as ponds and fountains.
- E. The establishment and care of gardens and landscapes often requires services of arborists, turf grass care providers, landscape and nursery industry professionals, and others. This creates the need for a consumer knowledgeable about the cost and skills required to provide these services.

- F. Managed landscapes often provide ecosystem services to home owners and communities by helping to capture storm-water runoff, abate noise pollution, provide shade, reduce erosion, provide animal habitat, and other applications.

The Initiative shall derive all authority for its operations and administration directly from these Bylaws and from regulations adopted by the duly elected members of the NICH Executive Committee. The Initiative exists as a virtual organization containing no real property and no financial holdings.

ARTICLE II. MISSION, VISION, and CORE VALUES

The Mission of NICH is growing a healthy world through plants, gardens, and landscapes.

The Vision of NICH is to use stakeholder partnerships to increase the percentage of U.S. households participating in Consumer Horticulture to 90% by 2025.

The Core Values of NICH involve...

- A. Diversity and Inclusion – all welcomed and valued individuals can make a difference
- B. Service – for the common good
- C. Research, Education, and Extension/Engagement – for positive change
- D. Environmental, Social, and Economic Focus – address all aspects of sustainability
- E. Innovation and Creativity – for real world challenges
- F. Accountability – demonstrate the ownership necessary to achieve desired results
- G. Relevance – in responding to the needs of, and communicating with, our clientele

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Being a member (members and stakeholders) in NICH is open and voluntary. Any person, professional or non-professional, engaged directly in or related to activities of Consumer Horticulture as described above, may participate in the Initiative.

ARTICLE IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The initiative is made up of an **Executive Committee, goal-oriented Committees** (Community Health and Well-Being, Economic, Environmental, and Marketing) as defined by the strategic plan, and **stakeholder-oriented Councils** (Academic/Government, Commercial and Non-Profit).

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for maintaining or amending the ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE of the Initiative. Initiative members or other persons affiliated with Consumer Horticulture may propose expansion of the goals or focus areas of existing Committees or Councils or propose the adoption of new Committees or Councils. This action shall be considered by the Executive Committee, who have the authority to approve/disapprove of the proposal outright. They may also seek input from existing Committees and Council members prior to their decision.

ARTICLE V. COMMITTEE OFFICERS and their ROLES

The Executive Committee of the Initiative shall be composed of officers (Executive Committee Chair, two Executive Committee Co-Chairs, and a Secretary) and Committee/Council Chairs or designees. Position descriptions for Executive Committee members are made available and revised periodically.

- A. The Executive Committee Chair shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee. Their vote shall ideally be conserved until after other votes are cast to either affirm the Committee's direction, or break tie votes should there be a need to do so in matters other than elections. They shall attempt to preside at all Executive Committee meetings of the Initiative. The Chair shall have the power to call meetings of the Executive Committee and the duty of setting/approving the agenda for such meetings. The Chair shall perform other duties and exercise other initiative powers such as its signatory, but shall do so within the best interests of the Initiative and is expected to frequently consult/receive delegation/represent publically the collective decisions of the entire Executive Committee.
- B. Executive Committee Co-Chairs shall perform all the duties and shall have all the powers normally conferred upon the Chair in the Chair's absence. They shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee during their term as Co-Chair. Additionally, Co-chairs shall perform such other duties and shall have such other authority as the Executive Committee may from time to time assign.
- C. The Secretary shall take minutes at all Executive Committee meetings and distribute minutes to the committee within one week of the meeting. The Secretary shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee and shall perform any other duties incident to the office of Secretary as assigned by the Executive Committee. If the Secretary is absent from any meetings, the Chair will appoint an alternate to take minutes. In addition, the secretary shall submit approved minutes for archival on the NICH website.
- D. Both Committee and Council Chairs provide leadership to their respective committees and councils and shall call regular meetings (ideally monthly) of their members. Committee/Council Chairs will maintain minutes of each meeting of their committee/council and report a summary to the Executive Committee. Committee/Council Chairs are full voting members of the Executive Committee and serve as liaisons between the Executive Committee and their respective committees/councils. In the event a Committee/Council Chair cannot attend an Executive Committee meeting, they will appoint a committee member to attend the meeting in their absence after consulting their membership.
- E. The Executive Committee shall work to create and maintain strategic plans for the Initiative. Plan progress will be reviewed and communicated to members at least once yearly. The Executive Committee has the power to make changes to the various goals, objectives, and tactics in order to further the Initiative's priorities in pursuit of its Mission, Vision, and Values.
- F. The Executive Committee shall also invite prominent leaders in horticulture or other fields, such as the USDA/NIFA National Program Leader for Horticulture, to serve as non-voting liaisons and/or to advise/consult with the Executive Committee or other Committees/Councils for such time as the Executive Committee deems appropriate.

ARTICLE VI. ELECTION and LENGTH of SERVICE of OFFICERS

- A. The Executive Committee Chair shall be elected by the other standing members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee Chair may be elected for two consecutive two-year terms and unlimited non-consecutive terms. While any person who has served the Initiative as a committee/council member or Chair for more than one year may be nominated for election to Executive Committee Chair, those with previous Executive Committee experience shall be encouraged for the Chair role. Nominations will typically be made by members of the Executive committee or by Initiative members-at-large should the Executive Committee fail to bring forward candidate(s) for election.
- B. The Executive Committee Co-Chairs (2 total) shall be elected by the other members of the Executive Committee. Any person who has served the Initiative as a committee/council member or Chair for more than one year may be nominated for election to Co-Chair. Nominations will typically be made by members of the Executive committee or by Initiative members-at-large. Executive Committee Co-Chairs may be elected for up to two consecutive two-year terms.
- C. The Executive Committee Secretary shall be elected by the other members of the Executive Committee. Any person who has been involved in the Initiative for more than one year may be nominated for election to Secretary and nominations are typically made by members of the Executive committee or by Initiative members-at-large. The Executive Committee Secretary may be elected for up to two consecutive two-year terms and unlimited non-consecutive terms.
- D. Committee and Council Chairs shall be elected by Committee and Council members who have been active over the past year in their respective Committee or Council. Nominations for Committee/Council Chair shall come from respective members of the Committee or Council and those nominated shall have been active in the Committee or Council for at least one year. Committee and Council Chairs may be elected for up to two consecutive two-year terms and unlimited non-consecutive terms.
- E. It is desirable for all Executive Committee members to reflect the diversity of the Initiative in their roles on the Executive Committee, and in their appointments to their Committees and/or Councils that they may Chair.
- F. In the event that any Officer or Council/Committee Chair is unable to fulfill their duties, a replacement will be elected by the Executive Committee to fill the remaining term of that office. Those serving on the Executive Committee are expected to attend at least 60% of Executive Committee meetings and keep informed on outcomes/decisions made whenever absent.

ARTICLE VII. ELECTION PROCESS

- A. Elections shall occur in November of each year and elected individuals serve from January 1 to December 31 of the following year (two year terms). Elections for unplanned Executive Committee vacancies shall be held within sixty (60) days from the last date the position was occupied.
- B. Election of Executive Committee Chair and one Co-Chair will occur in odd-numbered years and election of the other Co-Chair and Secretary will occur in even-numbered years.
- C. The Elections coordinator shall be the Executive Committee Co-Chair not currently standing for election.

- D. The electoral process and ballot shall be held by whatever method the elections coordinator (Executive Committee Co-Chair) running the election best deems appropriate (by electronic communication, proxy, survey, etc.)
- E. In the event of a tie vote, the Executive Committee Co-Chair running the election shall call for and preside over a deliberation meeting regarding the unresolved race, and administer a re-vote. This meeting shall occur within thirty (30) days of the tied vote. If the election of an officer remains tied after the meeting, the tie shall then be resolved by the flip of a coin.

ARTICLE VIII. RULES of ORDER

During any meeting of the Executive Committee, the rules contained in ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER by Henry M. Robert, shall be used to guide the parliamentary practice of the Initiative.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENT to BYLAWS

Amendments to the bylaws may be recommended by the Executive Committee or proposed to the Executive Committee Chair in writing as a petition signed by no fewer than thirty (30) Executive and/or Committee Members. The Chair shall inform the Executive Committee of such proposed amendments by electronic communication and/or other written communication along with a date to vote on changes with at least thirty (30) days to review them.

All proposed amendments shall become effective upon a two-thirds (2/3) or greater affirmative vote of Executive Committee Members. All returned ballots/votes received via electronic communication or other secure means within the period specified for voting will serve as the tally. Results of the vote shall be communicated within ten (10) days either electronically or otherwise in order to achieve prompt notification to all Executive Committee and/or petitioning members.

SIGNATURE:

I hereby attest that the Bylaws above are the version voted upon and approved by the NICH Executive Committee at its 28 May 2018 meeting. They supersede all previous draft copies and hereby become our organizational rules and regulations.



D. Casey Sclar, Ph.D.
Chair of Executive Committee
National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture
May 31, 2018