

**THE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF MALTA
L-GHAQDA MALTIJA TAL-ASTRONOMIJA**



**The Astronomical
Society of Malta**

STATUTE

STATUTE as approved on the 6th of March 2026

1. TITLE

The name of the organisation is **L-Ghaqda Maltija tal-Astronomija** or **The Astronomical Society of Malta**, (henceforth referred to as The Society).

2. DECLARATION

The Society is a registered voluntary organisation.

3. OFFICIAL ADDRESS

The Society's official address is Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector, Volunteer Centre, 181, Melita Street, Valletta, VLT 1129, Malta.

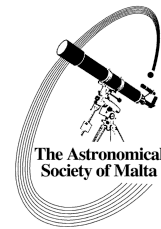
4. EMBLEM

The emblem of the society shall be as portrayed by this statute as both:



**The Astronomical
Society of Malta**

and



5. INTERNET DOMAIN & ADDRESS

The Internet domain name and web address (or URL) of the Society shall be ***maltastro.org*** and ***www.maltastro.org*** respectively.

6. OBJECTIVE

The Society is established **to promote and propagate education and interest in the science of Astronomy**, to:

1. Organise lectures, courses, discussions, observing sessions, and/or similar activities. These may be open to non-members of the Society.
2. Encourage observational work and projects for its members.
3. Publish astronomical literature as may be desirable from time to time.
4. Promote co-operation with other local and overseas societies.

7. MEMBERSHIP

7a. Any person, subject to ***Rule 7e***, may become a **Society member**:

1. Upon payment of the membership fee; and
2. Upon approval by the Committee.

7b. **The membership fee** of each Society member shall be such a sum as the Committee may determine from time to time.

7c. **All membership plans start or renew on the day fees are received**, or cleared in the case of cheques, in the Society's bank account.

7d. Outgoing members of the Society shall pay any outstanding dues and return all property and material of the Society borrowed by them.

7e. The Committee may, at its discretion, **refuse any application** for membership or **suspend** or **cancel the membership** of any member, provided that this person be afforded the opportunity to appear before the Committee.

7f. Application for new membership shall be made on the membership form as prescribed by the Committee.

7g. There shall exist a class of membership called 'honorary membership' which shall be bestowed upon those persons (including non-members of the Society) who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of astronomy in Malta and/or to the promotion of the Astronomical Society of Malta.

Honorary membership shall be awarded by the Annual General Meeting upon recommendation of the Society committee. Honorary members are exempt from paying the yearly membership dues.

8. THE COMMITTEE

- 8a. The management of the Society shall be entrusted to a body called the Committee. This body shall convene at least once every six weeks. If, for any reason, the President is unable to convene the Committee, the Vice-President shall take over this duty. All decisions regarding the Society (except for the changing of the Statute) shall be taken by the Committee. Any decision on issues on which there is not a unanimous agreement between the Committee members shall be decided on the basis of a simple majority vote between Committee members present.
- 8b. The Committee shall consist of **at least five members**. These will include a:
1. President
 2. Vice-President
 3. Secretary
 4. Treasurer and
 5. Public Relations Officer.
- 8c. **The President** shall chair every Committee meeting of the Society and shall have the right to know of all Society proceedings. The President shall be a member 'ex-officio' of any sub-committee or section of the Society.
- 8ci. Legal representation of the organisation shall be vested in **The President** or any other member as decided by the Committee from time to time.
- 8d. **The Vice-President** shall assist the President in his duties, without prejudice to **Rule 8c**. The Vice-President shall replace the President when thus delegated by the President.
- 8e. **The Secretary** shall keep the minutes and later distribute them to all Committee members within a reasonable time prior to the holding of the subsequent meeting. The Secretary will be responsible for the Society's Committee correspondence. He/she shall inform all Committee members of the forthcoming Committee meeting and of their respective agenda. The Secretary shall also keep the minutes of any Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting (henceforth AGM and SGM respectively).
- 8f. **The Treasurer** shall be responsible for all the Society's financial affairs and for drawing up a balance sheet to be presented to the AGM. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the organisation of fund-raising activities for the Society.

- 8g. **The Public Relations Officer** shall be responsible for the Society's relations with the mass media, other astronomical societies, and the general public.
- 8h. The Committee may fill any **vacancies** in the Committee, which may occur between one AGM and another.
- 8i. The Committee may, in the interests of the Society, **co-opt additional members** on the Committee.
- 8j. A Committee member will be asked to **resign from the Committee** if considered to have failed to carry out his/her duties for a period of time without reasons, held justifiable by the rest of the Committee or by two-thirds of the Society's members.
- 8k. **Three** members of the Committee, including either the President or Vice-President, shall form a **quorum** for Committee meetings.
- 8l. The Committee may keep, in the name of the Society, **one or more bank accounts**. All revenues should be deposited into a Savings Account. All withdrawals, transfers from the Savings account to other accounts as well as cheques issued must be signed by the Treasurer and the President or his/her delegated member of the Committee.
- 8m. The Committee shall present a report of the **state of affairs** of the Society during the previous year to the AGM.
- 8n. The internal reviewers shall be nominated and elected by the members attending and having a right to vote at an Annual General Meeting. No internal reviewer of accounts who has held office on the Society Committee during the past 12 months will be eligible for nomination. No internal reviewer of accounts shall run for office on the Society Committee during the following 12 months.
- 8o. When required by law, accountants and / or auditors of accounts shall be independent and cannot be selected from the Members of the Society.
- 8p. The accounts of the Society shall be prepared on a yearly basis in accordance with the Voluntary Organisations Act.
- 8q. Persons may be invited by the Committee to act as observers during a Committee meeting of the Society.

9. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 9a. The **AGM** shall, unless the Committee otherwise decides, **be held before the end of March** each year, for the purpose of presenting a report of the state of affairs and proceedings of the Society during the previous year and for the purpose of electing a new committee.

- 9b. The Committee shall forward to all members **at least two clear weeks** before the date fixed for the AGM :
1. The date, time, and place of the forthcoming AGM;
 2. The date, time, and place of adjournment of the AGM, if the case arises;
 3. The names of the retiring members of the Committee;
 4. The date and time up to which the Secretary shall accept motions to be presented at the AGM, including proposals for amendments to the statute and proposals for inclusion on the AGM Agenda;
 5. The name and address of a person appointed by the Committee to receive applications for the candidature of the above-mentioned elections;
 6. The closing date for the receipt of the above-mentioned applications;
 7. A copy of the application form to contest for election, subject to **Rule 10h**;
 8. Any other matters concerning the AGM.
- 9c. The President or his delegate or, in the absence of either of these, a chairperson appointed by the Committee, shall chair the AGM or SGM, subject to **Rule 9d**.
- 9d. **The Rules of Procedure** of the AGM or SGM shall be:
1. The Committee shall be responsible for setting up the Agenda in accordance with **Rule 9e**;
 2. The chairperson may suspend individual members and/or suspend or adjourn the AGM or SGM in case of disorder, as he sees fit and proper;
 3. The Secretary of the incumbent Committee or, in the case of his absence, any other person appointed by the Committee, shall be responsible for the keeping of minutes during the AGM or SGM.
- 9e. The Agenda of the AGM shall contain the following:
1. The Chairperson shall declare the AGM open;
 2. Reading of minutes of previous AGM;
 3. Presidential Report of the previous year;
 4. Administrative Report of the previous year;
 5. Public Relations Report of the previous year;

6. Financial Report, including assets, of the previous year;
 7. Motions and proposed amendments to the statute;
 8. The nomination of an Electoral Commission;
 9. Election of a new Committee by secret ballot;
 10. Any other matters.
- 9f. A simple majority shall approve any decisions taken during an AGM or SGM except those concerning amendments to this statute.
- 9g. Each paid-up member present will have a single vote.
- 9h. Special General Meetings may also be convened:
1. When the Committee deems it fit and proper;
 2. When a request, signed by at least one-third of the Society's members, is addressed to the Committee, containing the reason for which the SGM is being requested. The meeting shall be held within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the above-mentioned request.
- 9i. The Committee shall forward to all members at least one clear week before an SGM is due the following:
1. The date, time, and place of the forthcoming SGM;
 2. The date, time, and place of adjournment, if the case arises;
 3. The date and time up to which the secretary shall accept motions to be presented at the SGM, including proposals inclusion in the SGM Agenda;
 4. Any other matters concerning the SGM.

10. ELECTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

- 10a. The term of office of the Committee expires after one year. Any Committee member is eligible to contest for re-election.
- 10b. Five Committee members, in accordance with **Rule 8b** to **8g**, shall be elected annually. In the event of the resignation, death, or demotion resulting from **Rule 8j**, **Rule 8h** applies.
- 10c. The annual Committee election shall be conducted by and shall be the responsibility of an Electoral Commission (the EC).

- 10d. The EC shall consist of at least two members of the Society not contesting the forthcoming election. It shall be proposed by the outgoing Committee and approved by the majority of members present at the AGM.
- 10e. The EC's word shall be final in that:
- a. It refuses applications for the candidature of elections if these applications do not conform to the rules of this Statute;
 - b. It appoints assistants to help in performing its duties;
 - c. It takes any decisions relating to the elections.
- 10f. Every candidate who shall contest for the Committee election must be a registered paid-up Society member.
- 10g. The minimum age requirement to contest for the Committee election is sixteen (16) years of age.
- 10h. The names of the candidates shall be submitted in writing or electronic mail (e-mail) to the person appointed for this purpose in **Rule 9b(5)**. The signature of the candidate and of two seconders who shall be Society members shall accompany the submittance.
- 10i. On the day fixed for the election, each member present shall vote by a secret ballot for not more than five (5) of the candidates, who are to sit on the Committee.
- 10j. Voting papers signed by the EC shall be used for election purposes. Votes shall be deposited by voters in an appropriate ballot box.
- 10k. An electronic voting system that is approved and run by the EC for election purposes shall be used in lieu of **Rule 10j** if circumstances necessitate or is deemed to be more effective.
- 10l. The EC shall publish the election results immediately. In the event of a tie, the EC shall proceed to hold a by-election between those candidates who have secured an equal number of votes.
- 10m. The five (5) candidates securing the greatest number of votes in the election shall be declared elected.
- 10n. Any grievances as to the running of the election shall be submitted in writing to the EC no later than four (4) days from the announcement of the final election results. At the discretion of the EC, fresh elections may be held.

- 10o. A meeting of all elected members shall be held not later than one week following the announcement of the final election result. At this meeting, the members shall decide who will occupy which of the posts mentioned in **Rule 8b**, starting with that of President. If a Committee member wishes it, the election of any Committee official shall proceed by a secret ballot.
- 10p. The outgoing Committee shall hand over, within a stipulated time frame agreed with the newly elected Committee, all materials, funds, and Society matters.

11. ASM DELEGATES

- 11a. The committee may from time to time appoint paid or honorary members of the society to fulfil a role or a set of tasks to help the committee in its duties particularly in its outreach, members events and other tasks that are outside of the committee's core duties. Such roles shall be accompanied by a title and a description of the role to which the member shall agree to in writing.
- 11b. The delegates shall be reconfirmed unless there are **valid reasons** for dismissal with each newly elected committee within a period of not more than two months from the AGM to allow any new committee members to familiarise themselves with the delegates.
- 11c. The committee shall if required, call the delegates for a meeting to review their roles and responsibilities. A delegate may only be dismissed if **two thirds of the committee** agrees to dismiss a member from their role following a valid justification from the committee. The committee shall discuss dismissal with the delegate prior to a vote, where the member is allowed to present and justify their objections towards dismissal.
- 11d. A Delegate may resign at any time from their role and where possible, give at least two weeks notice prior to the termination date to allow proper contingency plans. It is good practice to keep a strong communication channel between delegates and committee and discuss any issues in a timely manner.
- 11e. A delegate shall strive under all circumstances to upkeep the name and decor of the society in their behaviour and core values of ASM.

12. DISSOLUTION

Should the Society decide at a general meeting to dissolve, all assets, books, funds, and other Society possessions at that time shall be sold by auction among members. Items not sold shall be valued and sold to the public. The net surplus derived in this way shall be applied in favour of another voluntary organisation with similar purposes as the Society which may be selected by the administrators' members, or the Court.

13. AMENDMENTS

- 13a. The secretary shall notify members, **at least one week before** an AGM or SGM, of **proposals** for the amendments to the Statute.
- 13b. **Any amendments** to this Statute, including this Rule, can be made at an AGM or at an SGM. It must be carried by a **two-thirds majority** of those members present.

14. AFFILIATIONS

Other societies may be **affiliated** to the Society subject to a set of regulations which are agreed upon by the Society Committee and **without** prejudice to this Statute.

15. SECTIONS

- 15a. The Committee may, in the interests of the Society, appoint sub-committees, groups, and/or expert teams which may be made up of society members and/or professionals to undertake tasks required by the Society.
- 15b. **Articles of Association**, governing the objectives, programme, organisations, and other matters pertaining to the operations of these sub-committees, groups, sections, and/or expert teams, are to be drawn up and agreed upon by the Committee and the **Designate Director** of the aforesaid sub-committee, group and/or expert team.
- 15c. The **Director** of a sub-committee, group, section, and/or expert team shall be a Society member appointed by the Committee for a period, which can be renewed, of twelve (12) calendar months. The Director will be directly responsible to the Committee for all matters relating to the sub-committee, group, and/or expert team under his direction. The Director and/or his delegate are entitled to attend all committee meetings of the Astronomical Society of Malta but have no voting rights.
- 15d. Articles of Association of sub-committees, groups, sections, and/or expert teams of the Society shall be **appended** as such to the **Society Statute**. Such articles will carry the **date** of the approval by the Committee on which the said sub-committee, group, and/or expert team will be deemed to have been officially established.
- 15e. Sub-committees, groups, and/or expert teams of the Society will be **guided** in all matters by the articles and spirit of the Society Statute currently in force or as may be amended from time to time.
- 15f. All such sub-committees, groups, sections, and expert teams must maintain a record of their main points deliberated during their meetings, as well as a detailed financial record (if applicable).

16. FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year of the Society shall begin on 1st January and end on 31st December of each year.

17. MISCELLANEOUS

- 17a. In exceptional circumstances, and unless this Statute declares otherwise, the **President** or his delegate will be deemed **to have the power to take decisions regarding the Society's management**. The President's delegate shall be a Society member. Any such decisions shall be reported to the Society Committee at the forthcoming Committee meeting.
- 17b. **The affairs of the Society** shall be regulated by this Statute. All Society members may be provided with a copy of this Statute and shall abide by it.

Date approved: 6th of March 2026

Annex A

Lists of Notes

Articles of Association as proposed on **14th December 1993** and subsequently approved, with amendments, by the Committee of the Astronomical Society in February 1994. Published in the ***Astronomical Society Newsletter***, February 1994, pages 6-8.

A. Honorary members of the Astronomical Society of Malta (as of March 2015)

1. Dr Patrick Moore (deceased)
2. Prof Frank J. Ventura
3. Br David Mizzi
4. Prof Godfrey Baldacchino
5. Tony Tanti
6. Edwin Camilleri
7. Leonard Ellul-Mercer
8. Stephen M. Brincat
9. Winston Grech
10. Vince Zammit

B. Recipients of the ASM Observer Award (as of 2016)

1. Leonard Ellul-Mercer
2. Stephen M. Brincat
3. Martin Mifsud
4. Charles Galdies