

DRAFT: BYLAWS OF INDIA CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF STARKVILLE, MS
(INDICO STARKVILLE)

Date: 10/12/2024

Article I. Name

The organization shall be known as the **INDIa Cultural Organization of STARKVILLE** (INDICO Starkville). It was incorporated on October 4, 2024, as a non-profit corporation in the state of Mississippi.

Inaugural Directors and Officers

Five inaugural directors, and officers (the president, secretary, and treasurer) appointed at the initial meeting on October 12, 2024, will establish the organization, secure necessary approvals, and conduct elections for regular directors within two months of completion. The term is one year or until all documentation is complete, whichever is sooner.

After the establishment of the organization, a duly elected board will oversee all organization affairs

Article II. Mission, Vision, and Objectives

MISSION

Our mission is to promote, educate, and celebrate India's rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and values, benefiting all communities in Starkville and surrounding areas. We strive to foster unity, inclusivity, and cultural appreciation, encouraging mutual respect and understanding.

VISION

To be the premier organization for the Indian diaspora, friends of India, and those interested in Indian culture and heritage, dedicated to promoting India's cultural legacy.

Objectives

1. **Community Link:** The INDICO Starkville will act as a coordinating body connecting individuals of Indian origin and those interested in Indian culture, facilitating dialogue and addressing shared concerns.
2. **Cultural Promotion:** Organize cultural, social, and regional events, such as festivals, art shows and music performances to celebrate India's heritage.
3. **Youth Empowerment:** Offer young Indian artists a platform to present their talents

through community events.

4. **Cultural Education:** Educate the local community on India's arts, languages, and heritage through workshops, festivals, and collaborative events.
5. **Forum for Discussion and Action:** Provide a space for discussion, and consensus on cultural, social, and regional matters, welcoming participation from all, irrespective of background.
6. **Emergency Support and Services:** Provide support and services to both the Indian and broader Starkville communities during emergencies and through community service initiatives.

By pursuing these objectives, INDICO Starkville will enrich the social fabric of Starkville and surrounding areas, promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

Article III. Activities and Events

Section 1. Annual Events

- **Sankranti** – Harvest Festival (Spring)
- **Family Picnic Event** (Summer)
- **Annual Foundation Day** (Fall)
- Additional events as proposed and approved by the Board

Section 2. Periodic Events

- Host themed events to foster goodwill and understanding between India and the USA and participate in prominent gatherings such as the International Fiesta, etc.
- Raise funds for charitable and educational purposes.
- Host Indian dignitaries, artists, and supporters.

Section 3. Activities

- Disseminate information of interest to the member community via social media and website.
- Hold seminars and workshops on topics on Indian culture, art and heritage.

- Conduct classes on Indian arts and culture for children and adults.

Article IV. Membership

Section 1. Eligibility, Classes, and Dues

All individuals of Indian descent in the Starkville and surrounding areas are classified as Members at Large. The board defines additional membership categories for voting and fees, periodically reviewing them as needed. The board also periodically reviews current member types and fees.

Membership Categories and Dues:

- **Patron Member:** Contributes \$2,501 or more. Membership includes lifetime membership for the member and spouse, both with voting rights and their children under 18 without voting rights. It also includes free entry to all ticketed events.
- **Life Member:** Contributes at least \$250 in a single year per person.
- **Family Life members:** Contributes at least \$400 in a single year. Membership includes lifetime membership for the member and spouse, both with voting rights and their children under 18 years old without voting rights.
- **Individual Member:** Pays annual dues of \$25.
- **Family Members:** Contributes at least \$40 in a single year. Membership includes annual membership for the member and spouse, both with voting rights, and their children under 18 years old without voting rights.
- **Student Member:** Students enrolled in college or university, pay annual dues of \$10.

Member Benefits:

- Eligible to vote and hold official positions.
- Participate in event planning and execution.
- Priority access to classes and workshops.

Section 2. Proof of Membership

Membership Cards will be issued to all paying members, which will serve as proof of membership.

Section 3. Membership Period and Transferability

Membership runs from January 1 to December 31 and is non-transferable.

Article V. Board of Directors

The Board consists of members from both the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee.

Section 1. Board Management

After the establishment of the organization, a duly elected board will oversee all organization affairs.

Section 2. Election and Terms of Directors

The general membership will elect directors and executive committees. The secretary and treasurer will each serve a defined term. Members of the board of directors will serve staggered terms, with the top three vote recipients serving for three years and the following two serving for two years.

The Board of Directors and Executive Committee will vote and have voting rights on all aspects of the organization's operational protocols. The president will only have the tie-breaking vote.

Eligibility and Voting Rights:

- Any paid member may contest and vote.
- Only one family member may hold a voting position on the Board.

Ex-Officio Member:

The immediate past president will serve on the board with voting rights.

Section 3. Resignation and Vacancies

The executive committee and the directors may resign by notifying the president. The board and executive committee approve, following a recommendation from the president, subject to specific membership requirements, to fill vacancies.

Section 4. Executive Committee

The executive committee includes the president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, and immediate past president.

Duties and Responsibilities

a) President: The president shall preside over all board and general body meetings, holding overall responsibility for INDICO Starkville's affairs. Within the bylaw's framework, the president will exercise all necessary powers, including appointing auditors for INDICO Starkville accounts, with prior consultation with the board and executive committee. The president shall serve as the sole spokesperson for INDICO Starkville unless a designee is appointed. Together with the Treasurer, the President is responsible for filing all necessary tax returns on time and ensuring the transfer of all documents by the end of February each year. The president will serve a three-year term, transitioning through the roles of president-elect, president, and immediate past president.

b) President-Elect: The president-elect shall support the president in the general operations of INDICO Starkville and perform all duties as authorized by the president. The president-elect will assume the president's responsibilities in the event of incapacity or absence and shall ensure the transfer of all relevant documents by the end of their term.

c) Secretary: The secretary shall record all proceedings, including minutes of board and general body meetings, maintain membership records, and distribute notices as required by the bylaws. The secretary shall send out the minutes of board meetings at least one week before the scheduled meeting. All relevant documents shall be transferred to the successor by the end of February. The secretary serves a term of 2 years and may hold the position for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

d) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall maintain records of all INDICO Starkville financial transactions, present financial reports at each board and general body meeting, and provide all necessary financial information to the Accountant/CPA for annual tax filings. The treasurer will assist the president in arranging audits when required. All financial records shall be transferred to the successor by the end of February. The treasurer serves a term of 2 years and may hold the position for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

e) Immediate Past-President: The Immediate past-president shall advise the president on official INDICO Starkville business as needed. This individual shall also serve as a member of the executive committee.

f) Executive Director (ED): If created, the board will determine the executive director's selection, duties, and responsibilities.

Article VI. Meetings

The board will meet monthly, and special meetings may be convened as needed. Members may join remotely with advance notice

Quorum: Approval of any board decisions requires the presence of at least 50 percent of the board members.

Expenditures Requiring Presidential Approval:

The President and Treasurer, with assistance from the Secretary, will prepare the budget and seek approval from the Board.

Compensation/Reimbursement: Board members / EC will not receive compensation but may be reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses related to INDICO Starkville events, with proper receipts and prior board approval.

Article VII. Ad Hoc Committees

The board or the executive committee may appoint Ad Hoc Committees to address specific needs, such as Membership, Cultural Activities, Fundraising, and Youth Activities.

Article VIII. Election Committee Duties and Procedures:

The Board will appoint an Election Committee, independent of current Board and Executive Committee members, consisting of at least two members. This committee will oversee the entire election process.

Article IX: Amendment to Bylaws:

Amendments to the bylaws of INDICO may be proposed by any member of the Board of Directors or by a petition signed by at least 25% of the general membership. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the secretary, who will then present them to the Board of Directors for review.

Adopting an amendment to bylaws requires a majority vote from the Board of Directors, followed by approval from a majority of the general membership present at the general meeting. All amendments approved through this process shall take effect immediately unless specified otherwise in the amendment text.

Article X. Operating Policy

The Board will prepare an operating policy based on the bylaws. Operating policy guidelines are a set of principles and procedures established to direct the day-to-day activities and decision-making processes. These guidelines are based on the organization's bylaws and cover areas such as financial management, compliance, and general administration.

Article XI. Dissolution Clause:

Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more except purposes within the meaning of section 501 C of the internal revenue 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 public purpose.