

Constitution

Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology (Alliance)

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Preamble

In the early 1950s, the founders of the Alliance envisioned that successful chemotherapeutic management of hematopoietic malignancies could be realized through carefully designed clinical trial programs, executed uniformly as a cooperative effort among several academic institutions. In 1956, a research consortium known as the Acute Leukemia Group B was officially recognized as a Cooperative Group responsible for conduct of adult leukemia clinical trials under the auspices of the National Cancer Institute. A sister organization, the Acute Leukemia Group A, was also formed at this time to design and implement studies for pediatric leukemia patients. The following decade was marked with significant advances in the therapy of acute leukemia, demonstrated through Group investigations. These successes attracted more clinical investigators to the cooperative approach; the research scope of the Group enlarged, as did its membership, to include a broad spectrum of neoplastic diseases and multi-modality approaches to therapy. In recognition of its new commitment and of its past traditions, the Group voted in 1976 to change its name to Cancer and Leukemia Group B (CALGB).

In 1977, a separate Cooperative Group, the North Central Cancer Treatment Group (NCCTG) was founded on the premise that the community oncology practice is the most appropriate venue to conduct cancer clinical trials. Based upon scientific leadership at the Mayo Clinic, and a network of outstanding community oncology centers, NCCTG brought multidisciplinary cancer treatment and control studies to patients receiving care in communities throughout the nation.

In the 1990s, cancer surgeons affiliated with the American College of Surgeons professional organization began efforts to enhance the involvement of surgeons in cancer clinical trials, and also to provide an infrastructure to support clinical trials for surgical patients. In 1998, these efforts led to recognition of the American College of Surgeons Oncology Group (ACOSOG) as an NCI-sponsored Cooperative Group. ACOSOG focused on the introduction of novel surgical and targeted therapies; the collection of fresh biospecimens toward bettering the understanding of the biology of early-stage disease; and the application of preoperative therapy toward the downstaging of cancers and reducing the extent of surgery.

Now, more than five decades after the founding of the Cooperative Groups, the extent and complexity of clinical research for patients with neoplastic diseases has increased dramatically. Options for cancer care have multiplied, and promising advances in the field of translational research increasingly demand testing in clinical trials. It is apparent that a re-structuring of the Cooperative Group system is required so that its work will meet the needs of our patients and our society by providing research results that are required for effective, evidence-based cancer treatment and prevention.

In recognition of these new dimensions, this new Constitution has been prepared to provide a framework in which an enhanced cooperative research program might proceed

with celerity and equity. This new Cooperative Group constitutes a formal merger of the current activities of CALGB, NCCTG, and ACOSOG, whose members agree to fully support a new, consolidated research program.

Article I. Name

This organization shall be called the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology (Alliance).

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the Alliance is to reduce the impact of cancer on people by uniting a broad community of scientists and clinicians from many disciplines, committed to discovering, validating and disseminating effective strategies for the prevention and treatment of cancer.

The mission of the Alliance is to reduce the impact of cancer by:

- conducting high quality multidisciplinary cancer control, prevention, and treatment trials that engage a comprehensive research network;
- furthering our understanding of the biological basis of the cancer process and its treatment, from discovery, to validation, to clinical practice; and
- providing a scientific and operational infrastructure for innovative clinical and translational research in the academic and community settings.

Article III. Organization

Section 1. Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Alliance consists of participating institutional members, a Board of Directors, an Executive Committee, a Group Chair and Vice Chair, Program Principal Investigators, and various scientific and administrative committees.

Section 2. Institutional Membership

A. Member Institutions

The Main member institutions of Alliance shall consist of academic member institutions and community member institutions as described and defined in the Constitution and Bylaws. Main member institutions are independently administered primary centers consisting of hospitals, medical centers or research institutes, or a group of such centers that have developed and are functioning as a coordinated cancer-oriented research program. The criteria for Main membership status shall be based upon the number of patients accrued to Alliance trials and upon satisfactory execution of study data submission, monitoring, regulatory, and

financial activities. The level of accrual required for membership status shall be proposed by the Membership Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

Each Main member institution designates one Principal Investigator to administer and coordinate the activities of the member. Academic Main member institutions are member institutions whose Principal Investigator resides at an academic institution. Community Main member institutions consist of NCI-funded Community Clinical Oncology Programs (CCOPs) or community consortia that meet membership standards set forth in the Bylaws. The Principal Investigator of the CCOP or community consortium shall name the Principal Investigator of the Alliance community Main member institution. Where a Main member institution is comprised of several hospitals or medical centers that have agreed to form a network and come under the administration and coordination of the Principal Investigator, the Principal Investigator assumes full responsibility for the effective operation of Alliance functions at these hospitals or medical centers.

Each Main member institution shall designate a co-principal investigator whose responsibilities are to assist the principal investigator as directed by him/her and to carry out the duties of the principal investigator should he/she vacate the office by resignation, death, incapacity or for any other reason.

Institutions eligible for Alliance Main membership may be admitted or removed upon a recommendation by the Membership Committee and the approval of a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors. New Main members are first recommended by the Membership Committee and voted upon by the Board of Directors for a provisionary period. Institutions that are provisionary Main members shall have the same responsibilities as the Main member institutions, including full scientific privileges, rights, and duties as described in the Constitution and Bylaws, but shall have no vote on the Board of Directors. Once a new Main member has successfully completed the requirements of the provisionary period, as decided by Membership Committee review and Board approval, they become a Main member institution with full rights and privileges.

C. Other Members

Other levels of institutional membership may be proposed by the Membership Committee, according to a need for such members by the Alliance. These membership levels shall be proposed by the Membership Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Institutions that are not Main members will not have a seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Group Chair

The Group Chair is responsible for the conduct and quality of scientific activities and efficient operation of the Alliance, shall represent the Alliance in its business

with the National Cancer Institute and other agencies and outside parties, and serves as the spokesperson for Alliance.

The Group Chair shall convene and conduct Alliance meetings, and shall act as Chair of the Executive Committee. The Group Chair shall nominate the Vice Chair and Program Leaders, and shall appoint the Chairs of the Scientific and Administrative Committees. The Group Chair shall also appoint, as occasion demands, representatives from Alliance to participate in activities for the Alliance.

A three person nominating committee selected by the Executive Committee shall select a suitable candidate or candidates and present the name(s) to the Alliance Board of Directors. The nominating committee shall consist of one academic, one community and one undesignated representative. In addition, nominations for Group Chair may also be made by any member institution provided that such nomination is seconded by two other member institutions; or nominations may be made by petition by any investigator of an Alliance member institution provided that there are 10 co-signatories to such a nomination from more than two other member institutions. The nominations shall be presented to the Board of Directors at one meeting and are to be voted upon at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Group Chair shall be elected by secret ballot by the Board of Directors for a five-year term, by a simple clear majority vote. Each institutional member of the Board of Directors shall have one vote. A voting member institution may vote by written proxy if it cannot have a representative present at the election meeting. In the event of a plurality, only the top two candidates are entered into a runoff election. A candidate who receives the votes of a majority of all voting institutional members is thereby elected. Should two or more candidates receive the same numbers of votes, non-candidate members of the Executive Committee (See section 6) shall cast the deciding ballot. If this vote still results in a tie, then the ballot will be sent back to the full Board of Directors for re-vote until a decision is made.

The tellers of the vote shall be the Chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee and the Group Vice Chair. If either of the tellers is a nominee for Group Chair, then the Group Chair shall designate a substitute teller(s). The Group Chair may be elected for only three consecutive terms but becomes eligible again following a period of time out of office.

The election for Group Chair shall occur quinquennially at the semiannual meeting of the Alliance immediately proximal (about six months) to the expiration of the term of office of the current Group Chair. This will foster an orderly transition of the office of Group Chair should that be a different individual than the current Group Chair. This allows time for mentoring and collaboration between the outgoing and a new incoming Group Chair.

Should the Group Chair be vacated prior to the expiration of the usual term of office by resignation, death, incapacity, or for any other reason, then a new Group Chair shall be nominated and elected, at the next Alliance Board of Directors meeting. In the interim, the Vice Chair shall act as the Temporary Chair until a new Group Chair is elected. In the event there is no Group Vice Chair, the Executive Committee shall elect a temporary Group Chair who will serve until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Group. The Group Chair is subject to recall by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting. A motion for recall shall be proposed to the institutional membership by the Executive Committee sitting without the Group Chair.

Section 4. Group Vice Chair

The Group Vice Chair shall be nominated by the Group Chair and be approved by a majority of the Board of Directors. If the position of Vice Chair is vacated for any reason, the Group Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee shall appoint an interim Vice Chair until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The Group Vice Chair shall assist the Group Chair in the direction of the Alliance, shall serve at the pleasure of the Group Chair, and shall act as the Temporary Chair in the absence of the Group Chair. The Group Vice Chair shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

Section 5. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall be responsible for final approval of overall policy for the Alliance; it shall elect the Group Chair and may recall the Group Chair; it shall elect and may revoke institutional membership; it shall receive reports from the Executive Committee; and it shall conduct other business as comes before it.

Each Main member institution that ranks among the top 40 institutions in total Alliance accrual by three-year rolling average shall designate one individual, who may be either the PI or a designated representative, who shall sit on the Board of Directors and have voting privileges. The remaining Main member institutions shall elect at-large individuals to sit on the Board of Directors for a three-year term and have voting privileges. The number of these individuals shall not exceed 20% of the total number of voting Board members (i.e., 10 elected representatives). PIs or designees of provisional or probationary Main member institutions shall not sit on the Board of Directors, but may attend open sessions of Board meetings. The members of the Executive Committee who are non institutional Principal Investigators shall serve on the Board of Directors *ex officio*. Other *ex officio* members of the Board of Directors include former Group Chairs for Cancer and Leukemia Group B, The North Central Cancer Treatment Group, the American College of Surgeons Oncology Group, and the Alliance, and

the current chairs of all modality committees of the Alliance. All *ex officio* members shall participate in Board of Directors meetings but shall have no vote.

The Group Chair shall preside over the Board of Directors. The Group Chair shall not be a voting member of the Board; however, in the case of a tie vote by the Board of Directors, the Group Chair shall cast the deciding vote. The Board of Directors shall meet as often as necessary, usually but not necessarily in association with the Alliance Group meetings. The Board of Directors shall also meet upon petition for such meeting by at least 25 percent of its member institutions. Such special meetings shall be convened within 4 weeks of the date of receipt of the request. A meeting of the Board of Directors may, when circumstances warrant, take place as a virtual meeting by using available technology for meeting of members who are at disparate locations.

Section 6. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall recommend to the Board of Directors overall Alliance policy and direction, as well as Alliance priorities and activities. The Executive Committee shall approve, by majority vote, members of the Study Concept Review Committee. It shall approve, by majority vote, appointments of chairs for scientific and administrative committees; it shall share with the Group Chair the responsibility for the performance of the Alliance, the overall scientific direction of the group and it shall transact such other business for the Alliance as is appropriate.

The Executive Committee shall be chaired by the Group Chair, and shall include the Vice Chair, the Program Principal Investigators, and eight representatives elected from the voting members of the Board of Directors, including four Principal Investigators from academic member institutions and four Principal Investigators from community member institutions. Of the eight Board of Directors members sitting on the Executive Committee, at least one member shall be a medical oncologist, one member a surgical oncologist, and one member a radiation oncologist. The Program Principal Investigators (See section 7), shall also sit as voting members of the Executive Committee. Decisions rendered by the Executive Committee shall be by simple majority vote of all members except the Group Chair. In the event that voting by the Executive Committee results in a tie, the Group Chair shall cast the deciding vote.

The eight elected Executive Committee members must be voting members of the Board of Directors. Those who are representatives from academic member institutions will be nominated by Principal Investigators of any academic member institution, and those who are representatives from community member institutions will be nominated by Principal Investigators of any community member institution. These representatives will all be elected by simple majority vote of the Board of Directors. Each elected Executive Committee member shall serve for a three year term. Elected Executive Committee members may be

elected for only three consecutive terms but become eligible again following a period of time out of office.

Section 7. Programs

To facilitate the conduct of multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary research, the scientific and operational structure of Alliance shall be organized into various Programs. Programs are primarily operational in nature, and exist to provide a coordinated infrastructure for research or other functions that involve multiple scientific and administrative committees.

Each Program shall have a Principal Investigator, nominated by the Group Chair and approved by majority vote of the Board of Directors. Program Principal Investigators serve a five year term of office, with no limit on successive terms of service. Program Principal Investigators shall organize and manage the operational aspects of their program and its affiliated scientific and administrative committees. Program Principal Investigators shall also serve as voting members of the Executive Committee.

As the occasion arises, new Programs may be added or existing programs may be eliminated to expand or better focus the scientific and operational aspects of Alliance. The Group Chair shall present a proposal for a new Program and Program Principal Investigator, or a Program termination, to the Board of Directors, which will approve the proposal by a simple majority vote.

Section 8. Standing Committees

Standing committees are convened by the Group Chair with the recommendation of the Program Principal Investigators, and are approved by the Executive Committee. Standing committees shall function under a Chair and one or more Vice Chairs appointed to serve at the discretion of the Group Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee.

A. Scientific Committees

The function of each scientific committee is to plan, implement, evaluate, analyze, and report on activities relating to its area of specialization. Each committee shall meet at least once a year, and more often when appropriate. Scientific committees include Disease Committees, whose activities focus upon research related to a particular disease or organ system; Modality Committees, whose activities focus upon optimal involvement of a particular profession; and Scientific Discipline Committees whose activities focus upon integration of particular disciplines in the work of Alliance. The Group Chair and the relevant Program Principal Investigator(s) or their designees are *ex officio* members of all scientific committees.

Each Committee Chair is responsible to the Group Chair and to the Executive Committee for the design, conduct, analysis, and report of each research project within the committee's scope. Scientific Committee Chairs shall nominate prospective Study Chairs to the Group Chair, who shall appoint investigators to chair studies with due cognizance of their contribution of ideas to the study and other relevant factors. The Executive Committee shall review and approve all such appointments.

Each Scientific Committee Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the Group Chair. The Scientific Committee Chair shall be appointed to a 5 year term of office, subject to approval by the Executive Committee. Scientific Committee Chairs must be re-nominated after each term, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms, but may be reappointed following a period of time out of office.

Such additional ad hoc scientific committees or subcommittees as are deemed desirable and necessary may be formed at any time by the Group Chair.

B. Administrative Committees

Administrative committees shall conduct business as required to ensure the effective and ethical operation of the Alliance. Administrative committees reporting directly to the Board of Directors include the following: Membership Committee, Institutional Performance Evaluation Committee, Audit Committee, Conflict of Interest Committee, and Constitution and Bylaws Committee. The chairs of each of these committees shall be proposed by the Group Chair, and approved by the Board of Directors. Administrative committees reporting directly to the Executive Committee include: Study Concept Review Committee, Data and Safety Monitoring Board, and Publications Committee. The chairs of these committees shall be proposed by the Group Chair, and approved by the Executive Committee. Ad hoc committees or subcommittees as are deemed desirable and necessary may be formed at any time by the Group Chair.

1. Membership Committee

The Membership Committee shall review and evaluate application for membership, and shall make a recommendation regarding such application to the Board of Directors. The Membership Committee shall also receive reports regarding the efficiency and performance of member institutions made by the Institutional Performance Evaluation Committee and from other appropriate sources, and with the advice of the Group Chair shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

The Group Chair shall appoint the leadership of the Membership Committee with the approval of the Executive Committee. In addition, there shall be at least one member from each of the following specialties: Surgical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Pathology, Imaging, and Medical

Oncology at all times. The members shall serve for four years and their terms of office shall overlap to provide continuity of committee activities. Members of the committee may be reappointed to the committee at the conclusion of their term of office, and there is no limitation on consecutive terms of service. Each committee member shall have one vote. The Group Chair and Vice Chair shall be *ex officio* members of the committee without vote.

2. Institutional Performance Evaluation Committee

The function of the Institutional Performance Evaluation Committee (IPEC) is to implement standards for the performance of the Alliance and its various institutional member components. This committee shall periodically review the performance of individual institutional members of the Alliance, using a quality evaluation mechanism that includes summary reports of established metrics. It shall render reports of its findings to the Membership Committee. It shall prepare an annual written evaluation of the performance of each member institution and forward that report to the Group Chair.

The Group Chair shall appoint the leadership of the IPEC with the approval of the Executive Committee. In addition, there shall be five members drawn from at least one of each of the following specialties: Surgical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Pathology, Imaging, and Medical Oncology. The members shall serve for four years and their terms of office shall overlap to provide continuity of committee activities. Members of the committee may be reappointed to the committee at the conclusion of their term of office, and there is no limitation on consecutive terms of service. Each committee member shall have one vote. The Group Chair and Vice Chair shall be *ex officio* members of the committee without vote.

3. Audit Committee

The members of the Audit Committee shall audit Alliance member institutions and at-large member institutions at regular intervals to review primary records for compliance with Federal regulations and with Alliance policy and protocol requirements. The committee shall submit a written report and recommendations following each site visit to the Principal Investigator of the audited institution, to the Group Chair, and to the Institutional Performance Evaluation Committee.

The Group Chair shall appoint the leadership of the Audit Committee with the approval of the Executive Committee. The membership of the Audit Committee shall include physicians, data managers, and other members of the research team as deemed appropriate. The members shall serve for four years and their terms of office shall overlap to provide continuity of committee activities. Members of the committee may be reappointed to

the committee at the conclusion of their term of office, and there is no limitation on consecutive terms of service. Each committee member shall have one vote. The Group Chair and Vice Chair shall be *ex officio* members of the committee without vote.

4. Conflict of Interest Committee

The Conflict of Interest Committee shall confidentially review the financial disclosure forms submitted by the leadership of Alliance, to include but not to be limited to the Group Chair, Vice Chair, Program Principal Investigators, members of the Board of Directors, members of the Executive Committee, committee chairs and vice chairs, study chairs and co-chairs, members of the Data and Safety Monitoring Committee, members of the Conflict of Interest Committee, and staff of the Statistics and Data Management Center. Based upon its review of Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms, and, if necessary, additional information, the committee reports at least annually and makes recommendations to the Executive Committee concerning potential conflicts of interest or possible violations of the Alliance policy related to conflict of interest reporting. The Executive Committee determines whether a conflict of interest or violation of policy exists and forwards its recommendation to action to the Group Chair or to the Group Vice Chair if the Group Chair is the subject of the report.

The Group Chair shall appoint the leadership of the Conflict of Interest Committee with the approval of the Executive Committee and these leaders shall serve for a four year term. The terms of these appointments shall overlap to provide continuity of committee activities. The membership of this committee shall include at least one additional member. Members are limited to no more than two consecutive four year terms, but may be reappointed again after a term out of office. Each committee member shall have one vote. The Group Chair and Vice Chair shall serve as *ex officio* members without vote.

5. Constitution and Bylaws Committee

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall keep a continued review of the Bylaws and shall make recommendations for changes in the Bylaws as they deem necessary for the efficient operation of the Alliance. Suggestions for changes to the Bylaws may also be submitted in writing to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee by the Group Chair, the Executive Committee, or by any member institution Principal Investigator in concert with a seconding member institution Principal Investigator. Such a suggested change shall be considered and a recommendation made to the Board of Directors for approval or disapproval. A simple majority vote of the Board of Directors shall decide. Amendments to the Bylaws may also be proposed directly to the Board of Directors by the Group

Chair or Executive Committee at any time, and shall be adopted by the Board of Directors at any official meeting by a simple majority vote.

The Group Chair shall appoint the leadership of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee with approval of the Executive Committee, and these members shall serve for four years. Members of the committee may be reappointed to the committee at the conclusion of their terms of office and there is no limitation on consecutive terms of service. The membership of this committee need not be limited to the leadership positions designated above, and additional appointments can be made by the Group Chair as circumstances dictate.

6. Study Concept Review Committee

The Study Concept Review Committee is responsible for scientific review of all Alliance study concepts. The Study Concept Review Committee meets as often as necessary to ensure timely and thorough review of concepts submitted from Alliance scientific committees.

The Study Concept Review Committee shall be chaired by the Group Chair, and shall include as voting members the Vice Chair and the Program Principal Investigators. Additional members shall include representatives from scientific committees as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.

7. Data and Safety Monitoring Board

A Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) shall be convened by the Group Chair and charged with periodic review of all ongoing phase III and selected phase II studies to ensure the safety and integrity of active trials.

All DSMB members shall be nominated by the Group Chair, and confirmed by the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Therapeutics Evaluation Program (CTEP). The DSMB Chair shall be nominated by the Group Chair to a 5-year term of office, with no restriction upon number of terms served. The Group Chair shall also appoint additional DSMB members to a three year term of office. Additional DSMB members may serve two consecutive terms, and may be reappointed following a term out of service. A majority of DSMB members shall be from outside the Group, and include at least one lay member and a statistician from outside the Group. A CTEP physician and CTEP statistician, selected by CTEP, shall be non-voting *ex officio* DSMB members.

The DSMB shall meet at least twice yearly. The exact timing and format of the meetings are determined by the DSMB Chair. Additional DSMB meetings, in any form, may be called as decided by the DSMB Chair.

Article IV. Meetings

Section 1. Group Meetings

The Group Chair shall call regular meetings of the Alliance at least once a year and may call other meetings when appropriate. All members shall be notified of meetings at least two weeks in advance and receive an agenda prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Scientific Committee Meetings

The Chair of each committee shall call committee meetings as necessary for the proper conduct of committee business. Attendance at committee meetings shall be limited to persons actively participating in the work of the Alliance and invited guests.

Section 3. Board of Directors Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet as often as necessary, but at least twice a year, usually but not necessarily in association with the Alliance Group meetings. The Board of Directors shall also meet upon petition for such meeting by at least 25 percent of its member institutions. Such special meetings shall be convened within 4 weeks of the date of receipt of the request. A meeting of the Board of Directors may, when circumstances warrant, take place as a virtual meeting by using available technology for meeting of members who are at disparate locations.

Voting by the Board of Directors shall take place at regularly scheduled meetings of the Board. In addition, a special meeting of the Board of Directors may be called with a minimum of four weeks notice by the Group Chair, Executive Committee, or upon petition for such meeting by at least 25 percent of its member institutions. Members not attending a meeting in person may designate an individual to serve as a proxy for the meeting, or may instead attend the meeting by telephone conference.

Voting by the Board of Directors may take place during meetings, or, when circumstances warrant, by mail or electronic mail. For voting by mail, ballots will be mailed to each voting member of the Board of Directors and shall be returned by mail. The official vote shall be deemed to have occurred when all members have had their ballots and pertinent information about the motion for a minimum of fifteen days. Any ballot returned more than thirty days after the official mailing shall be deemed invalid. When deemed necessary, a certified mail service shall be used to provide notification of the date of receipt of the ballot by the voting members and to establish a quorum.

For voting by electronic mail, ballots shall be sent to each voting member by electronic mail. The official vote shall be deemed to have occurred when all members have had their ballots and pertinent information about the motion for a minimum of fifteen days. Any ballot returned more than thirty days after the official electronic mailing shall be deemed invalid. A return receipt will be attached to each ballot electronically mailed so as to verify the date of receipt of the ballot and establish a quorum.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum for Alliance Executive Committee, Board of Directors, or Committee meetings shall be defined as 50 percent of its membership.

Article V. Bylaws

Such Bylaws as are deemed necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the Alliance, which may assist in the conduct of its business, promote its welfare, or aid in the attainment of its stated purposes may be adopted by the Board of Directors by a simple majority vote. Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by the Group Chair or Executive Committee at any time, and shall be adopted by the Board of Directors at any official meeting by a simple majority vote.

Article VI. Amendments

Proposed amendments, deletions, or additions to this Constitution may be proposed to the committee by two member institution Principal Investigators (proposer and seconder). Such proposals shall be considered by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee and the committee's recommendation shall be circulated to all members of the Board of Directors not less than 30 days prior to their next meeting. Before adoption, such amendments require formal presentation at one meeting and the affirmative vote of two-thirds or more of the Board of Directors at the next scheduled meeting.

Article VII. Ratification

This Constitution shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority affirmative vote of the Board of Directors and shall become effective on the day of its adoption. New members shall be provided a copy of this Constitution and all amendments and Bylaws. Their continued membership shall be interpreted as their acceptance of its provisions.

Article VIII. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order: Newly Revised* shall govern the Alliance in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution, with the Bylaws of the Alliance, with any special rules of the Alliance may adopt, and with applicable Federal and/or State laws.