



# Policies and Procedures

## Title

## Italian Family History Group

**Sections:** All of Co.As.It.

### Preamble

The Italian Family History Group (IFHG) was established by Co.As.It. NSW on **27 March 2001** to recognise the history of Italian migration in NSW and to assist members of the community with tracing their family history.

The IFHG operates under the auspices of Co.As.It. with its own elected committee members. The communication with Co.As.It. shall occur via the General Manager. The Committee enjoys autonomy with relation to organisation of events and seminars. However, nothing shall prevent Co.As.It. from intervening with respect to the activities of the Group should it deem necessary. The Co.As.It. Board, through its General Manager, retains the ultimate powers to reject any of the activities of the Group if it so chooses.

The purpose of this document is to outline the objectives of the committee, its relationship with Co.As.It. and its constitution.

### Background

The IFHG exists for the purpose of promoting Italian migration and heritage in NSW. Members of the IFHG have an interest in retaining and tracing their Italian heritage, and recording events of the migration of their family members. Emphasis is placed on those who wish to be part of a forum where attendees can exchange experiences of their Italian heritage.

The IFHG promotes Italian heritage via a monthly event. The event will likely feature the presentation of a guest speaker with a determined prominence in the community. Presenters are sourced from all walks of life including business, the arts and the broader community. The sessions attract a variety of interested community members and act as a catalyst for discussion and for connecting members of the Group.

### Mission of the IFHG

The mission of the IFHG is to:

1. promote, develop and assist those interested in tracing and recording details of their Italian ancestors and heritage.
2. promote history relating to Italian achievements; and
3. promote Italian culture.

People who are not of Italian origin are also welcome, provided that they uphold the aims and objectives of the Group.

### Aims and Objectives of the IFHG

1. To promote, develop, aid and assist those interested in tracing and recording details of their Italian ancestors and heritage.
2. To conduct lectures, seminars, workshops and events to promote the research of family genealogy.
3. To assist members by sharing experiences about researching.
4. To establish and maintain a newsletter and website (under the auspices of CoAsIt).

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5. To liaise and collaborate with other societies and organisations to share information and to promote awareness of Italian genealogy and history.
6. To record and tabulate names of families under research.
7. To record, publish and share information about research methods and sources.
8. To acquire books, periodicals and research aids by purchase or donation.
9. To organise, promote and encourage mutually supportive, practical partnerships between business, service providers, Italian organisations (including Co.As.It.) and the Italian Community generally.

## Membership

Membership to the group is free and open to any member of the community who has an interest in any of the activities outlined above.

## Events

The IFHG runs monthly events, most commonly in the form of a lecture or presentation followed by discussion.

The events are currently held at the Italian Forum Cultural Centre, 21-23 Norton Street, Leichhardt. However, meetings and events may be moved, from time-to-time, at the discretion of the Committee.

The events are open to all members of the community, not only to members of the IFHG.

Attendance at an event will attract a nominal fee. The fee is charged to assist with covering expenses with relation to venue hire, production costs and refreshments.

The Committee may increase the fee, from time-to-time, as costs of producing the events increase. The decision to increase the fee must be approved by the Board of Directors.

## The Committee

The Committee is to be elected annually at each Annual General Meeting.

The Committee shall comprise of eleven (11) members of which five (5) will comprise of Executive member positions:

- Chairperson
- Deputy Chairperson
- Secretary
- Assistant Secretary
- Treasurer

The Executive members are to be elected by the Committee members, and Membership of Co.As.It. is a pre-condition of nomination as an Executive member.

The role of the Executive is to:

- Liaise with the relevant Co.As.It. representative regarding all matters concerning the Group.
- Liaise with Co.As.It. accountant for financial matters and payments.
- Collect and bank fees from attendees.



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Should an urgent matter arise from time to time, that requires quick resolve, the Executive has the power to make the decision, however, matters that substantially affect the group are to be made by the full Committee.

A member of the Executive may, at any time, assign his/her tasks to another Committee member willing to fulfil them.

The role of the Committee is to:

- Plan activities for the Group
- Promote Group activities and events. This includes but is not limited to: IFHG website, Co.As.It. website, social media and paper flyers.
- Book venues
- Liaise with and confirm speakers for events
- Prepare refreshments, if required

If a Committee member wishes to leave his/her position for any length of time, they are required to notify the Committee and the Co.As.It. representative as soon as practicable.

If the role of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary or Treasurer remains vacant for a period of four or more weeks, for example for illness or holidays, the role must be filled by another person. The Committee members will be given the opportunity to temporarily fill the position. If this is not possible, the opportunity to fill the position will be offered to group members who wish to nominate for the role. In this case normal election rules will apply. The member will fill the position until the elected member returns or until the next election, whichever occurs first.

The Committee shall not be remunerated financially or in any other way for services rendered, except for the reimbursement of any moneys personally out laid, for example for stamps, telephone calls or petrol. Proof of such expenditure must be provided to the committee.

## Committee procedures

- The Committee is required to meet in person, or via video conferencing, at least every eight weeks to organise events for the coming month and to discuss any other issue of concern.
- A special Committee meeting can be called upon request from two committee members.
- The Chairperson, or in their absence, the deputy Chairperson or Secretary, must chair all committee meetings.
- A quorum for Committee meetings shall be 5 members.
- Decisions will not be made by an individual, but will be voted upon. Should an urgent decision be required, it will be made by the Executive members of the Committee.
- Each member of the Committee has only one vote. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.
- The Committee will keep the Group informed of all the decisions made or to be decided upon. Moreover, the committee will encourage the group to contribute towards the needs of the group itself, to suggest ideas and future activities and to comment where needed.

## Annual election of Committee members



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Committee member elections shall be held annually. This will usually occur in November, or at another designated time.

Financial members have the right to vote if they have been financial for at least two months.

Four weeks notice of an upcoming election shall be given to members by the Committee.

During the annual elections the Committee will have to report verbally on the activities undertaken in the course of the year; they will also supply a written report of income and expenditure.

Co.As.It. will appoint a returning officer at all elections.

Any member wishing to stand for election, or to nominate another for election, must notify the IFHG, in writing, no later than two working days prior to the elections.

N.B. new candidates will not be accepted on the day of the election.

## Extraordinary general meetings

An extraordinary general meeting can be called if, for example,

- There is a winding up of the group;
- A majority of Committee members retire simultaneously;
- There are exceptional circumstances which may impact on the future of the group.

## Funds

- Any moneys received by the group shall be deposited forthwith in the group's bank account.
- All funds raised shall be utilised by the group towards its activities. Any expenditure not otherwise linked to the ordinary expenses of the group will need to be approved by the group.
- Funds will be deposited into a Co.As.It. bank account.
- The Treasurer will liaise with Co.As.It. Accounting staff for all financial matters.
- A financial report will be presented to members of the group. It is at the discretion of the committee to determine how often this report is to be presented to the group.

## **Record Keeping**

The Committee is responsible for ensuring that accurate records are kept of the activities of the IFHG. These include, but are not limited to:

- Minutes and agenda of committee meetings
- Records of income and expenditure
- Records and register of members

The records of the IFHG remain the property of Co.As.It.

The records will be kept by the Chairperson and Secretary. Archive records will be stored at Co.As.It.

## **Dissolution**

Should the group be dissolved, all properties and accumulated funds following the settlement of

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any outstanding debts shall not be distributed among members of the group, but will instead be redirected to other groups with similar aims and objectives or to a charitable organisation.

Prior to dissolution, members of the group will select the beneficiary group which is to receive the aforementioned assets. Where this does not occur, the beneficiary group will be selected by Co.As.It.

All documentation relating to the group remains the property of Co.As.It. and must be returned to Co.As.It. as soon as possible.

## **Unacceptable behaviour of group or committee members**

Should a group or committee member continue to behave in a destructive manner, that is in a manner which contravenes the principles and regulations of the group, s/he must be afforded the opportunity to justify their behaviour in the presence of a representative from Co.As.It., a representative from the committee and another from the group itself.

A Co.As.It. representative must be present as mediator in order to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all involved and to enable proceedings to follow accordingly.

Should the decision lead to expulsion from the committee, then such decision must be made by the entire committee.

Should the member refuse to leave the group following expulsion from the same, then the committee has the right to request assistance from Co.As.It. in order to resolve the matter. Co.As.It. has the right to expel such an individual.

Should Co.As.It.'s intervention be required in resolving conflict, including conflict within the group itself, all correspondence on the matter must be directed to Co.As.It. via its representative.

Following Co.As.It.'s intervention, should the parties involved be dissatisfied with the ensuing decision, they may approach Co.As.It.'s General Manager.

Should said parties still be dissatisfied following this step, they may request via the General Manager that the matter be tabled for discussion by the Co.As.It Board of Directors. The Board's decision will then be passed on to all interested parties.

Members of the group cannot discuss the matter with any Co.As.It Board Member except in cases where the Board has previously:

- Received a report on the matter from the Co.As.It. General Manager and
- Decided to follow a specific course of action on the matter.

## **Relationship with Co.As.It.**

The IFHG exists under the auspices of Co.As.It. The Board of Co.As.It. has approved this document to enable the Committee of the Group to plan and promote activities and to allow the Committee a certain level of autonomy.

The IFHG is encouraged to nominate a representative (usually the Chairperson) as the contact person with Co.As.It. Co.As.It. will also nominate a contact person, currently the General Manager, to liaise with the Group. Co.As.It. reserves the right to change its contact person as



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deemed necessary and will notify the Committee.

Whilst the Committee has discretionary authority with relation to activities and events. The following will require the input and approval of Co.As.It.

1. Promotional and print material
2. All material which requires use of the Co.As.It. logo
3. Extraordinary expenditure
4. Sponsorship
5. Any decision which will substantially alter the objectives or activities of the Group.

The funds for the Group will be held with Co.As.It. The Treasurer can request an updated income and expenditure statement at any time. The Treasurer will work with the Co.As.It. accounting staff regarding expenditure and income.

The Committee will keep the Co.As.It. Representative informed of activities, events and plans. A quarterly meeting will take place for this purpose.

The Committee will write and submit Quarterly Reports to Co.As.It. within 60 days following each quarter ending 31 March, 30 June, 30 September, and 31 December. The reports will also be published on the IFHG website and stored at the Co.As.It.

The Chairperson will contribute a written report to the Co.As.It. Annual Report and will make a verbal report at the AGM (usually held in May each year).

### Related Policies

- Nil

### Related Forms

- Nil

**Prepared by:** Thomas Camporeale

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**Reviewed By:** IFHG Committee

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**Approved by Co.As.It. Board:**

**Updated by Thomas Camporeale August 2016**