

BYLAWS

of the

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION

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PREFACE
DEFINITION OF TERMS

The University: The University of Pittsburgh, encompassing all academic units, professional schools, and regional campuses.

Postdoctoral Professional: Any individual currently holding a University appointment as a Postdoctoral Associate or Postdoctoral Scholar.

UPPDA: Acronym for the University of Pittsburgh Postdoctoral Association.

Executive Board: The elected governing body of the UPPDA, vested with the authority to manage organizational affairs, set policy, and represent the Membership.

The Membership: The collective body of all Postdoctoral Professionals at the University.

Faculty Advisory Board: A non-voting advisory body composed of a diverse range of faculty and staff mentors from across the University's various schools and units.

Extraordinary General Meeting: A formal assembly of the full Membership.

UPPDA Volunteers: The collective group of Committee members, Ambassadors, and those appointed by the Executive Board to represent the Membership on behalf of the UPPDA (e.g. Senate Committee Representatives).

NPA: Acronym for the National Postdoctoral Association.

Officer: An elected voting member of the Executive Board.

Officer Emeritus: A non-voting, honorary designation granted to former Executive Board Officers who have successfully completed their term and fulfilled all transition obligations as certified by the President under Article X, Section 6. This status serves as the official UPPDA record of professional service in good standing.

ARTICLE I
NAME & STATUS

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the University of Pittsburgh Postdoctoral Association (for designation purposes the name shall be referred to as UPPDA in these Bylaws).

Section 2. The UPPDA is a representative body within the University of Pittsburgh's Shared Governance structure, subject to university policies applicable within that structure, and shall

serve as the official voice of the postdoctoral community in institutional decision-making processes.

Section 3. The UPPDA shall operate independently of University administration in its advocacy but maintains a collaborative partnership with University stakeholders to further the postdoctoral mission. The UPPDA shall not speak on behalf of the University.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE & MISSION

Section 1. The purpose of the UPPDA is to champion the professional development, welfare, and interests of Postdoctoral Professionals across the University of Pittsburgh.

Section 2. The mission of the UPPDA is to facilitate a culture of professional growth, enhance the quality of research training, and improve the postdoctoral experience. This is achieved by establishing an inclusive and supportive environment that provides material benefit to both the Postdoctoral Professionals and the University.

Section 3. The UPPDA shall represent the comprehensive interests of the postdoctoral community, ensuring that advocacy and programming are accessible to all members regardless of school, department, or geographic location.

Section 4. The UPPDA shall act as a communication channel between postdocs, staff, faculty, students, the University Officers and Administrators, the Board of Trustees, and all officially recognized governance bodies of the University.

ARTICLE III
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Institutional Representation

- **A.** The UPPDA shall meet regularly with the appropriate University officers and administrators to discuss issues and concerns that affect the welfare of Postdoctoral Professionals and the University.
- **B.** The UPPDA, through its elected officers, shall make recommendations to the appropriate University officials and administrators on issues and concerns which affect the welfare of Postdoctoral Professionals and the University.
- **C.** Upon request of the University, the UPPDA shall participate in the selection of University senior administrative officers and administrators by serving on search committees, interviewing candidates, and submitting evaluations and recommendations.

D. The UPPDA shall primarily consider matters brought to it by Postdoctoral Professionals and other members of the University community.

E. The UPPDA shall provide input on, and monitor Postdoctoral Professionals' adherence to, University policies and procedures.

F. The UPPDA shall act in compliance with and support the commitment of the University with regard to non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Section 2. Education

A. The UPPDA shall increase institutional and external awareness among the University community regarding University policies and activities along with National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) and federal guidelines that affect the postdoctoral community.

B. The UPPDA shall serve as a central repository for information concerning postdoctoral rights, responsibilities, institutional benefits, and national professional standards.

C. The UPPDA shall actively educate the University community on the unique contributions of Postdoctoral Professionals to the University's research mission and reputation.

D. The UPPDA shall actively seek opportunities to represent the postdoctoral community in University-wide orientations and departmental briefings to ensure the Membership is informed of the resources and representative structures available to them.

Section 3. Career Development

A. The UPPDA shall provide centralized resources for career development, postdoctoral training opportunities, job placement resources, and alternative career path information.

B. The UPPDA shall partner with relevant University offices and administrative units across all schools and campuses to identify and promote diverse career trajectories, including academic, industrial, and non-profit pathways.

C. The UPPDA shall facilitate professional growth by organizing workshops, seminars, and networking events aligned with the NPA core competencies to enhance the research training and marketability of Postdoctoral Professionals.

D. The UPPDA shall monitor institutional trends in postdoctoral training and provide recommendations to ensure University programs remain competitive with national benchmarks, NPA standards, and peer institutions.

Section 4. Networking & Social

A. The UPPDA shall promote interactions among Postdoctoral Professionals, as well as with former University Postdoctoral Professionals, to foster a cohesive and supportive community.

B. The UPPDA shall establish and maintain formal and informal networking channels to facilitate the integration of incoming Postdoctoral Professionals into the University community.

C. The UPPDA shall design and execute social programming that fosters cross-disciplinary collaboration and ensures visibility for Postdoctoral Professionals across all University schools and campuses.

D. The UPPDA shall serve as a liaison for community-building initiatives, ensuring that social and professional networking opportunities are accessible to a diverse and global postdoctoral population.

ARTICLE IV
THE MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. All Postdoctoral Professionals at the University are, by default, Members of the UPPDA.

Section 2. Membership in the UPPDA shall be automatic and inclusive of all academic units across the University.

Section 3. No dues shall be charged for membership, and Members shall receive no financial compensation from the UPPDA for their service.

Section 4. Membership and Officer status shall be contingent upon current University appointment, except as provided for in the Continuity Exception of Article X, Section 4.

ARTICLE V
THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall serve as the primary governing body of the UPPDA and is charged with the strategic management of the organization's affairs on behalf of the Membership.

Section 2. Executive Board Officers shall be elected by the Membership through an official online ballot process and shall hold full executive authority over UPPDA operations, policy positions, and fiscal management.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall consist of seven (7) voting officers:

A. President
B. Vice President
C. Advocacy Chair
D. Career Development Chair

E. Communications Chair
F. Networking Chair
G. International Chair

Section 4. Terms of Office: To ensure organizational continuity and institutional memory, Executive Board Officers shall be appointed for a service cycle totaling sixteen (16) months:

A. Shadow Phase: One (1) month (May 1 – May 31) serving as non-voting observers to the outgoing board to ensure a transfer of institutional knowledge. All administrative credentials, OneDrive permissions, and financial access must be fully transferred to incoming Officers no later than 11:59 PM on May 31. Failure to comply shall result in the immediate withholding of the Certification of Service.

B. Executive Phase: Twelve (12) months (June 1 – May 30) serving as active, voting Officers with full executive authority.

C. Advisory Phase: Following the conclusion of the Executive Phase, outgoing officers shall remain available for a three (3) month Consultant Period (June 1 – August 30). This is a non-voting, advisory role intended to support the incoming board on a "per-request" basis. In this capacity, consultants shall operate using "Read-Only" or "Commenter" access to digital assets unless specifically granted temporary "Editor" access by a formal vote of the current board.

Section 5. President

The President shall:

A. Be responsible for setting the strategic direction of the UPPDA in partnership with the Executive Board in accordance with these Bylaws.
B. Chair and preside over all Executive Board meetings, Faculty Advisory Board meetings, and Extraordinary General Meetings.
C. Serve as the official representative of the UPPDA to all internal and external parties.
D. Approve all official announcements, public statements, or formal comments on behalf of the UPPDA or designate a proxy.
E. Act as the primary liaison to University senior leadership and the University Senate Council.
F. Present a formal report to the Membership at each Extraordinary General Meeting regarding UPPDA activities, strategic initiatives, and fiscal status.
G. Oversee the high-level planning and execution of the annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium.
H. Jointly manage UPPDA funds and budget allocations with the Vice President.
I. Oversee the execution of the official orientation and handover process for the incoming Executive Board during the May Shadowing Phase.

J. Serve as the final certifying authority for the completion of Executive Board terms. This includes the formal granting of Officer Emeritus status to outgoing Officers who met all professional and transition obligations as defined in Article X, Section 6.

Section 6. Vice President

The Vice President shall:

A. Assume the duties and responsibilities of the President in their absence or at the President's request.

B. Ensure that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion considerations are integrated into all Executive Board activities, strategic planning, and policy recommendations.

C. Lead the development and coordination of the Community Ambassador program to strengthen engagement across all University units and campuses.

D. Manage UPPDA representation on University Senate committees, including:

- **i.** Matching Executive Board Chairs to relevant committees based on their portfolios.
- **ii.** Appointing volunteer Postdoc Representatives for committees not covered by an Executive Board member.
- **iii.** Collecting monthly updates from all representatives to ensure the Executive Board remains informed of institutional policy shifts.

E. Typically serve on the Senate Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Discrimination Advocacy Committee.

F. Maintain and update the internal UPPDA Operations Manual to codify repeatable processes and administrative workflows. This includes maintaining the official registry of certified volunteers and the running list of academic units actively without representation within Executive Board Officers or UPPDA Volunteers. The Vice President shall ensure the manual is reviewed and updated at least once per term (typically in April) and provide the President with the most current version for use during the May Shadowing Phase.

G. Serve as the primary point of contact for the Code of Professional Conduct (Appendix A) and The Pitt Promise (Appendix B). The Vice President shall:

- **i.** Brief all new Officers and Volunteers on these ethical standards during onboarding.
- **ii.** Review all allegations of improper conduct and present recommendations for sanctions to the Executive Board.

H. Jointly manage UPPDA funds and budget allocations with the President.

I. Serve as the final certifying authority for the President's completion of term, ensuring all digital assets and administrative records are successfully transitioned, and for the satisfactory service of the UPPDA Volunteers. This includes maintaining the official registry of certified volunteers within the internal Operations Manual.

Section 7. Functional Chairs

Each Chair shall lead their respective Standing Committee and serve as the primary Liaison to at least one (1) University Senate committee. While Chairs represent postdoctoral interests within their assigned committee portfolios, all external commitments or public policy positions must align with Article VIII. Individual duties are as follows:

A. Advocacy Chair:

- **i.** Lead the Advocacy Committee.
- **ii.** Lead the annual Postdoctoral Survey and subsequent data analysis.
- **iii.** Conduct background research and draft formal proposals for institutional change to present to the President and the Executive Board.
- **iv.** Typically serve on the Senate Benefits and Welfare Committee.

B. Career Development Chair:

- **i.** Lead the Career Development Committee.
- **ii.** Partner with University offices and academic units to provide professional development resources.
- **iii.** Identify and promote diverse career paths (Academic, Industry, Non-profit) to postdocs across all University units.
- **iv.** Typically serve on the Senate Educational Policy or Research Committee.

C. Communications Chair:

- **i.** Lead the Communications Committee and manage the UPPDA website, social media, newsletters, email account, and listservs/mailing lists.
- **ii.** Record official minutes for all Executive Board meetings and maintain the central digital repository (OneDrive).
- **iii.** Facilitate the transfer of administrative access and internal documentation to the incoming Executive Board during the transition period.
- **iv.** Typically serve on the Senate Computing and Information Technology Committee.

D. International Chair:

- **i.** Lead the International Committee.
- **ii.** Partner with University offices and academic units to support visa and cultural integration resources.
- **iii.** Act as a resource for international scholars on policy and integration issues.
- **iv.** Typically serve on the Senate Global Engagement Committee.

E. Networking Chair:

- **i.** Lead the Networking Committee.
- **ii.** Organize social events and community-building activities that foster participation from both medical and non-medical campus units.
- **iii.** Lead the planning and execution of National Postdoc Appreciation Week and the annual Postdoc Picnic.

iv. Typically serve on the Senate Student Admissions, Aid, and Affairs Committee.

Section 8. Common Duties to all Executive Board Officers

All Executive Board Officers shall:

- **A.** Actively support the initiatives of other Chairs to ensure organizational synergy.
- **B.** Attend all mandated meetings (Executive Board, Faculty Advisory Board, Extraordinary General Meeting, and assigned Committees).
- **C.** Maintain organized records of all project workflows and key contacts within the UPPDA OneDrive.
- **D.** Actively represent the interests of the comprehensive postdoctoral community, regardless of personal school or departmental affiliation.

ARTICLE VI
MEETINGS & VOTING

Section 1. Executive Board Meetings

Executive Board meetings shall be held at least monthly. Ad hoc meetings may be requested at any time by any Executive Board Officer.

- **A. Attendance Mandate:** Executive Board Officers are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. Regular attendance is considered a material duty of the office.
- **B. Participation Format:** At the commencement of each term, the Executive Board shall determine the standard meeting format (Hybrid or Fully Virtual). Any voting member may call for a formal vote to change the format, requiring a simple majority.
  - i. **Hybrid Format:** In-person attendance shall be encouraged at the designated University location; however, teleconference participation is unlimited and carries full participation weight.
  - ii. **Fully Virtual Format:** All meetings shall be conducted via authorized teleconference platforms.
  - iii. **Voting Integrity:** Regardless of the format, all participating Officers shall count toward quorum and possess full voting rights.
  - iv. **Digital Presence:** Digital presence requires active audio or visual confirmation. If a quorum is lost due to technical failure, no further formal votes may be taken until the quorum is restored.
- **C. Notification of Absence:** Any Officer unable to attend a scheduled meeting shall provide written notification to the President or Vice President at least 24 hours in advance.
- **D. Quorum:** Quorum for the transaction of Executive Board business shall consist of a simple majority of currently filled Executive Board positions. Quorum shall never be fewer than three (3) members.

i. In the event the board falls below three members, the President and remaining Officers shall initiate emergency appointments as per Article X, Section 4.

E. **Decision-Making Authority:** Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. To ensure high-stakes decisions represent the current board's deliberation, only Officers present in-person or via teleconference may cast a vote.
   i. The Membership reserves the right to challenge an Executive Board decision by registering a formal request with the President, which shall trigger a Membership-wide vote.

F. **Chronic Absenteeism:** Failure to attend or actively participate in three (3) consecutive meetings or five (5) total meetings without prior notification shall constitute a failure of duty and may initiate a Notice of Removal under Article X.

G. **Parliamentary Procedure:** While the UPPDA follows the principles of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* for formal UPPDA business, the Executive Board shall operate under Small Board Rules to maintain an agile, consensus-based deliberation process.
   i. **Informal Deliberation:** The Executive Board may deliberate on agenda items and reach decisions through general consent without the requirement of formal motions or seconds.
   ii. **Presiding Participation:** The President (Presiding Officer) shall be a full participant in all board deliberations and shall cast a vote on all decisions.
   iii. **Voting by Consensus:** Decisions shall ideally be reached through consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter shall be resolved by a simple majority vote of Officers present, provided quorum is met.

Section 2. Extraordinary General Meetings

The UPPDA shall hold a minimum of two (2) Extraordinary General Meetings per term (typically October and March) to ensure transparency and to gather feedback from the Membership.

A. **Meeting Format:** Extraordinary General Meetings may be conducted as formal business sessions or informal Town Halls at the discretion of the President.
   i. During Town Hall sessions, the rules of parliamentary procedure may be suspended to facilitate open dialogue and the gathering of feedback from the Membership.
   ii. Formal UPPDA actions (such as voting on resolutions) shall require the reinstatement of standard procedural order as defined in Article XI, Section X.

B. **Quorum and Voting:** For conducting formal UPPDA actions at an Extraordinary General Meeting, a quorum shall be established by the presence of a simple majority of the Executive Board and a minimum of fifteen (15) Members.
   i. **Electronic Ballot:** At the discretion of the President, or upon a majority vote of the Members present, any resolution or UPPDA action may be referred to an electronic ballot.

ii. **Digital Quorum:** If a vote is referred to an electronic ballot, the quorum requirement for that specific action shall be satisfied if at least twenty-five (25) Members cast a response within the designated voting period (e.g., five business days), regardless of their attendance at the physical meeting.

iii. **Notification:** No formal vote or referral to electronic ballot may occur unless notice of the meeting and the proposed agenda were distributed to the Membership at least ten (10) business days prior.

Section 3. Fiscal and Tie-Breaking Authority

A. **Voting Ties:** In the event of a tie resulting from vacancies or abstentions, including in fiscal matters, the President shall cast an additional deciding vote to resolve the matter.

B. **Budgetary Oversight:** The President and Vice President shall jointly manage UPPDA funds. The President is responsible for preparing the annual budget for University approval.

C. **Financial Signing Authority:** Formal financial signing authority is vested exclusively in the President and Vice President. No other volunteer or officer may enter financial obligations or sign contracts on behalf of the UPPDA without written authorization from both.

Section 4. Emergency Decisions

A. **Provisional Authority:** If a critical decision is required and quorum cannot be reached within 48 hours, the President and Vice President may jointly issue a provisional statement or decision.

B. **Ratification:** Any emergency provisional decision must be presented for formal Executive Board ratification at the next scheduled meeting to remain in effect.

ARTICLE VII
COMMITTEES & AMBASSADORS

Section 1. Standing Committees

The Executive Board shall maintain Standing Committees to support the mission and operational requirements of the UPPDA. Each committee is led by its respective Executive Board Chair.

A. **Advocacy Committee:** Led by the Advocacy Chair. This committee is responsible for identifying postdoctoral needs via the annual Needs Assessment and for drafting formal proposals for institutional improvements.

B. **Career Development Committee:** Led by the Career Development Chair. Responsible for professional development workshops, industry networking, and tailored career resources aligned with the NPA Core Competencies.

C. **Networking Committee:** Led by the Networking Chair. Responsible for fostering social engagement and community building across all schools and campuses of the University.

D. **Communications Committee:** Led by the Communications Chair. Responsible for the management of the website, newsletters, social media, and internal institutional records.
E. **International Committee:** Led by the International Chair. Responsible for supporting visa resources, cultural integration, and the unique advocacy needs of international Postdoctoral Professionals.
F. **Symposium Committee:** Led by the President. This is a specialized project committee responsible for the strategic planning, fundraising, and execution of the annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium.

Section 2. Community Ambassadors

A. **Purpose:** Ambassadors serve as formal liaisons between the Executive Board and specific academic units, departments, or geographical locations.
B. **Oversight:** The Vice President shall oversee the Community Ambassador program to ensure postdoctoral voices are heard across all University units.
C. **Duties:** Ambassadors shall promote UPPDA initiatives within their local units and communicate unit-specific concerns or policy needs back to the Executive Board.
D. **Appointment:** Ambassadors are volunteer members appointed by the Executive Board. They do not hold voting rights on the Executive Board but are encouraged to participate in monthly Executive Board meetings as non-voting contributors.
E. **Recruitment Priority:** If an academic unit is not represented on the Executive Board, the Executive Board must prioritize the appointment of an Ambassador from that unit to ensure a University-wide feedback loop.
F. **Ambassador Autonomy:** Ambassadors are encouraged to form unit-specific working groups (e.g., "Hillman Postdocs and Scientists") to address local needs.
G. **Liability and Naming:** Unit-specific groups must utilize unit-specific naming and may not enter into financial obligations or policy agreements in the name of the UPPDA without formal Executive Board ratification.

Section 3. Recruitment and Operations

A. **Recruitment Timeline:** The UPPDA shall conduct formal volunteer recruitment calls at minimum annually in September (National Postdoc Appreciation Week) and January. Qualified volunteers may be onboarded at any time throughout the year at the discretion of the respective Chair.
B. **Representation Mandate:** The Vice President shall maintain a running record of academic units not actively represented on the Executive Board and prioritize targeted recruitment from these areas to ensure inclusive, university-wide representation.
C. **Joint Operations:** By mutual agreement of the involved Chairs and the President, committees may operate as a joint body (e.g., Networking & Communications) to optimize resources for a specific project or term.

D. Ad Hoc Committees: Ad hoc committees or working groups may be established by any Executive Board member at any time to support the mission and goals of the UPPDA. UPPDA Volunteers may propose the creation of an ad hoc committee to the Executive Board; however, the formal motion to establish such a committee must be made by an Executive Board member. Committee establishment shall be decided by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

E. Accountability: All UPPDA Volunteers shall be subject to the same professional and ethical standards as the Executive Board Officers.

- **i.** UPPDA Volunteers serving as liaisons to University committees must strictly adhere to Appendix A, Section I, Item 4. Volunteers shall present UPPDA's formal position when one exists and must clearly label personal advocacy as such.
- **ii.** While Volunteers and Ambassadors represent the UPPDA mission, they possess no legal or financial agency to enter into contracts, sign agreements, or commit UPPDA funds without the express written authorization of the President and Vice President as defined in Article VI.

F. Recognition of Service: In coordination with Committee Chairs, the Vice President shall certify the satisfactory service of UPPDA Volunteers. This certification serves as the basis for any official verification of service or letters of recommendation issued by the UPPDA.

ARTICLE VIII
RELATIONSHIP WITH ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. Institutional Representation

A. The UPPDA represents the interests of all Postdoctoral Professionals at the University in institutional, regional, and national meetings.

B. The Executive Board shall decide by majority vote which Officer(s) or designee(s) shall officially represent the UPPDA in external capacities.

C. No Member or Officer shall represent themselves as the sole spokesperson for the UPPDA or enter into binding agreements with external organizations without the prior written authorization of the President.

D. Functional Chairs, as defined in Article V, and other appointed representatives are authorized to speak on behalf of the UPPDA regarding matters within their appointed role. However, any testimony or formal proposal that implies a change in UPPDA policy or a commitment of UPPDA resources must be ratified by the President.

Section 2. Faculty Advisory Board

The Executive Board shall maintain a Faculty Advisory Board composed of a diverse range of faculty and staff mentors from across the University's various schools and units.

A. **Purpose and Consultation:** The Faculty Advisory Board serves as a senior mentorship and advisory body to the UPPDA. The Executive Board shall consult with the Faculty Advisory Board at least quarterly.
B. **Composition:** The Faculty Advisory Board shall ideally consist of twelve (12) faculty/staff members serving staggered two-year terms. Appointees shall ideally hold positions of institutional leadership or administrative authority (e.g., Department Chair, Center Director, Office Director) to provide high-level strategic guidance.
C. **Unit Distribution:** The Executive Board shall endeavor to fill Faculty Advisory Board vacancies with faculty from a variety of academic and administrative units to ensure balanced representation across the University.
D. **Remit and Authority:**
    i. The Faculty Advisory Board is a non-voting advisory body.
    ii. The Faculty Advisory Board shall be briefed on all major UPPDA strategic plans, budget proposals, and policy initiatives.
    iii. While the Faculty Advisory Board provides institutional memory and mentorship, the Executive Board maintains final authority over all UPPDA operations, spending, and policy positions.
E. **Public Statements:** No member of the Faculty Advisory Board is authorized to issue public statements or represent themselves as a spokesperson for the UPPDA without prior written authorization from the Executive Board.
F. **External Advisory:** The Executive Board may appoint to the Faculty Advisory Board one additional external advisor from a peer university system to provide insight on national postdoctoral best practices. This role carries a minimum one-year commitment.

Section 3. National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)

A. **Institutional Liaison:** The UPPDA shall serve as the primary postdoc-led liaison to the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA), promoting available national resources and affiliate benefits to the University's postdoctoral community.
B. **Benchmarking & Standards:** The UPPDA shall advocate for the alignment of University postdoctoral policies with the NPA Core Competencies and other national best practices to ensure the University remains a competitive environment for postdoctoral training.
C. **Representation:** To the extent that resources allow, the UPPDA shall seek to represent the University's postdoc voice at the NPA Annual Conference and other national forums to contribute to and learn from the national postdoctoral landscape.

ARTICLE IX
ELECTIONS

Section 1. Annual Election Authority

A. The UPPDA shall conduct an annual election in March-April via an official online ballot.

B. Ratification of the election results requires a minimum participation of twenty-five (25) non-executive Members. If this threshold is not met, the contingency procedures in Section 2.E shall be enacted.

Section 2. The Four-Week Election Cycle

A. Week 1: Announcement

- **i.** The Executive Board shall announce the election to the comprehensive postdoctoral community.
- **ii.** This communication must clearly delineate the election procedure and the UPPDA mission.
- **iii.** Current Executive Board Officers are restricted to administrative promotion of the election and role clarification.

B. Week 2: Call for Manifestos

- **i.** The Board shall issue a formal call for candidate manifestos.
- **ii.** Submitted manifestos are considered final once published and cannot be altered.

C. Week 3: Compliance Review

- **i.** The Election Committee shall review all manifestos for completeness and compliance with these Bylaws.
- **ii.** Manifestos shall be made public to the Membership by Monday of Week 4.

D. Week 4: Voting Period

- **i.** The voting period shall be no less than five (5) days and no greater than fourteen (14) days.
- **ii.** Results shall be certified and announced by the Election Committee within one week of the close of voting.

E. Quorum Failure

- **i.** If the minimum participation of twenty-five (25) non-executive Members is not met during the primary election window, the Executive Board shall extend the voting period by seven (7) business days.
- **ii.** If quorum is still not met, the incoming Executive Board results shall be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the outgoing Executive Board Officers to ensure organizational continuity.

Section 3. Eligibility and Candidacy

A. **Incumbency:** Current Executive Board Officers seeking re-election must announce their candidacy by March 31 and recuse themselves from all election planning activities.
B. **Qualifications:** All candidates shall be current Postdoctoral Professionals as defined by the University and verified through the Center for Postdoctoral Affairs.
C. **Manifesto Standards:** Candidate manifestos shall demonstrate alignment with the UPPDA mission, outline leadership experience, and state measurable goals for the term.
D. **Consistency:** Campaigning activities shall remain materially consistent with the submitted manifesto. Intentional misrepresentation of a platform is grounds for disqualification.

Section 4. Election Committee and Oversight

A. **Committee Composition:** An Election Committee shall be organized to oversee the process, consisting of three (3) current or former Executive Board members.
B. **Data Integrity:** Only the Election Committee shall have access to the online voting portal to ensure confidentiality and vote security.
C. **The Returning Officer:** The Executive Board may appoint a neutral Returning Officer (a former Executive Board member) as the sole custodian of the ballots and registration.
D. **Resolution Timeline:** All ties or vacancies resulting from the election must be resolved by May 31, or within thirty (30) days of the close of voting.

ARTICLE X
REMOVAL, VACANCIES, & DUE PROCESS

Section 1. Removal Criteria

A. **Attendance Thresholds:** Officers may be removed by a majority vote of the Executive Board for the following:
    i. Missing a cumulative total of five (5) mandated meetings annually (Executive Board, Faculty Advisory Board, and Extraordinary General Meeting).
    ii. Missing three (3) consecutive meetings without providing the required 24-hour prior notification.
B. **Performance Standards:** Removal may be initiated for a material failure to perform duties mandated in Article VI or for failure to achieve Measurable Products as defined in the annual audit.
C. **Conduct Standards:** Officers may be removed for disparagement of other Officers or for conduct that violates University professional and ethical standards.

Section 2. Notice of Removal

A. **Trigger:** Reaching any threshold in Section 1 triggers a formal Notice of Removal issued by the President (or the Vice President, if the President is the subject).
B. **Response Window:** The Notice of Removal establishes a mandatory seven (7) day window for the Officer to provide a written justification for the absence or performance failure.
C. **Professional Conflict Clause:** While the UPPDA recognizes professional research obligations, a consistent inability to meet constitutional requirements – regardless of cause – necessitates the initiation of the vacancy process to ensure organizational continuity.

Section 3. Administrative Suspension

A. **Immediate Action:** Upon issuance of a Notice of Removal for conduct or material failure, the Executive Board may, by majority vote, move for an immediate Administrative Suspension.
B. **Scope and Purpose:** This suspension temporarily restricts the officer's access to UPPDA digital assets (OneDrive, website, email, social media) until the 7-day response window expires and a final decision is rendered.
C. **Data Protection:** This is a protective measure designed to prevent the disruption, deletion, or unauthorized alteration of organizational records during a leadership transition.

Section 4. Automatic Vacation of Office

Any Executive Board Officer or UPPDA Volunteer who ceases to meet the definition of Membership in Article IV shall be considered to have resigned their position effective immediately upon the change of their University appointment status.

A. **Continuity Exception:** Notwithstanding Section 4, an Officer or Volunteer who transitions to a non-postdoctoral appointment within the University of Pittsburgh may elect to complete the remainder of their current term (ending May 31).
    i. Individuals serving under this exception shall continue to represent and advocate for the professional interests of the postdoctoral community in all UPPDA business.
    ii. Should the individual's new role involve direct oversight of postdoctoral affairs or otherwise cause a conflict of interest with the UPPDA's mission, the Executive Board may, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, terminate the exception.
B. **Notification:** The individual must provide written notice of their change in status to the Executive Board within twenty (20) business days (approximately one calendar month) of the appointment change.

Section 5. Vacancies

A. **Succession Timeline:** If a position becomes vacant via removal or resignation, the Executive Board must initiate an open call or appoint a successor within two (2) months. The Executive Board shall decide based on a simple majority vote.
B. **Representation Mandate:** Appointments must prioritize maintaining University-wide representation to ensure the board does not become siloed within a single academic unit.

Section 6. Transition Requirements

A. **Shadow Period:** Incoming officers are required to shadow the current Board throughout the month of May to ensure a transfer of institutional knowledge.
B. **Advisory Consultation:** Outgoing officers shall remain available for three (3) months of consultation (June–August) following the formal handover.

Section 7. Certification of Service

To ensure organizational continuity and professional accountability, the conclusion of an Executive Board Officer's or UPPDA Volunteer's term is subject to a formal certification process.

A. **Cross-Certification of Executive Officers:** The President shall serve as the certifying authority for all Executive Board Officers, except themselves. The Vice President shall serve as the certifying authority for the President. Certification of all Executive Board Officers is contingent upon the fulfillment of all transition obligations.
B. **Granting of Status:** Upon successful certification, the outgoing Executive Board Officer shall be granted the designation of Officer Emeritus.
C. **Volunteer Certification:** The Vice President, in coordination with relevant Committee Chairs, shall certify the service of UPPDA Volunteers and Community Ambassadors.
D. **Alternative Certification:** In the event that a certifying officer is unable or unwilling to perform their duties by the May 31 deadline, the authority to certify shall fall to the incoming Executive Board. The incoming Executive Board shall grant certification by a majority vote upon verification of the transfer of all UPPDA assets and records.
E. **Administrative Recourse:** In cases where certification is withheld due to a breach of professional conduct or failure to complete the handover, the UPPDA may decline to provide official letters of recommendation or verification of service.
F. **Revocation:** The Executive Board reserves the right to revoke Officer Emeritus status by a majority vote if the individual's subsequent conduct is found to be in violation of the Code of Professional Conduct or the Pitt Promise.

ARTICLE XI
RATIFICATION & GRIEVANCES

Section 1. Grievance and Removal Hearing

A. **Right to a Hearing:** Any Officer facing removal under Article X has the right to a formal hearing before the full Executive Board and a minimum of two (2) Faculty Advisory Board members.
B. **Presentation of Evidence:** The Officer in question shall be given the opportunity to present documented evidence and witness statements regarding their performance or conduct.
C. **Advisory Recommendation:** The attending Faculty Advisory Board members shall provide a non-binding recommendation to the Executive Board regarding the removal.
D. **Finality of Decision:** Final authority for the removal of an Officer rests solely with the Executive Board. A Faculty Advisory Board recommendation against removal does not preclude the Executive Board from exercising its authority.

Section 2. Ratification Authority

These Bylaws can only be amended or replaced by the Membership. It remains independent of University faculty, staff, or administration.

A. **Amendment Process:** Amendments require a simple majority vote of the Executive Board followed by a simple majority vote of the participating Membership during an election or Extraordinary General Meeting.
B. **Signatories:** Upon ratification, all Executive Board Officers must sign (electronically or by hand) an original copy of the Constitution to certify its validity.
C. **Record Keeping:** The Vice President shall maintain the signed original document; a digital version shall be stored in the UPPDA OneDrive for institutional records and published on the UPPDA website.

Section 3. Operations Manual

The Executive Board shall maintain an internal Operations Manual to maintain Institutional memory and codify the repeatable processes and administrative workflows of the UPPDA.

A. **Oversight:** The Vice President shall serve as the primary custodian of the Operations Manual, ensuring it is reviewed and updated at least once per term.
B. **Purpose:** The manual shall serve as the authoritative guide for the May Transition and Shadowing Phase, providing incoming Officers with the necessary institutional knowledge and digital access to maintain organizational continuity.

Section 3. Severability

If any provision of this Constitution is found to be invalid or unenforceable by University policy or law, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

Section 4. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the UPPDA in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws or any special rules of order the UPPDA may adopt. The Executive Board shall utilize 'Small Board Rules' for all deliberations, including grievance and removal proceedings, to ensure efficient and direct resolution.

Section 5. Provisional Amendments

The Executive Board may adopt provisional amendments by a two-thirds (2/3) vote when required to maintain immediate compliance with University Policy. Such amendments remain in effect until the next Extraordinary General Meeting, where they must be ratified by the Membership.

A. **Administrative and Clerical Corrections:** The Executive Board may, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, adopt non-substantive amendments to correct clerical or typographical errors, update organizational titles, or adjust numerical figures for the purpose of administrative clarity and operational efficiency.
B. **Notification:** All such corrections shall be documented in the meeting minutes and presented to the Membership for informational purposes at the next Extraordinary General Meeting.

ARTICLE XII
CORE ANNUAL PROGRAMMING

Section 1. The Postdoctoral Research Symposium

The UPPDA shall host one (1) major University-wide Research Symposium annually, traditionally occurring in the latter half of the Executive Board term.

A. **Operational Requirement:** The planning and execution of the Symposium is a collective priority of the organization. All Executive Board Officers are required to provide active operational support as directed by the President and the Symposium Committee.
B. **Accountability:** An unexcused absence from the Symposium or a material failure to complete assigned Symposium tasks is considered a material failure of duty and may be grounds for a Notice of Removal under Article X.
C. **Scope:** The Symposium must be designed to showcase research from all academic units, ensuring visibility for all Postdoctoral Professionals.
D. **Administrative Partnerships and Contingency:** The Executive Board may, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, elect to enter into an agreement with University offices and/or academic units to ensure the continuity and University-wide impact of the Symposium.

i. **Operational Capacity:** This contingency is intended for instances where the Executive Board determines that resource alignment or administrative support is required to meet operational standards.
ii. **Strategic Programmatic Control:** In any co-hosted arrangement, the Executive Board shall serve as the primary stakeholder. While administrative partners may provide logistical and financial support, the Executive Board shall retain final authority over the Symposium's content and structure.
iii. **Resource Definition:** Any such agreement shall clearly define the division of labor and financial responsibilities, ensuring the Symposium remains a recognized UPPDA-led initiative regardless of administrative involvement.

Section 2. National Postdoc Appreciation Week

The UPPDA shall lead the University's participation in National Postdoc Appreciation Week, beginning annually on the third Monday of September.

A. **Programming Mandate:** National Postdoc Appreciation Week programming shall aim for University-wide visibility and make an effort to include at least one formal recognition event involving University leadership.
B. **Coordination:** The Networking Chair shall lead the planning in collaboration with the Communications Chair to ensure maximum engagement across all campuses.

Section 3. The Postdoc Picnic

The UPPDA shall host an annual Postdoc Picnic to foster community building and social integration.

A. **Scheduling:** The picnic shall be scheduled in conjunction with NPAW (occurring within one week before, during, or after the third Monday of September).
B. **Inclusive Planning:** Event logistics, including location and timing, must be selected to encourage participation from Postdoctoral Professionals across diverse University units and locations.

Section 4. National Postdoctoral Association Conference

To ensure the UPPDA remains aligned with national best practices, the Executive Board shall endeavor to send at least one representative to the annual NPA Conference.

A. **Reporting Requirement:** Any Officer attending the NPA Conference shall provide a formal written summary or presentation to the Executive Board regarding national trends, policy shifts, and actionable insights for the UPPDA.
B. **Funding:** Travel and registration for the NPA Conference shall be prioritized within the annual budget, subject to the fiscal authority defined in Article V.

APPENDIX A
CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Section I. Relations with the University Community

1. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall represent the interests of the Membership. Advocacy initiatives and policy recommendations must prioritize the collective good over personal, departmental, or school-specific affiliations.

2. Executive Board Officers shall engage with University senior leadership, the University Senate, and the Faculty Advisory Board with structure, clarity, and a professional demeanor. All communications shall follow formal administrative standards to maintain the UPPDA's reputation as a credible shared governance body.

3. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall offer information or policy interpretations only when verified as accurate. When uncertain, they shall refer inquiries to the appropriate University source or the relevant UPPDA Officer to prevent the dissemination of misinformation.

4. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers are free to express personal opinions to the University community; however, they must clearly state that these opinions are their own and differentiate them from official UPPDA positions.

5. Executive Board Officers shall strive to demonstrate competence and fairness in all UPPDA business. This includes a commitment to aligning professional development programs with the NPA Core Competencies.

6. Executive Board Officers shall keep private, non-University interests separate from their UPPDA activities to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

7. No Executive Board Officer or UPPDA Volunteer shall use the name, logo, or letterhead of the UPPDA for any purpose or statement unless expressly authorized by the Executive Board or the President.

8. No Executive Board Officer or UPPDA Volunteer shall speak for or represent another Officer or Volunteer unless expressly authorized by that person to do so.

9. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall comply with all University of Pittsburgh policies and local, state, and federal laws. A violation of University policy while acting in an official UPPDA capacity constitutes a violation of this Code.

10. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall adhere to the principles outlined in *The Pitt Promise: A Commitment to Civility*, maintaining mutual respect and mindful engagement in all interactions, whether in-person or digital.

Section II. Relations within the UPPDA

1. All work product created in the course of UPPDA business – including databases, guides, and transition reports – is the property of the UPPDA. Access shall be surrendered as a condition of certification.
2. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall actively seek to identify and bridge gaps in representation, ensuring that Postdoctoral Professionals from all disciplines and schools feel represented in and supported by the UPPDA.
3. Executive Board Officers have a professional obligation to maintain transparent, organized records of their workflows within the UPPDA OneDrive. Failure to document project status or maintain transition reports is considered a breach of professional duty.
4. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers are responsible for ensuring their UPPDA activities do not negatively impact their own research progress or professional standing. Officers and Volunteers should communicate capacity constraints to the Executive Board to ensure a sustainable distribution of labor.
5. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall not allow UPPDA disagreements to interfere with the laboratory relationships or professional standing of their peers.
6. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall respect the confidentiality of sensitive discussions regarding institutional policy or individual postdoc grievances.
7. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall provide timely notice of absence for all mandated meetings. Consistent failure to communicate availability is a breach of professional conduct.
8. No Executive Board Officer shall submit more than one vote for any official UPPDA action. Proxy voting is not permitted unless otherwise specified in Article VI.
9. Executive Board Officers and UPPDA Volunteers shall support the initiatives of all Chairs and Committees. While Chairs operate their specific portfolios, they must recognize that their work is part of a unified University-wide mission.
10. UPPDA Volunteers shall communicate concerns raised by the Membership to the relevant UPPDA Officer to ensure they are addressed through the proper representative structures.
11. No Executive Board Officer shall coerce, intimidate, or provide undue incentive to another Officer to influence a vote on official UPPDA actions.
12. Outgoing Executive Board Officers shall provide comprehensive orientation and access to the internal Operations Manual to their successors during the May Shadowing Phase as a professional and ethical obligation.

13. Any Executive Board Officer or UPPDA Volunteer accused of improper conduct shall be subject to review by the Vice President. Recommendations for sanctions, including removal from office or committee, shall be decided by a majority vote of the Executive Board in accordance with Article X.

Section III. Conduct at Extraordinary General Meetings

1. While the Membership is not subject to the professional mandates of this Code in their daily activities, all members attending an Extraordinary General Meeting shall:
    i. Adhere to *The Pitt Promise* and maintain civil discourse.
    ii. Remain on-topic and respect the floor as moderated by the Presiding Officer.
    iii. Focus on collective resolutions. Personal or lab-specific grievances should be referred to the appropriate University ombudsperson.
    iv. Submit only one vote.

2. The presiding Officer reserves the right to remove any individual from an Extraordinary General Meeting who consistently violates these standards of conduct or disrupts the orderly progression of the meeting.

APPENDIX B
THE PITT PROMISE

The following text is the official *Pitt Promise: A Commitment to Civility* as established by the University. The UPPDA adopts this Promise as its foundational ethical framework.

> *The University of Pittsburgh is an academic community whose members are expected to follow high standards of ethics and conduct. This is a commitment to civility. As a Pitt student, I will:*
>
> - *Adopt a lifestyle of **civility** in my dealings with others, behaving with **dignity** and treating each person with **respect**.*
> - *Practice **personal and academic integrity**, helping to foster an environment in which the highest standards of ethical behavior are expected and maintained.*
> - *Promote **educational and social justice** by helping the University community remain a safe and inclusive environment for all.*
> - *Exhibit a **spirit of partnership** by encouraging the professional and personal development of others.*
> - *Strive for **personal excellence** in all my endeavors.*
> - *Accept **responsibility** for my own behavior.*
> - *Demonstrate **self-discipline** and show **respect for the rights of others**.*

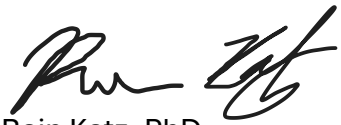
UPPDA Interpretive Pledge: As a representative body of the University, the UPPDA formally adopts these principles to guide the professional conduct of its Volunteers and Executive Board Officers. We specifically emphasize the *spirit of partnership* as our mandate for University-wide inclusion and the *acceptance of responsibility* as our commitment to the transparent management of the UPPDA's records and the internal Operations Manual.

APPENDIX C
RATIFICATION STATUS

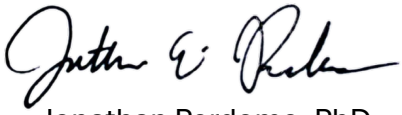
We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that this constitution was ratified by the Membership according to the required regulations.



Jessica Nuwer, PhD
President



Rain Katz, PhD
Diversity & Inclusion Chair/VP



Jonathan Perdomo, PhD
Advocacy Chair



Afsana Naaz, PhD
Career Development Chair



Mary Cacace, PhD
Communications Chair



Monojit Bhattacharjee, PhD
International Chair



Marie-Charlotte Allichon, PhD
Networking Chair

Ratification Date: March 31, 2026