

NOT IN MY NAME
BYLAWS

As amended by Convention—Sunday August 20, 2006

Article I. Preamble

NOT IN MY NAME (NIMN) is a membership-driven organization. The direction of the organization is set by its members. The Common Ground, priorities, areas of focus, and the selection of leadership are all decided by the membership. Not In My Name is a project of its members.

NIMN bases its work on the principles of its Common Ground. The membership is united around this Common Ground, but may not be united on other political issues. There may be significant differences of opinion on many issues. We accept this as a benefit that can provide an opportunity to exchange ideas within the context of common work. We also recognize that this may lead to tensions and tendencies towards actions that are inconsistent with the Common Ground.

Several conflicting democratic desires need to be balanced. It is necessary to afford the members who are actually doing the work the greatest possible autonomy to make decisions based on political assessments that they make in the course of their work. It is also necessary to foster initiatives from the membership. However, it is necessary to ensure that work is both consistent with, and coordinated with, the work of the entire organization. Further, any organization that undertakes several serious, simultaneous projects, perhaps in several distinct locations, cannot demand that every decision pass the democratic ratification of the entire membership.

Therefore, it is necessary to create an organizational structure that facilitates the day-to-day functioning of the organization while, at the same time, ensuring that such leadership and coordinating bodies truly represent the wishes of the membership.

These bylaws attempt to codify a structure that serves these interests and present a mechanism by which these interests are democratized to the greatest extent possible.

Article II. Membership

As NIMN has been specifically self-defined as an activist organization, our members must be informed, motivated, and engaged.

Section 2.01 Chapter Members

Chapter Members are individuals who wish to engage in the work of an organized Chapter of NIMN. [Note: at the moment, NIMN only has the Chicago Chapter.] Chapter Members accept and endorse NIMN's Common Ground as the foundation of our work. They are expected to engage in some NIMN programs and internal activity. Chapter Members pay yearly dues, which are set at \$36 (\$18 suggested student/fixed income, or pay as you are able, at least \$1). Chapter Members in good standing may vote at all open meetings.

Section 2.02 Supporting Members

Supporting Members have chosen not have voting rights in NIMN but are, in every other way, free to engage in all activities that a Chapter Member may. Supporting Members pay yearly dues, which are set at \$36 (\$18 suggested student/fixed income, or pay as you are able, at least \$1). Supporting Members may attend, but do not vote, at all

open meetings. A Supporting Member automatically becomes a Chapter Member (or an At-Large Member) by sending such a request to the Steering Committee.

Section 2.03 At-Large Members

At-Large Members are individuals who do not wish to engage in the work of an organized Chapter of NIMN, or who live in a location that does not have an organized Chapter of NIMN. At-Large Members pay yearly dues, which are set at \$36 (\$18 suggested student/fixed income, or pay as you are able, at least \$1). At-Large Members in good standing may vote at all open meetings.

Section 2.04 Expulsion

A member may be expelled only by the Steering Committee, and only for undertaking activities that are contrary to the Common Ground or to the interests of NIMN.

Expulsion may occur only after the accused member has had an opportunity to defend herself/himself before the Steering Committee.

To protect the identity and interests of the accused member, such a hearing will be held privately unless she/he requests a public hearing, in which case the hearing shall be public.

The accused may appeal the decision to a panel comprising three (3) members of the Steering Committee and (3) other members chosen at a meeting called in compliance with Section 3.02 with at least seven (7) days prior notice. The membership of the accused will be in suspension pending the outcome of this appeal.

Section 2.05 Membership Rejection

The Steering Committee is empowered to reject membership to individuals it believes seek to cause disruption within NIMN or who do not accept our Common Ground.

Article III. Meetings

Section 3.01 General

NIMN, as a membership-driven organization, will have meetings at which the membership is able to discuss, debate, and decide various issues. The membership is the body with the highest authority and meets regularly. It decides the Common Ground, determines NIMN policies, priorities, and general allocation of resources. It may be called upon to resolve disputes within the committees or the Steering Committee.

The meetings will be well planned, organized, and announced in advance. The membership will have time not only to be presented issues, but will have time to think about them, debate them, and present alternatives for consideration.

Section 3.02 **Membership Meetings**

(a) Frequency

There will be at least eleven (11) monthly Members' Meeting each year unless the members decide to forego the following month's meeting.

(b) Special Meeting

Special meetings may be called if at least 10 members request it or if deemed necessary by the Steering Committee.

(c) Speaking Rights

Chapter Members, At-Large Members, and Supporting Members have full speaking rights. Speakers will be taken in rounds, with an attempt to maintain gender parity. Non-members will have speaking rights only after the second round. These rules may always be changed at the pleasure of the body.

(d) Voting Rights

Chapter Members and At-Large Members have voting rights. A majority will be considered to be (50% + 1) of those voting yea or nay. No secret ballots will be allowed except for votes regarding leadership. Absentee or proxy voting at a specific membership meeting will only be allowed if a prior membership meeting within 4 months has so decided.

Section 3.03 **Conventions**

(a) Purpose

The primary purpose of the Convention is to elect the Steering Committee for the next term. It is also a time to take stock of the organization, to review the last year's work and to look forward to the next year. Other major issues may be addressed, as necessary. The Convention is the body that modifies the Bylaws, as stated in Section 6.01 and the Common Ground, as stated in Section 7.01.

(b) Frequency

There will be at least one Convention each year.

(c) Speaking Rights

Chapter Members, At-Large Members, and Supporting Members have full speaking rights. Speakers will be taken in rounds, with an attempt to maintain gender parity. Non-members will have speaking rights only after the second round. These rules may be changed at the pleasure of the body.

(d) Voting Rights

Chapter Members and At-Large Members will have voting rights. A majority will be considered to be (50% + 1) of those voting yea or nay. No secret ballots will be allowed except for votes regarding leadership. Absentee or proxy voting at a Convention will only be allowed if a prior membership meeting within 4 months has so decided.

(e) Presiding Committee

When the Convention begins the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee will be considered to be dissolved. A Presiding Committee, selected by the outgoing Steering Committee, will be seated by the Convention. This Presiding Committee will then be responsible for running the Convention.

Article IV. Elected Leadership

Section 4.01 Purpose

The elected leadership acts to maintain the smooth day-to-day functioning of the organization. It may make decisions to ensure the appropriate fulfillment of the political tasks and obligations of the group. Our explicit goal is that the activity of this elected leadership neither replace nor supercede the activity of the membership.

Section 4.02 Steering Committee

(a) Election and Size

The Steering Committee will be elected by majority vote by the membership at the Convention in accordance with Section 3.03. The Steering Committee will have no less than 5 nor greater than 7 members.

(b) Gender Parity

As in all cases within the functioning of the organization, it will be a goal to establish gender parity in the constitution of the Steering Committee.

(c) Meeting Frequency

The Steering Committee will meet no less than 12 times a year.

(d) Openness

Steering Committee meetings are open to Chapter Members, At-Large Members, Supporting Members, and invited guests. The Steering Committee reserves the right to go into executive session.

(e) Duties & Responsibilities

The Steering Committee will have the following duties and Responsibilities.

- i. Oversight of Activity
The Steering Committee will ensure that all membership activity is consistent with the Common Ground. It will ensure that the work delegated to the Standing Committees is accomplished as required.
- ii. Daily Administration
The Steering Committee will make timely decisions on urgent matters that arise between membership meetings. These include decisions on

endorsements, public statements, donations to other groups, and other items that it deems appropriate for the smooth functioning of the organization.

iii. Funding Powers

The Steering Committee is responsible for the allocation of funds to the other committees and projects. This allocation may be mandated by the membership in advance. If funding has not been mandated by the membership in advance, it may be reviewed by the membership, *post facto*, by examining the appropriate committee report.

iv. Preparation of Members Meetings

The Steering Committee is responsible for preparing all members meetings, although much of the work may be delegated to sub-committees.

v. Preparation of the Convention

The Steering Committee is responsible for preparing the organization for the yearly Convention.

(f) Transparency

The Steering Committee is responsible for keeping the membership informed of the activities of the Steering Committee and other committees, including announcing in advance the time and location of meetings, and the distribution of minutes in a timely fashion.

(g) Relationship to Membership

The Steering Committee is not the body that undertakes the major activity of the organization, which is left up to the membership. Rather, the Steering Committee is the body that maintains the smooth functioning of the group, thus facilitating the broad and varied work of the organization.

Each committee will either include a member of the Steering Committee or will assign a specific person to act as a liaison to the Steering Committee.

Section 4.03 Election of Leadership

(a) Composition

The goal in establishing the Steering Committee is to prioritize a balance of political views, gender, and age. A consideration of political and practical skills and experience is also appropriate.

(b) Election

The mechanism by which leadership is selected will be determined by the members at a Members Meeting no later than three (3) months before the Convention.

(c) Ratification

The composition of the Steering Committee will be ratified by the Convention.

(d) Length of Term

The Steering Committee will sit for one (1) year, between Conventions.

(e) Recall

The leadership bodies sit at the pleasure of the membership. The members can organize to recall a member of the Steering Committee at a meeting that is called in accordance with Section 3.02 with at least seven (7) days prior notice.

(f) Vacancy and Additions

The members may fill a vacancy and/or add to the Steering Committee at any meeting that is called in accordance with Section 3.02 with at least seven (7) days prior notice.

Article V. **Working Committees**

Section 5.01 General

(a) Purpose

Working Committees are established when it is necessary to coordinate and focus the work of the group. It will be assumed that, save for the few Standing Committees that will be long-lasting, most of the other committees will come and go with the natural ebb and flow of the work.

Each working committee should be afforded the greatest autonomy possible so as to allow the greatest possible input from the members who are actually engaged in its work. The Steering Committee, as it represents the membership as a whole, can make adjustments to the work to ensure that it is acting in accordance with its mandate.

Questions or disputes within working committees may be brought to the Steering Committee or the membership for resolution.

Each working committees will either have a member of the Steering Committee or someone who is assigned as the liaison to the Steering Committee.

(b) Internal Organization

The internal organization and direction of each Committee is left up to its members to establish. It is assumed that internal democracy shall be maintained. Committee membership will consist of the voluntary regular involvement of NIMN members.

(c) Funding

Funds for Standing Committees are allocated in compliance with Section 4.02(e)iii.

(d) Dissolution

In the case that a Committee has become dysfunctional or clearly non-representative of NIMN, or incompatible with NIMN's project, the Steering Committee will dissolve or reconstitute the Committee.

Section 5.02 *Standing Committees*

(a) Membership Committee

This Committee is responsible for maintaining information about the membership. It is responsible for creating and maintaining programs for new members, and for developing strategies to reach out to potential new members.

(b) Fundraising Committee

This Committee is responsible for developing and implementing major fundraising activities.

(c) Financial

This Committee is responsible for bookkeeping, budgeting, and forecasting. Not In My Name will engage an independent auditor to prepare an audit report and financial statement once a year. This report shall be made available to any NIMN member upon request.

(d) Political Committee

The organization shall have a Political Committee whose purpose is to present political positions, statements, press releases, etc, in a timely manner, for approval by the membership.

Section 5.03 *Ad-Hoc Committees*

(a) Creation

Ad-hoc committees are created by membership initiatives or by the Steering Committee in order to undertake projects that require organization and/or focus. Any project that requires a serious and committed focus, and that will engage the membership in a coordinated manner, should have an *ad-hoc* committee.

Article VI. *Modification of Bylaws*

Section 6.01 *Responsibility*

The Bylaws may be modified only by the Convention. As in all votes, a simple majority of 50% + 1 of those voting yea or nay is required.

Article VII. *Modification of the Common Ground*

Section 7.01 *Responsibility*

The Common Ground may be modified only by the Convention. As in all votes, a simple majority of 50% + 1 of those voting yea or nay is required.

Article VIII. **Employees**

Section 8.01 Job Descriptions

Job descriptions for paid positions may be prepared at the direction of the membership or the Steering Committee. They must be approved by the membership at a meeting in compliance with Section 3.02.

Section 8.02 Coordinator

If desired, a Coordinator may be hired. The job description will be prepared in accordance with Section 7.01. The Coordinator must have an affinity for the work of NIMN and will be hired by the Steering Committee, which will be responsible for her/his work.

Section 8.03 Office Staff

If desired, office staff may be hired. The job description(s) will be prepared in accordance with Section 7.01. An office staff person will be hired by the Steering Committee, which will be responsible for her/his work.

Section 8.04 Pro-Union Policy

NIMN will facilitate the unionization of office staff.

Section 8.05 Benefits

NIMN will attempt to provide employee benefits to the greatest extent possible.