

Interim Constitution of NigeriaLics - Version March, 2020

NigeriaLics: Nigerian Network for Economics of Learning, Innovation and Competence Building Systems

INTERIM CONSTITUTION

(As Adopted onat)

1. Preamble

NigeriaLics is the acronym for the Nigerian Network for Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems. NigeriaLics brings together scholars, researchers and policy analysts who study development, innovation, learning and competence building in a Nigeria context. It is currently not a legal entity.

The overall vision of NigeriaLics is to facilitate the production and use of high-quality research in the field of innovation and development with a view to promote inclusive and sustainable development in Nigeria. As such, it works to support Nigerian scholars, especially early career researchers, to produce research in the field of innovation studies that is at the global frontier and is relevant for policy and practice including resolving developmental challenges of Nigerian communities.

The NigeriaLics perspective is systemic, socio-economic, institutional, evolutionary, and policy oriented, seeking to support an inclusive development process. It recognizes that innovation and development are value-laden concepts, and provides a space for exploring the consequences of the choices made in the innovation process. It aims to promote inclusive and sustainable development in Nigeria.

NigeriaLics provides a platform for collaboration between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners in all parts of Nigeria as well as with partners in the South more generally and with partners in the North.

The network emphasizes interactive learning and promotes plurality in terms of research approach, methodology and theoretical perspectives. NigeriaLics fosters a culture where serious research discussions take place in an open and friendly atmosphere. It's activities are based partly on time and resources allocated by members of the network on a voluntary basis and partly on contributions to specific activities from other sources such as universities, government institutions, development agencies and foundations.

2. NigeriaLics core activities

The NigeriaLics network aims at achieving its vision/ mission through a combination of three different types of activities:

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- 1) Promotion of research training in innovation and development including promotion of innovation and development curricula (MSc and PhD level) in universities in Nigeria.
- 2) Supporting research incubation and networking first and foremost between Nigerian scholars in the field of innovation and development but also between Nigerian and non-Nigerian scholars with an interest in innovation and development issues in Africa
- 3) Influencing policy makers through training and dialogue to adopt policies for innovation and development in Nigeria.

Regionalisation and Integration

NigeriaLics is committed to the realisation of an integrated Nigeria. To ensure that NigeriaLics advances the integration of Nigeria, the operations and functions of NigeriaLics must accommodate, where appropriate and possible, diversity, specificities, linguistics and equitable participation.

4. Governance structure

Five elements (principal organs) make up the governance structure:

- The NigeriaLics Scientific Board (NSB)
- The NigeriaLics President and Vice-President
- The NigeriaLics Secretary General
- The NigeriaLics Secretariat
- NigeriaLics Constitution Committee

The NigeriaLics Scientific Board (NSB)

The NSB consists of up to 15 members. The composition of the Board shall take into account geo-political representation (defined by state of permanent employment/residence), gender balance and the profile of the different members of NigeriaLics. Representation of all geo-political zones in Nigeria and of an equal number of female and male members is strived for. A geo-political zone cannot have more than two members (a male and a female) on the Board. Some flexibility in these matters may be required in the initial years of the formalisation of the network. It is also possible that the board may be bigger than 15 members in the initial years of the interim constitution in order to ensure that institutional memory is retained/ before all existing NSB members step down. The Secretary General participates as non-voting member of the Board. The NSB will comprise up to 12 members made up of:

- a) Two (2) members from each of the six (6) geo-political zone of Nigeria (North-East, North-West, South-East, South-West, North- Central, South-South), ideally one male and one female from each region;

- b) The Secretary-General (as a non-voting member);
- c) Two additional members from the NigeriaLics alumni fraternity (I.e. those who have attended a NigeriaLics academy); one male and one female.

Functions of the NSB

The NSB is responsible for overseeing the organisation and functioning of NigeriaLics. The functions of the NSB are to:

- Appoint the NigeriaLics President and Vice-President;
- Appoint the NigeriaLics Secretary General and decide on location of the NigeriaLics Secretariat;
- Discuss and decide on the overall policies of NigeriaLics;
- Review and agree on changes to five-year planning schedule for NigeriaLics conferences and academies (living document);
- Approve the work programme for the coming year including the location and programme of key events (NigeriaLics Conferences every second year and NigeriaLics Academies as often as funding permits);
- Approve the level of the NigeriaLics conference fee;
- Work with the NigeriaLics Secretariat and local organisers to support proper planning and preparations for the bi-annual NigeriaLics conferences;
- Assist and advise the NigeriaLics Secretariat in fund-raising and other matters of importance for the future development of the network;
- Take decisions concerning additional partnerships and activities in which NigeriaLics should be involved and decide on the utilisation of the NigeriaLics logo.
- The NSB may establish relevant committees if deemed necessary. Appointed committees may hold additional meetings in order to fulfil their duties.

The NSB will meet at least once every year. The meeting will normally take place as a face-to-face meeting in conjunction with the NigeriaLics Conferences where most NSB members are expected to participate. In the years where there are no NigeriaLics conferences, the NSB may meet either back-to-back with the Globelics and Africalics Conference or in conjunction with another major event. The quorum required for a valid meeting is 50 % of the membership of the NSB including the President and/or the Vice-President and Secretary General. If it is not possible to ensure the conduct of a face-to-face meeting with quorum (e.g. due to funding constraints) a virtual meeting may be organised by the Secretariat. The duties of the NSB's members are to:

- Participate in the annual board meeting;
- Participate actively in committees created by the NSB;
- Participate actively in the review process for NigeriaLics Conferences;
- Participate actively in NigeriaLics Conferences e.g. by chairing sessions, acting as discussants on papers or organising thematic panels following agreement between NSB and the local organisers;
- Assist in fundraising activities, both regarding funds for their own participation in NigeriaLics activities and for implementation of network activities in a broader sense.
- Approve membership to the network

- Expel members in case of severe misbehavior

Election of the NSB

Membership of the NSB is personal, honorary and without payment. To qualify to be nominated as a member of the NSB and to become a member of the NSB, an individual must **as a minimum:**

- Agree with the objectives of NigeriaLics and its wider spirit of openness, tolerance and lively intellectual construction;
- Have actively participated in the organisation of at least one NigeriaLics conference/academy and have participated actively in one other event either in AfricaLics, GlobeLics or any of the affiliated regional and national LICs;
- Be active as a scholar/researcher and/or practitioner in the field of innovation and development.

Elections to fill vacancies of the first NSB under the interim constitution will take place at the first general meeting. Members of the NSB will hold their post for a term of three years and can renew their position on the board for one additional term. To ensure continuity, a minimum of 1/3 of the members should stay on when new board members are elected. Where a board member is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board without justification or prior permission of the President, the position of the member on the Board shall be declared vacant by the Board. Vacancies on the NSB shall be filled by a simple majority decision of the Board from a list of alternates using electronic voting system.

The list shall take into account the region from which the vacancy occurred as well as the need to strive for gender balance on the Board. Possibilities for also ensuring representation in terms of language will be considered. The list of alternates will be created by the Secretariat on the basis of nominations received for the vacancies. The Secretariat will announce vacancies on the Board and call for nominations from all/any members of the NigeriaLics network at least three months before the next NSB meeting. The Secretariat will develop a short-list of names comprising at least two times the number of people necessary to fill the vacancies following vetting of the names received during the open call using the criteria outlined above.

NigeriaLics President and Vice President Positions

The President and Vice President of NigeriaLics shall be elected by the NSB among its members and by a simple majority of members present and voting in the annual meeting. However, if the number of members present is not considered adequate for election of the President or Vice President, the election may be conducted through written procedure (email and/or electronic voting). The President informs the NigeriaLics community about the outcomes of the elections. All members of the NSB can nominate candidates for the positions. The President and Vice President shall not come from the same geo-political zone. The President must be a scholar that is well respected in the NigeriaLics community and has a relevant background in Science, Technology and Innovation studies as a scholar and/or as a practitioner.

The President and Vice President serve honorary functions (without payment). The post of

President and Vice-President is to be a three-year term, with possibility for reelection (can serve a maximum of six years). After a period of six years of service, the President cannot be re-elected during the following six years. The election of the first President and Vice President under the interim constitution will take place at first general meeting. If the President or Vice President steps down or has to be replaced due to health reasons the NSB will elect replacements for these positions based on consultations and consensus through e-mail. If agreement cannot be reached, the NigeriaLics Secretariat will organise the voting procedure. The Secretary-General shall on receipt of letter of resignation from the President immediately notify the NigeriaLics Scientific Board and arrange for election of a new President.

The functions of the Presidency team (President and Vice-President) are to:

- ❖ Act as representatives of NigeriaLics;
- ❖ Carry out the policies and decisions of the NSB together with the Secretary General;
- ❖ Work closely with the Secretary General to prepare discussion documents for the NSB on matters of importance for NigeriaLics;
- ❖ Prepare and present, together with the Secretary General, an Annual Report on NigeriaLics activities to be presented to the NSB and shared with NigeriaLics members through the web-site;
- ❖ Prepare, along with the Secretary General drafts on changes on the Constitution, at the request of the NSB or by their own initiative, to be submitted to the NSB for consideration.

NigeriaLics Secretary General and Secretariat

The NigeriaLics Secretary General is chosen by the NSB. The board decides on the election of the Secretary General and the location of the NigeriaLics Secretariat on the basis of invited proposals from suitable individuals with institutional backing. The criteria for election of the NigeriaLics Secretary General and location of Secretariat is as follows:

- The NigeriaLics Secretary General must be a person with proven leadership, managerial and fund-raising capabilities.
- Secretary General must be a respected scholar or practitioner in the field of Innovation and Development studies research and practice.
- The Secretary General should be supported by an organisation with a legal identity. The organisation should be in good standing and of relevance for the work of the NigeriaLics network activities. It could be a university, a think-tank or other type of relevant organisation.
- Organisations offering to host the NigeriaLics Secretariat must clarify what resources they are willing and able to make available to run the NigeriaLics Secretariat. Such resources could be e.g. in the form of time made available for the Secretary General to work on behalf of the NigeriaLics network; support staff for the Secretary General; ability to run the NigeriaLics website and resources to help organise NigeriaLics conferences and PhD academies among others.

- Proposals should include suggestions/plans for fundraising activities for financing core NigeriaLics activities and costs related to running the secretariat. The position of Secretary General is voluntary and shall normally be compatible with the performance of other duties. Subject to availability of funding, the SG may however receive remuneration on a part time basis for her/his work on behalf of the network.

The NigeriaLics Secretary General is the head of the NigeriaLics Secretariat that administers NigeriaLics. He/she serves a three-year term and is eligible for a maximum of two consecutive terms. In exceptional cases, the NSB may decide to extend his/her term by a third term/another two years. The Secretary General should preferably be able to document institutional support from his/her home institution for this period. The Secretary-General shall uphold and protect the Constitution of NigeriaLics; provide organisational leadership and direction to NigeriaLics; represent NigeriaLics in relevant fora; develop fund-raising strategy for NigeriaLics for discussion with the NSB and help ensure sustainability of the organization through multi-year planning of key-events and fundraising for these.

The Secretary General may accept and search for funding from various sources for the purpose of realizing the NigeriaLics vision and overall objectives in the name of NigeriaLics with the approval of the NSB. The Secretary General takes responsibility for all contractually bound activities of the Secretariat (e.g. receiving, administrating and reporting on use of funds received from funders for the purpose of NigeriaLics activities). In cases where other legal entities raise funds for NigeriaLics activities approved by the NSB, the Secretariat may not be involved and, in such cases, will not take responsibility for contracts entered into by the legal entity in question.

The functions of the Secretariat are to:

- Act as representatives of NigeriaLics;
- Work together with the NSB to raise funds for NigeriaLics activities;
- Keep a close working relationship with the NigeriaLics President and Vice-President;
- Jointly prepare with the NigeriaLics President and Vice-President issues to be discussed by the NSB;
- Be responsible for preparing and taking minutes of NSB meetings;
- Assure good communication with the NigeriaLics community;
- Disseminate information – newsletters, conference announcement, announcements of academies as well as funding options to encourage development of joint research projects among members of the network;
- Support local organisers in organizing and preparing the NigeriaLics conferences and academies in collaboration with the NSB;
- Process operational issues regarding the membership application process and indicate results for NSB validation
- Keep the membership database updated and in line with data protection regulation;
- Facilitate and oversee the election process for vacancies for the first NSB under the Interim Constitution and future rounds of elections;
- Maintain relationships with Globelics and other regional and national LICs
- Coordinate as necessary with the hosting organization of the Secretariat.

Membership of NigeriaLics

Members of NigeriaLics are expected to be supportive of the goals as they are set out in the preamble above and to act accordingly. They are also expected to take an active part in NigeriaLics Conferences and – where relevant – in NigeriaLics Academies and participate in other activities of the network. They will eventually elect members of the NSB. Membership is individual. An individual becomes an automatic member of NigeriaLics on attending a NigeriaLics event (conference or academy). Anyone who wishes to become a member without attending the conference can apply in writing to the Secretary-General. In such circumstances, the individual will have to complete an application form affirming broad agreement with NigeriaLics aims and objectives. In addition, potential members will be expected to provide relevant personal and academic data. The NSB will make the final decision on the individual's admission to the network. Apart from payment of registration fees for conferences, membership of NigeriaLics will be free unless agreed otherwise by the NSB.

Duties of the members:

- Support and promote the objectives of NigeriaLics
- Promote NigeriaLics and its activities and facilitate the execution of the NigeriaLics' activities and programmes in their respective countries and regions
- He/she should endeavour to participate in NigeriaLics network activities (conference, academy).
- He/ she must respect other members of NigeriaLics and diversity of opinion. Members are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty. Agree to abide by the byelaws and constitution of NigeriaLics members have the right:
 - To be included in the list of members on the NigeriaLics website;
 - To nominate candidates to the NSB;
 - To be nominated for the NSB;
 - To vote for members of NSB.

Membership does not expire, as long as the member fulfils the requirements for membership. All members will be asked to confirm their personal data once a year. In case of severe academic misbehaviour or fraudulent or criminal activity (e.g. plagiarism, abuse of funds, etc.) that damages the reputation of NigeriaLics, the NSB can decide to expel members.

Constitution Committee

In connection with adopting and implementing the constitution, the NSB appoints a Constitution Committee with the following tasks:

- a) Overseeing and advising on the election process for those positions that are vacant
- b) Advising on what suggestions for changes in the constitution should be considered minor vs. major (e.g. if a change has implications on the rights of the members it is considered a major change)
- c) Advising the NigeriaLics Secretariat and the NSB on procedures in all matters related to elections and how to interpret and implement the constitution.

The Constitution Committee is composed of a maximum of 3-6 members and is headed by the NigeriaLics President or his/her appointee. For the ordinary members the following applies: they should have substantial experience of NigeriaLics activities and be generally trusted in the community; they cannot be members of the NSB and they should not be candidates for the Board in the next upcoming election. The Secretary General serves as secretary for the Constitution Committee.

The first Constitution Committee will be appointed by members online via the NigeriaLics chat group (This was done on 25th February, 2020). The committee may be constituted by members of the NSB during the interim period to ensure continuity. They will serve for a period of three years. Subsequent Constitution Committees will be elected immediately after the election of a new presidency.

Interim Constitution, Amendments and Revisions

The Interim constitution shall become valid from the time of its ratification by members online. This Interim Constitution will be made available on the NigeriaLics web-site. It may be amended by a majority vote of two-thirds of the members of the NigeriaLics Board present and voting in an NSB meeting, bearing in mind that decisions in the NSB are normally made on the basis of discussions and mutual consensus.

Changes to the Constitution

Minor changes to the constitution will require a 2/3 majority of the NSB. Major changes require a 2/3 majority in the NSB and that a majority of ordinary NigeriaLics members confirms the change through a network wide vote. The Constitution Committee – once established - decides if a proposed change falls in one or the other category. Proposals to modify or review the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Constitution Committee through the President at least four months before the annual meeting of the NSB.

5. Financial Contributions structure

As NigeriaLics is currently not a legal entity, annual subscriptions will not be payable. Through payment of the Conference Fee (agreed by the NSB), participants in NigeriaLics conferences will automatically become members of NigeriaLics unless they explicitly inform the Secretariat that they do not wish to become members. Conference fees will, however, be used to fund costs related to the conference in question and will not be transferred to the hosting organisation of the NigeriaLics Secretariat. Subventions, grants and donations may be accepted by the legal entity hosting the NigeriaLics Secretariat on behalf of NigeriaLics for purposes that are consistent with the objectives of the NigeriaLics under conditions approved by the NSB. NigeriaLics members who are interested in holding an event in collaboration with NigeriaLics will be responsible for finding funding for these activities themselves. All activities that are to use the name and logo of NigeriaLics must be agreed on by the NSB in writing. No event or activity will be granted retrospective use of the NigeriaLics logo or name.