

NYU Neuroscience Predoctoral Interest League (NeuroPIL) Charter

In Sum

- A. All Neuroscience PhD students are automatic members. Others in adjacent departments can become members upon approval.
- B. There is a Council that the members elect annually.
- C. Committees should be organized to address specific issues or carry out specific functions.
- D. There will be Council meetings every two months and town halls every semester open to all members.
- E. Members can request actions of the Council in meetings or through virtual correspondence.

Section I: Purpose

- A. This organization shall work to promote the welfare and self-determination of Graduate Students of the New York University Neuroscience Program by lending a collective voice to its members.
- B. This organization shall serve to facilitate interactions between its members and the NYU Neuroscience department, with a priority of enforcing accountability of the administration and faculty in this department.
- C. This organization shall strive to ensure that the NYU Neuroscience department is an equitable environment that is inclusive and accessible to all.
- D. This organization shall serve to promote community and empowerment among its members.
- E. This organization shall strive for efficiency in terms of its mechanisms and demands on its membership.

Section II: NeuroPIL Membership

- A. NeuroPIL membership shall be granted automatically on a semester-by-semester basis to students enrolled in the NYU neuroscience PhD program, encompassing the Center for Neural Science (downtown), the Neuroscience Institute (uptown), and the NYU Shanghai track.
- B. Membership guarantees members the right to vote in elections and on other issues laid before the general membership*. Membership also grants members the right to attend meetings and events, as well as request actions by the Council (see Section IV).
- C. Membership can be granted to PhD students in adjacent departments such as psychology or Sackler by a simple majority vote from the Council.
- D. Membership will be automatically terminated upon graduation from a PhD program.

Section III: Observer status

- A. Observer status shall be granted to non-faculty members of the broader NYU neuroscience community, including but not limited to post-doctoral fellows, lab technicians and alumni seeking support from NeuroPIL. Observer status can be revoked with a simple majority vote[†] by the Council and will be automatically terminated when the individual's affiliation with New York University ends.
- B. Individuals with observer status are given the right to attend meetings and request action from the Council. Further involvement can be granted by a simple majority vote from the Council on a case-by-case basis.

Section IV: Council Representatives

- A. The NeuroPIL Council shall consist of seven members who are elected to represent the general membership. The following Council positions shall be filled at all times: two Presidents, one

* General membership refers to the group of all NeuroPIL members.

[†] Simple majority vote occurs when one-half or more of the Council representatives vote in favor.

Secretary, one Treasurer, two Department Liaisons, one Inclusion executive. No one person may hold two Council positions concurrently. To be eligible for a Council position, a member must have previously served on a committee for at least one year (see Section VII). If a Council position is vacant, the Council shall appoint an interim representative by a simple majority vote. Interim representatives shall serve until the next scheduled election is held.

- B. Tenures of representatives shall be staggered by six months such that one President, the Secretary, the downtown Department Liaison and the Inclusion executive shall take their positions at the conclusion of the election. The other President, the Treasurer and the uptown Department Liaison shall take their position in the Spring, no later than March 31st.
- C. Presidents are responsible for maintaining the functions of the Council and communicating with the general membership. Presidents shall preside over meetings of the general membership and the Council, setting the agenda for such meetings and making day-to-day decisions. Presidents shall delegate to members of the Council and the appropriate Committees. Presidents are responsible for fielding requests for action (see Section VI A and B), ensuring the Council votes within two weeks of the request and promptly notifying the requester of the result. If a request is made through virtual communication, the exact request shall be made available to each Council representative. Presidents must make themselves available for interaction with the general membership upon reasonable request. Presidents shall also be tasked with maintaining and updating the organization Charter and making it available to members. Presidents shall preside over voting on Charter amendments (see Section VIII).
- D. Secretary shall be responsible for the administrative duties required to maintain the organization. This shall include keeping the official calendar and ensuring the minutes of the meetings are kept. The Secretary shall communicate with the general membership as to the dates of meetings and other notices. The Secretary shall work with Liaisons to organize the town hall meetings. The Secretary shall update and maintain the general membership email list and other contact information.
- E. Inclusion Executive shall be a specific point-person for issues of discrimination, inequality and harassment. They are tasked with continuous promotion of equality, inclusion and accessibility throughout the proceedings of this organization and in assisting members who face issues of this nature. The Inclusion Executive shall work with Liaisons, the department and the institution to understand the resources and paths of action available to students facing these issues. They shall organize and convey this information to the general membership annually.
- F. Treasurer shall be responsible for accounting and reporting the budget as well as organizing and presiding over the annual Council representative election. The Treasurer shall preside over any issues or actions related to NeuroPIL funding. The Treasurer shall also work with the Secretary to schedule elections and convey election-related information to the general membership. The Treasurer shall arrange and ensure that the elections proceed as described (see Section V). The Treasurer shall ensure that all candidates are eligible (have served on a committee for at least one year) and at least one candidate is running for each Council position (except Shanghai Track Liaison which may be left empty).
- G. Department Liaisons shall be responsible for communications with the NYU Neuroscience Department. They shall coordinate with the department officials where appropriate. Liaisons shall report their communications and observations to the Council. Liaison roles shall be divided so that one Liaison is responsible for communications with the Neuroscience Institute (uptown), while the other is responsible for communications with the Center of Neural Science (downtown) department and Shanghai track administrators if a Shanghai Track Liaison is not elected (see below).
- H. Shanghai Track Liaison is an optional representative position that can be elected if there is at least one willing member to fill it. This Liaison shall be responsible for communications with the Shanghai Track administrators and faculty and shall provide input to the Council regarding issues

specific to Shanghai Track students. This Liaison is permitted but not required to attend Council meetings and is not permitted to vote on the Council.

- I. A motion to remove a representative from the Council can be initiated through a petition with at least 20 general member signatories, including representation from at least three different years in the program. Within two weeks (14 days) of receiving such a petition, a Council representative (separate from that in question) shall organize a vote across the general membership. The election shall be open for at least three and no more than seven days. If a two-thirds majority across the general membership as a whole is reached, the representative's tenure shall be terminated and an interim representative shall be appointed to the vacant position.

Section V: Elections

- A. Elections for Council representatives shall be held annually at the beginning of the Fall semester, beginning no later than September 30th. Voting shall be open for one week (7 days). The scheduled date of elections shall be announced to the general membership at least two weeks (14 days) but no more than four weeks (28 days) before the scheduled date. Elections shall be held via a virtual forum sent to the general membership.
- B. Members who are eligible (have served on a committee for at least one year) and interested shall designate the representative positions for which they will be candidates. An eligible member can be a candidate for multiple positions but cannot run for more than one Liaison position per election. Members shall alert the current Council of their candidacy at least one week before the scheduled date of the election.
- C. In voting, members shall rank all candidates for a given Council position. These votes shall be anonymous.
- D. Votes shall be tabulated by the Treasurer, linearly weighted by ranking, and summed across all cast ballots. The candidates for President with the two top scores are the elected Presidents. If they are candidates for other Council positions, they shall be removed from all other candidacy. This procedure of choosing top candidates and removing them from other candidacy shall be repeated for the rest of the positions in the following order (after Presidents): Secretary, Liaisons, Inclusion Executive, Treasurer.
- E. Elections for matters outside those enumerated in this charter shall be structured and organized by the interested party(s), but must be approved by the Council through a simple majority vote.

Section VI: Proceedings

- A. NeuroPIL members and observers may request action from the Council during general membership meetings or through virtual correspondence with one or both of the Presidents. The Council will decide on the action virtually or in person through a simple majority vote that must occur within two weeks (14 days) of the request. The requester must be promptly notified of the result of the vote.
- B. Actions that can be requested of the Council include but are not limited to: the formation of a committee, allocation of funds, conveyance of information to the department, correspondence with the general membership.
- C. The Council must hold virtual or in-person meetings at least once every two months. The first portion of the meeting shall be open to general membership, during which members may request actions from the Council. After the general membership portion has ended or two hours have passed (whichever comes first) the second portion of the meeting shall commence, which is closed door for the Council members only.
- D. The Council shall coordinate and preside over one town hall meeting each semester that is open to general membership as well as invited faculty and administrators of the program. This shall be an opportunity for members to collectively interface with the department. The location of the meeting shall alternate between the uptown and downtown campuses.

Section VII: Committees

- A. Committees shall be formed to address specific issues and carry out specific functions on behalf of NeuroPIL. Once created, the organization of each committee is almost entirely self-determined.
- B. The Council shall have the right to form committees when they deem it appropriate and have identified at least one NeuroPIL member willing to serve as chair. A committee can be proposed by any member or observer and is formed upon achieving a simple majority vote of the Council. A committee will also be dissolved upon a simple majority vote of the Council.
- C. Each committee shall have one Chair who is responsible for interfacing with the Council and presiding over the committee. The Council shall be made aware of any interactions between a committee and the department or general membership on behalf of NeuroPIL. A committee Chair cannot be a member of the Council. The Council is responsible for determining the Chair of each committee upon its formation.
- D. Any NeuroPIL member may join any existing committee. Observers may serve on committees to an extent decided by the committee Chair.
- E. The Council shall evaluate all committees for potential dissolution on an annual basis, during the first Council meeting of each calendar year.

Section VIII: Charter Amendments

- A. This charter may be amended as deemed appropriate by the Committee or general membership. Votes to amend this charter shall occur over a period of one week (7 days).
- B. The Council may put forth an amendment to the general membership after it has passed a simple majority vote of the Council. The charter shall then be amended if the proposed amendment earns a two-thirds majority vote[‡] by the general membership.
- C. A NeuroPIL member may put forth an amendment to the general membership. The member shall introduce the proposed amendment and if seconded by another member, shall be adopted if it earns a three-fourths majority vote by the general membership.

Section IX: Ratification

- A. This Charter shall be ratified upon a two-thirds majority vote by the prospective general membership, as defined by this Charter, after a comment period of no less than two weeks (14 days). More than four-fifths of the prospective general membership must cast votes on the question of ratification in order for the ratification vote to be valid.
- B. Ratification shall be presided over by the already elected charter committee. The committee shall be responsible for collecting comments from the prospective general membership and conducting the election of this ratification.
- C. After ratification a Council election must take place within one month. The usual eligibility requirements for candidacy (see Section IV) will not apply to members running for Council positions in the first election only.
- D. Members of the first Council will take their positions at the conclusion of the first election. One President (second place candidate in election), the Secretary, the downtown Department Liaison and the Inclusion executive will hold their positions for one year (as usual). For this first Council only, the other President (first place candidate in election), the Treasurer, and the uptown Department Liaison will hold their positions for 18 months. All following terms will be staggered and one year in duration (see Section IV B).

[‡] X majority vote by the general membership is achieved when at least X fraction of votes cast are in favor, with no minimum participation required unless otherwise stated.