

# **Constitution of the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow**

## **Article 1: Name**

The name of this organization is the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT), hereafter referred to as “National ACT.” Each local chapter that is a member of National ACT has its own name.

## **Article 2: Affiliation**

National ACT establishes close relationships with all professional agricultural communications and agricultural journalism organizations.

## **Article 3: Purposes**

The purposes of this organization are as follows:

- To stimulate interest in the profession of agricultural communications on the local, national and international levels.
- To promote the interchange of ideas among students and faculty members at colleges and universities offering professional education in agricultural communications or related programs.
- To foster both personal and professional relationships between students and agricultural communications professionals.

## **Article 4: Membership and dues**

### **Section 1**

Membership is composed of undergraduate and graduate students actively interested in agricultural communications or related areas of study. Associate membership is composed of faculty members in agricultural communications or related programs and agricultural communication professionals who want to support students.

### **Section 2**

Members establish individual national dues at the official business meeting held each summer. Dues are paid through the local treasurer to the National ACT executive treasurer or directly to the National ACT executive adviser (who will forward them on to the National ACT executive treasurer). If paying as an individual where no local chapter exists, members may pay directly to the National ACT executive treasurer. All dues for the fall must be submitted by October 31. Chapters that submit their membership roster by October 31 and are in the process of paying their dues during the fall semester will have voting privileges at official business meetings. Chapters that have not submitted rosters and payment information by the October 31 deadline will not be given voting privileges at official business meetings. New members can pay dues and be added to

chapter rosters anytime throughout the academic year.

### **Section 3**

The National ACT will not release any membership information (including name, email, phone number, etc.) beyond chapter/institution affiliation with the organization.

## **Article 5: Officers/Adviser(s)**

### **Section 1**

National ACT officers include the president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, member relations coordinator and communications coordinator. The National ACT officer team is composed of the officers of the national organization and the National ACT executive adviser, with the president serving as chair. The National ACT executive treasurer will serve as an ex-officio member of the officer team who is not required to attend all meetings but will advise the National ACT executive adviser on the financial status of the National ACT organization. It is the duty of this committee to:

- Handle all matters of policy between meetings of National ACT,
- Be responsible for the program at the summer and winter/spring National ACT business meetings.

### **Section 2**

Duties of the National ACT officer team members, the National ACT executive adviser and National ACT executive treasurer are:

#### A. President

- 1) To preside at all National ACT meetings,
- 2) To appoint and oversee such committees as he/she deems necessary,
- 3) To maintain contact with members and all advisers,
- 4) To maintain contact with professional organizations,
- 5) To coordinate the program for the two National ACT business meetings,
- 6) To organize elections,
- 7) To manage and maintain the National ACT constitution,
- 8) To assist the secretary/treasurer with fundraising efforts,
- 9) To prepare the president's file for the president-elect at the end of the term.

#### B. Vice president

- 1) To preside at all meetings in the absence of the president,
- 2) To oversee and coordinate the National ACT Critique and Contest,
- 3) To assist the secretary/treasurer in generating sponsorships for the Critique and Contest,
- 4) To prepare the vice president's file for the vice president-elect at the end of the

term.

#### C. Secretary/treasurer

- 1) To record minutes at the two National ACT business meetings as well as the National ACT officer team meetings,
- 2) To work with the National ACT executive treasurer to compile National ACT membership rosters,
- 3) To secure sponsorships and develop fundraisers for National ACT,
- 4) To correspond with external audiences on behalf of National ACT,
- 5) To prepare the secretary/treasurer's file for the secretary/treasurer-elect at the end of the term.

#### D. Member relations coordinator

- 1) To work with the host chapter to plan the Professional Development Conference,
- 2) To actively seek out ways to more fully engage members and local chapters with National ACT opportunities and events,
- 3) To work with the president to enhance student and alumni relations,
- 4) To take photographs at all National ACT conferences and activities,
- 5) To seek nominations for National ACT awards, including the Honored Professional Award, the Distinguished Alumnus Award, the Distinguished Member Award, the Honored Chapter Adviser Award, and the Chapter of the Year awards.
- 6) To prepare the member relations coordinator's file for the member relations coordinator-elect at the end of the term,
- 7) To work with the communications coordinator to post chapter content on the National ACT website, electronic newsletter or social media.

#### E. Communications coordinator are as follows:

- 1) To maintain the National ACT website and keep it current with the latest opportunities for members,
- 2) To actively post, based on the guidelines found in the organization's social media plan, to National ACT social media outlets,
- 3) To seek nominations for the social media contest,
- 4) To update and maintain National ACT's social media plan,
- 5) To write and submit press releases to the media,
- 6) To maintain correspondence with members via email,
- 7) To prepare the communication coordinator's file for the communication coordinator-elect at the end of the term.

#### F. National ACT executive adviser

- 1) To advise the National ACT officer team,

- 2) To serve as the main contact for all chapters and members,
- 3) To assist with correspondence, when necessary, with professional agricultural communication organization's and with local ACT chapters and members.
- 4) Will work with National ACT executive treasurer to establish the yearly budget for the National ACT organization.

#### G. National ACT executive treasurer

- 1) To manage all finances and accounts on behalf of the organization,
- 2) To work with the National ACT secretary/treasurer to compile the National ACT membership rosters,
- 3) To pay all bills associated with the organization's activities,
- 4) To file all tax forms on behalf of the organization each year,
- 5) To maintain the organization's status as a not-for-profit entity,
- 6) Will work with National ACT executive adviser to establish the yearly budget for the National ACT organization.

### **Section 3**

The term of office is from the point of election at the summer business meeting until a new officer team is elected at the next summer business meeting. An officer can serve only two terms. National officer team members must be dues-paying members. Additionally, officers must be enrolled in and in good standing academically at their universities or colleges during their term of office. An officer who is not enrolled during an entire academic year at their respective university/college or is not in good standing academically will forfeit the office. An officer may also be asked to step down if he or she fails to perform his or her officer duties or misrepresents himself or herself or the organization in an unprofessional manner. If an office is vacated, the remaining National ACT officer team members, in consultation with the National ACT executive adviser, will either seek out and appoint a replacement officer or absorb the extra duties without appointing a replacement.

### **Section 4**

All officers are elected by the following procedures:

- A candidate must complete and submit a national officer application to the National ACT president by 9 p.m. local time the night before officer elections are held at the summer business meeting.
- A candidate may only indicate two desired office positions on the application.
- Copies of the completed national officer applications will be distributed to chapters prior to the election process.
- "Slide downs" are allowed only once per candidate, and the office is selected by the candidate.

- In the event there are no “slide downs” and no national officer applications for an open position, nominations will be taken from the floor during elections. Self-nominations are accepted.
- Candidates from the floor cannot “slide down.”
- If an office has no candidates and no one has submitted a national officer application for that office, a person who has previously “slid down” and was unsuccessful may run for the open office.
- Only two candidates per university may be elected for National ACT office.
- If no more than a total of five candidates run for the five offices and three or more candidates are from the same university, nominations from the floor during elections will be accepted.
- If no more than a total of five candidates run for the five offices and three or more candidates are from the same university and no nominations from the floor are received, three candidates from the same university may be elected.

### **Section 5**

Candidate presentations will be conducted during the election process in this format:

- Each candidate may give up to a one-minute timed speech.
- Each candidate who “slides down” will be allowed a 30-second speech to state his/her qualifications for the office he/she slid to.
- The National ACT officer team reviews and selects the questions to ask the officer candidates. All candidates running for that office will be asked the same question.
- No campaign material or solicitation other than the application and timed speech is allowed.

### **Section 6**

National ACT officers are elected with a plurality of delegate votes. Ties will be broken in a run-off election. In the event there is a tie with two candidates in the pool, the current National ACT officer team will cast the deciding vote.

### **Section 7**

There is the potential for seven National ACT advisers – one executive adviser and five from the local chapter of the newly elected National ACT officers – chosen in the following manner:

- One National ACT executive adviser, referred to throughout this document as “National ACT executive adviser,” is selected every four years by the National ACT officer team and approved by the voting delegates at the National ACT summer business meeting.
- The National ACT executive adviser-elect will shadow the National ACT executive adviser for one year.
- If the National ACT executive adviser should move out of academia or for any other reason be unable to serve, the National ACT executive treasurer will serve as interim National ACT executive adviser and complete the academic term, and the National ACT officer team will select a new adviser to begin service after approval of the voting delegates at the following National ACT summer business meeting.
- In the event the National ACT executive treasurer is unable to serve, the president’s adviser will serve as the interim adviser.
- The National ACT headquarters are located at the university/college where the National ACT executive adviser is employed.
- The National ACT archives are located at the University of Illinois.

### **Section 8**

The National ACT executive treasurer is selected from the past National ACT executive advisers by the National ACT officer team and approved by the voting delegates at a National ACT business meeting.

- The National ACT treasury will be housed at a bank in proximity to the university / college where the National ACT executive treasurer is employed.
- If the National ACT executive treasurer can no longer fulfill his or her duties, the accounts will be transferred to the current National executive adviser until a replacement can be selected and approved by the voting delegates at a National ACT Business meeting.
- A staff member at the institution where the National ACT executive treasurer resides will have signatory powers on the account in the event the executive treasurer cannot fulfill his/her duties.
- The National ACT executive treasurer will be audited by the new National ACT executive adviser every four years.

- The executive treasurer will retain the position until they step down or the executive adviser finds significant flaws in the financial records.

## **Article 6: National ACT business meetings**

### **Section 1**

National ACT will hold two official business meetings each year. The summer business meeting will be held in conjunction with the convention of a professional agricultural communications organization. The winter/spring business meeting will be held in conjunction with the National ACT Professional Development Conference. The National ACT officer team will determine the logistics for both business meetings, including setting the agenda for the meeting.

### **Section 2**

The National ACT officer team is authorized to meet by telephone or web conference, or through other electronic communications media so long as all the members may simultaneously hear each other and participate during the meeting. The official business meetings may be conducted in a virtual setting if deemed necessary by the National ACT officer team.

### **Section 3**

Each dues paying university/college represented at a business meeting is entitled to one vote. Such dues must be paid by the winter/spring dues deadline. A chapter's voting delegate will represent the chapter in all voting procedures. A chapter's voting delegate is chosen by chapter members and must register with the National ACT president prior to the beginning of the business meeting.

### **Section 4**

Amendments to this constitution require approval by two-thirds of dues paying chapters. The addition and revision of bylaws are accomplished in a like manner. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the National ACT executive adviser 30 days prior to a national business meeting. The National ACT executive adviser must provide copies of the properly submitted amendments to chapters in good standing 14 days prior to a national business meeting. Amendments to this constitution can be voted on at either of National ACT's two official business meetings. In an event an action needs to be addressed between the official business meetings, the National executive adviser can call for an electronic vote of dues paying chapter delegates.

### **Section 5**

Business meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article 7: Local chapters**

Local chapters shall establish constitutions and bylaws and elect such officers as they deem necessary. Local chapters' constitutions and bylaws must be in conformity with the National ACT constitution.

## **Article 8: Contests and awards**

### **Section 1**

National ACT conducts the National ACT Critique and Contest.

### **Section 2**

National ACT recognizes the Honored Professional Award for one outstanding agricultural communicator annually. The National ACT officer team selects this recipient. The National ACT member relations coordinator, prior to March 1, will make a call for nominations for this award, and nominations must be submitted prior to May 1.

### **Section 3**

National ACT recognizes the Distinguished Alumnus Award for one outstanding ACT alumnus member annually. The National ACT officer team selects this recipient. The National ACT member relations coordinator, prior to March 1, will make a call for nominations for this award, and nominations must be submitted prior to May 1.

### **Section 4**

National ACT recognizes the Distinguished Member of the Year Award for an outstanding agricultural communications student who has had a significant role in the success of local chapter activities. The National ACT officer team selects this recipient. The National ACT member relations coordinator, prior to March 1, will make a call for nominations for this award, and nominations must be submitted prior to May 1.

### **Section 5**

National ACT recognizes the Honored Chapter Adviser Award for an outstanding ACT chapter adviser annually. The National ACT officer team works with the Agricultural Communicators Network (ACN) to select up to two recipients annually. The National ACT member relations coordinator, prior to March 1, will make a call for nominations for this award, and nominations must be submitted prior to May 1.

### **Section 6**

National ACT recognizes the Chapter of the Year Awards recognizing local ACT chapters in the areas of educational activities, social activities, leadership activities, fundraising activities, member recruitment and retention activities and community service. An overall Outstanding Chapter of the Year award will also be awarded. Judges will be selected to review entries and select award winners. The National ACT member relations coordinator, prior to March 1, will make a call for nominations for this award, and nominations must be submitted prior to May 1.

### **Section 7**

The social media contest will be an evaluation of current chapters' social media content and engagement on Facebook from September 1 to June 24 every year. Chapters will submit three posts, including the engagement metrics for each post, the total number of followers or likes on their page as screen captures that are pasted into a document. Judges will be selected to review entries and select one contest winner. The National ACT communications coordinator, prior to March 1, will make a call for this contest.



Nominations are submitted by June 24.

### **Section 8**

National ACT recognizes tenure of sponsors to the organization through awards at five-year increments. The National ACT officer team will coordinate the recognition each year.

## **Article 9: Nonprofit Status Under Section 501(c)(3) of Internal Revenue Code**

### **Section 1**

National ACT is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future federal tax code).

### **Section 2**

No part of the net earnings of National ACT shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, directors, officers or other private persons, except that National ACT shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of Section 501(c)(3) purposes. No substantial part of the activities of National ACT shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and National ACT shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

### **Section 3**

Upon dissolution of National ACT, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, i.e. charitable, educational, religious or scientific, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the Federal government, or to a state or local government for a public purpose.

**National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow was formed July 12, 1970.**

**Constitution revised July 23, 2000.**

**Constitution revised July 23, 2002.**

**Constitution revised July 25, 2004.**

**Constitution revised July 31, 2008.**

**Constitution revised July 27, 2010.**

**Constitution revised October 1, 2011.**

**Constitution revised February 7, 2014.**

**Constitution revised January 16, 2016.**

**Constitution revised July 1, 2017.**

**Constitution revised July 29, 2020.**

**Constitution revised July 19, 2022.**

**Constitution revised August 1, 2023.**