

**Black Women's Alliance**  
**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**  
**Constitution & Operational By-Laws**

*Approved September 19th, 2013*

**Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Black Women's Alliance, hereafter referred to as the M.I.T.B.W.A.

**Mission**

The mission of this organization is:

- To **provide a forum** to address the needs and concerns of black female undergraduate students at MIT;
- To **promote the awareness** of black women's issues in the MIT community through activities designed to increase the visibility of black women on campus;
- To **encourage interaction** with other campus groups;
- To **encourage the scholarship** of black women at MIT; and
- To **promote activism, unity, friendship, and community.**

**Article I: Membership**

*Section 1- Membership Types*

- A. A general member of the M.I.T.B.W.A. shall be any person pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who has expressed an interest in and will work towards fulfilling the mission of the organization.
- B. A voting member of the M.I.T.B.W.A. shall be an individual who has met the criteria of a general member as listed in Article I, Section I (A) and who has paid their yearly dues; however, exceptions will be made for students who cannot afford these dues.

*Section 2- Dues*

The dues of the M.I.T.B.W.A. shall be determined by the Executive Committee at the start of each Academic Year and may be paid at any point during the school year.

*Section 3 - Divisions*

The M.I.T.B.W.A. shall have three major divisions. These divisions are the Executive Board, Social Committee, and the General Body.

*Section 4*

Those who fulfill the requirements for general membership under Article I, Section 1, shall be members of the General Body.

*Section 5*

The General Body shall be responsible for providing input for policies and governance of the M.I.T.B.W.A.

## **Article II: The Executive Board**

### *Section 1 – Membership*

The members of the M.I.T.B.W.A. Executive Board shall be:

- A. Co-Chairpersons
- B. Social Chair
- C. Treasurer
- D. The Social Committee

### *Section 2*

The duties of the Executive Board shall be:

- A. To aid in determining policy of the M.I.T.B.W.A.
- B. To ensure that the M.I.T.B.W.A. works efficiently by advising and coordinating all committees.
- C. To supervise and administer all activities.
- D. To decide each year whether any committee, other than those provided for in the Constitution shall exist and appoint a chairman for such a committee.
- E. To report policy decision at the next General Body meeting.
- F. Serve on C.A.B.S. Event committees.
- G. Responsible for determining the content of the annual M.I.T.B.W.A. retreat.

### *Section 3- Duties*

The duties of the specific members of the Executive Board shall be as:

- A. The Co-Chairpersons
  - a. Responsible for determining the direction of M.I.T.B.W.A.
  - b. Serve as facilitator at meetings.
  - c. Create an agenda to be sent out at least one day before all meetings.
  - d. Effectively delegate duties and responsibilities, namely making sure that every action plan has an overseer.
  - e. Serve as liaison and main contact person between M.I.T.B.W.A. members and faculty and staff at the Institute.
    - i. Schedule and meet regularly with M.I.T.B.W.A.'s faculty advisor.
  - f. Responsible for maintaining correspondence with other social and professional organizations at MIT.
- B. The Social Chair
  - a. Appointed member from the Social Committee.
  - b. Chair the Social Committee.
  - c. Serve as the main overseer and general coordinator of all social activities including:
    - i. M.I.T.B.W.A. events
    - ii. C.A.B.S. events
    - iii. Joint events in which M.I.T.B.W.A. is a participant
  - d. Maintain an active list and report of all completed BWA events. Reports should include possible improvements to future events.
  - e. Delegate coordinating and chairing duties of ad hoc committees formed for social events to members of the Social Committee.
- C. The Treasurer

- a. Create and monitor the budget of the M.I.T.B.W.A.
  - b. Prepare bi-weekly reports of the financial status of M.I.T.B.W.A. to be reviewed at the opening of Executive Board Meetings.
  - c. Represent the M.I.T.B.W.A. during various MIT finance related meetings
  - d. Attend Council for the Advancement of Black Students (C.A.B.S.) Treasurer Committee meetings and participate in the raising of funds for CABS events.
  - e. Apply for funding on behalf of M.I.T.B.W.A.
- D. The Social Committee
- a. Create a draft of the semester calendar by soliciting input from organization members.
  - b. Plan and implement all M.I.T.B.W.A. social events.
  - c. Organize publicity for all M.I.T.B.W.A. events.

#### *Section 4- Executive Board Meetings*

M.I.T.B.W.A. Executive Board Meetings shall be held bi-weekly. Emergency meetings may be called by either Co-Chair with a minimum of 5 days' notice.

#### *Section 5- Restrictions*

- A. No one member can hold more than one office of the Executive Board or Social Committee, with the exception being the Social Chair as an appointed member from the Social Committee.
- B. To be eligible to run for an office, one must be a voting member of the M.I.T.B.W.A.

### **Article III: The Social Committee**

#### *Section 1- Membership*

The elected members of the M.I.T.B.W.A. Social Committee shall be:

- A. Freshman Class Representative
- B. Sophomore Class Representative
- C. Junior Class Representative
- D. Senior Class Representative
- E. Technology Chair

#### *Section 2- Specific Duties*

- A. Freshman Class Representative
  - a. Create M.I.T.B.W.A. activities which tailor to the needs of the freshman class.
- B. Sophomore Class Representative
  - a. Create BWA activities which tailor to the needs of the sophomore class.
  - b. Coordinate community service opportunities for the organization.
  - c. Record minutes during M.I.T.B.W.A. Executive Board Meetings.
- C. Junior Class Representative
  - a. Create M.I.T.B.W.A. activities which tailor to the needs of the junior class.
  - b. Coordinate of BWA Cares by creating activities, at least once per semester, which sends well wishes to BWA members during times of great stress.
- D. Senior Class Representative
  - a. Create M.I.T.B.W.A. activities which tailor to the needs of the senior class.
  - b. Coordinate the Big Sis- Lil Sis Program by facilitating the pairing of underclassmen with upperclassman mentors as well as events which help to strengthen these bonds.
  - c. Organize the senior class "deep" event to take place at the annual BWA Retreat.
- E. Technology Chair

- a. Maintain and update the online presence of M.I.T.B.W.A. including but not limited to the website, Gmail account, Facebook and Twitter pages.
- b. Update the MIT event's page to include M.I.T.B.W.A. events.
- c. Routinely update and manage the M.I.T.B.W.A. and C.A.B.S. Google Calendars.
- d. Maintain a record of all events including itemized reports, photos, and posters from events.

#### **Article IV: Legislative Procedure**

##### *Section 1- Impeachment*

A minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of M.I.T.B.W.A. general members' signatures is required to bring an impeachment statement before the General Body. In the event that the number of general members is not determined, the number of signatures is set to fifteen (15). A two-thirds majority vote of the General Body is necessary to enact the statement. In the event of a tie, the General Body shall resume discussion and prepare for a re-vote.

##### *Section 2- Quorum*

- A. A minimum of one-third (1/3) of all voting members of the M.I.T.B.W.A. must be present to vote on any General Body policy decision, or Executive Board and Social Committee Elections.
- B. Fifty percent (50%) of any committee membership must be present to vote on any policy decision brought forth by that committee.

##### *Section 3- Amendment and Rewriting Process*

Amending and rewriting the Constitution follows the same procedure as Article IV, Section 2.

#### **Article V: Elections Procedures**

##### *Section 1*

Each year, a member of either the Executive Board or Social Committee shall be appointed as Election Coordinator. To avoid a conflict of interest, the Election Coordinator will be restricted from participating in elections.

##### *Section 2 - Term*

The term of office for the Executive Board and the Social Committee shall begin on May 1st continue until April 30th of the following year.

##### *Section 3- Eligibility*

Any candidate who is nominated for office must be a voting member of the M.I.T.B.W.A. for the current academic year. Exceptions may only be considered with a minimum of twenty-five (25%) of the General Body.

##### *Section 4- Nominations*

Candidacy for office on the Executive Board or Social Committee shall be confirmed after the submission of a position application. Applications are to be released in February of each academic year. The Election Coordinator is responsible for confirming the candidacy and eligibility of all nominees.

##### *Section 5*

- A. Elections for the Freshman Class Representative shall be held after the Annual Fall Retreat no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> of each academic year with no less than two (2) and no more than six (6) weeks allowed for nominations.
- B. Elections shall be held in March of each academic year with no less than two (2) and no more than six (6) weeks allowed for nominations, with April designated as the month for transitioning.

#### *Section 6 - Vacancy*

In the event of a vacancy, the position may be filled by appointment by the Executive Board.

#### *Section 7 - Resignation*

A member of the Executive Board or Social Committee may formally resign by submitting a letter of resignation at least two (2) weeks in advance to the Executive Board. It is the responsibility of the Executive Board, the Social Committee, and the individual resigning to identify a replacement. Until a replacement is found, the position is still held, and the duties of the position, carried out by the individual, excluding adverse circumstances, as approved by the Executive Board.

#### *Section 8- Procedures*

- A. Candidate applications shall be made available to the General Body a minimum of two (2) weeks before elections are to be held.
- B. Candidates for office shall be allowed no more than five (5) minutes to present their platform to the General Body during elections.
- C. Once all candidate platforms and the corresponding question and answer period for a particular office has been concluded, all candidates shall leave the room and the General Body shall enter executive session to discuss the qualifications of the candidates. The selection of each office takes place during executive session.
- D. Only voting members of the General Body may cast a vote during elections.
- E. A majority of votes for a specific position is required to be elected to that position. In the event of a tie, the General Body shall resume discussion and prepare for a re-vote.

#### **Article VI: Association of Student Activities Governance Clause**

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Black Women's Alliance agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the Association of Student Activities, and its executive board. This constitution, amendments to it, and the by-laws of this organization shall be subject to review by the ASA Executive Board to insure that they are in accordance with the aforementioned rules and regulations.