

The Constitution of the European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association

1. The society.

Participants at the business meeting of the *European Human Behaviour and Evolution* conference in Montpellier on April 4 2008 unanimously agreed to the formation of a new association to support the activities of European researchers with an interest in evolutionary accounts of human cognition, behaviour and society. The association is to be known as the *European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association*, or *EHBEA*. Formation of the society capitalises on a series of earlier EHBE annual meetings, which have been widely regarded as successful, and which have attracted considerable interest and support. The society is explicit recognition of a groundswell of opinion that there is a definite European community who wish to meet regularly, to present and discuss their research, and to collaborate, and that European research in this field has its own distinctive character.

Membership: The need for such a society was primarily recognised by European researchers, and the greater part of its constituency is expected to be European-based. Nonetheless, membership of EHBEA is potentially open to anyone with an interest in human behaviour and evolution, including individuals of non-European nationality, and those based outside of Europe. Individuals will be required to pay an annual subscription fee to join the society. Benefits to members will include cheap access to relevant journals and to the EHBEA annual conference.

Mission statement: EHBEA supports all evolutionary approaches to the study of human mind, behaviour and society, and membership is open to all who share this research interest. The society is committed to a broad, pluralistic and interdisciplinary perspective, which brings together all researchers applying neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory to the behavioural sciences, including human behavioural ecology, evolutionary psychology, cultural evolution and gene-culture co-evolution, human ethology, behaviour genetics, the comparative method, and evolutionary sub-disciplines of economics, medicine, population studies, archeology, and other human sciences. EHBEA encourages rigorous science, with strong theoretical foundations and integration across disciplines, which it supports through the organization of conferences and workshops, and through administering small grants. The principal objectives of the society are (i) to coordinate EHBEA conferences, (ii) to publicize information about European activities, collaborations, jobs and funding, on the EHBEA website and in EHBEA paperwork, (iii) to offer members research and travel grants, (iv) to sponsor and organise workshops and meetings to promote understanding of evolution and human behaviour, facilitate research collaborations, and further research, (v) to promote high-quality teaching of evolution and

human behaviour in educational establishments, (vi) to enhance the public understanding of, and engagement in, the field, and (vii) to raise funds to support EHBEA activities.

Values: EHBEA endorses the key values of *pluralism*, *rigor* and *integration* in the field of evolution and human behaviour, and organises its activities to endeavour to promote such values.

Pluralism: The society embraces all neo-Darwinian evolutionary approaches to the behavioural sciences, irrespective of the disciplinary background or theoretical persuasion of the participants, and is committed to seeing all perspectives fairly represented at its meetings, and in its activities. EHBEA will act to ensure that no one perspective should entirely dominate its proceedings. As far as possible, the governing committee of EHBEA should be composed of members whose own interests reflect EHBEA's commitment to pluralism and representation of approach.

Rigor: While EHBEA promotes rigorous and disciplined evolutionary accounts of human behaviour, and recognizes the explanatory power and utility of evolutionary reasoning, it acknowledges that weak evolutionary science, and undisciplined or untested story-telling can be counterproductive to the field. EHBEA recognizes that evolutionary arguments can be abused, and does not support the use of evolutionary arguments to sponsor prejudice or discrimination. Accordingly, EHBEA is committed to organising its activities to promote high academic standards and constructive criticism amongst its members. Conference and workshop presentations will be pre-screened to ensure, as far as possible, good quality research is presented. Constructive critical feedback will be encouraged following presentations.

Integration: EHBEA recognises and supports recent moves towards multidisciplinary approaches within the human evolutionary behavioural sciences and endorses collaboration between participants and subfields. EHBEA is committed to the view that the strongest evolutionary accounts of human behaviour will come from integrating insights and exploiting the full panoply of methods derived from evolutionary psychology, human behavioural ecology, cultural evolution, and other evolutionary approaches. EHBEA will promote dialogue and constructive exchange, both among evolutionary schools and among the broader field of evolution and human behaviour and adjacent disciplines, such as biology, psychology, anthropology, archaeology and economics.

2. *EHBEA officers and committee*: The smooth running of EHBEA, and all EHBEA business, will be the responsibility of a committee of four officers and six ordinary members. The roles of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and the ordinary Committee members are set out below:

President: The President will be the principal figurehead and publicist of the Society, as well as having oversight of its work. The President, together with the other three officers, will form a steering group, which will take responsibility for much of the day-to-day running of the society. The President will chair EHBEA business meetings.

Vice-President: In addition to steering group activities, the Vice-President will support the President in his/her activities and will take over such activities in the President's absence.

Treasurer: The role of Treasurer involves handling subscription monies, any grant income and payments to EHBEA conference/workshop organisers, and handle financial reports on grant expenditure from local organizers and any other benefactors. The Treasurer will also take the lead in fund-raising activities, and play a key role in the day-to-day running of the society.

Secretary: In addition to steering group activities, the Secretary will act to coordinate information and convene meetings of the Committee, which may be conducted using electronic media, such as Skype. The Secretary will also record the meetings and archive these materials at the same time as producing and distributing an action list to the Committee in good time.

Committee: The committee will be composed of EHBEA officers and six ordinary members. The committee will be the formal decision making body of the society. All major decisions associated with EHBEA activity will be made by the committee, and the committee is required to ratify any steering group decisions. Individual committee members will take on various roles, as required (e.g. website manager, publicist, membership secretary, etc). In general, ordinary committee members will be expected to take on a fair share of the Society's workload and manage it. The committee is required to meet a minimum of once a year.

3. *EHBEA elections*: All officers and committee members will be elected for a period of two years. As far as possible, the election of officers and committee members will be staggered to ensure the whole-scale changes in the composition of the steering group and committee do not occur in the same year, and the committee shall have the collective right to re-appoint officers and committee members for a further year (i.e. delaying the

election of a replacement) to assist in this smooth running. All members will be notified of vacant and soon-to-be-vacant positions and of the due date for nominations. Any EHBEA member will be eligible to stand for office or committee member, provided they are nominated by another EHBEA member, with nominations sent to the secretary by the published date. Where more than one nomination is received for a given position, elections will take place. Election of officers and committee members will be by postal or electronic ballot of members, with the final decision ratified by the committee. The committee's decision will as far as possible reflect the views of the members but should balance those views against the greater interests of the society, as laid down in the constitution. While the committee hold the right to appoint committee members and officers contrary to those selected by the membership, this procedure should only be deployed in rare circumstances.

4. *Changes in the constitution:* Any change in the EHBEA constitution requires endorsement by a majority of the committee and ratification by 2/3 of the voting members in an electoral ballot.

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