

Society for Persuasion and Technology

Mission Statement and Bylaws

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Introduction

During the 2018 Persuasive conference in Waterloo, the Steering Committee identified the need to move towards a more formalized structure for our society.

For this the Steering Committee (at their Persuasive 2018 meeting) installed a preparatory committee. This preparatory committee was given the assignment to further develop “the mission and any bylaws, as far as needed” (email to the Steering Committee by Cees Midden, 2018). The Steering Committee elected us to this preparatory committee.

As a preparatory committee, we started by collecting additional input from the Persuasive community for a mission statement, bylaws and election procedures. Next to the first setup of a mission statement provided by Cees Midden, we received two emails with input from society members right after the conference. Also, we actively solicited for input from the Persuasive community at large by sending an email to the email addresses used for Persuasive 2017 and 2018. To this email, we received 2 responses. We took care to take all of the ideas and proposals contained in these responses into the bylaws we are now proposing. Also, we stored these responses such that the upcoming Steering Committee(s) can use them to further specify and improve the mission statement and bylaws that we now proposed or use them for other purposes.

Below, we present our proposal for a mission statement and bylaws for our society. In line with the instruction given to us by the current Steering Committee, we have tried to propose a mission statement and bylaws only ‘as far as needed’. That is, we propose that the next Steering Committee should take care of the task of making the more general proposals we did more specific. For example, the next Steering Committee could describe in more details guidelines and rules for the annual conference. Still, when needed, we have made quite specific proposals. For installing the first new steering committee, such procedures can only be followed to a certain extent as there for example is no membership registration system yet.

During the 2019 Persuasive conference, organized at Cyprus April 9 to 11, 2019, we propose that (in line with the procedures described below) the current Steering Committee proposes members for a new committee (chair, secretary, treasurer and general members) and that the audience present during the plenary meeting at Persuasive 2019 is invited to vote for this proposal.

With the current MSB (and the additions proposed in this letter), we hope that we have provided a solid step towards firm ground for our community, that will help the community develop and grow.

Kind regards,

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1. Mission statement and bylaws

1.1. About the Society for Persuasion and Technology

The Society for Persuasion and Technology (SPT) is an international, multidisciplinary, scholarly, society that provides an open forum for all those who are interested in the education, science and applications of Persuasive Technology.

Persuasive Technology is broadly defined as technology that is designed to change attitudes or behaviors of the users through persuasion and social influence, but not through coercion or deception. It includes persuasive communication pertaining to attitude and behavior change systems, attitude and behaviour change through technology, related to issues relevant to individuals, to public- and private-sector organizations, and to society at a local, regional, national, or global level (for definitions of Persuasive Technology, also see Fogg, 2003; IJsselsteijn et al., 2006; for a perspective on theory and evaluation, also see Spagnolli et al., 2016).

1.2. Goals of the Society

1. Establishing and strengthening persuasive technology as a scientific field of study, and promote advancement of the state-of-the-art in research and education on persuasive technology;
2. Bring together individuals from diverse scientific disciplines and practitioners from different countries and provide them opportunities to exchange theories, research findings, persuasive design and methodologies for Persuasive Technology and behavior change;
3. Foster professional collaboration among individuals and organizations for the purpose of contributing to persuasive technology;
4. Facilitate the dissemination of knowledge about persuasive methods, processes and systems and their applications and designs;
5. Encourage applications of persuasive technology insights and methods;
6. Develop a curriculum on persuasive technology and foster educational programs on persuasive technology;

7. Provide services to its members to assist them in developing their careers in Persuasive Technology.
8. Ensuring ethical scientific practices, application of Persuasive Technology knowledge, and internal community procedures.
9. Provide recognition for the best research and education in the field through awards.
10. Stimulate diverse participation to the community (e.g., through travel grants for students and underprivileged members)

1.3. Membership

The society aims for a diverse membership with members from academia, government, industry, consultancy, and non-governmental organizations. This diverse membership makes SPT a particularly relevant forum for the discussion of leading issues in Persuasive Technology. Basically, everyone who is (or has been) a participant of a yearly conference can become a member. All members have membership rights as indicated below.

1.3.1. Procedures for becoming a member

Everyone who has attended a Persuasive conference can become a member of the society. To apply for membership, a person fills out the application form provided by the Steering Committee.

1.3.2. Membership fee

A membership fee can be set by the Steering Committee.

1.3.3. Membership decisions

The Steering Committee takes final decisions about individual memberships.

1.3.4. Membership obligations

Members of the Society for Persuasion and Technology shall:

- Hold paramount the truth in all matters associated with Persuasive Technology.
- Observe the laws, regulations, and ethical standards with regard to the conduct of risk research and practice, including guidelines for human and animal studies.
- Give due consideration to the ethical, legal, social, and policy implications of their research, advice, and communications.
- Conduct their work with objectivity and themselves with integrity, being honest and truthful in reporting and communicating their research and assessments.

- Abstain from professional judgments influenced by undisclosed conflict of interest and disclose any material or professional conflicts of interest.
- Conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the Persuasive Technology professions.

1.3.5. Membership rights

Members of the Society for Persuasion and Technology are core to shape the future of Persuasive Technology research and applications.

All members have the following rights:

- Right to propose initiatives to the Steering Committee
- Discounts for the Persuasive conference and affiliated events
- Access to website, including the member area and participation in email list?

1.3.6. Voting rights

When a member participates in his or her second Persuasive conference, a member received voting rights (active and passive). That is, those members who have visited one or more earlier conferences, can vote during a conference of a given year, and also these members can be voted for.

All members with voting rights:

- have the right to vote for the Steering Committee elections and other elections that the Steering Council might organize.
- have the right to run for an office, that is, have the right to be elected to the Steering Committee.

1.4. Governance

The Mission Statement and Bylaws (MSB; the current document) describe the core goals and regulations of the Society for Persuasion and Technology. The MSB can only be changed on proposal of the Steering Committee through a vote by the society members (with voting rights). The MSB can only be changed when 75% of the votes are in favor of the proposal, and a minimum of 30% of the society members (with voting rights) have voted.

1.4.1 Steering Committee

SPT has a Steering Committee consisting of 6 members that provides oversight of the society. Steering Committee members are elected by the society members and serve a term of maximally 3 years. As for serving on the Steering Committee, a year starts at a year's Persuasive conference, and ends at the next year's conference. The core task of the Steering Committee is to guide the community such that the goals of the society (see above) are attained.

Decisions will be made by the Steering Committee only by majority of votes within the Steering Committee. Each of the 6 members of the Steering Committee has 1 vote.

Within the Steering Committee four different member roles are defined:

- Chair (1 member)
- Treasurer (1 member)
- Secretary (1 member)
- General member (3 members)

The Steering Committee has 1 chair, 1 treasurer, 1 secretary and 3 regular members. Through elections, individuals can be elected to be a member (with a specified role) of the Steering Committee. In the elections, members of the community elect persons to a specific role.

Furthermore, the elected chair appoints one of the other members of the Steering Committee to perform the additional role of vice-chair. The vice-chair takes over the responsibilities of the chair if needed.

1.4.2. Steering Committee tasks

The Steering Committee will organize activities to attain the goals of the society. Amongst these activities are:

- Make decisions about activities.
- Strive to attain society goals.
- Organize the annual elections for the Steering Committee

More specifically;

- The Steering Committee will stimulate the organization of special interest groups to make it a vivid and dynamic community
- The Steering Committee installs every year a Conference Organization Committee by appointing a general chair and a program chair. The appointed general chair and program chair organize the conference, and involve other chairs into the Conference Organization Committee. The Steering Committee assists the Conference Organizing

Committee by providing advice on common practices (e.g., number of keynote speakers, order of parts of the conference).

- The Steering Committee can nominate an individual as a member of the Conference Organization Committee and also as a new member for the Steering Committee.
- The steering committee develops and monitors rules for the annual conference (e.g., related to publication, reviewing, bidding procedure for hosting the conference, and chairs of the conference).
- The Steering Committee develops initiatives to advance the goals of the society, and to stimulate growth of the society. For example, by creating a publication outlet like a journal, handbooks or tutorial meetings (in addition to the annual conference), or a repository of important information in the PT domain (e.g., scientific knowledge, practical applications, examples, cases, contributions, initiatives, courses, and other materials and information). Also, the Steering Committee can take the initiative to organize events.
- The Steering Committee represents the community in relation to other institutions such as at the policy level.
- The Steering Committee will stimulate regional organizations and specialty groups. Such groups may have their own leadership with governance structures determined by the organization or group and approved by the SPT Steering Committee.

1.4.3. Council member election procedures

At the start of the very first year of the Society, 6 members will be elected. At the end of each year (i.e., before the consecutive Persuasive conference), 2 members will stand down. At the start of the next year (i.e., during the Persuasive conference), an election will be organised to elect 2 new Steering Committee members.

The voting procedure will consist thereof that all members (with voting rights) vote for candidates and indicate for which role they would like to elect a specific candidate. The election is organized online by the Steering Committee, and takes place during the conference.

Steering Committee members can nominate themselves for a second term of three years and be re-elected. Steering Committee members can only serve for two consecutive terms (a total of 6 years). After having served 2 consecutive terms and then not serving in the Steering Committee for 1 term (3 years), a society member can again nominate him- or herself for the Steering Committee. Only society members with voting rights (who have paid their fees) may volunteer, vote and hold elected roles.

1.4.3.1. Nomination

The Steering Committee consults the community including individual members (who can nominate themselves to the Steering Committee), and then nominates individuals for the roles to be elected. Before the election, the Steering Committee publishes these nominations.

1.4.3.2. The very first election

Because of the rolling member characteristic of the Steering Committee, the first election will be different from the consecutive elections. That is, to be able to continually 'role' the memberships of the Steering Committee, the society members elect 2 new members to the Steering Committee each year in regular elections. During the very first election, all 6 members of the Steering Committee are elected, while

- 2 members are elected for a position of 3 years (the chair and secretary);
- 2 are elected for a position of 2 years (the treasurer and 1 general member); and,
- 2 are elected for a position of 1 year (2 general members).

Table 1 below shows that in 6 persons are elected in in year 1, each indicated by a capital letter. Before the next conference (year 2), 2 members (E and F) stand down, and 2 new members are elected during that conference (G and H). As the election at the conference of year 2 is a regular election, these elected members of the Steering Committee (person G and H) are elected for the full, three year period. So, after this start-up arrangement, members are always elected for a certain role for a period of three years (as indicated by the capital letters I, J, K, L, M, N, O, and P), and each year certain roles become available. Also, members can stand down and serve for shorter periods than 3 years, or stand down, and nominate themselves for different roles (and the same role), see section 1.4.3.5.

| | <i>Year</i> | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Role</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Chair | A | A | A | K | K | K | ... | ... | ... |
| Secretary | B | B | B | L | L | L | ... | ... | ... |
| Treasurer | C | C | I | I | I | O | O | O | ... |
| General member 1 | D | D | J | J | J | P | P | P | ... |
| General member 2 | E | G | G | G | M | M | M | ... | ... |
| General member 3 | F | H | H | H | N | N | N | ... | ... |

Table 1. The elected persons (indicated by a capital letter) and their respective roles and length of position (years).

1.4.3.3. Regular voting procedures

During a regular election, 2 new members are elected to perform a specific role for three years. As can be seen in Table 1, two positions will have become vacant for that years election (e.g., for year 2, the positions of person E and F will have become vacant), and these vacant positions can be elected.

1.4.3.4. Steering Committee roles

In the election, members of the society elect nominees for specific roles (1 chair, 1 treasurer, 1 secretary and 3 regular members). That is, nominees do not nominate themselves for a specific role. Rather, the voter indicates which nominee he or she wants to elect for which role. As each year different roles are available (see Table 1 below), each year votes can vote for a nominee to perform one of the available roles. For example, as in the very first election all roles are available, during that election voters can elect nominees for one of all 4 different roles (chair, secretary, treasurer or one of the three general members). During the elections in year 2 (as can be seen in Table 1), the roles of 2 general members are vacant as members E and F have stepped down. So, in year 2 voters can elect 2 new members for the roles of general member (persons G and H).

1.4.3.5. Standing down as a Steering Committee member

A Steering Committee member can stand down and end his or her membership and role of the Steering Committee. One reason for doing so can be that another role within the Steering Committee has become vacant and that the member would like to nominate him or herself for that role in the upcoming election. For example, if a member serves as a general member, and the role of chair will become vacant, the member can stand down (starting after the upcoming election), and nominate him- or herself for the role of chair. Also, at the same time, the member can nominate him- or herself for other roles (e.g., again for general member).

The Steering Committee may decide to end the membership of an individual member of the Steering Committee. This can only be done through a voting procedure involving all members of the Steering Committee. A proposal for ending the membership of a Steering Committee member must be proposed to the whole Steering Committee at least 2 weeks before the vote. To end the Steering Committee membership of an individual Steering Committee member, a majority of the members of the Steering Committee has to vote in favor of that proposal.