



MULTI FAITH REFERENCE COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Context

The Federation of Indian Origin Multi-faith Organisation Inc (FIMO) is an umbrella organisation whose core purpose is to be a key representative body for faith communities of Indian origin through advocacy, consultation and collaboration with government (including through representation on various interfaith networks) and with the broader community.

Role of the Multi Faith Reference Committee

The FIMO Multi Faith Reference Committee has an advisory role. It provides advice and feedback to FIMO regarding spirituality and challenges faced by multiple faith groups.

The core responsibilities of the Reference Committee are:

- To provide informed input into key FIMO policies and activities.
- To keep FIMO informed on the spirituality needs and challenges faced by faith groups in Victoria;
- To facilitate discussion and interaction between faith group representatives and FIMO;
- To contribute to ongoing review of FIMO's activities, business plan and strategies;
- To contribute to the development and enhancement of interfaith harmony;
- To contribute to the development and positioning of FIMO as a leading representative organisation in relation to faith based issues.

Membership

Membership of the Reference Committee is open to any person who wishes to join the Reference Committee, subject to this section.

Members need not be of Indian origin. Members need not adhere to any particular faith.

Membership of the Committee is not open to a person who is a representative of an organisation that is also represented on the FIMO Executive Committee.

A Chair of the Reference Committee will be selected from and by the Committee members, either for a defined term or on a rotating basis.

Term

The term of appointment of a Committee member will be for two (2) years.

Any member may resign at any time by advising his or her resignation to the FIMO Executive Officer in writing. The FIMO General Council will be responsible for appointing any person to fill the casual vacancy for the remainder of the term.

A member who is absent for more than two consecutive meetings without leave or reasonable excuse may be asked to explain their absence to the Reference Committee.

If a Reference Committee member is absent without leave or reasonable excuse that is accepted by the Reference Committee, the Reference Committee may via the FIMO Executive Officer request that FIMO General Council declare the position vacant.

Process for Selection

All members (with the exception of the Chairperson) will be selected via a nomination process.

Advertisements will be placed on the FIMO website and through FIMO members calling for nominations. A mail out will also be undertaken to call for nominations.

Following the closure of nominations an assessment panel made up of the FIMO President, FIMO Secretary and FIMO Executive Officer will be convened to decide on the selection of representatives to fill vacancies.

Applicants seeking membership on the Reference Committee should:

- Come from various walks of life;
- Demonstrate they are keen to make a difference in society and those with diverse spiritual affiliations;
- Demonstrate a desire to promote social cohesion in mainstream society;
- Demonstrate a passion for promoting community harmony.

Conduct of Meetings

The Reference Committee shall meet on a bi-monthly basis (ie. six meetings per year). Meetings shall be held, where possible, on Saturday afternoons to allow for maximum participation and attendance by Reference Committee members.

The quorum for meetings will be not less than three members of the Reference Committee, unless otherwise determined by FIMO General Council.

Prior to consideration of an item in which a member may have a conflict of interest (ie. potential financial or material gain arising from the Reference Committee's decision), this interest must be declared to the Chairperson. The member must leave the room and remain outside until the conclusion of discussion on the item.

Agendas and minutes of meetings shall be forwarded to members at least two working days before the meeting.

Decision Making

The Reference Committee will seek to operate on a consensus basis.

Should a vote be necessary, all Reference Committee members have voting rights. Council officers provide support and administrative services to the Advisory Committee only and do not have voting rights.

Administrative & Support Services

The FIMO Executive Officer shall act as the secretariat to the Multi Faith Reference Committee.

In particular, the FIMO Executive Officer shall:

- Send members of the Committee all notices and agendas, clearly setting out the items to be discussed at Committee meetings;
- Attend meetings of the Committee and take minutes of Committee meetings;
- Provide status report updates on matters of interest to the Committee

Minutes, Note Taking & Reporting

FIMO shall ensure that appropriate and accurate minutes are taken of Committee meetings. FIMO shall also ensure that a running actions item list is maintained to record actions arising from Committee meetings.

Minutes of meetings will be presented to the next available Ordinary Meeting of FIMO General Council and a copy of the Minutes will be circulated to FIMO General Council members.

The FIMO General Council, and FIMO Executive Committee, shall provide sufficient information – including minutes of meetings and reports – to enable the Reference Committee to perform its function and duties.

Limitations on Authority

The role of the Multi Faith Reference Committee is to provide advice to FIMO and its officers, and it may only act within these Terms of Reference and procedural arrangements endorsed by FIMO Executive Committee.

The Multi Faith Reference Committee, and its individual members, have no authority to:

- expend moneys on behalf of FIMO;
- commit FIMO to any arrangement;
- consider any matter outside its specific reference; and/or
- direct FIMO committee members, officers or staff in the performance of their duties.

Publicity

Committee members, with the exception of the Chairperson, must not make any public comment about the Multi Faith Reference Committee or any discussions which take place in Committee meeting unless otherwise authorised by the FIMO Executive Officer.

Confidentiality

Information discussed, received, used or created by the Committee is confidential, unless the FIMO Executive Committee resolves otherwise ("confidential information").

Non Disclosure

A Committee member must not disclose, discuss or make public confidential information, unless authorised by the FIMO Executive Officer.

Members may be required to abide by a 'Confidentiality Protocol' that shall be developed by the Committee and by FIMO.

Restriction of Use

A Committee member must not photocopy or in any way record, retain, or reproduce confidential information, unless authorised by the FIMO Executive Officer.

A Committee member must not permit any person who is not a member of the Committee to view, read, photocopy, make notes of or in any way record confidential information, unless authorised by the FIMO Executive Officer.

Breach of Confidentiality

FIMO, by resolution of Executive Committee or General Council, may terminate a Committee member's term for breaching the confidentiality rules.

Member Declaration

Signature X_____

Name X_____

Date X_____