The constitution of the NEALT

Version 1.0 (As approved by the founding meeting on Saturday 28.10.2006 in Gothenburg, Sweden)

A printer-friendly form of the text is available in the following formats: in plain XHTML, in PDF and in PostScript.

I. Name and Domicile

1. The name of the Association is **Northern European Association for Language Technology (NEALT)**, and its domicile is Uppsala, Sweden.

2. The **Geographical Area** of the *Association* consists of the Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark including the Faroe Islands and Greenland, Iceland), the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and Northwest Russia.

3. The **Official Language** of the *Association* is English. Official calls and documents of the association will be written in English, which is also the language of its Business Meetings.

II. Purposes

The *Association* is a scientific, non-profit and non-political association focusing its activities especially on the Geographical Area and on the languages spoken in that area. The purposes of the association are:

1. To promote research and development activities in the field of language technology, including speech technology.

2. To promote cooperation and information exchange among related professional and technical societies.

3. To represent language technology to funding bodies and government agencies.

4. To disseminate information on language technology to the general public.

III. Membership

1. **Regular Membership** is open to any individual with an interest in language technology who lives in the Geographical Area of the *Association* or who has an explicit interest or connection with the *Geographical Area*. Each *Regular Member* has one vote in the *Association's* ballots and may hold office in the *Association.*

2. **Supporting membership** is open to commercial companies, associations, institutions and societies which have an interest in language technology or its applications. *Supporting Members* pay *Dues* (usually higher than the *Regular Members*) but they have no vote in the meetings and they cannot hold office in the *Association.*

3. There are two main classes of *Regular Memberships*: **Normal** and **Student**. Student members are eligible for reduced dues rates. To qualify for the student rate, a person must be enrolled as a full-time student at a university.

4. New members are accepted by the Executive Committee based on applications.

5. **Dues** for each calendar year are payable upon receipt of a dues statement and membership will lapse if dues are not received.

6. Distinguished scholars in the field may be elected **Fellows of the Association** by the Business Meeting, upon recommendation by the Nominating Committee. The number of living *Fellows* shall not exceed twenty-five; no more than three may be selected at any *Business Meeting.*

7. The *Executive Committee* shall maintain a list of members. The list of members shall contain information on the name, address, e-mail address, and nationality of the members. All communication from the *Association* to the Members is sent via e-mail to the addresses supplied by the members.

8. A *Membership* is automatically terminated in the event of death of an individual, and the dissolution of other legal entities (such as companies and organizations).

IV. Business Meeting

1. There shall be a **Business Meeting** of the *Association* at least every second year, with notice mailed to the *Membership* at least two months before the meeting date. The call will be sent to the email address provided by the *Member*.

   Business Meetings can be held in conjunction with workshops or conferences (such as NODALIDA), or by electronic means (such as electronic mail or videoconference).

2. In votings and elections, the alternative which gets most votes will become the decision of the meeting, or the candidate who gets most votes will be elected. If two or more alternatives share the same highest number of votes, (a) in open ballots, the chairperson will have the casting vote and (b) in closed ballots and elections, a decision will be reached by drawing lots.

3. The **Agenda** of the *Business Meeting* is as follows:

   1. Election of a chairperson for the meeting.
   2. Election of the secretary for the meeting.
   3. Election of two members to check the minutes of the meeting.
   4. Establish if the meeting has been properly convened,
   5. Presentation of the *President's* report,
   6. Presentation of the *Treasurer's Annual Financial and Membership Reports*,
   7. Presentation of the accounts *Auditor's* report,
   8. Adoption of the reports and accounts,
   9. Establishing the annual Membership Dues for the following two years for each type of Member: Supporting Members and Regular Members of two types, Normal Members and Student Members,
   10. The election of the members of the Executive Committee of the Association (including the President, the Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor in Chief and other positions) as needed and on the basis of the nominations by the Nominating Committee and Regular Members.
   11. Election of one accounts Auditor and one *Deputy Auditor*.
   12. Any other business which has been mentioned in the call.

V. Administration

1. The administration of the Association shall be the responsibility of the **Executive Committee**. The Executive Committee consists of six members:

   - a **President of the Association**,
   - a **Vice-President of the Association**,
   - a **Secretary of the Association**,
   - a **Treasurer of the Association**,
   - the **Editor in Chief** of the publications of the Association, and
   - one additional member.

   The Business Meeting elects the members of the *Executive Committee*. The new *Executive Committee* elected shall take office on January 1st of the year following the *Business Meeting* and the term of it is two calendar years.

2. The normal **Terms** and the expected **Succession** of the members of the *Executive Committee* are as follows:

   1. The *Vice-President* is elected by the *Business Meeting* for a 2-year term, and after those two years, the Vice-President becomes the *President* for the next 2-year term.
   2. The *President* elected by the *Business Meeting*, or entered that position through *Succession*, leaves that position after the 2-year term.
   3. The *Secretary*, the *Treasurer* and the *Editor in Chief* usually serve two successive 2-year terms.
   4. The additional member of the Executive Committee has a term of two years.

   If vacancies occur, the *Executive Committee* shall appoint replacements according to the scheme of *Succession* and the deputies elected by the *Business Meeting* and these serve until December 31 following the next *Business Meeting*.

3. The *President* of the Association shall **chair** the *Executive Committee*.

   The *President* and the *Vice-President* are authorized to **sign the name of the Association** in all matters, and the *Treasurer* has the right to sign the name of the *Association* in financial transactions.

   The *Treasurer* is empowered to deposit and disburse funds and to enter into contracts as appropriate to conduct the business of the *Association*. The

Treasurer shall deliver a written **Annual Financial and Membership Report**, to the Association by the end of each year. The Association may have one or more **bank accounts**.

4. The *Executive Committee* shall (a) determine the place and time of the *Association's* meetings and appoint members to be responsible for organizing its programs and for local arrangements; (b) select or approve the editors and editorial boards of any publication sponsored by the *Association*; (c) appoint members to various positions and form committees to assist in conducting the activities of the *Association*; (d) collect the Dues of the *Association* according to the decisions of the *Business Meeting*; (e) be responsible for a review of the *Treasurer's Annual Financial and Membership Reports* before these reports are presented to the *Business Meeting*; (f) establish and oversee **Special Interest Groups** of the *Association*; (g) fix the times of the *Business Meeting*, prepare the agenda and announce the meetings.

5. There shall be an accounts **Auditor** elected by the *Business Meeting* and a **Deputy**. The duty of the *Auditor* is to consider the *Treasurer's Annual Financial and Membership Reports* and to review the financial state of the *Association*, in preparation for the *Business Meeting*.

6. The **Accounting Period** is one calendar year. Balancing of accounts will be done every year.

7. There shall be a **Nominating Committee** consisting of the two most recent *Past Presidents* not on the *Executive Committee*, each serving for the four years following their own Presidency. The member whose term is about to expire shall chair the Committee. In case of a vacancy the *Executive Committee* shall appoint a member to serve for the appropriate period.

8. **Nominations** shall be conducted as follows: the *Nominating Committee* shall nominate (normally two) people who are willing to serve in each position to be filled at an election at the *Business Meeting*. When selecting the candidates the *Nominating Committee* shall also consider the balanced representation of genders and nationalities.

   The *Secretary* shall announce these nominees to the Membership, post their names on the **Association web site**, and invite the *Regular Membership* to submit additional nominations. Additional nominations will be accepted by email, provided that two Regular Members of the Association second each such nomination and provided that evidence is presented that such a nominee will serve if elected.

The nomination has to be completed so that it can be included in the call for the *Business Meeting*.

VI. Amendments

1. **Amendments to the Constitution** shall be made in a Business Meeting with two-thirds majority of voters based on a proposition made by the Executive Committee or a group of no less than ten Regular Members. The proposition must be included in the announcement of that meeting.

2. The **Dissolution of the Association** requires a two-thirds majority of voters in a *Business Meeting*. If the *Association* will be dissolved, possible funds and property of the Association will be used in a way consistent with the *Purposes* of the Association as decided by the meeting dissolving the Association.

3. Items not covered in the present constitution of the Association will be regulated by laws on free associations of Sweden. If the present Constitution of the Association is inconsistent with the Swedish legislation, the latter will take precedence.

Document may not end with a transition.