The Regulations of the CEPIUG

1. General Provisions.

1.1. The association shall be called ‘Confederacy of European Patent Information User Groups’ abbreviated as CEPIUG hereinafter called "the Confederacy".

1.2. The Confederacy shall exist to promote the professional status and skills of the patent information community.

1.3. The Confederacy aims to provide a platform for discussion and cooperation for its Members.

1.4. The Confederacy is established without time limitation.

1.5. The Confederacy shall have as address the address of the secretary of the Confederacy.

1.6. Commercial providers are defined as providers of patent information search engines, databases and related applications.

1.7. The Confederacy is expressly a non-profit organization.

2. Members and Observers.

2.1. At the discretion of the Board of the Confederacy, Membership of the Confederacy is open to Patent Information User Groups in Europe, hereinafter called Members.

2.2. Each Member will appoint two representatives of whom maximally one is working for a commercial provider; these representatives will act as contact person and will represent the Member in meetings of the Confederacy.

2.3. Each Member has the right to vote in the meetings of the Confederacy with one vote per Member.

2.4. In cases where a Member representative of the Confederacy (or the Board) is no longer supported by his/her national user group he/she will be withdrawn from the Confederacy (and/or the Board).

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2.5. Other organizations or natural persons can be granted observer status at the discretion of the Board. An observer has the right to attend the open sessions of the meetings of the Confederacy and take part in the discussions, but has no right to vote.

3. Board.

3.1. The Board of the Confederacy consists of at least four persons (Board representatives) who each are representing a different Member. Nevertheless, the Board can consist of more persons, preferably representing different Members. The Board will not count more persons than the number of Members of the Confederacy.

3.2. Board representatives are elected for a time period of three years; each year at least one of the Board representatives resigns. Board representatives preferably resign according to their seniority in the Board. Board representatives can be consecutively re-elected once. After one possible re-election a minimum period of one year is respected before a person could be elected again as Board representative.

3.3. The Board elects one of its Board representatives as chair, one as vice-chair, one as secretary and optionally one as treasurer. The elections are carried out by simple majority votes.

3.4. The Board representatives, as defined in 3.3, will all have a proxy (authorization) for official documents and communications e.g. bank account. At least 2 proxy holder signatures are needed.

3.5. Only one of the Board representatives can work for a commercial provider.

3.6. The Board carries out the decisions of the Confederacy.

3.7. The official physical contact address of the Confederacy is directly linked to the address of the secretary of the board or of the chair.

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4. Meetings.

4.1. The joined Members as present in a general meeting are the highest decisive body of the Confederacy.

4.2. The Confederacy will meet at least once a year.

4.3. The treasurer will present a balance during a Member meeting once a year and will request to be discharged for the past year by a simple majority vote of the Members present.

4.4. The Board will distribute an agenda for the meetings.

4.5. If none of the two representatives can attend a meeting, a Member is allowed to send one or two other representatives.

4.6. If more than 50% of the representatives in a meeting work for a commercial information provider, no valid decision can be taken during that meeting. The Board will check two weeks before the meeting date whether this situation occurs. To prevent an indecisive meeting the Board can use the following remedies in order:

i. Discuss with Member associations the possibility of sending a substitute representative.
ii. Degrading Member representatives to observer status until a decisive meeting can be held. Representatives that work for a commercial provider will be degraded in reverse order of accepting the meeting.

4.7. The general meeting will only make decisions if at least two thirds of the Members are represented. The meeting will make decisions by simple majority of all Members present at the general meeting. Changes to the Regulations require a two thirds majority of all Members present at the general meeting.

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4.8 If the general meeting is attended by less that two thirds of the Members the following steps are taken:

i. The general meeting will make no decisions.
ii. A substitute meeting will be called within six weeks of the general meeting.
iii. Invitations will be sent to all Members at least two weeks before the substitute meeting.
iv. The substitute meeting will make decisions only if at least one third of the members are present.
v. The substitute meeting will make decisions by simple majority of all Members present at the substitute meeting. Changes to the Regulations require a two thirds majority of all Members present at the substitute meeting.

4.9 In discussions through the year, a vote by other means (e.g. writing, email) outside the general meeting is allowed if none of the members disagrees and will be regarded as a decision in a general meeting when the following requirements are fulfilled:

i. Information and invitation to vote is sent to all representatives of the Members.
ii. Decisions are made by simple majority of all Members.
iii. Changes to the Regulations require a two thirds majority of all Members.

5. Committees and Working Parties.

5.1. Committees and Working Parties can be formed to perform specific tasks.

5.2. The Board appoints an interim-head of such a committee or working party. The interim head will:

i. Seek participants and propose a list of candidates to the Confederacy.
ii. Propose the terms of reference of the committee or working party to the Confederacy.

After approval of the participants and terms of reference by the Confederacy, the committee or working party itself will choose one of the participants as head.

5.3. The working group shall report to the Board at least once a year. The report will contain the results of last year and a proposal for continuation.

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5.4. The working group can be closed by the Confederacy if:

i. The work is done.

ii. The Confederacy feels there is no need or desire to continue the working group.

6. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

6.1. All Members have to provide the explicit consent towards GDPR by confirming the following 2 questions:

□ I confirm I would like to receive email communications from the CEPIUG

□ I confirm that I agree that my contact details are kept for administrative and communication purposes related the activities of the CEPIUG.

6.2. If a Member wishes to stop receiving communications from the CEPIUG, they will be able to do so by sending an email to info@cepiug.org with the subject UNSUBSCRIBE. This includes not being a Member anymore of the CEPIUG.

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