

# **Bylaws of the Lehigh University Postdoctoral Association**

Last Ratified: May 29, 2025

## **1. Name of the organization**

The name of the organization shall be the “Lehigh University Postdoctoral Association”, hereafter referred to LPDA.

## **2. Mission Statement**

The LPDA seeks to establish a self-sustained organization that is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and vibrant community for all Lehigh Postdocs. Our mission is to create a supportive environment that promotes community, social interaction and a sense of belonging. We aim to actively involve postdocs in a range of academic, professional, and social activities that enhance their overall experience, while advocating for their needs at institutional and departmental levels. The association will facilitate career and social development, and provide networking opportunities with the goal of fostering collaboration among scientists and other professionals.

## **3. Membership**

### **3.1 Eligibility**

The members of the LPDA include any individual formally appointed in postdoctoral scholar positions (hereafter referred to as postdocs) at Lehigh University. This includes individuals designated as Postdoctoral Research Associate, Postdoctoral Psychology Fellow, Research Scientists and research personnel appointed at Lehigh who identify as postdocs.

### **3.2 Membership**

The membership includes two categories: (a) elected Executive Board members, and (b) general members.

(a) The Executive Board is composed of elected members, including President, Vice-President, Directors of Communications and Events, Treasurers, and Secretaries.

(b) General members are all remaining members of the LPDA. Therefore, LPDA membership is automatically granted to all postdocs at Lehigh.

Ad hoc positions shall take the form of commissions, consultants, collaborator, proxies, or assignees and shall be either standing or temporary as decided by the board.

**Non-Discrimination Clause.** The LPDA seeks to promote diversity and ensure equal opportunity and inclusion for all postdocs in the membership, leadership and activities of the association regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, disability, national origin, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation, or gender-identity.

#### **4. The Executive Board**

The governing body of the LPDA is the LPDA Executive Board, hereafter referred to as the Board. The Board oversees the creation and management of activities, partnerships and overall vision of the LPDA in accordance with its mission.

##### **4.1 Leadership and Governance**

**4.1.1 President.** The President is responsible for shaping and fulfilling the mission and vision of the association, managing the activities of the Board, and providing ultimate oversight over all LPDA activities. In addition, the President is the chief liaison between the LPDA and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs or other entities. This role shall be held by a single individual. The President serves a six-month term and may be re-elected for one consecutive term, for a maximum of one year in this position.

Regular duties include:

- Leading the LPDA Board meetings
- Delegating responsibilities for the planning and coordinating of LPDA activities
- Providing opening remarks at major LPDA events
- Monitoring and responding to messages coming into the LPDA email account
- Coordinating the bi-annual executive board elections in
- Attending the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) Annual Conference

**4.1.2 Vice President.** The Vice-President supports the President in shaping and executing the mission and vision of the association and acts as the President's deputy in their absence. This role shall also assist in maintaining communication between the Board and other institutional entities, ensuring the smooth functioning of LPDA activities. The role shall be held by a single individual. The Vice-President serves a six-month term and may be re-elected for one consecutive term, for a maximum of one year in this position.

Regular duties include:

- Assisting the President in managing the Board's activities and providing input on strategic decisions
- Taking over the responsibilities of the President in their absence, including leading Board meetings and representing the LPDA in institutional matters
- Assisting in the coordination and execution of major LPDA events and activities
- Supporting the organization of the bi-annual Board elections and succession planning
- Monitoring and responding to messages coming into the LPDA email account

- Attending the NPA Annual Conference

**4.1.3 Treasurer.** The Treasurer Team is responsible for managing the financial affairs of the association, ensuring proper handling and transparency of all funds in accordance with [institutional guidelines](#). This role involves maintaining accurate financial records, budgeting, and reporting on the association's financial status. The role can be held by a single individual or by a team.

Regular duties include:

- Preparing and overseeing the annual budget, monitoring income and expenditures, and ensuring timely processing of payments.
- Collaborating with the Board to secure funding and managing financial accounts in compliance with regulations.
- Providing regular financial reports to the Board and assisting in the auditing of financial records as needed.
- Supporting event organizers with budget planning to ensure adherence to financial guidelines.
- Assist the Board with reimbursements and OneCard reconciliation matters as needed.

**4.1.4 Secretary.** The Secretary team is responsible for coordinating Board meetings, organizing LPDA records, and coordinating the timing of LPDA activities. This role ensures effective communication within the Board and with the broader postdoctoral community. The role can be held by a single individual or by a team.

Regular duties include:

- Recording and distributing minutes of Board meetings and major events, ensuring all members are informed of decisions and actions taken.
- Maintaining the association's documentation, including bylaws, meeting records, and membership lists, ensuring all records are up-to-date and accessible.
- Assisting in organizing events by coordinating logistics, preparing necessary materials, and drafting emails for circulation by the communications team in advance.
- Coordinating the meeting schedule, attendees invitations and meeting location.
- Assist with compiling info for the LPDA annual report.

**4.1.5 Director of Communications and Events.** The Directors of Communications and Events are responsible for LPDA communications and activities. This role involves managing the association's online presence and coordinating events that foster community building and networking. This position can be held by a single individual or by a team.

Regular duties include:

- Updating the LPDA website
- Managing and monitoring social media account activity
- Monitoring and responding to messages coming into the LPDA email account
- Sending LPDA promotional emails created by the Executive Board
- Planning, organizing and advertising events of the association
- Managing official correspondence and communication on behalf of the association, including announcements and updates to the postdoc community.

#### **4.2. Election of the LPDA Executive Board**

Elections shall be held twice a year. Followed by a) a nomination period, b) an election meeting, c) a transition period, and d) an elected executive board term period.

	<b>Spring board</b>	<b>Fall board</b>
<b>Nomination period</b>	January	July
<b>Election meeting</b>	Ideally first week of February, board needs to be determined by the end February	Ideally first week of August, board needs to be determined by the end August
<b>Transition period</b>	February	August
<b>Elected executive board term period</b>	February-July	August-January

The current executive board must advertise the opening of the nomination period, the date of the election meeting and provide copies of the nomination form. Members interested in being part of the next executive board should demonstrate interest by applying for the LPDA executive board members nomination. The nomination should be made in person, delivering the nomination form for the LPDA president, or online, sending the form by email.

The election meeting must be held by the current executive board and led by the current president. During the election meeting, the executive board roles will be distributed in common agreement between the nominees present. If the number of nominees exceeds the maximum number of executive board positions, the current executive board will conduct a closed-session vote, with each member casting an equal vote to determine which nominees will proceed with the distribution of functions. For the president and vice-president roles, the nominee must be a LPDA member for at least 3 months and be attending at least 50% of the LPDA board meetings during the last 3 months. Any LPDA member can be elected for the other executive board roles.

Elected board members will serve a term of six months. To ensure continuity of leadership, the previous board must complete a transition period to be held one month after the end of its term, in February or August.

#### **4.3 Suspension or termination of membership**

All elected or appointed members shall assume their duties associated with their roles. Executive board members of the LPDA may be suspended or removed from their positions by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members during an official LPDA meeting, should they fail to meet their responsibilities or attend required meetings. In case of resignation, the executive board member should manifest official resignation by email to the current president and vice president and LPDA email.

#### **4.4 Decision-Making**

##### **4.4.1 Voting**

All decisions requiring a vote shall be determined by a simple majority of members present, unless otherwise specified. A quorum, defined as two-thirds (2/3) vote, must be met for any vote to be valid. Voting may occur in person, online, or through absentee ballots submitted in advance. In the event of a tie, the LPDA president shall cast the deciding vote.

#### **5. Meetings**

The LPDA executive board meetings shall be open to all postdocs and interested parties. They shall be held weekly, unless prevented by extraordinary circumstances as decided by the LPDA president and vice-president. The location and details of the LPDA board meetings shall be determined by the executive members and distributed to the postdocs and LPDA community with reasonable advance notice. Any meeting where significant decisions—such as changes to leadership structure, dissolution of the board, or amendments to bylaws—are to be made must be announced at least three days in advance and require the presence of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the executive board members to reach a quorum. Each meeting shall reserve a period at the end of the agenda for the solicitation of questions and concerns from postdocs who are not members of the LPDA board. The executive board members shall make an effort to encourage members to attend and take an active part in the meetings.

## **6. Finances**

The association's yearly budget must be prepared by the treasurer team in consultation with the Postdoctoral Affairs Office and approved by the LPDA Board with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. All expenditures over \$500 require dual signatures from the treasurer and either the President or Vice-President to ensure accountability. Receipts and other documentation for all financial transactions must be securely stored in the LPDA's designated Google Drive folder for transparency and record-keeping. All spending decisions must be discussed during board meetings to maintain oversight. Additionally, the treasurer team shall keep detailed financial reports outlining income, expenditures, and the association's financial standing.

## **7. Conflict Resolution**

In the event of a dispute among LPDA members or between members and the leadership, the association is committed to addressing the issue in a fair, transparent, and respectful manner. Initially, the parties involved should attempt to resolve the conflict through open and constructive dialogue. If the issue remains unresolved, the matter will be brought to the attention of the LPDA Board, who will facilitate mediation. The Board will work with the involved parties to reach a resolution within two weeks. If necessary, an external mediator may be appointed. All decisions made during the conflict resolution process will be final, and the parties are expected to abide by the agreed-upon resolution.

## **8. Affiliation**

The association is formally affiliated with Lehigh University, and as such, operates under its guidelines and policies. Lehigh University provides support to the LPDA through access to resources, funding opportunities, and administrative assistance from the Postdoctoral Affairs Office. Additionally, the association is subject to the institution's oversight to ensure that its activities align with institutional values and objectives. The LPDA maintains an open line of communication with the Postdoctoral Affairs Office and Lehigh University, reporting regularly on its activities and any significant decisions or events. This affiliation fosters collaboration and ensures that the association's work contributes positively to the broader postdoctoral community. Any public statements made by LPDA members in their individual capacity represent their personal views and do not reflect the opinions or positions of Lehigh University or the LPDA as an organization. Official statements on behalf of the LPDA must be approved by the executive board and clearly identified as such.

## **9. Dissolution**

In the event that the association must be dissolved, a proposal for dissolution must be submitted to the LPDA executive board and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the board. Upon approval, the LPDA executive board will oversee the proper liquidation of any remaining assets or funds. All remaining funds and assets will be

returned to the Postdoctoral Affairs Office, which will determine their appropriate use in accordance with institutional policies. All dissolution processes must comply with institutional policies and any legal requirements, and the LPDA Board will ensure that members are notified in advance of the dissolution decision and involved in the process as appropriate.

#### **10. Amendments & Annual Review**

The LPDA Bylaws shall be reviewed at least once per year. Any LPDA member may propose an amendment by submitting it to the Executive Board for review. The Executive Board will evaluate and vote on all proposed amendments during the annual Bylaws Meeting, held in November, which only board members shall attend. Amendments approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Executive Board will be incorporated into the LPDA Bylaws.

#### **11. Ratification**

The Bylaws of the LPDA shall take effect immediately on May 29, 2025, followed by the approval of the Lehigh University Provost on July 10, 2025.