



**BY-LAWS OF LAV  
ANTI-VIVISECTION LEAGUE  
non-profit organization**

**Preamble**

LAV

- Proclaims the rights of all animals, human and non human, to life, dignity and liberty;
- Appeals to each person to set their sight on life and peace, justice and freedom, protection of the environment and the ecosystems;
- Declares it attributes a historically absolute value of law to the imperative “do not kill”;
- Acknowledges and condemns the manipulations perpetrated by men against nature, with morally and physically nefarious consequences on men’s habitat and men themselves.
- Is a social organisation where each individual expresses and develops his/her personality with the aim to fulfil and accomplish the goals of the Association.

**1. Name. Registered office. Nature of the Association**

An animals rights, antispeciesist association for the protection of the integrity of every individual, drawing its inspiration from the principles of non-violence, is established in Rome, under the name of LAV Lega Anti Vivisezione (LAV Anti-Vivisection League), with registered office and operating headquarters in Rome.

LAV has been recognised as a non-profit organisation by a Ministerial Decree of 19 May 1998. It has been officially recognised as an association pursuing the protection of the interests adversely affected by crimes against animals with Decree 2/09 EN.AS. – Ministerial Decree on Health of 2 November 06 - Law 189/04. It has been officially recognised as an association for the protection of the environment with Ministerial Decree of 15 February 2007 (Law 349/86).

Pursuant to Legislative Decree 460/97 and subsequent amendments and additions thereto, LAV shall use the wording “socially useful non profit organisation” or the acronym “NPO” in its name, its distinctive signs and public communications.

**2. Purposes of the Association**

LAV’s purposes are animal Liberation, the affirmation of the rights of non human animals and their protection, the struggle against the mafia of zoos, the preservation of the environment. It fights for the abolition of vivisection, fishing, hunting, livestock production, animal farming, animal trade, animal shows, the use of any living being. It defends the Earth and its ecosystems. LAV fights against speciesism, by combating all forms of violence, prevarication and exploitation, and asserting the right to life, dignity and liberty of every individual, whether human or non human.

Furthermore, LAV aims to protect human health through the dissemination of technical-scientific information and using all available means to tell people how to coexist with the other animals in a proper, non conflictual manner, while fostering a change in people’s vision from anthropocentric to biocentric. LAV also promotes and guarantees the rights of the individuals who adhere to and pursue the principles of animal Liberation, in any civil or judicial venue, and fights against any discrimination or distortion of such principles.

The Association pursues on an exclusive basis social solidarity goals to be attained in the fields of the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and animal liberation, it has no profit-

related objectives nor any other goals that may be incompatible with the aforementioned principles. LAV views the vegan choice as one of its founding principles.

To foster the attainment of its statutory purposes, LAV promotes educational programs, laws, conferences, treaties; it also undertakes any nonviolent civil disobedience initiatives and/or judicial actions which may be deemed necessary, including bringing complaints, initiating and joining legal proceedings in actions concerning violations of the rights of animals and the environment and any related or similar offences, and appealing against administrative measures that violate the rights of animals or the environment.

LAV may take action for the safeguard of subjective situations that are juridically relevant.

In pursuing the aforementioned goals, the Association may undertake activities directly associated with its main institutional initiatives, including, but not limited to:

- 1) organise seminars, conferences, teaching and information courses, training and refresher courses for students and teachers, debates, events, shows, showings of films and videos, art shows, arts and craft shows, journeys, and whatever else may be necessary to accomplish its statutory purposes;
- 2) encourage and promote changes in industrial, scientific and agro-alimentary processes with the aim to combat the exploitation of animals as means or as resources, also by organising, conducting and supporting researches or by providing for specific standards, also in collaboration with public or private subjects;
- 3) establish relationships of collaboration with other Italian and foreign organisations having similar purposes, for a mutual exchange of experiences, and with a view to fostering joint initiatives;
- 4) join, possibly by appointing representatives, Organisations, Entities, Institutions, national and international Foundations that pursue similar or complementary purposes;
- 5) engage in publishing activities and distribute books and magazines of a cultural nature;
- 6) in accordance with the applicable regulations, set up a service of wildlife officers, fish and game wardens and natural resource officers in charge of ensuring compliance with local, national and international laws for the protection of animals, wildlife, the environment and the natural heritage.

In order to attain its goals, the Association undertakes to promote the use of any dissemination and communication media, including the press, radio and television programs, IT tools, distribution by post of printed materials and publications (leaflets, books, periodicals) published/edited either in-house or by third parties, with the aim to enhance public awareness and adhesion to the goals pursued by the Association.

In order to pursue its statutory goals or closely associated goals, LAV may purchase movable and immovable property, also by means of suitable financial instruments and by taking loans through deeds *inter vivos* or *mortis causa*.

Pursuant to Legislative Decree 460/97 and subsequent amendments and additions thereto, it is prohibited to undertake activities other than solidarity-oriented or closely correlated activities.

### **3. Volunteering activities and organisation**

LAV activities are performed through volunteers working on a personal, spontaneous, non remunerated, non-profit basis, for solidarity purposes.

Relationships between volunteers are inspired by a spirit of participation, human and animal solidarity, pluralism, the free exchange of opinions and democratic principles.

LAV may hire employees and use self-employed collaborators as necessary for its regular operation or as necessary to qualify/specialise the activities performed.

### **4. Members**

LAV membership is open to any natural person, without any limitations in terms of nationality or place of residence. Membership fees have to be paid upon joining the Association and after that on an annual basis; membership is non transferable and membership fees are not subject to revaluation. Voting rights at the national Convention, at meetings of the members of Local Chapters and for the election of statutory and local governing bodies are attributed to members aged over 18, who have

been registered members for at least ten months; younger members constitute a special group without voting rights. To run for a national office, a person must have been a registered member for four years.

Candidate members cannot undertake any activities conflicting with or incompatible with the goals of the association. Acceptance of new members is entrusted to the sole discretion of the national Governing Council, no explicit motivation being required. In the event of rejection by the national Governing Council, the membership fees paid, if any, shall be reimbursed.

Membership status may be lost:

- a) automatically, for failure to pay the annual membership fees within the established time limit of ninety days after the annual renewal date;
- b) based on explicit resignation notice given in writing to the National Governing Council;
- c) when expelled for serious reasons based on a resolution passed by the national Convention after hearing the motivations of the member before the Guarantors' Committee and after hearing the opinion of said Committee. While waiting for a resolution to be passed by the National Convention, a member may be suspended on a precautionary basis, also from any position attributed to him/her by the Association, through a resolution passed by the Guarantors' Committee based on a proposal submitted by the Governing Council, for activities severely conflicting with or incompatible with the purposes of the Association.
- d) due to death.

Honorary members may be appointed by the national Governing Council, by unanimous decision, possibly based on a proposal by the National Convention.

Rights and obligations:

Members are required to comply with the provisions set out in these By-Laws, to comply with the resolutions passed by the governing bodies of the Association, and to contribute to the activities of the Association; they have the right to participate in all the activities promoted by the Association, participate in all the Conventions, run for office, vote to elect the Council and Guarantors' Committee members, have full access to the premises of the Association.

There are no treatment disparities within the Association as all members have the right to participate in the activities and the life of the Association, with the same rights and obligations, irrespective of the category they belong to. Accordingly, membership relationships and association modalities are governed by a uniform discipline designed to ensure the effectivity of the membership, any form of provisional participation in the life of the Association being explicitly ruled out.

## **5. Assets and financial resources**

Assets:

The assets of the Association include its movable and immovable property and endowment fund.

Operating surplus is used for the statutory purposes of the Association. It is prohibited to distribute surplus, funds, reserves or capital, whether directly or indirectly.

Financial resources:

The financial resources of the Association come from:

- A) Contributions by members
- B) Contributions by private individuals
- C) Contributions from the government, public entities and institutions, provided with the sole purpose to support specific and documented activities and projects
- D) Contributions from international organisations
- E) Donations and bequests
- F) Refunds arising from agreements
- G) Any other revenues permitted by the law and in keeping with the purposes of the Association
- H) Annual membership fees
- I) Income from movable and immovable property

L) Contributions by the LAV Committee

M) Judicial and extra-judicial material and moral damages.

Any profit or operating surplus shall be used for the realisation of institutional activities and activities closely associated with the statutory goals.

## **6. Financial year**

The financial year of the Association starts on 1 January and ends on 31 December of the same year.

-Annual national financial statements: the national financial statements reflect the assets and liabilities and the financial situation of the Association, showing the year's revenues and the expenses. The annual national financial statements shall be drawn up at least four months before the end of the year, and, 15 days before the date of the National Convention, they shall be made available for consultation by any Association member.

-Annual income statement: the annual income statement of the local chapters reflects its financial situation, specifying the income and all the expenses incurred for the year. The annual income statement of a local chapter shall be discussed at the members' meeting by 31 March of every year and shall be made available to the members 15 days before.

-Activity planning document: the Activity planning document sets out the policy and financial guidelines for the activities of the following year. It specifies the main areas of activity that the Association intends to pursue and quantifies the financial resources necessary. It is drawn up by the National Governing Council and approved by the National Convention.

## **7. Governing bodies**

The governing bodies of the association are :

- the National Convention
- the National Governing Council
- the Chairman
- the Vice Chairman
- the Guarantors' Committee
- the Board of Auditors
- the National Committee
- the Directors
- the Local Chapters

## **8. National Convention**

The National Convention shall be convened once a year, before 30 June, by the National Governing Council to approve the annual financial statements and the Activity planning document, and every two years for the renewal of the elected office holders.

Participation in the National Convention with voting rights is open to members in good standing with the payment of their membership fees who have been registered members for at least ten months.

The National Convention shall also be convened when deemed necessary or when a motivated request is submitted in writing by at least one tenth of the members. Extraordinary conventions may be called to make amendments to the By-Laws of the Association.

The National Convention:

- resolves on changes to the By-Laws;
- approves the annual financial statements and resolves on the activity planning document for the following year;
- votes on the Chairman's report;
- elects the members of the national Governing Council;
- elects the members of the Guarantors' Committee;
- appoints the members of the Board of Auditors;

- resolves on the motions to be submitted to the national Governing Council;
- resolves on the dissolution of the Association.

### **9. Calling the National Convention**

An ordinary or extraordinary National Convention shall be called by a means of a written notice to be sent by post and to be received at least fifteen days in advance. This notice shall detail the agenda and shall indicate a date for the meeting on second call, which may also be the same as for the first call.

### **10. Resolutions by the National Convention**

The ordinary and extraordinary resolutions by the National Convention are approved with an absolute majority of the votes cast and the presence of at least half the members of the Association. On second call, the resolutions are passed by a simple majority and are valid irrespective of the number of members present.

All members, save for minors, may cast one vote, regardless of the category they belong to. Voting by proxy, by post or by mail is prohibited.

The dissolution of the Association and the transfer of its assets can be resolved on by the favourable votes of at least three quarters of the Association members. The resolutions passed shall be recorded in reports signed by the Chairman and the Secretary of the National Convention.

### **11. National Committee**

The National Committee is composed of the members of the Governing Council, a representative from each Local Chapter and Reference Point. The meetings are attended by the members of the Guarantors' Committee, the Directors, and the national Managers for the sectors concerned.

The National Committee has consultative functions and proposes, provides guidelines and controls the local and national activities and campaigns of the Association. Its resolutions are not binding on the other governing bodies of the Association. It meets at least twice a year, its meetings are called by the Chairman and address specific issues.

The National Committee organises sessions of analysis, discussion and proposal by the Local Chapters and carries out training and in-depth study initiatives through thematic sessions.

### **12. Governing Council**

The Governing Council is composed of five members who are elected every two years by the National Convention of the members. Each meeting is chaired by the Chairman or in his/her absence or impediment, by the Vice Chairman.

The Governing Council adopts its resolutions by a majority vote. The persons serving on the Council must be members with voting rights, who have been registered members of the Association for at least four years; they remain in office for two years and may be re-elected.

The meetings must be attended by at least four members in order to be valid.

If a decision entails a situation of potential conflict of interest for one or more members of the Governing Council, the Guarantors' Committee shall provide a written consultative opinion.

The office of Councillor does not entitle the holder to any compensation, other than reimbursement for documented expenses incurred on the behalf and in the interest of the Association.

If one or more Councillors cease to hold office in the course of an operating year, they shall be replaced to all intents and purposes by the non elected candidates who received the highest number of votes during the last election. Lacking this, the Governing Council shall co-opt its new members from the members who have been duly registered for at least four years. The members of the National Governing Council lose their office if they fail to attend two consecutive meetings of the Council without justification; this decision is made by the National Governing Council itself, after hearing the opinion of the Guarantors' Committee.

If a majority of the Councillors leave office, the ones still in office shall convene the National Convention within sixty days, so that it might elect a new Council.

The Governing Council is vested with all ordinary and extraordinary management powers, subject to specific powers of attorney.

The Governing Council:

- elects a Chairman and a Vice Chairman from among its members;
- defines and updates the mission of the Association;
- proposes a program of activities which is submitted to the approval of the National Convention to verify compliance with the statutory goals and the fulfilment of the mission;
- receives, resolves upon and implements the motions approved by the National Convention;
- appoints one or more directors and defines their tasks and powers;
- determines fund raising and communication policies and criteria;
- makes sure that the Association is managed according to sound management principles and, in particular, makes sure that the program of activities can be supported according to the activity planning document, with financial resources commensurate with the revenues; the Council must define for itself Regulations designed to ensure a balanced management of financial resources;
- draws up the annual financial statements;
- defines, and proposes amendments to, the Regulations governing the management of the Association, always provided that such regulations are not conflicting with or incompatible with these By-Laws;
- may establish technical-scientific Committees staffed by members and non-members who, with their professional and intellectual contributions, can help the Association achieve its objectives more effectively;
- defines memberships categories and fees;
- accepts and allocates donations, legacies, bequests and any other contingent assets;
- resolves on the purchase and sale of real estate property and holdings in companies, organisations, associations and international federations;
- appoints the three members of the Governing Council of the LAV Committee;
- defines the agenda of the National Convention;
- is directly responsible for hiring and dismissing personnel, and the start and cessation of relationships with self-employed workers;
- oversees the activities of the Local Chapters of the Association, in terms of adherence to the statutory goals, the mission and the implementation of the program of activities, the legitimacy of the actions undertaken and proper management modalities;
- ratifies the decisions concerning the Local Chapter and the Manager thereof;
- has the right to appoint and revoke the Reference Points;
- maintains the book of reports of its own meetings and those of the national convention;
- may delegate some of its powers to one or more of its members, defining the limits such powers;
- has a representation role and, at the request of the Council itself or the Chairman, its individual members are also required to represent LAV on the occasions and in the venues deemed appropriate.

The meetings of the Governing Council may be attended by the Managers of the Local Chapters and the Reference Points, unless otherwise provided for in specific instances by the Regulations that govern the functioning of Governing Council.

The Governing Council meeting reports are regularly sent to the Local Chapters and Reference Points that have submitted a request to this effect on an annual basis; such reports may be consulted by any member who so requests.

Since they represent the Association, candidates wishing to serve on the Governing Council and Guarantors' Committee must follow a vegetarian diet, as a minimum, and actively uphold all the ideals and goals of the Association, including veganism as a moral choice and a way of living.

### **13. Chairman and Vice Chairman**

The Chairman and the Vice Chairman are elected by the National Governing Council from among its members during the first useful meeting, and remain in office for two years. The Chairman calls

and chairs the meetings of the National Governing Council and defines the agendas. The Chairman is the political representative of the Association.

Together with the people in charge of the various sectors, the Chairman follows the daily management of the policy decisions of the Association, with a view to ensuring consistency with the guidelines defined by the Governing Council. The Vice Chairman monitors the regular operation of the organisational structure and the offices of the Association, and follows the implementation of the work plans defined by the Governing Council.

The Chairman and the Vice Chairman are the legal representative of the Association and exercise this powers severally, both in legal proceedings and in dealing with third parties.

In the case of impediment or absence of the Chairman, his/her power are exercised by the Vice Chairman. Any deeds sent to the Association may be received severally by either the Chairman or the Vice Chairman.

The Chairman and the Vice Chairman, severally, are conferred the power to stand in legal proceedings concerning matters having national, international and local relevance.

Both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman have standing to bring and oppose legal actions, have the right to enter an appearance in civil proceedings and to appoint legal counsel, also severally, with the prior consent of the national Governing Council.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman may grant powers of attorney to one or more members, for either specific actions or types of actions.

The office of Chairman or Vice Chairman does not entail any remuneration other than reimbursement for documented expenses incurred on behalf and in the interests of the Association.

Their revocation may be resolved on by the Governing Council. Their election and revocation are decided by an absolute majority of the votes.

#### **14. Directors**

The National Governing Council appoints one or more Directors and defines their powers and tasks. The Directors participate with consultative powers in the meetings of the National Governing Council and the National Committees. They are responsible for implementing the directives established by the National Governing Council, the Chairman and the Vice Chairman, as well as for ensuring compliance with the provisions of these By-Laws and the resolutions passed by the Convention. The National Governing Council retains the right to revoke the Directors.

#### **15. Guarantors' Committee**

The Guarantors' Committee is staffed by two standing members and a Chairman, elected by the National Convention from among the members with voting rights who have been registered members of the Association for at least four years. They remain in office for two years and may be re-elected. They are not entitled to any compensation, save for the reimbursement of documented expenses incurred on behalf and in the interests of the Association. The Guarantors' Committee is responsible for settling any disputes concerning the interpretation of the provisions set out in the Deed of Incorporation, the interpretation of these By-Laws and the application of the regulations, as well as any disputes arising from resolutions adopted by the National Convention and the Governing Council concerning the relationships between the Association and its members, and between members. The Guarantors decide as friendly arbitrators, without any formality being required, and the Association members and the National Convention are required to comply with the decisions of the Guarantors' Committee.

The Guarantors attend the meetings of the National Governing Council without voting rights, and attend the Conventions and the meetings of the National Committee.

Their activities are governed by ad hoc Regulations.

#### **16. Board of Auditors**

The Board of Auditors is composed of three members, from among whom a Chairman is appointed; the auditors need not be members and are selected from among individuals registered with the

Registry of Legal Auditors and in possession of the necessary professional qualifications. The Board of Auditors is appointed by the National Convention and remains in office for ca three years. The Board of Auditors verifies compliance of the management modalities with the provisions set out in the Civil Code; checks the accuracy of the accounts and correspondence with the income and expenditure entries recorded in the financial statements, verifies cash in hand and the inventory of Association assets.

### **17. Official information tools**

The official information tools of LAV include “Impronte”, a periodical registered with the Court of Rome, under number 50/84, and registered in the National Press Registry, under number 4086/1993, which is distributed for free to Association members and supporters according to the modalities defined by the National Governing Council, and the Association website [www.lav.it](http://www.lav.it).

The Managing Editor is appointed every two years by the National Governing Council when it holds its first meeting after the National Convention.

### **18. Local Chapters**

The Association operates locally through the Local Chapters, the Reference Points and the Regional Coordinators.

The governing bodies of a Local Chapter are:

- The meeting of the members,
- The Manager of the Local Chapter;
- The Governing Council of the Local Chapter.

A Reference Point (“Punto di Riferimento – PdR”) is a member appointed by the National Governing Council who takes on the task of coordinating the activities of a group of local volunteers, for which he/she assumes responsibility before the Association. The local area encompassed is defined at the time of appointment of the PdR, and may include a municipality, several municipalities or a province .

Based on a proposal by a majority of the Local Chapters, the Regional Coordinators are appointed by the National Governing Council, which defines their tasks and the tools available to them in a subsequent set of rules. The National Governing Council retains the right to revoke the coordinators, after hearing the opinion of the Local Chapters and the Reference Points operating in the area.

The Local Chapters carry out their activities independently, but always in compliance with the By-Laws of the Association and the policy guidelines defined by the National Convention and the National Governing Council. They have independent administrative powers in drafting their accounts, which must be merged periodically into the accounts of the Associations.

They may sign deeds and enter into agreements within the limits and according to the modalities specified in the Regulations governing the activities of the Local Chapters, with the prior approval and binding opinion of the National Governing Council. The power of signature is entrusted to a Manager elected by the Governing Council of the Local Chapter from among the members thereof. The activities of the Local Chapters and their relationship with the national Bodies are governed by ad hoc Regulations. The Governing Council of a Local Chapter is composed of from three to five members, is elected by the General Meeting of the members and remains in office for two years. The Manager of a Local Chapter is elected from among the members of the Governing Council of the Local Chapter and remains in office for two years. In the course of the annual meeting of the members, the Governing Council of a Local Chapter illustrates their annual income statement and activity report.

The Governing Council of a Local Chapter:

- elects the Manager of the Local Chapter from among its members;
- carries out national campaigns and activities at local level;
- carries out animal welfare initiatives addressing local problems and issues;
- is responsible for maintaining relationships with local institutions;



- promotes and expands the presence and the activities of the volunteers.

The Manager of a Local Chapter:

- is responsible for the activities of the Local Chapter and represents the Local Chapter;  
- calls and chairs the meetings of the Governing Council of the Local Chapter, organises the activities of the Local Chapter and represents it in its relationships with the territory, performs all the tasks he/she has been entrusted with by the Governing Council. Is responsible for dealing with the national structures of the Association. The activities of a Local Chapter and its relationships with the national Bodies are governed by the Regulations of the Local Chapters.

### **19. Regulations**

The Governing Council defines and proposes the approval of, and changes to, the Regulations governing the activities of the Association, always making sure that such Regulations are not incompatible or conflicting with these By-Laws, and, having heard the opinion of the Guarantors' Committee, submits the Regulations to the National Convention, which approves, amends or repeals them, as the case may be. The consultative opinion of the National Committee is also required prior to the approval of the Regulations of Local Chapters. The following Regulations are mandatory:

- those of the Governing Council;
- those of the Guarantors' Committee;
- those of the Local Chapters; and
- those on financial management modalities.

### **20. Termination, transfer of the assets**

Besides the circumstances provided for by the law, the Association shall be terminated when the purposes for which it was established have either been attained or have become impossible, and/or if the assets available have been exhausted. Any decision on the dissolution of the Association shall be made by the National Convention with the favourable vote of 80% of the members having voting rights. If the Association is terminated, any residual assets shall be donated to other socially useful non profit organisations operating in the same or a similar field, or pursuing public utility purposes, unless a different destination is provided for by the applicable regulations, after hearing the opinion of the Control Body as per article 3, clause 190, of Law no. 662 of 23 December 1996 and subsequent amendments and additions thereto.

### **21. Changes to the By-Laws**

These By-Laws may be amended on the basis of resolutions adopted by a duly convened extraordinary National Convention, with the favourable vote of 60% of the members attending who have voting rights.

### **22. Reference to the Civil Code**

The provisions of the Civil Code shall apply to any matters not provided for in these By-Laws.

### **Transitional provision**

The requirement of a prior four year registration period for members of the National Governing Council and the Guarantors' Committee shall come into force on 1 June 2017.

*By-Laws approved by the extraordinary National Convention of the Members held on 1 June 2013*