ESTSS Charter summary

The ESTSS charter covers the roles and aims of the ESTSS from a legal and administrative perspective. The aim of this short document is to highlight the important elements of the charter in plain English. This should allow ESTSS members (and other people who are interested) to understand what the charter means.

The ESTSS is officially based in The Netherlands. The main aim of the ESTSS is to promote knowledge of the effects of extraordinary events and their long-term consequences for those affected by them. This includes furthering the understanding of treatment options for traumatic stress related conditions.

Members of the ESTSS may be residents of any European country, including Turkey, Cyprus and the states to the west of the Ural and Greenland in the west. A register of members, including their addresses, will be kept by the Board. Full members can either join ESTSS individually or be part of a 'member' or 'affiliate' society – these are societies that have similar aims to the ESTSS, have more than 20 members and that have agreed that their entire membership will also be ESTSS members. ESTSS also accepts supporters (who are individuals that have declared that they are prepared to support the Society financially); however only full members have voting rights. If there are doubts about whether a person is entitled to join ESTSS or not, then the ESTSS Board will decide. The Board can also decide to cancel an individual's membership if they are thought to no longer meet the requirements for membership.

All members and supporters are required to pay an annual contribution; the amount will be determined by the General Meeting and the ESTSS Board. The Board will be composed of three or more people who are appointed by the General Meeting. Board members can be dismissed or suspended by the General Meeting, but they are otherwise expected to resign by rotation two years after their appointment at the latest. Retiring members may be re-appointed twice. The Board will include a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The outcomes of Board meetings will be recorded as minutes.

The Board effectively works on behalf of the members. A General Meeting should be held every year, some six months after the end of the financial year at the latest. However, other General Meetings can be held as often as deemed desirable by the Board. Access to the General Meeting is granted to all Members of the Society, all Student Members, Associate Members and all Supporters; however only full members can vote. The outcome of a vote is determined by the opinion of the Chairman whose decision is decisive. However, such decisions can be challenged if the challenge is done so immediately.

The Articles of the Society can only be amended by a General Meeting. To pass a resolution in order to amend the Articles, at least two thirds of the votes cast are needed. Such meetings should have at least two thirds of the Members present. Should it be required, the Society can be dissolved after a resolution to this effect passed by the General Meeting.