

The British Interplanetary Society Branch Guidelines

Background and Acknowledgements

This document derives from the International Branches Terms of Reference (reflecting its structure and limiting the content to the aspects of interest to a UK Regional branch).

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Notes:

- These Terms of Reference are designed for Branches covering a whole Region in the UK and Internationally.
- Parts highlighted in yellow in the appendix constitute the required information portion of the Branch Information template.

Glossary of Terms:

- 'The Society', 'The British Interplanetary Society', and 'BIS HQ' refers to The British Interplanetary Society Headquarters, its Council (being Trustees and Directors) and its waged staff.
- 'Branch' or 'Regional Branch' refers to the definition given at 1.1.
- 'Geographical domain' refers to the points defined in 2.1.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REGIONAL BRANCHES

1. Definition of a BIS Regional Branch

1.1 A British Interplanetary Society Regional Branch is a collection of Members and Fellows of The Society, who have an interest in coming together to pursue the mission of The Society in their local region defined within the UK or Internationally.

1.2 **Constitution:** A Branch must act within the constitution of The Society, whilst adhering to the BIS Articles and Bye Laws, including any rules set out within the Bye Laws relating to Branches.

1.3 A Regional Branch must consist of at least two (2) Members of The Society and at least one of these must be a Fellow of The Society.

2. Roles and Responsibilities in the Geographic Domain

2.1 The Geographic Domain where the Branch has an organisational role on behalf of the Society, must be well-defined and clearly stated to better coordinate efforts among other groups and must not intrude into the Geographical Domain of another branch.

2.2 In the UK Branches will be based on defined regional geographic areas. International Branches should cover one nation. There should be only one international Branch in any given nation.

2.3 The Branch Lead should agree with all the terms contained in the BIS Council's Branch Guidelines (this document) with the understanding that the Regional Branch can represent the Society in its own well-defined geographic domain or local area.

2.4 A Branch is responsible for:

- Representing The Society by promoting its national or international activities and encouraging membership of The Society.
- Ensuring that all payments (e.g. for new/renewing memberships, Society merchandise, etc) are directed through BIS HQ (ideally by website, or by telephone within UK office hours).
- Hosting, or participating in, local events and managing local projects and activities under the BIS name.
- Facilitating orders for publications or other items.
- Providing information about BIS history, projects, activities and membership.

2.4 A Branch may be the point of contact in relationships between the BIS and

institutions such as schools, academia and industries in liaison with the relevant BIS Committees. This role should be exercised in the above-mentioned, well-defined Geographical Domain.

3. Financial terms

3.1 The Branch should only handle payments from members and the public in extremis, and payments for merchandise provided by HQ or memberships should be made through an agreed online portal unless there is a pre-agreed arrangement. This is to ensure compliance with accounting, UK VAT and PCI DSS (debit/credit card payments) legislation.

3.2 Any merchandise produced (in line with 6.4) must be sold in accordance with local legislation.

3.3 A Branch must handle any monetary transfer, along with any accompanying breakdown of the payments, to BIS HQ in a form compliant with local laws.

3.4 Payments to suppliers must be made direct from BIS HQ, and no financial commitments must be entered into without prior authorisation from HQ.

3.5 Payments to the BIS must be made direct to BIS HQ. BIS HQ will be responsible for generating invoices and confirming receipt of the payment.

3.6 The Society will not be held responsible for any debts incurred by any Branch.

3.7 All formal financial transactions, including donations, must be reported (in line with 8.6) to The Society, and profits/donations transferred in full to the BIS unless otherwise agreed with BIS HQ or Council.

3.8 A Branch is not authorised to claim from HQ any travel cost or out-of-pocket expenses for its members or guests.

3.9 Any concerns regarding local financial regulations must be declared immediately to The Society CEO.

4. Membership

4.1 All Branch Members must be paid-up Members/Fellows of The Society.

4.2 A Branch must not charge any additional fees for Regional Branch participation or membership.

4.3 BIS HQ will be responsible for managing Regional Membership lists and ensuring

that these remain up to date.

4.4 BIS HQ will handle notifications to all of its Members in the Geographic Domain and issue messages supplied from the Branch, whilst also providing contact details of Branch Officers where people might wish to make direct contact.

4.5 The Secretariat Officer of The Society must be prompt in circulating information and any concerns must again be escalated to the BIS CEO.

4.6 The Society will promote the Branch Events via the Society's website Branches section and via direct e-mail as requested by the Regional Branch Officers. These events may also be publicised in advance within SpaceFlight magazine and/or the BIS Newsletter where possible/appropriate.

5. Data Protection of Branch Members

5.1 The central member list for the Branch will be held on The Society's membership registration system and mailings to Branch members must be coordinated via The Society's Secretariat Officer.

5.2 A Branch must abide by UK Data Protection law (DPA 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations) and The Society's Data Protection Policy. For international branches, additional local regulations may apply and must be abided by.

NB: Let it be understood that any data held about members is, by law, to be treated confidentially, and that any data provided to the Branch is treated by the ICO (the British Information Commissioner's Office) as though it is held by The Society at HQ level. As a result, the BIS CEO is accountable for ensuring that it is handled correctly as the data protection lead.

Please be aware: If the Society is not aware that it holds the information, it is still liable for how it is used and any data breaches.

6. Local Activities

6.1 A Branch can prepare and organise its own meetings, activities and events to suit its local members and promote The Society to potential new members.

6.2 Branches should keep The Society HQ informed of all their local activities and should make full use of the Branches section of The Society's website to promote their local activities and keep all members informed.

6.3 The Society will aim to make an effort to hold a national event in a UK Branch location once a year, on a rotating basis, by mutual agreement and proposed by the

relevant branch. The Branch will be expected to manage the event, together with BIS HQ. This clause does not apply to international branches.

6.4 International branches should aim to make an effort to hold a national event in their own country for their local members. They will seek participation from the Council or BIS HQ where possible, which may be physical or virtual. This clause does not apply to UK regional branches.

6.5 If a Branch is producing branded collateral (including leaflets, merchandise, etc.) the design and product must be approved by BIS HQ.

7. Collaborations

7.1 Branches are encouraged to collaborate with other local societies or groups to increase the reach of events and, where possible, share venues and costs.

7.2 Any collaborations must be authorised by The Society in advance.

7.3 Participation in events should be institutionally recognised by means of promotional materials (newsletters, press-releases, social media engagement, or other communications) approved by The Society.

7.4 Cooperation with other entities shall not entitle the persons belonging to these entities to speak on behalf of the BIS or to claim membership to it. Clear agreements on roles and financial issues shall also be agreed in advance before the joint participation in events.

7.5 Branches are not authorised to act in any legally or binding way on behalf of The Society. Such acts include, but are not restricted to, signing MOUs, contracts or other agreements, which must be approved by BIS Council.

8. Management of the Branch

8.1 Regional Branches can decide on the Management Team structure that best suits it and its activities, but it must assign three (3) Management roles, which must be held by Members or Fellows of the Society:

8.1.1 One member of The Branch must be designated as the **Branch Lead**. The Branch Lead is responsible for all aspects of the Branch and its management team and ensuring that The Society's interests are protected, and BIS HQ is kept informed of Branch activities at all times. The Branch Lead must be a Fellow of the BIS, and must be approved by Council.

8.1.2 One member of The Branch must be designated as the **Branch Secretary**.

The Branch Secretary is the primary contact for the Branch and is responsible for all Branch admin and internal communications with The Society.

8.1.3 One member of the Branch must be designated **Operations/Finance Lead**. The Operations Lead is responsible for managing events, including the financial requirements for the Branch [section 3].

Please Note: Whilst The Society encourages a diverse range of people running each Branch, the aforementioned roles can be held by the same person, in the event that no other Branch members volunteer.

8.2 One member of the Branch may be designated as the delegated official of the Branch for all Data Protection and GDPR-related purposes.

8.3 One or more Branch members can also be appointed as **Activity Leads** for the management of specific projects or events.

8.4 The Branch Lead will have the responsibility for the formal running of the Branch, and for the handling of local tasks.

8.5 The Branch Lead shall report regularly to The Society's **Council Lead for Branches** and keep them fully informed of all the activities and events performed by the Branch.

8.6 **Reports:** The Branch should provide a written update, and financial report, at least half-yearly (June and December), to the Council Lead for Branches (copied to BIS CEO), and these will be collated to Council. If minutes are taken for committee meetings at Branch level, these must be included.

9. Branch Conduct Rules

9.1 The Branch agree to uphold and protect the reputation of The Society at all times. They further agree that any potentially harmful or damaging issue is to be declared to the BIS CEO immediately.

9.2 The Branch must only act within its remit, within its geographical area. (Noting that members from outside that Branch boundaries may choose to be affiliated with no issues, but the Branch cannot go to other regions and territories unilaterally.)

9.3 The Branch must not make policy statements unless these are consistent with such statements issued from The Society.

9.4 All press and media enquiries must be referred to The Society's head office. The Society must not withhold or delay a response unreasonably.

10. Legal Requirements for Branches

10.1 A Branch must ensure that they act within the law of the country they are operating, as well as within English law.

10.2 Any concerns regarding legal status or actions must be escalated to the CEO immediately.

APPENDIX 1 - BIS BRANCH GUIDELINES: AGREEMENT TO FORM BRANCH

This agreement is for the establishment of a Branch of the BIS, which will henceforth be referred to as 'BIS-<Nation/Region>'. The creation of a BIS Branch must be in line with the Branch Guidelines, as approved by the BIS Council from time to time.

In the first instance a conversation should be had with the Council Lead for Branches. This form is then completed for final approval by Council.

BIS <Nation / Region> International Branch Organisation			
Geographical Description	<i>Add a short description of the area of activity of the Branch</i>		
Main Location	<i>Principal geographical location</i>		
BRANCH ROLES	TITLE	FULL NAME	Delete as appropriate
Branch Lead			FBIS
Secretary			MBIS/FBIS
Operations/Finance Lead			MBIS/FBIS
Primary Contact			MBIS/FBIS
GDPR Official			MBIS/FBIS

The above Branch Guidelines are herewith agreed by the undersigned:

For the BIS-< Nation/Region> Branch:

Branch Lead:

Second Branch representative:

For the British Interplanetary Society:

BIS President:

Council Lead for Branches:

BIS CEO:

Date:

Location: