GOVERNANCE PACK

Ambedkarite Buddhist Global Network UK

Charitable Incorporated Organisation — application document set

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Charity Commission for England and Wales

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Website: ambedkaritebuddhistsociety.org

Founder trustees:

- **Mr Prafulla Ramteke** — Founder Trustee / Chair
- **Miss Siddhi Dhiwar** — Trustee / Secretary
- **Mr Vishwas Dhiwar** — Trustee

This pack contains every governance document required by the Charity Commission for a CIO application: constitution, statement of public benefit, mission and values, trustee code of conduct, conflict of interest policy, safeguarding policy, equality and diversity policy, financial controls, risk register, data protection notice, and the trustee declaration template.

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SECTION 1

Constitution (Association CIO)

This is a model Association Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) constitution, adapted from the Charity Commission's published template for an association CIO. The form of the CIO is that of an Association CIO: it has voting members other than the trustees.

1. Name

The name of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("the CIO") is the **Ambedkarite Buddhist Global Network UK**.

2. National location of principal office

The principal office of the CIO is in England and Wales.

3. Objects

The objects of the CIO are, for the public benefit: (1) To advance the Buddhist religion, particularly in the Ambedkarite tradition, for the public benefit in the United Kingdom and internationally where consistent with the charity's objects. (2) To advance education for the public in Buddhist philosophy, ethics, equality, liberty, fraternity, compassion and social wellbeing. (3) To promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion for the public benefit, particularly for disadvantaged or underserved communities.

Nothing in this constitution authorises an application of the property of the CIO for purposes which are not charitable in accordance with section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and section 2 of the Charities Act 2011.

4. Powers

The CIO has power to do anything which is calculated to further its objects or is conducive or incidental to doing so. In particular the CIO has power to:

- raise funds (provided that in raising funds the CIO must not undertake any substantial permanent trading activity);
- buy, sell, lease, mortgage or otherwise deal with any property;
- borrow money and give security for loans;
- employ paid or unpaid staff and engage volunteers (subject to clause 6);
- deposit or invest funds and acquire investments in any manner;
- co-operate with and support other charities and statutory bodies;
- further its charitable purposes through physical, digital, hybrid and platform-based means — including charitable online teaching, meetings, educational programmes, religious services and public engagement — where this widens public access and improves public benefit;
- operate, maintain and develop its own digital platform infrastructure as charitable mission infrastructure (and not as a commercial undertaking) in furtherance of the objects;
- do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

5. Application of income and property

The income and property of the CIO must be applied solely in promoting the objects. A charity trustee is entitled to be reimbursed from the property of the CIO or may pay out of such property reasonable expenses properly incurred by them when acting on behalf of the CIO. A charity trustee may benefit from trustee indemnity insurance cover purchased at the CIO's expense in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 189 of the Charities Act 2011.

6. Benefits and payments to charity trustees and connected persons

No charity trustee or connected person may buy or receive any goods or services from the CIO on terms preferential to those applicable to members of the public. No charity trustee or connected person may sell goods, services, or any interest in land to the CIO. No charity trustee may be employed by, or receive any remuneration from the CIO other than as expressly permitted by sub-clause (3). No charity trustee or connected person may receive any other financial benefit from the CIO unless: (a) it is permitted by sub-clause (3); or (b) it is authorised by the court or the prior written consent of the Charity Commission has been obtained.

(3) A charity trustee or connected person may receive a benefit from the CIO as a beneficiary of the CIO provided that a majority of the charity trustees do not benefit in this way. A charity trustee or connected person may enter into a contract for the supply of services, or of goods that are supplied in connection with the provision of services, to the CIO where that is permitted in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, sections 185 to 188 of the Charities Act 2011.

7. Conflicts of interest

A charity trustee must: (a) declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which they have in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the CIO or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the CIO which has not previously been declared; and (b) absent themselves from any discussions of the charity trustees in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between their duty to act solely in the interests of the CIO and any personal interest (including but not limited to any personal financial interest). Any charity trustee absenting themselves from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the charity trustees on the matter.

8. Liability of members to contribute to the assets of the CIO if it is wound up

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

9. Membership of the CIO

(1) Admission of new members. Membership of the CIO is open to any natural person aged 16 or over who: (a) supports the objects of the CIO; (b) has applied in the manner required by the charity trustees; and (c) has been approved by the charity trustees.

(2) The charity trustees may impose a reasonable subscription as a condition of membership; however, the trustees must ensure that core public-benefit activities of the CIO remain accessible to those who cannot afford a subscription, including through hardship waivers.

(3) Termination of membership. Membership is terminated if: (a) the member dies or, if it is an organisation, ceases to exist; (b) the member resigns by written notice to the CIO; (c) any subscription due is more than six months in arrears (in which case the trustees may, after giving the member a reasonable opportunity to bring the subscription up to date, terminate membership); or (d) the member is removed by resolution of the trustees on the ground that in their reasonable opinion

the member's continued membership is harmful to the CIO and the member has been given a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

10. Members' decisions

Except for those decisions reserved by this constitution or by general law to a particular procedure, any decision may be taken either by a vote at a general meeting or by written resolution. A simple majority of votes cast is required unless this constitution or the Charities Act 2011 require otherwise (e.g. dissolution or amendment of an entrenched provision require a 75% majority).

11. General meetings of members

(1) The CIO must hold an Annual General Meeting ("AGM") each calendar year. Not more than 15 months may elapse between successive AGMs. (2) Notice of any AGM or other general meeting must be given to all members in writing at least 14 clear days in advance. (3) The quorum is 10% of the members entitled to attend and vote, or three members entitled to attend and vote (whichever is the greater).

12. Charity trustees

(1) The number of charity trustees shall be not less than three. (2) The first charity trustees are: Mr Prafulla Ramteke (Founder Trustee / Chair); Miss Siddhi Dhiwar (Trustee / Secretary); Mr Vishwas Dhiwar (Trustee).

(3) Appointment of trustees. Trustees are appointed by ordinary resolution of the members at an AGM, or, between AGMs, by resolution of the existing trustees subject to ratification at the next AGM. (4) Information for new trustees. The trustees must ensure that any new trustee is supplied with a copy of this constitution and signs a declaration of eligibility and acceptance.

13. Retirement and removal of charity trustees

(1) A trustee ceases to hold office if they: (a) retire by giving written notice to the CIO; (b) become disqualified under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011; (c) cease to be eligible under sub-clause (2); or (d) are removed by resolution of the other trustees on the grounds set out in sub-clause (3).

(2) Eligibility. A person is eligible to be a trustee if they are aged 16 or over, are not disqualified under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011, and have signed a declaration of eligibility and acceptance.

(3) Grounds for removal include: (a) absence without prior consent from three consecutive trustee meetings; (b) breach of the Code of Conduct; (c) failure to act in the best interests of the CIO. The trustee concerned must be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard before any vote on their removal.

(4) Term of office. Trustees are appointed for an initial term of three years and may be re-appointed for further three-year terms.

14. Trustee meetings

(1) The trustees must meet at least four times each year. (2) Notice of at least seven days must be given unless waived by all trustees. (3) The quorum is two trustees, or one-third of the number of trustees in office (whichever is the greater). (4) Decisions are taken by simple majority of those present and voting. (5) The Chair has a casting vote. (6) The trustees may participate in a meeting by telephone or video conference and are considered present at the meeting.

15. Delegation

The trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee, a sub-committee, or to any individual trustee, employee, or volunteer, on such terms as they decide. The trustees must keep written records of decisions taken under such delegation and remain ultimately responsible for those decisions.

16. Amendment of constitution

(1) Subject to sub-clause (2), this constitution may only be amended by resolution of the members in general meeting passed by a 75% majority of votes cast. (2) Any amendment to the Objects clause (3), the Application of Income and Property clause (5), the Benefits to Trustees clause (6), the Amendment clause (16), or the Dissolution clause (17) requires the prior written consent of the Charity Commission, in accordance with section 226 of the Charities Act 2011.

17. Voluntary winding up or dissolution

(1) The CIO may be wound up or dissolved by a resolution of the members passed by a 75% majority of votes cast at a general meeting. (2) On dissolution, any net assets remaining after the satisfaction of debts and liabilities must be applied or transferred to one or more other charities with objects similar to those of the CIO. The trustees must make all reasonable efforts to identify a suitable recipient charity.

18. Interpretation

In this constitution: "connected person" means a person connected with a charity trustee within the meaning of section 188 of the Charities Act 2011; "charity trustees" means the charity trustees for the time being of the CIO; "the Commission" means the Charity Commission for England and Wales; "member" and "membership" refer to membership of the CIO under clause 9; "the Act" means the Charities Act 2011.

SECTION 2

Statement of Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and activities and in planning future activities.

Who benefits

- British Buddhists, particularly those drawn to the Ambedkarite tradition;
- people from Scheduled-Caste and Dalit backgrounds across the United Kingdom;
- young people aged 5–25 seeking ethical education rooted in equality and compassion;
- the wider public who attend our public Dhamma talks and cultural events.

How they benefit

- Free access to weekly online Dhamma teaching and meditation sessions delivered through the CIO's own charitable digital platform;
- Free educational modules (KS1, KS3, KS4 levels) on Buddhism and Dr Ambedkar's vision;
- Community gatherings, retreats, and cultural events open to all (in person and via the platform);
- A confidential mutual-aid scheme for members in hardship (when operational);
- Public-interest publications and translations of historic Buddhist texts.

Platform-based charitable delivery

The CIO operates its own digital platform as charitable mission infrastructure. The platform is wholly owned by the CIO, operated by volunteer trustees and members, not licensed or sold to any third party, and generates no commercial income. It exists solely to deliver the CIO's charitable objects and to widen public access — overcoming barriers of distance across UK cities, disability and mobility, caring responsibilities, elderly participation, the absence of a local Buddhist centre, financial means, and working-family time constraints.

Charging and access

Membership of the charity is free at the baseline tier. Optional paid tiers (£24 / £60 / £250) exist for those who wish to support the charity financially but confer no exclusive religious benefit. Hardship waivers are available on request and confidential to the trustees.

SECTION 3

Mission, Vision & Values

Mission

To advance the Buddhist faith in the tradition revived by Dr B. R. Ambedkar — a path that combines ethical practice with the active dismantling of caste, inequality and prejudice — and to do so visibly, lawfully and compassionately in the United Kingdom.

Vision

A British Sangha in which every person — regardless of caste, race, gender, or class — encounters the Dhamma as a living, equal, and dignifying tradition.

Values

- **Equality (samat■):** every member of the Sangha is of equal worth;
- **Wisdom (paññ■):** we question, we study, we keep records;
- **Compassion (karu■■):** our service extends beyond our own community;
- **Integrity:** our governance is open, accountable and recorded;
- **Educate · Agitate · Organise:** Babasaheb's three-word programme is our long-term direction.

SECTION 4

Trustee & Member Code of Conduct

All trustees, members, volunteers and paid representatives of the CIO are expected to abide by this Code of Conduct. Breaches may be considered by the trustees and may result in suspension or termination of membership.

Conduct

- Act always in the best interests of the CIO and its beneficiaries;
- Treat every person with respect, regardless of caste, race, faith, gender, sexuality, age or ability;
- Use only respectful, non-discriminatory language in all CIO settings, online and offline;
- Refuse to engage in or condone bullying, harassment, abuse or discrimination;
- Respect confidentiality of trustee meetings and member personal data;
- Decline gifts or hospitality which could compromise impartial judgement (see Conflict of Interest);
- Refer all safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay;
- Refuse to use the CIO's name, branding, or networks to promote personal commercial interest.

Sanctions

Where the trustees, on a balance of probabilities, find a breach of this Code, sanctions available include: a private letter of expectations; a formal written warning; suspension from CIO platforms for a defined period; or termination of membership.

SECTION 5

Conflict of Interest policy

Purpose

This policy ensures that decisions taken by the trustees are made solely in the best interests of the CIO and are not influenced by personal interests.

What is a conflict of interest

A conflict of interest arises where a trustee's personal interests, or the interests of a connected person, could influence or be perceived to influence a decision of the trustees. Examples include: a contract with a trustee or their family; an appointment of a connected person; a grant to an organisation in which a trustee holds office.

Trustee duties

- Declare any personal or connected interest in writing on appointment, and update annually;
- Declare any specific conflict on every agenda item at the start of each trustee meeting;
- Withdraw from any vote on a matter in which a material interest exists;
- Where the conflict is severe, withdraw from the discussion entirely;
- Permit the secretary to record the declaration and withdrawal in the minutes.

Register of interests

The Secretary maintains a Register of Interests which is open to inspection by any trustee and, on reasonable notice, by any member. The Register is reviewed annually.

SECTION 6

Safeguarding policy

Statement

The CIO is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and adults at risk who come into contact with our activities. Safeguarding is the responsibility of every trustee, volunteer and member.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is the trustee responsible for handling safeguarding concerns. The DSL is appointed by the trustees and trained in line with NSPCC and Charity Commission guidance. Contact: safeguarding@ambedkaritebuddhistglobalnetworkuk.com.

Recognising a concern

- Direct disclosure by a child or adult at risk;
- Observed signs of physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse;
- Inappropriate behaviour by an adult towards a child;
- Online harm — grooming, harassment or extremism.

Responding to a concern

- Listen calmly; do not interrupt or interrogate;
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing;
- Do NOT promise confidentiality — explain that you must report;
- Record what was said in the person's own words as soon as possible;
- Report to the DSL the same day; escalate to police or social services where required by law.

Recruitment

Volunteers in roles involving regular contact with children or adults at risk are subject to an enhanced DBS check and two satisfactory references. Children's events are run with a minimum staffing ratio of one adult per eight children, with at least two adults present at all times.

SECTION 7

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy

Commitment

The CIO is rooted in the teaching of Dr B. R. Ambedkar, for whom the eradication of caste discrimination and the achievement of social equality were central. We therefore commit unconditionally to the equal treatment of every person, regardless of caste, race, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality, age, disability, marital status, or socio-economic background.

Practical measures

- All public events are advertised in accessible English and, where resources allow, in community languages;
- Trustee appointments are made on the basis of skills, commitment and lived community connection; no caste, gender, or ethnic test is applied;
- Reasonable adjustments are offered for participants with disabilities on request;
- Hardship and access bursaries are offered for in-person events;
- Complaints of discrimination are taken seriously and investigated promptly under the Complaints Procedure (see ABS website).

Caste discrimination

The CIO recognises caste-based discrimination as a form of unlawful discrimination in the UK by virtue of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 (particularly race, religion and belief). Any allegation of caste-based discrimination within ABGN-UK activities is treated with the same seriousness as any other form of unlawful discrimination.

SECTION 8

Financial controls & reserves policy

Income

The CIO's income is derived from voluntary donations, membership subscriptions, grants from charitable foundations, and occasional sponsorship of public events. All income is paid into a dedicated charity bank account.

Authorisation of expenditure

- Up to £200: any trustee with written record;
- £201 – £1,000: two trustees jointly, with written record;
- Over £1,000: full trustee resolution and recorded in the minutes.

Reserves policy

The CIO aims to maintain unrestricted reserves equivalent to three months' anticipated operating costs to cover unforeseen interruptions to income. The reserves position is reviewed at every trustee meeting and reported in the annual return.

Banking

All CIO funds are held in a UK-regulated charity bank account. The mandate requires two trustees to authorise any payment above £200. Cash is not held except for small petty-cash floats at events, which are reconciled within 7 days.

Annual return

The Treasurer (or, in the absence of a separate Treasurer, the Chair) prepares the annual return and accounts in accordance with the Charity Commission's published threshold-based requirements. Accounts are independently examined for any year in which gross income exceeds £25,000.

SECTION 9

Risk register

The trustees maintain and review this risk register at every trustee meeting. Mitigations are owned by named trustees and progress is recorded in the minutes.

#	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
1	Loss of safeguarding capacity (DSL unavailable)	Low	High	Deputy DSL trained; safeguarding hotline open to all
2	Financial fraud or unauthorised payment	Low	High	Two-trustee authorisation above £200; monthly bank reconcilia
3	Trustee conflict of interest unreported	Medium	Medium	Standing agenda item; written declarations; annual review
4	Reputational harm from member misconduct online	Medium	Medium	Code of Conduct; moderator authority; clear sanctions
5	GDPR breach of member personal data	Low	High	Encrypted storage; minimal data collection; named DPO
6	Caste-related harassment within Sangha	Low	High	EDI policy; confidential reporting; trustee oversight
7	Loss of key volunteer / trustee	Medium	Medium	Skills audit; succession plan; written role descriptions
8	Failure to meet objects (mission drift)	Low	Medium	Annual strategy review against constitution
9	Cyber-attack on member platform	Low	Medium	Industry-standard auth; backups; password rotation
10	Withdrawal of grant or major donor	Medium	Medium	Reserves policy; diversified income; donor-care plan
11	Charitable platform outage during scheduled service	Medium	Medium	Hot-standby hosting; documented fall-back to in-person and au
12	Safeguarding incident in a digital (platform) space	Low	High	Trained moderators on every session; no 1:1 minor-adult chat;
13	Moderation failure / online abuse on platform	Medium	Medium	Code of Conduct; rapid mute/remove tools; transparent appeal

SECTION 10

Data Protection / Privacy notice

Data controller

The data controller for the purposes of UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 is Ambedkarite Buddhist Global Network UK (CIO in formation).

What we collect

- Name, email, postal town (for members);
- Payment confirmation reference (we do **not** store card details);
- Records of attendance at events;
- Posts, comments and votes within member platforms (votes are anonymised — see Section 11).

Lawful basis

- Contract — to deliver membership benefits;
- Legitimate interests — to operate as a charity and account for donations;
- Consent — for marketing emails (opt-in only).

Retention

We keep member records for the duration of membership plus six years (the standard period for charity record-keeping). Safeguarding records are kept for as long as the law requires.

Your rights

You have the right to access, rectify, erase, restrict or port your personal data, and the right to object to processing. To exercise any of these rights, contact privacy@ambedkaritebuddhistglobalnetworkuk.com. You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

SECTION 11

Trustee declaration (template)

This declaration must be signed and dated by every trustee on appointment and re-signed at the start of each financial year.

Declaration

- I am over 16 years of age.
- I am not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 (which includes, but is not limited to, unspent convictions for offences of dishonesty or deception, undischarged bankruptcy, and prior removal as a charity trustee for misconduct).
- I will act in the best interests of the charity and within its objects.
- I will declare any personal interest that conflicts with my duties as a trustee and will withdraw from any decision on such matters.
- I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct, the Conflict of Interest policy, the Safeguarding policy, and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy of the CIO.
- I acknowledge that I share joint and several responsibility with my fellow trustees for the proper administration of the charity.

Trustee details

Full name: _____

Postal address (not published): _____

Email: _____

Date of birth (held for Commission verification only): _____

Date signed: _____ Signature: _____

Counter-signed by Chair

Full name: _____ Date: _____
Signature: _____