

Historical and Organizational Background

Below you will find the founding statutes for the General Anthroposophical Society that Rudolf Steiner formulated during the Christmas Conference 1923/24. It describes the task and objectives of the Society and the School of Spiritual Science. The Current statutes of the Society follow afterwards.

Foundation Statute of the Anthroposophical Society of 1923

1. The Anthroposophical Society is to be an association of people whose will it is to nurture the life of the soul, both in the individual and in human society, on the basis of a true knowledge of the spiritual world.
 2. The persons gathered at the Goetheanum in Dornach at Christmas, 1923, both the individuals and the groups represented, form the nucleus of the Society. They are convinced that there exists in our time a genuine science of the spiritual world, elaborated for years past, and in important particulars already published; and that the civilisation of today is lacking the cultivation of such a science. This cultivation is to be the task of the Anthroposophical Society. It will endeavour to fulfil this task by making the anthroposophical spiritual science cultivated at the Goetheanum in Dornach the centre of its activities, together with all that results from this for brotherhood in human relationships and for the moral and religious as well as the artistic and cultural life.¹
 3. The persons gathered in Dornach as the nucleus of the Society recognise and endorse the view of the leadership at the Goetheanum (represented by the Vorstand [Executive Council] formed at the Foundation Meeting): 'Anthroposophy, as fostered at the Goetheanum, leads to results which can serve every human being as a stimulus to spiritual life, whatever their nation, social standing or religion. They can lead to a social life genuinely built on brotherly love. No special degree of academic learning is required to make them one's own and to found one's life upon them, but only an open-minded human nature. Research into these results, however, as well as competent evaluation of them, depends upon spiritual-scientific training, which is to be acquired step by step. These results are in their own way as exact as the results of genuine natural science. When they attain general recognition in the same way as these, they will
- bring about comparable progress in all spheres of life, not only in the spiritual but also in the practical realm.'
 4. The Anthroposophical Society is in no sense a secret society, but is entirely public. Anyone can become a member, without regard to nationality, social standing, religion, scientific or artistic conviction, who considers as justified the existence of an institution such as the Goetheanum in Dornach, in its capacity as a School of Spiritual Science. The Anthroposophical Society rejects any kind of sectarian activity. Party politics it considers not to be within its task.
 5. The Anthroposophical Society sees the School of Spiritual Science in Dornach as a centre for its activity. The School will be composed of three classes. Members of the Society will be admitted to the School on their own application after a period of membership to be determined by the leadership at the Goetheanum. They enter in this way the First Class of the School of Spiritual Science. Admission to the Second or Third Classes² takes place when the person requesting this is deemed eligible by the leadership at the Goetheanum.
 6. Every member of the Anthroposophical Society has the right to attend all lectures, performances and meetings arranged by the society, under conditions to be announced by the Vorstand.
 7. The organising of the School of Spiritual Science is, to begin with, the responsibility of Rudolf Steiner, who will appoint his collaborators and his possible successor.
 8. All publications of the Society shall be public, in the same sense as are those of other public societies.³ The publications of the School of Spiritual Science will form no exception as regards this public character; however, the leadership of the School reserves

1 The Anthroposophical Society is in continuity with the Society founded in 1912. It would like, however, to create an independent point of departure, in keeping with the true spirit of the present time, for the objectives established at that time.

2 These have not yet been established.

3 The conditions under which one acquires training have also been made public, and their publication will be continued.

the right to deny in advance the validity of any judgment on these publications which is not based on the same training from which they have been derived. Consequently, they will regard as justified no judgement which is not based on an appropriate preliminary training, as is also the common practice in the recognised scientific world. Thus, the publications of the School of Spiritual Science will bear the following note: 'Printed as manuscript for members of the School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum, ... Class. No one is considered competent to judge the content, who has not acquired – through the School itself or in a manner recognised by the School as equivalent - the requisite preliminary knowledge. Other opinions will be disregarded, to the extent that the authors of such works will not enter into a discussion about them.'

9. The purpose of the Anthroposophical Society will be the furtherance of spiritual research; that of the School of Spiritual Science will be this research itself. A dogmatic stand in any field whatsoever is to be excluded from the Anthroposophical Society.

10. The Anthroposophical Society shall hold a regular General Meeting at the Goetheanum each year, at which time the Vorstand shall present a full report with accounting. The agenda for this meeting shall be communicated by the Vorstand to all members, together with the invitation, six weeks before the meeting. The Vorstand may call special meetings and fix the agenda for them. Invitations to such meetings shall be sent to members three weeks in advance. Motions proposed by individual members or groups of members shall be submitted one week before the General Meeting.

11. Members may join together in smaller or larger groups on any basis of locality or subject. The headquarters of the Anthroposophical Society is at the Goetheanum. From there the Vorstand shall bring to the attention of the members or groups of members what it considers to be the task of the Society. The Vorstand communicates with officials elected or appointed by the various groups. Admission of

members will be the concern of the individual groups; the certificate of membership shall, however, be placed before the Vorstand in Dornach, and shall be signed by them out of their confidence in the officials of the groups. In general, every member should join a group. Only those for whom it is quite impossible to find entry to a group should apply directly to Dornach for membership.

12. Membership dues shall be fixed by the individual groups; each group shall, however, submit 15 Swiss Francs⁴ for each of its members to the central leadership of the Society at the Goetheanum.

13. Each working group formulates its own statutes, but these must not be incompatible with the Statutes of the Anthroposophical Society.

14. The organ of the society is the weekly 'Das Goetheanum', which for this purpose is provided with a supplement⁵ containing the official communications of the Society. This enlarged edition of 'Das Goetheanum' will be supplied to members of the Anthroposophical Society only.

The Founding Vorstand
President Dr. Rudolf Steiner
Vice-President Albert Steffen
Recorder Dr. Ita Wegman
Members Marie Steiner
Dr. Elisabeth Vreede
Secretary and Treasurer Dr. Guenther Wachsmuth

On the basis of the founding statute of 1923 and the statutes, the General Anthroposophical Society can continue striving to accomplish its task of "combining the greatest conceivable openness with true and genuine esotericism" (Rudolf Steiner, GA 260).

4 At the General Meeting at Easter 1990 this was raised from 100 to 125 Swiss Francs, 300 Francs for those attached directly to Dornach.

5 For English-speaking members, "Anthroposophy Worldwide" is published ten times a year and contains translations of the supplement.