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Chapters' Corner

Draft for the Strengthening of the Local Chapters of the World Future Society



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[Editor's note: This proposal was discussed briefly among some participants of the Chapter Activities Session 2006 (CAS2006) in Toronto. The national "umbrella" organizations proposed therein have potential to inspire and support WFS chapter growth in countries outside the US. As a separate matter, an umbrella organization for US chapters was proposed to help them obtain 501 (c) (3) registration that qualifies them to receive tax-deductible donations (see *FUTUREtakes* Summer-Fall 2006 issue). Julio's proposal supports both objectives, and *FUTUREtakes* invites your commentary.]

To strengthen World Future Society (WFS) chapters throughout the world and make them more effective, a new organizational paradigm, inspired in part by the franchise model, is proposed.

STRUCTURE

1. We recommend the following basic structure, understanding that each level must communicate with the others before performing any activity:

The World Future Society international organization sits above everything. Below this are National Chapters chartered on a country basis and within them Local Chapters chartered on a regional basis within countries. For example, in the case of Mexico there would be a national Mexican Chapter, within which there would be a Mexico City D.F. chapter. At the National Chapters there will be a President and a manager. The head of the local chapters will be a manager. Although local chapters are independent regarding financing, structure and decision-making, they must coordinate with their respective National Chapters to make events, seminars, conferences, as well as other activities. They must inform the National President as well about membership levels, fees, and general activities. The National President must supervise the local chapters performance and their usage of the World Future Society's name.

Every activity developed by a local chapter must become a bonus for the WFS National and local chapters around the world. National Presidents must be the link between the headquarters of the World Future Society and the National Chapters as well as the local ones.

2. In order to make functional this structure, a fee will be set by the World Future Society. Each chapter will pay this fee, as in a franchise, for every member registered. The WFS will not be able to receive personal registrations anymore. Members must be registered by either a National Chapter or a local one.

BENEFITS FOR NATIONAL CHAPTERS AND MEMBERS

3. The World Future Society must accredit the National Chapters and their Presidents as the official speakers of the organization facing the countries' governments.

4. A basic catalogue of products and services offered by the World Future Society must be created, including products and services from the national and local chapters. Magazines like *The Futurist* and *Future Survey*, the *Futurist Update*, and the newspaper *Foresight, Innovation and Strategy* are already received by the members but some new products can be included: a copy of magazines or bulletins created by chapters around the world, a futurists directory and a DVD with a professional documentary about the future and the organization.

5. A database with information about the future available to every member from the World Future Society can be generated – papers, presentations, maps, statistics, reviews, on line courses, blogs, luncheons, etc. By having a password, members will have the opportunity to search in the data base any information required.

6. It will be up to each chapter to provide an additional service to its members, i.e. seminars, projects, bulletins, magazines, reading clubs, book reviews, luncheons, and working groups on specific topics for example. All of these activities can charge a small fee so that these events could be financed by the chapter itself.

7. Defining an international program of activities and a calendar of events throughout the year, and making efforts to integrate the annual program with regional events, will be achieved only by the constant communication between the headquarters of the World Future Society and the Regional Chapters which, at the same time, will have fluent communication with the National Chapters and the local ones.

A “World Tour” performed by the President of the World Future Society is also suggested. This will help National Chapters in various ways: media coverage, interaction between members and the most important person of our organization, the opportunity to spread nationally and internationally the goals achieved by the host Chapter and the activities to come.

8. To develop a large database of all the members over the world, what they study, their interest areas, and their most recent publications, members will be able to find blogs regarding different topics related to the studies of the future where discussions will take place. Experts should and must be invited to the debates.

Through the database every member will have the chance to meet, to talk and to discuss with students, professionals, scholars, entrepreneurs, businessmen and any member of the World Future Society.

9. To achieve the creation of multidisciplinary working groups, and multinational also if possible, about specific topics regarding the future, these groups might, and should, eventually become groups of experts of the future located all over the world to support all chapters. These groups could talk in conferences, with governments, with enterprises and transnational corporations and get a payment for this through the WFS.

10. By having a futures experts network, the World Future Society will have international projection. Through international conferences and other events, the network members will be invited to participate, and media coverage should be arranged whenever possible.

Next Steps?

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