

The Wholefoods Constitution

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1. Aims.

The aims of the Wholefoods Restaurant are:

- 1) To provide only **vegetarian and vegan food**, using **organic** and ethically produced and traded ingredients wherever possible;
- 2) To encourage **voluntary student participation** at all levels of operation of Wholefoods, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation;
- 3) To demonstrate that a **Collective** (operating by consensus decision-making) is a **viable alternative to hierarchical organisation**;
- 4) To create an atmosphere which **promotes social awareness** and possibilities for social change through, for example, encouraging use of Wholefoods as a venue for student cultural, social and political activities;
- 5) To create an environment which promotes and **encourages open skill-sharing** between members of the Wholefoods community;
- 6) To **purchase from local suppliers** and use alternative marketing systems, including cooperatives, wherever possible;
- 7) To maintain a **not-for-profit philosophy** whereby the restaurant aims to break even.

This means covering all costs, which includes making contributions to the MSA capital reserves fund and the MSA major equipment fund and generating revenue to reinvest into the restaurant as capital or as an emergency fund for less profitable years.

2. Definition of terms.

- 1) **Wholefoods** includes:
 - a) The Wholefoods Restaurant;
 - b) The Wholefoods Café;
 - c) The Wholefoods Coffee Cart
 - d) The Wholefoods Grocery;

- e) The Wholefoods space and its use consistent with the values of the Collective and the aims of the Constitution;
- f) The Wholefoods Collective
- 2) **The Wholefoods Collective** is the managing body of Wholefoods, constituted according to s.3 of the Wholefoods Constitution.
- 3) **Consensus** in the decision-making procedure which is used by the Wholefoods Collective. For a decision to be implemented all full Collective members present at a meeting must agree that the decision is the best decision for the group at the time.
- 4) **Coordinator(s)** are paid staff members who are employed by the Collective to co-ordinate a certain area of Wholefoods, including but not limited to:
 - a) The kitchen;
 - b) The café;
 - c) The grocery;
 - d) Volunteers;
 - e) Functions;
 - f) Publicity.
- 5) **The Cook** is responsible for food preparation. They are strongly encouraged to attend Wholefoods Collective meetings, acknowledging time constraints that they might have.
- 6) **Paid staff** are responsible for serving food, customer service, cash register use and helping train volunteers. It is preferable that they are students and they are strongly encouraged to attend Wholefoods Collective meetings.
- 7) **Volunteers** are students and others who volunteer at Wholefoods in exchange for meal tickets. They are required to go through training in food preparation, customer service and hygiene. They are encouraged to participate in social functions, working bees organised by the Wholefoods Collective, and the Wholefoods Collective itself (as full or partial members).
- 8) **Sub Groups** are groups that are set up within and by the Collective for the express purpose of carrying out one or more set of tasks as assigned by the Collective. Sub Groups can be subsequently set up if the need for such a group arises
- 9) **Email list** is an electronic mail list to which all staff, volunteers and other interested parties may join. It is used to communicate meeting times, important messages, upcoming events, news, etc.

10) **Interested parties** may include Monash University staff and students, MSA staff and office-bearers, regular Wholefoods customers and past Collective members.

3. The Collective.

1) The Wholefoods Collective is made up of full and partial members.

a) **Full members of the Wholefoods Collective** have full consensus rights, which means that they can block consensus. Before being entitled to the privilege and responsibility of blocking consensus a member must:

i) Agree to the aims of the Wholefoods constitution as set out in s.1 of the Wholefoods Constitution;

ii) Have volunteered in the restaurant, café, grocery or space for at least five hours;

iii) Be on a current volunteer or staff roster during a semester, and/or hold a coordinator position; and

iv) Have attended at least three Wholefoods Collective meetings in the last 12 months.

- or by consent of the Collective.

b) **Partial members of the Wholefoods Collective** can contribute to discussions and make proposals in Wholefoods Collective meetings. Partial members can help organise activities and implement ideas that have been approved by the Wholefoods Collective. Partial members of the Wholefoods Collective do not have to meet any obligations, apart from respect for the meeting process, but they cannot block consensus.

2) The Wholefoods Collective shall operate using consensus-decision making.

a) Consensus is a non-voting procedure that requires the agreement with a decision by all full members of the Wholefoods Collective present at a meeting, before such a decision can be implemented.

b) Any person who is a full member of the Wholefoods Collective may, with good reason, block a proposal if they do not agree with that proposal.

c) Should continued discussion and/or reformulations of the original proposal not address these concerns, there should be a cooling off period before the matter is considered again. The designated time frame for the cooling off period shall be agreed upon by the Wholefoods Collective but it should be no more than one week for urgent matters.

3) Meetings shall be facilitated by a person or persons chosen to do so by the Wholefoods Collective.

4) All participants in the Wholefoods Collective meetings shall facilitate themselves so as to ensure that all views are heard.

- 5) Neither aggressive or intimidating behaviour nor abusive language will be tolerated in Collective meetings. All participants in Wholefoods collective meetings deserve the right to speak and be heard on issues being discussed, without interruption.
- 6) Wholefoods Collective members may only act on behalf of the Wholefoods Collective where their actions are authorised by the Wholefoods Collective.
- 7) The Wholefoods Collective's obligations shall include:
 - a) Contributing to problem solving and improving the restaurant;
 - b) Hiring new paid staff, coordinators and a cook, as necessary; and
 - c) Any other tasks the Collective sees fit to undertake.
- 8) The Wholefoods Collective may:
 - a) Organise consensus workshops so that meetings are run smoothly and new members can learn about consensus decision-making processes;
 - b) Assist the coordinators with financial assessments and costings, source suppliers of desired products, and assist with any general tasks that need doing such as organising special functions, advertising, setting up volunteer rosters, decoration of tables and noticeboards, etc;
 - c) Train volunteers in food management and handling, customer service, cash register use, and hygiene;
 - d) Respond to notes from customers which have been placed in the suggestion box;
 - e) Help to plan weekly menus for the restaurant and cafe in cooperation with the cook(s);
 - f) Organise social events for the Wholefoods community;
 - g) Do voluntary work in the restaurant for after hours functions;
 - h) Clean, maintain and decorate the space by organising working bees;
 - i) Promote Wholefoods as a venue for cultural, social, and political events;
 - j) Set up sub groups that will deal with the above areas of responsibility and any other areas that are deemed necessary by the Collective;
 - k) Publicise the restaurant (e.g. posters, noticeboards, articles in 'Lot's Wife', stickers, networking with clubs, etc.).
- 9) The Wholefoods Collective shall meet no fewer than twelve times a year, and fortnightly during semester.
- 10) A notice about each Wholefoods Collective meeting shall be displayed in the restaurant (with a suggested agenda to be amended by those attending) and shall be posted on the Wholefoods Collective email list.

- 11) Quorum for a meeting of the Wholefoods Collective shall be at least four full Collective members, or a number of full Collective members equal to the number of sub-groups, whichever is the greater number.
- 12) Sexism, racism, queerphobia, militarism, and other forms of prejudice, will not be tolerated within the Wholefoods space. Wholefoods reserves the right to refuse service on these grounds.
- 13) Wholefoods is a meat free space, and this policy may be enforced by Collective members and others at their discretion.

4. The Coordinators.

- 1) The number of coordinators and their roles and tasks:
 - a) Are to be determined by the Collective and are to specified in the coordinator job descriptions prior to the hiring of coordinators;
 - b) May be revised by the Collective as the Collective feels necessary.
- 2) As well as their individual responsibilities, all coordinators are responsible for the day-to-day operations of Wholefoods. They are responsible for staff relations, coordinating and training volunteers, financial management, purchasing decisions and organisational efficiency.
- 3) A requirement for any Coordinator position is that the Coordinator attend Wholefoods Collective meetings. All Coordinators must agree to the aims of the Wholefoods Constitution. The Coordinators shall give regular reports to the Collective about financial and personnel situations, and to raise issues of concern or suggestions.
- 4) Coordinators should work out any small problems on their own initiative and discuss with Collective later to allow input and debate. They shall be given authority by the Collective to sort out any small problems which do not substantially affect Wholefoods' operation, without consulting the Collective. Such problems could include resolving personal conflicts, and suggesting ways of making operations more efficient. In general, the coordinator should explain his/her actions, ideas and intentions to the Wholefoods Collective to allow for input and debate.
- 5) Serious issues such as financial losses, large changes to orders, refurbishment, policy, the use or aesthetics of the space, and hiring/firing staff, cannot be decided by the Coordinator(s) alone. These decisions must be made through the Wholefoods Collective.
- 6) The Coordinator(s) should make sure that the Collective follows through with making decisions on issues that they feel are important for the functioning of the restaurant, especially in the areas of finance or staff relations.

5. Sub-groups.

- 1) The Wholefoods Collective may form sub-groups for any purpose it deems necessary.
- 2) Sub-groups shall be set to deal with such areas as are deemed necessary at that time by the Collective. The responsibility of each sub-group will be decided upon at the time of its formation.
- 3) Sub-groups can contain one or more persons. Each sub-group will appoint, by consensus, a contact-person who will coordinate the sub-group. No single person can be contact-person for more than one sub-group, although people may be a member of as many sub-groups as they wish.
- 4) Sub-groups shall be authorised to make purchases up to the cost of fifty dollars by the Collective if such purchases are presumed to be likely, eg., maintenance sub-group, publicity sub-group. Such funds will be allocated via a budget line entry as determined during the formation of the sub-group.
- 5) Any purchases by sub-groups over fifty dollars Australian must be authorised by the Collective.
- 6) One member from each active sub-group must attend each Collective meeting to report back on the sub-group activities and allow for input and/or direction by the Collective.
- 7) Sub-groups may act, in the areas in which the Collective has authorized them to do so, without explicit consent of the Wholefoods Collective.

6. Finances.

- 1) The Coordinator(s) and Collective of the Wholefoods restaurant (in consultation with MSA finance) shall submit an annual account of Wholefoods' assets, liabilities, income and expenditure for audit by an accountant or company approved by the Monash Student Council.
- 2) The Coordinator(s) shall act as a liaison with MSA finance by making regular financial reports and reports about operations. They should also submit an annual audit (refer to s.6(1)).
- 3) Wholefoods will contribute money to the MSA capital reserve fund (2.25% of annual takings) and to the major equipment fund (2.25% of annual takings).
- 4) Wholefoods will pay nominal costs for financial and back of house support from the MSA.
- 5) The Collective should be given a run-down of the time spent by the finance department on Wholefoods financial accounts in order to ensure that the fees charged to Wholefoods by the MSA for financial matters is fair and adequate.

- 6) The Collective may seek advice from the MSA about any staff, organisational or financial issues or to gain suggestions for improvements.
- 7) The MSA President and all MSA members are encouraged to come to the Collective meetings and offer proposals. However, they may not block consensus and may not vote if a vote is required unless they meet the requirements of full Collective members (see s.3(1)(a)).
- 8) Wholefoods shall aim to cover costs, including contributions to the MSA capital reserve fund and the major equipment fund.
- 9) The MSA should financially support Wholefoods in the case of an incurred debt. Likewise, any profits made by Wholefoods shall go to the Monash Student Association at the end of each calendar year.
- 10) The MSA recognises the not-for-profit philosophy behind Wholefoods restaurant.

7. Staffing issues.

- 1) The Collective is responsible for the hiring of all paid staff, including coordinator(s) and a cook.
 - a) The Collective may create an interview panel to interview short-listed candidates for positions, but may not delegate the final decision regarding hiring new staff members.
 - b) If a Collective member is applying for a vacant position, that member shall not be included in any meetings, or parts of meetings, regarding the position for which they are applying.
- 2) Where a problem, issue or dispute arises regarding a staff member or volunteer the relevant coordinator(s) shall endeavour to resolve those issues, problems or disputes with the person or people involved. If a coordinator themselves is involved such a problem, issue or dispute, then the Wholefoods Collective shall attempt to resolve the matter. If this is unsuccessful, the Coordinator or Collective may ask the Manager of Wholefoods to assist in resolving the dispute. If the problem is not rectified through discussion then the Wholefoods staff member(s) or volunteer(s) involved shall be informed by a member appointed by the Collective about any serious grievances and given a reasonable amount of time to rectify or improve the situation, as appropriate, before any measures are taken.

8. Student elections.

Election materials are not allowed to be posted or left on tables. The only forms of campaigning allowed will be where students speak to other students or leave election material when requested. The wearing of student election T-shirts is allowed within the Wholefoods space, but is not allowed to be visible within the working areas (e.g. café, kitchen, servery) during student election week.

9. Alterations to the Wholefoods Constitution.

1) Constitutional change can only occur through a Wholefoods general meeting where quorum shall be at least fifteen people, of whom at least ten (10) shall be full Collective members, or all such members, or whichever number is lower.

2) Any proposals for constitutional change shall first be discussed by a sub-group of Collective members and made available for consideration before a meeting date for the decision is made.

End of Constitution.