



## CHARTER

of the

### GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON LONELINESS AND CONNECTION

#### I. Overview

The Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection (GILC) was established on January 1, 2021. The GILC is comprised of representatives of national organizations committed to addressing the pressing global issues of loneliness and social isolation and to support the dissemination of system-wide, national approaches to building social connection. Accordingly, our respective organizations have agreed to this Charter and the responsibilities herein. The GILC can revise the Charter as needed and as approved by a unanimous vote among members.

#### II. Mission Statement and Goals

##### A. **Mission** Statement:

As members of the GILC and global community at large, our mission is to support current and future generations to have a positive and meaningful social identity and sense of connection to their families, friends, and communities, thereby reducing the prevalence, incidence, and negative impacts of loneliness and social isolation.

##### B. To enact this mission, our **Goals** are to:

1. **Share** our knowledge, skills and resources within our respective nations and the global community;
2. **Connect with and support** similar and emerging organisations within and across countries with a shared aspiration;
3. **Foster understanding** of the wide range of factors contributing to loneliness or social isolation which need to be considered in determining solutions at a national, community and individual level; and
4. **Empower organizations** tackling loneliness or social isolation to address their unique challenges with appropriate measures to promote social wellbeing.

The members of the GILC have agreed to work collectively to accomplish these goals.

#### III. Primary Objectives and Principles

The primary objectives of the Global Action on Loneliness and Connection are defined below.

A. GILC's **Objectives** are to:

1. Increase awareness of loneliness and social isolation as important social, economic, and health issues.
2. Advocate for the issues of loneliness and social isolation to be embedded in all sectors of public policy, research, and planning;
3. Take collective action to develop, disseminate, and support nations in systemically implementing evidence and tools to combat loneliness and social isolation effectively; and
4. Serve as a centralized resource and information sharing hub to support the attainment of these goals.

B. To achieve the Objectives outlined above, the GILC and its members shall act in accordance with the following **Principles**:

1. Coordinated and collaborative approaches are the preferred methods for addressing loneliness and social isolation within the GILC;
2. That GILC is based on the principle of equality of its members;
3. Integration of the perspectives of people with lived experience is vital to furthering a deeper understanding and development of solutions for managing loneliness and social isolation and spurring social connection;
4. Evidence-based approaches are the preferred methods of reducing loneliness and social isolation; and
5. Increasing the capacity and capabilities of local communities is an important national and global approach to addressing loneliness and social isolation.

#### IV. Description of Member Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the GILC and its members are as follows:

A. All member and leadership **Responsibilities** include to:

1. Commit to attending all scheduled GILC meetings (or appoint a proxy in advance when feasible);
2. Review, inform, and provide feedback to the best of their abilities on GILC's projects and/or efforts;
3. Actively seek to expand the views and representation of the GILC as appropriate to ensure global positioning and perspective;
4. Notify other members, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed relevant to the work of the GILC and/or its members;
5. Identify and manage any perceived, actual, or potential conflicts of interest and notify the GILC of such conflicts via the co-directors;

6. Commit to assisting the GILC whenever possible in any action taken in accordance with the present Charter;
7. All work produced by the GILC will seek to be in alignment with the best available evidence. GILC will document and be transparent with such evidence in decision-making and product/project development.

**B. Committee Responsibilities:** any committee chairperson will also seek to:

1. Develop respective work plans for their subcommittees with the aid of subcommittee members;
2. Hold regular subcommittee meetings and provide timely reports on activities and initiatives to the broader GILC membership.

Additional responsibilities will be re-assessed and re-defined (if found necessary) on an annual basis, or on an ad-hoc basis, subject to consensus approval by GILC membership and co-directors.

## V. Membership and Organizational Structure

**A. Size and Makeup:** No limit on the number of member organizations will be imposed. To encourage global perspectives within the initiative, the GILC will accept membership from any nationally-focused organization seeking to address the issues of loneliness and social isolation. A maximum of two individuals from each member nation will serve as representatives on the Steering Committee. Each member organization will exclusively represent one country.

**B. Eligibility for Membership:** The GILC aims to establish a membership comprised of organizations from different countries, each representing an organisation committed to addressing nationally and globally the pressing issues arising from loneliness and social isolation. The GILC's aim is to gather members who represent all-population expertise (aging, youth, disabled, etc.), and a spectrum of disciplines (medicine, psychology, sociology, epidemiology, anthropology, economics, public health, public policy, finance, etc.). In recruiting members, the GILC Recruitment Committee will consider the extent to which the prospective members are willing and able to participate in furthering the GILC mission. Consideration will be given to whether the prospective organisation and its members (if any) are exclusively dedicated to addressing loneliness and social isolation.

**C. Duration of Membership:** The term for membership will be considered indefinite so long as each member organisation is actively contributing to the mission,

operating principles and responsibilities of the GILC. Any member organization or delegate not upholding the goals and standards outlined within the framework of this charter, and/or is hindering the work of the GILC, will be given notice by the Steering Committee Co-Directors, or a GILC-appointed person, to change their behaviour or contribution and may be subject to a vote for their removal. If, following a vote, a majority of existing Steering Committee members no longer believe an organisation or delegate merits being part of the initiative, the Steering Committee Co-Directors will be asked to remove the organization or delegate in question from the official roster of the GILC. Members may resign any time, at their sole discretion.

D. **GILC Leadership:** The GILC will maintain two Steering Committee Co-Directors, and all other subcommittees will be led by a chairperson and vice chairperson. Upon further consideration, GILC may operationalize new roles at any time, however, the fundamental strategy of the GILC is to establish and maintain a collaborative and welcoming dialogue among members.

E. **Committees:** The GILC shall be comprised of the following committees:

1. **Steering Committee:** A steering committee comprised of the original organizational members (See Addendum 1) and their two delegates will have exclusive voting rights on all matters pertaining to the GILC unless otherwise delegated to the broader GILC membership within this charter. Steering Committee terms will last for three years, but with no more than one third of existing members being replaced within a three-year period. New steering committee organizational members will be nominated and voted on by the broad GILC membership. Steering Committee organizational members will hold one vote across their delegates. If a second organisation from a given nation wishes to become the Steering Committee member representing their nation, they will be considered if they meet the requirements and considerations for membership of the GILC and the current organisation representing the nation within the Steering Committee is considered by the Co-Directors to have contributed materially less than the average Steering Committee member over each of the preceding two calendar years. In this case, the decision of which organisation will represent the nation will be made via a consensus vote among existing Steering Committee members.

2. **Recruitment Subcommittee:** The subcommittee will seek to recognize new membership opportunities for pursual by the GILC, identify gaps in the organization's expertise and how to fill them, and will manage new member onboarding into the Initiative.

3. **Communications Subcommittee:** The subcommittee will seek to oversee GILC's broad communications and marketing strategy, current and future global campaigns,

and provide counsel to GILC as it relates to best practices in information sharing across platforms. The subcommittee will monitor media platforms on behalf of GILC (i.e., website, social media feeds, etc.). The committee will initially use the *Togetherness Hub* as a primary tool for international communications.

4. **Treasury Subcommittee:** The subcommittee will oversee any funding streams, grant, or award opportunities, and allocation of any GILC funds. The committee will be charged with the creation, monitoring, and reporting of an annual budget. Further information on this budget can be found under section 'VII. Annual Budget'.

**F. Steering Committee and Subcommittee Leadership:**

1. Each subcommittee will be governed by a chairperson and vice chairperson and the Steering Committee by two Co-Directors.
2. The term of leadership roles will equal two calendar years. Leaders may be nominated an indefinite number of times and elected via a consensus vote among the Steering Committee membership.

G. **Reporting Requirements:** The GILC is not required to report its initiatives or findings to any outside organization; however, it will strive to publish a report on its progress, initiatives, campaigns, etc. in addition to regular communications on a bi-annual basis.

**H. Voting Structure:**

1. *On action items relating to the Organization as a whole* - A vote will be initiated by Co-Directors and will be decided upon based on a two-thirds majority consensus of Steering Committee organizations. Steering Committee organizations will cast one vote encompassing the views and opinions of up to two individual members representing that organization on the Steering Committee.
2. *On naming leadership roles* – Nominations will be held every two years. Nominations can come from any Steering Committee member, including self. A vote will be initiated by Co-Directors and will be decided upon based on member consensus. If the successfully appointed person is no longer able to continue in the leadership position for whatever reason, the nomination process for that role will be initiated again.
3. *On items relating to conflicts of interest* – A vote will be initiated by Co-Directors and will be decided upon based on member consensus, excluding those members potentially affected by the vote.

**VI. Conflicts of Interest**

The GILC aims to ensure no conflicts of interest to the best of its abilities. Should a conflict of interest be identified, it will be minuted and GILC will work to mitigate it to the best of its ability with direction from the Co-Directors. If a member of the Steering Committee is deemed by the Co-Directors to have a conflict of interest in relation to a particular issue, resolution of such conflict will be made on a case-by-case basis as determined by the majority consensus of the Steering Committee.

## **VII. Annual Budget**

The Treasury Committee will submit a budget proposal by no later than October 31 for the following calendar year. Feedback on the proposed budget will be solicited from members and ultimately passed by the Co-Directors by December 31 annually.

## **VIII. Meetings and Other Communications**

GILC meetings will be held monthly or on an ad-hoc basis as determined and convened by Co-Directors. To account for a variety of time zones, meeting times may be held on a rotational basis. Subcommittee Chairs and Vice chairs are not precluded from organizing additional meetings or convening a specific group of members to discuss and progress specific topics. Meetings will be held virtually via webinar or teleconference. Unless there is a matter which is specifically identified as confidential or commercial in confidence, the discussion of matters in the meetings will be open and collaborative.

## **IX. Procedure in the Event of International Emergency**

Members will convene as needed should an emergent, global situation arise that requires the GILC's immediate attention.

## **X. Termination of the Global Initiative for Action on Loneliness and Connection**

Termination of the GILC entirely will be communicated with members at least 6 months prior to the effective date of termination. Immediate termination of the Initiative may be permitted if such actions are due to any unforeseen and/or extreme circumstances impacting the Initiative entirely. In the event of the termination of the GILC, any surplus funds or assets shall be transferred to a relevant organization, dedicated to addressing loneliness and social isolation, which the Co-Directors shall by their sole discretion select.

### **Filing Date**

June 14, 2021

APPROVED:

June 22, 2021

Date



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**DR MICHELLE H LIM**

Steering Committee Co-Director

June 21, 2021

Date



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**Edward Garcia III**

Steering Committee Co-Director

# ADDENDUM 1

## Steering Committee Organizations and Members

### **Australia: Ending Loneliness Together**

*Michelle H Lim, Ph.D.*

Chairperson and Scientific Chair of Ending Loneliness Together  
GILC Steering Committee Co-Director 2021/2022  
Research Fellow Iverson Health Innovation Research Institute  
Swinburne University of Technology

*Johanna Badcock, Ph.D.*

Vice Chair & Deputy Scientific Chair, Ending Loneliness Together  
Adjunct Professor University of Western Australia

### **Brazil: Instituto Dara**

*Adriane Menna Barreto*

### **Canada: The GenWell Project**

*Pete Bombaci*

Founder and Chief Connection Officer

*With significant, formative contribution from:*

*Amy Westland, Esq.*

Chair of the Board, HelpAge Canada

### **Denmark: The Mary Foundation**

*Tine Oxholm*

Senior Projekt Manager

*Mikkel Lynggaard*

Head of Analysis

### **Finland: HelsinkiMissio**

*Tuuli Albekoglu*

Loneliness Intervention Specialist

*Heidi Östling*

Crisis Counselor

**Germany: Togetherness Hub**

*Jannis Kuhlencord*

Founder and Chairperson

**New Zealand: New Zealand Charitable Trust**

*Ms. Cathy Comber*

Trustee & Chief Executive Officer

*Dr. Spencer Scoular*

Trustee

**United Kingdom: Campaign to End Loneliness**

*Robin Hewings*

Programme Director

*Jenny Manchester*

Communications Manager

**United States: Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness/Foundation for Social Connection**

*Edward Garcia, MHS*

Founder and Executive Director, Foundation for Social Connection

Co-Director, Coalition to End Social Isolation Loneliness

GILC Steering Committee Co-Director 2021/2022

*Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Ph.D.*

Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Brigham Young University

Chair, Scientific Advisory Council, Foundation for Social Connection

*With significant, formative contribution from:*

*Andrew MacPherson*

Co-Director, Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness