



THE NINETY-NINES, INC.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Writing Policies and Standard Operating Procedures

1. **Purpose:** Ensure quality, consistency, and transparency in the execution of the Corporation's business by its members. Provide standards for content and format of written policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs).
 - 1.1. Policies are a) the ideas or plans that are used as a basis for making decisions; and b) what to do in particular situations that has been agreed to officially by the Corporation. Further, a policy may describe a set of acceptable behaviors that governs actions in the organization, and the repercussions for violating the policy.
 - 1.2. SOPs document how the Corporation does business, generally the "who, what, where, when, and how." SOPs may provide detail on how to implement a provision in the Bylaws or the Standing Rules, or the steps to implement or enforce a policy. This permits new members as well as the membership in general, newly-elected, or appointed position holders, coordinating committees, etc. to interact efficiently and productively.
2. **Applicability:** This SOP prescribes the minimum standards for content and format of policies and SOPs prepared for the International level, i.e. International Board of Directors (IBOD), IBOD appointees, Trusts, International Committees, and Headquarters Staff. Sections and Chapters are encouraged to use all or part of these standards where applicable and useful.
3. **Background:** As an international corporation, The Ninety-Nines, Inc. (The 99s) must pursue its business in compliance with its Certificate of Incorporation, the laws of the state of Delaware, the International Bylaws and Standing Rules, corporate policies, and good business practices. The 99s can best comply with the above documents throughout its diverse endeavors and multiplicity of Sections and Chapters by developing and implementing policies and detailed SOPs to help members and organizational units support The 99s' mission.
4. **Responsibility:** The International Vice-President is responsible for maintaining this SOP. Revisions and amendments for all International policies and SOPs must be approved by majority vote of the IBOD. However, for administrative updates (e.g. spelling, name changes, minor formatting, etc.), the Vice-President may review and approve the changes.
5. **Creating and Maintaining Policies and SOPs:** The IBOD, International Committees, Trusts, and IBOD appointees are responsible for writing and maintaining policies and SOPs to document governance of the International Organization in the realm of their assigned responsibilities.
 - 5.1. In order to keep policies and SOPs current, the responsible entity must review and update them whenever a substantive change occurs, or at a minimum, every 5 years. In addition, any of the entities listed in 5.0 may decide to initiate the review and update of a policy or SOP.

- 5.2. When creating a new policy or SOP, or revising an existing policy or SOP, the responsible author will use, as much as possible, the Template for Policies & SOPs as a guide to content and format.
- 5.3. When the author is satisfied that the draft is ready for review, she sends the source version (MS Word) to the Vice-President. The Vice-President will work with two additional IBOD members to review the draft.
 - 5.3.1. This group reviews the draft and, if needed, works with the author to make recommended changes.
 - 5.3.2. This group revises the draft as necessary to meet the requirements of the Content and Style and the Format Checklists (see Tables I and II below). The committee ensures that the document contains the "Draft" watermark.
- 5.4. When the draft is ready for the next step:
 - 5.4.1. The Vice-President sends it to the IBOD for review and discussion.
 - 5.4.2. The IBOD may choose to return the draft to the author for further work.
- 5.5. When the IBOD is satisfied with the draft, the IBOD may decide to approve or disapprove the draft document.
- 5.6. When a policy or SOP is approved:
 - 5.6.1. The Vice-President creates the final approved version of the document, sends notice of approval, with a short summary, to the electronic newsletter editor, and provides the final version in both MS Word and .pdf format to the Webmaster or her designee.
 - 5.6.2. The electronic newsletter editor is responsible for posting notice of approval in the next electronic newsletter.
 - 5.6.3. The Webmaster or her designee is responsible for storing the MS Word and .pdf versions on the corporate server, and making the .pdf version available to all members in the Library section of the International website or at Headquarters as appropriate.

6. **Policy and Procedure Provisions:** When writing or revising policy and SOPs, the following topics should be included:

- 6.1. Purpose: Include the purpose, and if there is a committee or Trust, the purpose of that entity. One purpose should be to document and ensure repeatability of desired organizational behavior and good operational practices.
- 6.2. Applicability: Be very clear about whether the directions and required actions apply to the International level (i.e. IBOD, an International committee, Trust, etc.) and/or to Sections and/or to Chapters. Do not burden small Sections and Chapters with onerous or complex actions needed only at the Corporation level.
- 6.3. Background: This section is optional. Include any information to explain why this policy or SOP is needed, and perhaps how it relates to other areas of the organization.
- 6.4. Membership: Include this section only in SOPs that relate to the conduct of business by a committee or Trust or any other type of functional group. Describe in general how individuals become members of the committee or Trust (do not name individuals and do not go into the details of an election process). If relevant, describe specific expertise, experience, or skills necessary to be an effective committee member (note: this is not the same as eligibility for being elected).
- 6.5. Responsibilities: Describe who is responsible for this document. Summarize the subject areas described, or the high-level responsibilities of the committee or Trust. Put details in the content section(s) below.
- 6.6. References: A Reference section is optional. If the policy or SOP refers to other documents, policies, or SOPs, and it is important to mention them, list them here. See the Election Procedures SOP for an example of where references are helpful to include.

- 6.7. Policy Content: This section applies to policies. Cover what to do in specific situations, or what behavior is desired. Optionally, describe why the policy statements exist. If possible, defer any further detail of “who, where, how and when” to an SOP, or to separate procedure sections further down in the document. Each policy statement should clarify:
 - 6.7.1. The specific issue to which the policy applies.
 - 6.7.2. The Ninety-Nines, Inc.’s position / behavior / action in response to the issue.
 - 6.7.3. The standards that apply (if appropriate).
 - 6.7.4. If appropriate or relevant, describe the consequences to those who breach the policy, and provisions for appeal and escalation (not necessary for most policies). Note: the description of the consequences could be as simple as “Breaches are referred to the IBOD for consideration of appropriate consequences”.
 - 6.7.5. If there are brief procedural steps used to implement the policy, they may be included in this section. If the procedural steps are more complex, then one or more separate procedure sections or SOPs should be created.
- 6.8. Procedure Content: This section applies to SOPs. Cover the “who, what, where, when, and how” of executing an entity’s responsibilities, or of implementing the subject activity. Use multiple paragraphs, sub-paragraphs, and even graphics as necessary. Include the following:
 - 6.8.1. Make it clear who does what, i.e. what position (e.g. Chairman) takes what actions. Use specific positions, e.g. Headquarters Manager, or a specific Officer who participates. Use separate sections to describe actions of each position or group, if this would make responsibilities clearer. Don’t finalize the SOP unless those parties review the SOP and agree to their described responsibilities.
 - 6.8.2. Stick to your entity’s purview--don’t wander into the duties of other entities except as they intersect with yours. They will write their own SOPs.
 - 6.8.3. Implement your entity’s responsibilities as allocated in the Bylaws and Standing Rules, in one or more policies, or from other authority. It is not necessary to cite paragraph references.
 - 6.8.4. Timeline: Create a timeline, even one at a high level, with approximate or actual dates for required actions. Use this timeline to keep everyone aware of where they are in the cycle, as well as to help in the preparation of an actual schedule to track detailed activities and due dates throughout the year.
- 6.9. Refer to the Policy and SOP Checklists for additional guidance on Content and Style (Table I) and Format (Table II), included in this document. The checklists are reminders of additional items to include, or methods to clarify the content or steps.
- 6.10. Approval: Who approved the document, and when.
 - 6.10.1. Authorizing Body: International Board of Directors
 - 6.10.2. Approval Date: This [policy or SOP] was approved on: month day, year

7. Approval:

- 7.1. Authorizing Body: International Board of Directors.
- 7.2. Approval Date: This SOP was approved on: November 2, 2018

Table I

Content and Style Checklist	Yes	No
1. Use active verbs, if possible. Start each procedural step with words such as: “Coordinate.....”, “Review.....”, “Monitor.....”, “Evaluate.....”, etc.		
2. Avoid passive sentences as much as possible (e.g., “The members vote to approve” is preferred to “Approval is done by membership vote”).		
3. Ensure sentences are clearly understandable		
4. Ensure facts are accurate, relevant, and complete		
5. Identify risks and contingencies, if any		
6. Identify potential issues and approach to resolution		
7. Use good grammar and accurate spelling and punctuation		
8. Reference laws, rulings, and documents, if they are useful to further explain the policy or SOP		
9. Define the scope in the “purpose” and “applicability” sections		
10. Describe policy/SOP exceptions, if any		
11. Use consistent verb tenses		
12. Use simple verbs and plain English to the extent possible		
13. Use tables, figures, diagrams, artwork, and text highlighting techniques as needed to convey information.		

Table II

Format Checklist	Yes	No
The Policies & SOPs Committee will help with formatting. The template includes the formatting listed below.		
1. Font: Use Arial 11 pt for text, Arial 14 pt for title at beginning		
2. Title/Header: Center at top of first page, double-spaced (no bold or underlines)		
2.1. First line of title, all caps: THE NINETY-NINES, INC.		
2.2. Second line of title, all caps: POLICY or STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE as appropriate		
2.3. Third line of title, upper and lower case: Name of committee or trust, or title of subject (as in this procedure).		
3. Insert 99s Logo at the top left of the first page.		
3.1. Right click on the logo on the first page of this document, select Copy.		
3.2. Select your document's first page, right click in the upper left corner, select Paste "Keep Source Formatting".		
3.3. If needed, left click inside the logo and drag to desired position.		
4. Footer:		
4.1. Page Numbering: Number all pages, centered in footer		
4.2. Date of Document/Revision: Use month, day, and year the document was approved, in footer, right side (e.g., April 28, 2018)		
4.3. Name of Document: Optional. Use file name or short name of the document, in footer, left side (e.g., SOP for Writing Policies & SOPs).		
5. Paragraph/text enumeration: If the document is less than two pages, enumeration may not be needed. Apply judgment depending on length and complexity of content.		
5.1. Enumerate paragraphs and sub-paragraphs for organizational clarity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sample procedure step 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Sample sub-step 1.2 Sample sub-step 2. Sample procedure step 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Etc. 		
6. Graphics: If there is more than one graphic, use a figure number and title for each.		