itaka escolapios

# MANUAL ON THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

**Manual on the organization and operation**
Itaka-Escolapios Network

**Version: 28 October 2025**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this manual is to provide, in a single document, the criteria and guidelines governing Itaka-Escolapios in terms of its organization and operation as a network.

The text first includes the reference documents previously approved by the founding entities of Itaka-Escolapios, the Order and the Fraternity of the Pious Schools, such as the Programmatic Letter (2015) and the Network Organization Document (2022), which form the basis of this manual.

It then specifies the functions of the teams and the regional coordinators, adding a section on the requirements and profile of the latter, who are key figures in the smooth running of Itaka-Escolapios.

The manual then addresses some fundamental aspects of the dynamics of Itaka-Escolapios, both internally and in the projects with which we promote the mission: communication and the use of our resources, as well as some final practical considerations, which conclude the document.

The manual is the result of work coordinated by the Executive Committee with the participation of the main leaders of the Network, including the Board of Trustees, which approved it at a meeting on June 27, 2025. However, it should not be considered a closed and static text, but rather one that is open to new additions and improvements as the evolution of the Network requires or advises.

We invite all those responsible for the Itaka-Escolapios Network to familiarize themselves with this manual, which should be distributed to the demarcational and general teams. It should be a reference document, especially for demarcational coordinators, for whom it can be of great help in positioning themselves in the role they are called to perform.

# 2. PROGRAMMATIC LETTER OF THE ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS NETWORK.

The Programmatic Letter is the highest-ranking institutional document in Itaka-Escolapios. It was drawn up when the Network had already been in operation for more than ten years, with the aim of capturing the fundamental identity of Itaka-Escolapios within the Pious Schools, as well as the commitments involved in being part of this network.

The Programmatic Letter was signed during the 47th General Chapter (Esztergom, July 2015) by the Father General of the Order, the General Council of the Fraternity (representatives of the highest authorities: Order and Fraternity), as well as by the president of the Network.

The document was then opened up for signature by the demarcations and fraternities of the Pious Schools, both those that were already members and those that subsequently decided to join the Network.

The full text of the Programmatic Letter is reproduced below.

*The Lord continues to call us to follow Jesus in the manner of Calasanz, accepting the gift and responsibility of revitalizing the Piarist charism and mission every day in all the places where the Spirit leads us.*
*This Piarist charism is embodied by religious and also by many lay people. The Fraternity, since its recognition as a reality of charismatic integration, joins the Order to enrich the Pious Schools and their mission. Sharing our charism, from these two complementary vocations, leads us to walk together in the experience and celebration of Calasanctian spirituality, to share elements of life in different ways, and to go hand in hand in the Piarist mission.*
*Itaka - Escolapios is an opportunity to continue advancing on this joint path of the Order and the Fraternity.*

*Itaka - Escolapios*
*is an entity created and supported*
*by the Order and the Fraternity of the Pious Schools,*
*as a platform for shared institutional mission*
*between both entities and anyone who wishes to collaborate.*
*It thus becomes a space for charismatic integration*
*as well as collective legal integration*
*and a Piarist network that includes the Piarist demarcations*
*and fraternities that join*
*and explicitly state the specific aspects they share in an agreement.*
*With all this, Itaka - Escolapios collaborates with*
*the spirituality, life, and mission of the Pious Schools.*

***Itaka – Escolapios***

1. Collaborates in strengthening the Pious Schools and their mission, making available the resources at its disposal.
2. 2. It promotes various calls to participate in the Pious Schools, offering especially the vocation to Piarist religious life and to the Fraternity.
3. 3. It responds, to the extent of its possibilities, to the requests made by the Order or the demarcations through its superiors with their congregations.
4. 4. Maintains a permanent channel of communication with those responsible for the Order, Demarcations, and Fraternities that participate in the network.
5. 5. It is organized with the participation of individuals and teams proposed by the provinces and fraternities involved in a demarcational team and in the appropriate local headquarters.
6. 6. It provides the necessary resources for the ordinary functioning of shared projects, based on agreed budgets, and collaborates in the search for funding to meet new or extraordinary needs.
7. 7. It provides ongoing information on the progress of Itaka-Escolapios and its projects to its founding entities (Order and Fraternity), to those who collaborate in its projects, and to society in general.

***The Order and the demarcations of the Pious Schools participating in Itaka-Escolapios***

1. Recognize the Itaka-Escolapios Network as a shared institutional entity to promote Piarist life and mission, making it known and accepting the decisions it legitimately makes through its operating bodies, always in communion with the respective demarcational congregations.
2. They place Itaka-Escolapios in their organizational chart (general, district, and local), promoting the implementation of the necessary teams and coordination with other teams.
3. They promote the action of Itaka-Escolapios in shared projects in each demarcation and also in the network awareness with other places where Itaka-Escolapios is present.
4. They promote the legal recognition of the Itaka-Escolapios Foundation in the locality. If this is not possible, they will create a similar entity, linked to Itaka-Escolapios by agreement.

***The General Fraternity and the demarcational fraternities participating in Itaka-Escolapios.***

1. They value Itaka-Escolapios as a space for shared mission between the Order and the Fraternity, accepting its aims and decisions.
2. They understand the projects and life of Itaka-Escolapios as their own, taking an interest in all of them, even when some do not directly affect the Fraternity or each of its members.
3. They actively participate by contributing their solidarity tithes, guiding volunteering towards Piarist projects, always in accordance with their particular vocation and with the involvement and interest possible in each circumstance.
4. They participate in the various moments and functioning bodies of Itaka-Escolapios, especially in the nearest offices.

*The General Congregation and the Council of the General Fraternity endorse this Programmatic Letter of Itaka-Escolapios and invite the demarcations and Fraternities interested to adhere to it.*
*The adherence of each demarcation and Fraternity will also entail an annual agreement with the executive committee of the Itaka-Escolapios Network, where shared projects, those responsible with their teams, objectives, and corresponding budgets will be determined.*

*And to this end, this Programmatic Letter is signed by those who subscribe to it in Esztergom on July 9, 2015.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Signed: on behalf of the council of the General Fraternity* | *Signed: President of Itaka-Escolapios* | *Signed: Father General of the Pious Schools* |

# 3. ORGANIZATION OF THE ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS NETWORK.

**(Document prepared by the executive committee, amended by the board of trustees, and approved by the general congregation and general council of the Fraternity. July 13, 2022).**

1. **General criteria:**

   - All positions have a term of office set at the beginning of their appointment.
   - They may be reappointed if the appointing bodies so decide. They may also be dismissed by those bodies at any time if they so decide.
   - Efforts are always made to ensure that teams are well-matched and efficient.
   - Efforts are also made to reflect different sensibilities in the configuration of the various teams within the Network: religious and lay people, different countries, men and women, contributions from each individual, etc.
   - The organization of Itaka-Escolapios will respond to and adapt to the diversity of contexts, moments, and requirements of the reality in each place of the Network.
   - Communication between the different teams in the Network will be carefully managed in order to promote co-responsibility and harmony in the promotion of the Piarist mission and in the accompaniment of each demarcation and each location.
   -

2. **The General Congregation and the Council of the General Fraternity,** together, have the ultimate responsibility for the governance of the Itaka-Escolapios Network.
   - They oversee the Network's mission to promote the institutionally shared mission and the growth of the Order and the Fraternity in their joint journey.
   - They are in constant contact with those immediately responsible for the Network, mainly the president and the

General Coordinator, in order to be well informed and to guide the progress of the Network when they deem it appropriate.
- Following the principle of subsidiarity, they promote the proper functioning of each demarcation and shared work, facilitating the responsibility of the demarcational congregation and, if applicable, the council of the corresponding Fraternity in its area.

3. The **advisory council** meets every three years, in an advisory, participatory, and listening capacity, at the call of the president and with the following members:
   - The General Congregation of the Order.
   - The council of the General Fraternity.
   - The major superiors of the demarcations participating in the Network.
   - One member of the council of each Fraternity participating in the Network.
   - The Board of Trustees.
   - The Executive Committee.
   - The coordinators of the general teams.
   - The coordinators of the country or demarcation teams.
   - Those persons invited by the board of trustees.

   Some of these individuals, or others of interest, may participate virtually if appropriate.

4. **The board of trustees** is the permanent team of the advisory council. It is also responsible for the Foundation in Spain and other countries where this entity has legal recognition (similar to other entities recognized in other countries with their board of directors or management team).
   Its members are responsible for keeping the people who have elected them informed and jointly responsible, advising with an international network mindset on its operation, and assisting the Executive Committee in its work.

To this end, in addition to receiving information through the established channels (regular meetings, submission of minutes and other documents, etc.), it will be involved in the affairs of the Network in a general manner and, as situations require, through the most appropriate channels: virtual workspace, extraordinary meetings, joint meetings with the Executive Committee or participation in its meetings, consultations at specific times, especially when making decisions of particular relevance to the Network or to a particular demarcation, specific reports, etc. The members of the board of trustees may request clarifications and suggest initiatives to the Executive Committee whenever they wish.

Likewise, the Board of Trustees shall be responsible for defining, at the proposal of the Executive Committee, the general organizational chart of the Network in terms of general teams.
It will have the following members:

- The provincials in Spain of the provinces participating in the Network.
- One representative from each Fraternity in Spain participating in the Network, appointed by its council.
- A member of the General Congregation of the Order, appointed by the latter.
- A member of the General Fraternity Council, appointed by the Council.
- At the initiative of the above, and by agreement of the Board of Trustees itself with the approval of the congregation and the General Fraternity council, other members may be included in order to ensure greater participation and presence.
- The board of trustees shall elect from among its members a vice-president, a secretary, and, if appropriate, a treasurer. The term of office for these positions shall be that corresponding to their tenure on the board of trustees.

The term of office shall be four or six years, depending on whether the appointment is provincial or general. The appointing authority shall always be free to set a shorter term if it deems it appropriate.

It is possible that members of this board of trustees, as a permanent team of the advisory council and the Network, may participate fully, even without the recognition of Spanish law.

In addition, the board of trustees may agree that other Network officials may attend its meetings as guests, either on an ad hoc or permanent basis.

5. **The president** of the Network, the Advisory Council, and the board of trustees is elected in dialogue with the General Congregation and the council of the General Fraternity, for a term of six years, or less if so decided in that dialogue.
   - He/she represents the Itaka-Escolapios Network.
   - He/she chairs the advisory council and the board of trustees.
   - Be part of the Executive Committee.
   - He/she is in constant contact with the General Coordinator.
   - He/she is in regular communication with the General Congregation and the council of the General Fraternity.
   - He/she is available to the superiors of the demarcations and their congregations, as well as to the councils of the Fraternities participating in the Network.

6. **The general coordinator** of the Network, who is also the coordinator of the executive committee, is elected in consultation with the general congregation and the council of the General Fraternity, after hearing the board of trustees, for a period of six years, or less if so decided.
   - He or she heads the Executive Committee.
   - And, with it, the general teams, as well as accompanying and supporting the demarcational teams in their work.
   - He or she is in constant contact with the president.
   - He/she is in regular communication with the General Congregation and the council of the General Fraternity.
   - He or she is available to the superiors of the demarcations and their congregations, as well as to the councils of the Fraternities participating in the Network.

7. The **Executive Committee** is the operational management team of the Network. It will have the following members:
   - The president of the Network.
   - The general coordinator.
   - Other members appointed by the board of trustees, at the proposal of the president and the general coordinator, who must first consult with the individuals and teams involved and obtain the approval of the congregation and the council of the General Fraternity. The term of appointment shall be for six years or less if so decided.

8. The **general teams** are responsible for accompanying and promoting the main areas of work of Itaka - Escolapios throughout the Network: training, volunteering, awareness-raising, communication, and resource management, or any other areas that may arise in the future, as decided by the board of trustees at the proposal of the executive committee.
   Its composition is as follows:

   - Coordinators are elected by the Executive Committee for a term of four years or less, if so decided.
   - The other members are appointed by the Executive Committee on the recommendation of the team coordinators for a renewable one-year term.

9. The **demarcational** (or country) **teams** manage Itaka – Escolapios within the corresponding region (or country).
   They are composed of:

   - The coordinator, appointed by the Executive Committee on the proposal of the corresponding district superior, in dialogue with the Fraternity Council and/or the provincial presence team, if any, normally for a term of four years.
   - The other members are appointed by the district superior, with the advice of the Fraternity Council and/or the provincial presence team, if any, after consulting the demarcational coordinator, normally for a term of four years.

10. The **local teams** manage Itaka – Escolapios in the area of the corresponding local presence.
    Unless the statutes of the demarcation establish otherwise, the coordinator and members of these teams are appointed by the demarcational superior, with the Council of the Fraternity where appropriate, at the proposal of the demarcational team, and after consultation with the local council of the Fraternity and/or the local presence team, if any. The term of their appointment shall be as deemed appropriate, normally four years.

11. After **formally joining the Network by signing the Programmatic Letter**, the demarcations and Fraternities draw up an **annual plan**, which is a key tool for participation and project implementation.
    - This plan may include biannual, four-year, or even longer-term elements, such as shared projects, objectives, etc.
    - This plan determines the shared works and projects, specific objectives, teams and persons responsible, budgets, etc.
    - This plan, which must be approved by the congregation and the council of the corresponding Fraternity, as well as by the Executive Committee, becomes a procedure that facilitates co-responsibility, participation, and efficiency with its process of continuous improvement.

12. The Itaka-Escolapios Network cannot forget, with the **criterion of subsidiarity**, the fundamental reference in each demarcation, Fraternity, local presence, and work.
    To this end:
    - It is a fundamental objective of Itaka-Escolapios to collaborate in the good organization of the demarcation, in the appropriate place within that organization, as well as with regard to the Fraternity and the shared mission.
    - It is important to collaborate in the growth of the Fraternity in all areas and, above all, in the shared mission with the own demarcation and in the Network.
    - We seek the ideal place for Itaka-Escolapios within the organization of the Order, the province, the Fraternity, and each presence in order to advance in shared life and mission.
    - We promote the recruitment and training of people who,

according to their vocation and ability, participate in the Pious Schools and their mission, especially through the projects in Itaka - Escolapios.

- In addition to the participation of all those involved with Itaka-Escolapios in the aforementioned bodies, we encourage initiatives and channels for proposals and suggestions in all areas.
- The Itaka-Escolapios Network is implemented in each demarcation, country, and presence in the most appropriate manner, with the aim of having the necessary leadership, the awareness of being a reality in its own right and in communion with the rest of the Network, as well as the necessary co-responsibility for the proper functioning at the local, demarcational, and general levels.

# 4. FUNCTIONS OF THE DEMARCATIONAL TEAM.

The demarcational (or country) teams manage Itaka-Escolapios within the corresponding demarcation (or country).

The demarcational (or country) team:

- Promotes awareness of the Itaka-Escolapios Network as a platform for shared mission.
- Prepare the annual plan proposal that responds to the Network's strategic plan and the needs of the demarcation to be presented to the demarcational congregation, the Fraternity Council (if applicable), and the Executive Committee.
- Draw up a schedule of regular annual activities common to all presences or offices.
- Be responsible for implementing and evaluating the annual plan.
- Follows up on Itaka-Escolapios projects.
- It assesses the need for new projects and assists in their development.
- Forms demarcational teams (training, volunteering, communication, awareness-raising, and resource management) with their respective coordinators to promote these areas.
- It accompanies and evaluates the functioning of the local teams.
- Maintains constant contact with the congregation and regional fraternity.
- Ensures the training of its own members and teams, including training in Piarist identity.
- Promotes the participation of people from the demarcation in the general teams of the Network.
- Provides guidance related to operation and management (regulations, protocols, use of local income, etc.).
- Is responsible for financial operations and budget execution, promoting initiatives for fundraising and sustainability.
- Ensures compliance with the Network's policies and protocols (financial transparency, protection of children and young people, prevention of abuse, etc.).

# 5. FUNCTIONS OF THE DEMARCATIONAL COORDINATOR.

- Represents Itaka-Escolapios in the demarcation.
- Convenes, organizes, and moderates the demarcational team meetings.
- Presents the annual plan to the demarcational congregation, the Fraternity, where applicable, and the Executive Committee for approval.
- Maintains constant contact with the district congregation, the Fraternity, and other areas of mission in the demarcation.
- Maintains continuous contact with the Executive Committee and, if there are no specific persons in charge, with other teams in the Network (resource management, project support, communication, volunteering, training, and awareness-raising), attending their meetings.
- Accompanies the Local Office Managers of the offices, maintaining frequent contact with each one.
- He/she is responsible for the functioning of the Itaka-Escolapios teams in the demarcation, ensuring good economic, administrative, and legal performance.
- Ensures the selection and training of people who enable the development of projects, plans, and accountability.

# 6. REQUIREMENTS OR PROFILE OF THE DEMARCATIONAL COORDINATOR.

- This is a key figure to whom the entire demarcation, including local entities, can turn to for support when needed.
- A person with a Christian and Piarist identity (religious or lay, and, if possible, a member of the Fraternity or at an advanced stage of the Calasanz Movement).
- Availability to respond to their duties and the priority needs of Itaka-Escolapios throughout the demarcation.
- Willingness to travel.
- Ability to work in a team.
- Leadership and human and economic resource management skills.
- Ability to organize and plan.
- Assertive communication.
- Willingness to integrate into the teams of the demarcation and the teams of the Itaka-Escolapios Network, or good communication with them.
- Familiar with digital technology (social media, video call applications, office tools, etc.).
- Willingness to undergo training in whatever is required for their role at Itaka-Escolapios.

# 7. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE DEMARCATIONAL AND THE NETWORK.

The district must:

- Submit the annual plan and budget to the Executive Committee within the established deadlines.
- Participate in the Advisory Council.
- Participate in the Network's meetings.
- Hold follow-up meetings with the Executive Committee, the general coordinator, or other officials through the person to whom they delegate, whether at the proposal of the Network or the demarcational coordination.
- Report relevant events in the demarcation to the Executive Committee.
- Keep up to date with the information shared on the Network's communication channels (institutional email, website, Microsoft Teams platform, social networks).
- Request prior approval from the Network through the Executive Committee for the following decisions within the demarcational:

    - Hiring and dismissal of personnel working for Itaka-Escolapios in demarcational offices and headquarters (this approval is not required in the case of personnel assigned solely to specific projects).
    - Significant modifications to the approved Annual Plan or to the execution of budget items.
    - Agreements and alliances with institutions and entities outside the demarcation, both Piarists and external.
    - Public statements on matters beyond the scope of the demarcation.
    - Use of the name and image of Itaka-Escolapios in matters that, due to their significance, compromise the Network.
    - Supralocal solidarity campaigns.
    - Presentation of projects and requests for assistance to entities with which the Network already works; the

search for resources for the implementation of new projects shared in Itaka-Escolapios.
    - Participation in supra-local networks and platforms.

The communication channels are:

- Institutional email. The email used in the Network will be the corporate email (@itakaescolapios.org). The regional coordinators will have an account that they must use in their electronic communications and, as far as possible, they will ensure that it is also used in their demarcation by other Itaka-Escolapios managers, staff, and collaborators.
- Microsoft Teams platform. The Network teams use the MicrosoftTeamscollaborativeworktoolforvideoconferencing, information exchange, and file sharing. At least the regional coordinators must use it as a regular work tool for their communication with the Network.

Recommended best practices:

- Maintain proactive communication.
- Report changes or difficulties in a timely manner.
- Foster a culture of network collaboration, where demarcations share lessons learned with each other.
- Promote meeting spaces for synchronous dialogue.

# 8. USE OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES.

One of the characteristics of the Itaka-Escolapios Network is the orderly use of economic resources, always with a view to investing in everything that helps to generate education and development processes for the most vulnerable people.

## 8.1. General criteria.

Based on the orderly use of assets, we work to:

a. tructuring our administrative and economic policies, always taking care to preserve the dignity of each person and the common good.
b. Creating an organized structure to raise funds by partnering with companies and donors whose values coincide with those of the Itaka-Escolapios Network.
c. From a humanistic perspective on the use of money.
d. Seeking the best use of human, material, and economic resources.
e. By investing strictly in improving the needs we seek to address.
f. Always striving to generate development, especially for children and young people with fewer opportunities to get ahead.
g. From a human and Christian exercise of resources.
h. Taking inventory and trying to maximize resources.
i. Preparing carefully considered and approved budgets.
j. By strictly monitoring the approved budget.
k. Conducting administrative evaluations, reports, and accountability with complete clarity and a full sense of responsibility for the duties we have assumed.
l. From a clear sense of transparency.

Investing in everything that helps to generate education and development processes for the most vulnerable people:

a. Based on a clear response to the Calasanctian charism.
b. Using resources to generate opportunities for the comprehensive development of the children and young people we serve.
c. Promoting shared development processes in the places where we are located.
d. Being sensitive to the realities of different forms of poverty that we face in the places where we are located and being the seed of more just relationships.
e. Promoting, encouraging, and investing in the training of volunteering that is committed and effective.
f. Promoting integral education as an ideal tool for fostering the personal and community development of the most disadvantaged.
g. Promoting cultural development through all kinds of activities that encourage education, integration, teamwork, and solidarity.
h. Attending to formal and non-formal education, leisure education, and any activity that helps to develop personal and community development processes.
i. Constantly accompanying our agents and volunteers.
j. Working with a clear sense of purpose and network structure that helps us achieve our goals.
k. With close attention to the process of the people to whom we direct our action.
l. Promoting, through our mission, the construction of a world closer to the Kingdom of God.

## 8.2. Pratical aspects.

The main tool for economic functioning between the Network and the demarcations is the annual budget approved as part of the annual plan.

The Network:

- Prepares the general budget for the Itaka-Escolapios Network.
- Attends, as far as possible, to the needs of each demarcation,

taking into account the priorities set out in the Strategic Plan and the degree of participation of each demarcation in Itaka-Escolapios.
- It is accountable to the Order, the General Fraternity, the participating demarcations and fraternities, and their donors.

The demarcations:
- Prepare their annual budget according to actual needs and budgetary availability from the Network.
- They work actively to seek resources to sustain the regular budget.
- Share their financial information with the Network in a transparent manner.

# 9. OTHER ASPECTS.

- Itaka-Escolapios, in different contexts, shares a single name, logo, and corporate image. The corporate manual developed by the General Team of Communication will be followed without creating variations of the name or logo.

- Each demarcation may create the social media profiles it deems appropriate. The website (www.itakaescolapios.org) is unique for the entire network.

- The official languages of the Network are Spanish, English, French, and Portuguese. The official documents of the Network and, as far as possible, all content will be available in at least these languages.

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