

Sophianic Animism USA Membership: Criteria, Details and Guidelines

Revised 2021.09.18 and 22 – revisions including the removal of several questions that no longer seem relevant or important and the addition of material relevant to general membership, as well as a few general clarifications.

Questions and Answers

Q1. What is a Sophianic Animist?

A1. There are two ways to answer the question. In the context of common parlance, it doesn't matter whether the 'a' in "animist" is capitalized or not; but Sophianic Animism USA makes a technical distinction based on capitalization, as follows:

1. A Sophianic animist (with lowercase 'a') is a devotee of the Aeonic Goddess who is the Earth, Gaia-Sophia, and who identifies with and participates in the way of life, world view and practices described by JLL's essay, [Sophianic Animism in 500 Words](#). Additional details and specific criteria can be found in the SA USA founding document entitled **Tenets and Practices of Sophianic Animism**, especially the section entitled **Core Tenets and Practices**.

Such an individual need not be a member of a church of Sophianic Animism. There are many solo practitioners, couples and perhaps informal groups, and if that is the preference of the individual(s) involved, it is their business. All who revere the Planetary Animal Mother and follow the Sophianic way of life are friends and allies.

2. In SA USA's parlance and literature, a Sophianic Animist (with uppercase 'A') is a Sophianic animist as defined above who is also a member of a church of Sophianic Animism, as such assemblies progressively appear in various nations across the Earth's surface. There are many benefits to considering becoming a member of such an assembly, some discussed in this document and others in the companion document, **Benefits of Sophianic Animism**.

Additional comments:

For some Sophianic animists, membership in a Sophianic Animism church (a religious assembly or fellowship) is an option that may appeal and be of benefit. Sophianic Animism USA (SA USA) is one such group that offers itself as a context within which one who self-identifies as a Sophianic animist may elect to place him- or herself.

(Internally, we tend to use the term "**collegium**" rather than "church." A collegium is defined as: "A group whose members pursue shared goals while working within a framework of mutual trust and respect." If the purpose of such a group includes expressing reverential recognition toward the supernatural, it can also be framed or described as a church.)

SA USA intends to remain in a mutually-supportive relationship with Nemeta and with John Lamb Lash, who is the church's honorary founder and the esteemed Gnostic teacher whose vision SA USA seeks to fulfill. SA USA's CNS ("central nervous system," or guidance and governance body) remains

in regular communication with JLL in an effort to ensure that our work remains consistent with his teachings and vision.

Q2. Why might an individual want to become a member of Sophianic Animism USA?

A2. Part of the answer is generic, involving reasons why people get together with others with whom they have interests in common and with whom they share a common orientation and common purposes.

In terms of values essential to Sophianic Animism, **facilitating mutual aid** is very high on the list of reasons.

Also, consider the **Nine Loves of the Anthropos**: Freedom, Truth, Beauty, Innocence and Pleasure, Learning and Sharing, Power (with others, never over others) and Mystery. A large part of the intention and purpose of Sophianic Animism is to provide an atmosphere and setting in which we can cooperatively function together with others in Sophia's Correction, cultivating, celebrating and enacting the Nine Loves individually and in groups.

During the first quarter of 2021, the **Nine Loves Community and Agora (NLCA) initiative** came into definition as a set of activities coordinated and sponsored by SA USA and its CNS. The long-term and Big Picture objective of this initiative is to help lay the groundwork for the Beauty to Come – the reorganized, sane and humane society that will follow the defeat of the enemies of life. More immediately, it is to lay the groundwork for *gathering and trading* within the national and global community of Sophianic animists and Gaian Shaktas. Membership in SA USA is recommended but not required for NLCA participants.

The NLCA continues to evolve through participation, reflecting the interests and needs of participants. If interested in learning more about this initiative and potentially participating in it, as well as helping to define its ongoing development and future direction, please indicate the same in an email to info@sophianicanimismusa.org.

Q3. What are some of the benefits of membership in the Sophianic Animism USA church to the individual member and potentially to Sophia's Correction?

A3. As mentioned above, one can more fully humanize himself and can encourage others to do the same. Living in a world that is largely insane and inhumane, one can co-create with other devotees of Gaia-Sophia an island of the sane and humane way of life that exemplifies Correction. An assembly of people who are focused on doing that also can be a source of attraction to others who are favorably disposed toward pursuing such a way of life.

Sophianic Animism USA aims to provide programs that help which those who desire to do so to more effectively put Sophianic animism into practice, reconnecting with their Planetary Animal Mother, benefiting themselves and others.

See also the document **Benefits of Sophianic Animism** for additional details.

Q4. How is being a member of Sophianic Animism USA different from being a non-member?

A4. Being a member means being a **co-creative contributor** in the context of the SA USA church (collegium). Generally, one gets out of something in proportion to what he puts into it.

One who experiences the benefits of association with the collegium will likely develop a desire to give back, to give to others, and to use his or her membership in the collegium as a means of helping to propagate to others Sophianic animist knowledge and practices and the benefits that come from and through them.

Q5. What are the criteria, and what is the process, for becoming a member of Sophianic Animism USA?

A5. SA USA features two types of membership:

- **General membership**, open to all Sophianic animists
- **“Inner circle” membership**, open to Gaian Shaktas who have performed the Gaian Tantra Vow and entered into a power-sharing pact with the Goddess who is the earth; such individuals are serious, in-depth students of the living Gnosis today (the body of JLL’s work) and practice Planetary Tantra, working with the Shakti Cluster and observing the Lunar Shaktis

First, it’s worth stating that this distinction does not create a hierarchy, two “tiers” of membership as it were. However, SA USA reserves one set of privileges for inner circle members, which is the holding of Minister and Deputy Minister positions in the national CNS that guides and directs SA USA as a whole. The reason for doing so is that an inner circle member’s involvement with the deeper aspects of the living Gnosis is likely to enhance that individual’s ability to effectively handle the responsibilities involved in such ministerial positions.

In contrast, as local collegiums form and develop (in physical form) in various places, the local governance and guidance of those groups (using the same structure as applies at the national level) can be entrusted to general and/or inner circle members, and a typical local CNS may be composed mainly or entirely of general members. The way the national CNS functions can stand as a model for the operation of local CNS bodies and ministers, who may consult with ministers at the national level as they find necessary and appropriate.

So, there are **two different answers** to this question.

An individual desiring **general membership** may simply send an email to info@sophianicanimismusa.org expressing your desire to become a member and affirming that you qualify according to the criteria set forth in the document **Tenets and Practices of Sophianic Animism**, the section entitled **Core Tenets and Practices**.

To be approved for **inner circle membership** with eligibility to serve as a Minister or Deputy Minister in the national CNS, an applicant is expected to have more extensive and advanced knowledge and experience, of which the following is a high-level descriptive summary in the form of questions:

1. Has the applicant completed reading JLL's book *Not in His Image* or is he or she making steady progress in reading it?
2. Is the applicant registered with Nemeta as a Guest or as a Staff member? (The usual expectation is that she or he will have been registered for a few months at least.)
3. Can the applicant identify three or four of the most important features / aspects of the Terma of Gaia Awakening?
4. Has the applicant performed the Gaian Tantra Vow?
5. Does the applicant know what the GNE (Gaia Navigation Experiment) was? Does he or she know what the period of Reset was and when it occurred?
6. Can the applicant demonstrate basic knowledge of Gaian ethics?
7. Can the applicant provide a high-level summary of the Sophianic Myth / FGS?
8. Can the applicant explain the Gnostic view of Archons and the Xenosh?
9. Can the applicant explain the Sophianic animist view of Sophia's Correction and humanity's role in it?
10. Does the applicant have at least basic familiarity with Planetary Tantra, the Lunar Shaktis and the Shakti Cluster App? Does he or she appreciate the value of learning and using these tools for interactivity with Gaia-Sophia?
11. Has the applicant read the publicly-accessible founding documents of SA USA?

It is assumed that anyone who can respond positively and effectively to the above questions will also demonstrate familiarity with basic Sophianic terminology. (This was originally listed as a criterion on equal footing with those listed above, but is now deemed superfluous as an explicit feature of the interview, based on the stated observation. However, an interviewer asking himself or herself whether the applicant demonstrates such familiarity may be useful as a verification of the interviewer's overall assessment.)

One who desires to become an inner circle member will do well to write a letter applying for that type of membership, giving evidence of his or her qualifications with regard to the above items. He or she must also provide contact information – an email address and preferably a phone number, in addition to a postal address. A minister of the national CNS (a member of the “central nervous system,” the body of governing ministers) may contact the individual and interview him or her briefly. Alternatively, the applicant may attend a CNS meeting via Zoom and talk with the CNS members present in that meeting.

In recognition that writing a letter can feel like an unpleasant chore and is often an activity ripe for postponement / procrastination, alternative approaches may be used. For example, the candidate might make an audio or video recording of his or her answers to the above questions and make that recording available to the CNS for consideration.

The vital essence of the process will be contacting the local or national CNS and making it clear that the individual wants to become a member; then, arrangements must be made to gather the information necessary to assess the candidate member's fulfillment of the criteria outlined above, which fulfillment must be substantial but does not have to be, or even closely approach being, 100% complete or “perfect.” Disposition and intent to learn and grow and fill any gaps in the criteria will merit favorable consideration.

The following points apply to both general and inner circle members.

Upon a candidate's approval for membership, a **nominal annual financial contribution** of \$30 is requested as an indication of willingness to support the collegium and to cover basic costs of operation. (All who are associates of the collegium are encouraged to contribute financially and otherwise as seems appropriate to each individual based on his or her level of appreciation, desire and ability.)

Note: As of the 18 September, 2021 revision of this document, due to unanticipated delays, banking arrangements for the collegium are still being set up. We expect those arrangements to be completed soon and will notify members when they are operational so that contributions can be tendered.

Every member of SA USA is considered a minister and **an ordination is bestowed** on each new member. If a desire to obtain a personalized **Certificate of Ordination** is expressed, one will be prepared and either made available for download via the Internet or printed and mailed to the individual, whichever approach is more appropriate.

Q6. What is the situation with regard to a person who stops giving the annual contribution and thus permits his membership to lapse?

A6. That person's ordination becomes inactive. He is still considered a Sophianic animist minister, although inactive as regards the collegium. His membership documents will be brought up to date if and when he renders the nominal contribution to renew his membership.

Membership is annual and must be renewed on or before its anniversary to remain active.

Q7. What is the situation with regard to a person who is removed from the collegium, either at his own request or (potentially, in cases of persistent gross misconduct) by action of the CNS?

A7. Again, he will be considered an inactive minister. Members of the collegium will make their own decisions as regards their personal relationships with the individual.

If an individual becomes an open opposer and defamer of Sophianic Animism or grossly misrepresents the collegium, the CNS has the option of declaring that that person's association with the collegium has been terminated, and such a person will no longer be considered an SA minister, either active or inactive.

If an individual makes known to the CNS that he desires complete severance from the collegium and correlated termination of his ordination, his request will be granted.

Ordinarily, the CNS will retain basic membership records concerning each member or former member. If a person whose relationship with the collegium is terminated requests those records to be expunged, they will be eradicated except for, in the usual case, a note indicating that the person (identified by name only) became a member on a certain date and his or her association with the collegium terminated on a certain date; and even that note will be omitted or expunged if requested.

Q8. Is SA USA membership open or closed to Sophianic animists and Gaian Shaktas living in other countries?

A8. Sophianic Animism is a worldview that is appropriate for people of all kinds, and in all countries, who sincerely and wholeheartedly embrace it.

Although Sophianic Animism USA is a church headquartered in the USA with local collegiums in that country, and has been developed with the needs, perspectives and customs of Americans specifically in mind, people living in other lands and who may not be considered Americans may be attracted to the church and want to join it. Their membership could be viewed as potentially or actually supportive of their own efforts to develop and further the Sophianic Animist movement and Sophianic initiatives in their own countries. Further, it is anticipated that no conflicts of interest are likely to arise due to accepting non-American members.

The international association arising via acceptance of members residing anywhere on the planet must have no political element or aspects whatsoever, and if trans-national political activity is detected within the church it will be grounds for termination of the membership of those involved. The Sophianic animist worldview has implications that naturally and necessarily result in a high degree of consistency in political stances, standards and behaviors being chosen by Sophianic animists in various countries, but as a church SA USA shall not be a venue, mechanism or vehicle for trans-national coordination of political activities.

If a Sophianic Animism church exists in a given foreign country (relative to the USA), devotees of Gaia-Sophia in that country are encouraged to join that country-specific church, and representatives of that church are invited to participate in the International Conference discussions sponsored (currently, monthly) by SA USA. At the same time, membership in Sophianic Animism USA, if an individual finds it desirable for personal or transpersonal reasons, is not ruled out.