

# Constitution of the International Science Council World Data System

As approved by the Governing Board of the International Science Council (ISC) at its virtual meeting on 19 April 2023.

## **ARTICLE I**

### Name

1.1 The name of this organization is the World Data System (WDS).

## **ARTICLE II**

### Mission

2.1 The mission of the World Data System is to enhance the capabilities, impact and sustainability of our member data repositories and data services by:

- creating trusted communities of scientific data repositories
- strengthening the scientific enterprise throughout the entire lifecycle of data and all related components creating first-class data that feeds first-class research output
- advocating for accessible data and transparent and reproducible science

### Objectives

2.2 The overall objectives of the WDS are to:

- Enable universal and equitable access to quality-assured scientific data, data services, products, and information
- Promote long-term data stewardship
- Foster compliance to agreed-upon data standards and conventions
- Provide mechanisms to facilitate and improve data access

## **ARTICLE III**

### WDS Members

3.1 WDS Members shall consist of organizations that have a role in collecting, analyzing, compiling, distributing, archiving, and networking data for the scientific community. The WDS is multidisciplinary in nature and is not discipline-restricted.

3.2 An organization applying to be an accredited Member of WDS shall meet all membership criteria for the relevant membership category as seen in the Bylaws Article I, Section 2 (Regular, Network, Partner, Associate, and Candidate) as developed by the WDS Scientific Committee (WDS-SC). Approval of a membership application shall be by assessment by the WDS-SC of the organization's resources and capabilities.

3.3 Upon entering into WDS, a new Member Organization must sign an appropriate letter of agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with the WDS that addresses vital issues defined by the WDS-SC and declares the intention of the candidate organization to contribute to WDS as a Member.

3.4 Neither the ISC nor the WDS can provide funding for Members of the WDS. All WDS Members shall be recognized as essential parts of the core infrastructure of science and must be funded accordingly by national and international funding bodies.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### WDS Scientific Committee (WDS-SC)

4.1 The WDS-SC shall be the governing body of the WDS.

4.2 The responsibilities of the WDS-SC shall be to develop and prioritize plans for the WDS, guide their implementation, and publicize the results.

4.3 The WDS-SC, including the Chairperson, shall be appointed by the ISC Governing Board according to the ISC Statutes and Rules of Procedure and abide by Terms of Reference as approved by the ISC Governing Board (Annex 1 of this Constitution).

4.4 At least four members (one-third) of the WDS-SC shall be executive leads of WDS Member Organizations.

4.5 The WDS-SC shall usually reach decisions by consensus. Should a vote be required, each member of the WDS-SC shall have one vote, and a simple majority of those voting decide the matter. The WDS-SC Chairperson shall have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

4.6 The WDS-SC shall typically meet in person or virtually twice each calendar year.

4.7 The WDS-International Program Office (WDS-IPO) supports the WDS-SC. It is responsible for both implementing the decisions of the WDS-SC and the daily tasks of coordinating the WDS.

4.8 A designated representative of the hosting institute of the WDS-IPO shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the WDS-SC.

## **ARTICLE V**

### WDS Members' Meetings

5.1 The WDS-SC shall organize biennial meetings of WDS Members. Where possible, these meetings shall be in concert with the International Data Week Conference.

5.2 To accomplish WDS Objectives, the WDS-SC may organize or facilitate WDS meetings among the executive leads of WDS Member Organizations or other meetings involving members, as necessary.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### WDS Executive Committee (ExComm) and WDS-IPO



- 6.1 The WDS ExComm shall consist of three members: a Chairperson and two Vice-chairpersons. The WDS-SC shall elect the Vice-chairpersons.
- 6.2 The WDS-IPO shall be led by an Executive Director (ED) and staffed by supporting scientific and administrative personnel, as required.
- 6.3 The WDS-IPO ED shall act as Secretary to the WDS-SC and will participate in all WDS-SC and ExComm meetings, except those about their performance.
- 6.4 With oversight from the WDS-SC, the WDS-IPO ED shall facilitate the expeditious and orderly development and implementation of the WDS, including the preparation of WDS-SC and ExComm meetings.
- 6.5 The WDS-IPO ED and their supporting staff shall organize and implement the biennial meetings of WDS Members.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### Committees

- 7.1 To accomplish WDS Objectives, the WDS-SC may establish permanent or *ad hoc* committees, working groups, or task groups.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### WDS Bylaws

- 8.1 The WDS-SC shall maintain Bylaws consistent with this Constitution for conducting WDS affairs.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### Parliamentary Authority

- 9.1 The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order<sup>1</sup> shall govern WDS in cases in which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with this Constitution and any special rules that the WDS may adopt.

## **ARTICLE X**

### Amendment

- 10.1 Amendments to this Constitution must be agreed upon by 2/3 of WDS voting membership present at a properly called meeting<sup>2</sup>. The point of contact listed in the WDS membership rolls for current WDS Regular, Network, Partner, and Associate members will

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert, Henry M. (Henry Martyn) et al. *Robert's Rules of Order: Newly Revised*. 12th edition, 50th anniversary / by Henry M. Robert III, Daniel H. Honemann, Thomas J. Balch, Daniel E. Seabold, and Shmuel Gerber. New York: Public Affairs, 2020. Print.

<sup>2</sup> RONR (12th Edition. 44:3)

serve as the one vote for that entity unless written notice of a proxy vote is given to the WDS-IPO office no later than three days prior to the vote.

If approved, the WDS-SC shall submit it to the ISC Governing Board. The ISC Governing Board may also amend the contents of this Constitution after consultation with the WDS-SC.

## **ANNEX**

1. Terms of Reference of the ISC World Data System Scientific Committee

# **Terms of Reference of the ISC World Data System Scientific Committee**

As modified by the ISC Governing Board at its virtual meeting on 19 April 2023.

## **Background**

The 29th ICSU General Assembly (Maputo, October 2008) elected to formally launch WDS in 2009 as a replacement for the Interdisciplinary Body of the World Data Centers (WDCs) and the Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical data analysis Service (FAGS).

The World Data System (WDS) mission is to provide tools, support, and activities for our member data repositories and data services by:

- creating trusted networks of scientific data repositories
- enhancing the scientific enterprise throughout the entire lifecycle of data and all related components creating first-class data that feeds first-class research output
- advocating for accessible data and transparent and reproducible science

WDS Members join these trust networks and 'communities of excellence' by meeting internationally recognized standards and approval from the WDS-SC.

## **Terms of Reference**

The WDS-SC is appointed by the ISC Governing Board and shall report annually to this Board and the ISC General Assembly. The WDS-SC is the governing body of the WDS and is supported by an International Program Office (the WDS-IPO).

The WDS-SC has the following responsibilities:

1. To ensure that the WDS supports the ISC's mission and objectives by safeguarding long-term stewardship and providing quality-assessed data and data services to the international science community and other stakeholders.
2. To develop and continuously review an implementation plan to realize the World Data System mission and objectives.

3. To define standards and establish and oversee procedures for the review and accreditation of existing and new Members of the WDS.

Annex 1

4. To monitor the geographic and disciplinary coverage of the WDS and develop strategies for recruitment and establishment of new WDS Members and regional nodes.

5. To consider the resource issues of WDS Members and, where appropriate, provide guidance on funding mechanisms.

6. To cultivate strong links with the ISC Standing Committees, through a nominated ISC representative.

## **WDS-SC Membership**

Membership of the WDS-SC shall:

- Consist of a Chairperson and no more than eleven additional members serving in their capacity and include an *ex officio* member from both the hosting institute of the WDS-IPO and the ISC.
- Be gender and geographically balanced insofar as possible.
- Be made up of leading scientists experienced in using extensive data resources or be data center/service executive leads.
- Be customarily appointed for a three-year period, which may be renewed once. Tenures are to be staggered to allow for renewal while maintaining continuity.

## **Finances**

The WDS-SC shall work with the ISC to find, vet, and maintain a self-funded host for the WDS. The WDS and constituent offices may apply for alternative financing mechanisms like grants and sponsorships.