

## **Summary of Roles, Responsibilities and Best Practices for Standing Committees, SC Chairs and Program Management (7/25/17 with BoD revisions)**

*The Program Standing Committees perform an essential role in the IRIS governance and management structure as defined in the IRIS By-Laws. Formally reporting to the IRIS Board of Directors (BoD), these committees provide direction to their respective Programs. They provide a powerful mechanism for the community to help establish programmatic goals and priorities, evaluate program execution and performance, and provide input on facility policies and program development. They also provide advice to the Program Managers and the IRIS President on the Annual Plan and Budget to be presented to the BoD for approval. Each Standing Committee Chair should work closely with the Program Manager to prepare semi-annual reports to the BoD and to develop agendas for Standing Committee meetings.*

### **Roles of Governance:**

The IRIS Board of Directors (BoD) is the only governance committee with legal responsibility for the corporation, including approval of the Annual Plan and Budget.

- The Standing Committees (SCs) are governance committees appointed by and reporting to the IRIS BoD.
- SCs are represented by a SC Chair and communicate with the BoD through CoCom, the Board liaison to each SC, and through SC Chair participation in BoD meetings (described below).
- SCs set goals and priorities for individual IRIS programs in the context of the IRIS and programmatic Strategic Plans as well as IRIS's Cooperative Agreements with NSF or other funding organizations.
- SCs work with Program Managers to align available resources with these goals and priorities, assess program execution and performance, and enhance coordination across IRIS programs, services and activities.
- SCs develop policies related to the usage of IRIS facilities.
- Governance should monitor performance regularly and hold management accountable for its actions; however, it is not the role of governance to prescribe in detail how the program should be managed.

### **Roles of Management:**

The IRIS Management Team plans and manages the detailed activities (i.e., hiring and tasking of personnel, developing and executing budgets, schedules, and activities, developing procedures to meet facility policies and allocating resources) necessary to achieve the goals defined by Governance.

- The IRIS President leads the management team and is appointed by the BoD.
- The Program Directors, Program Managers and Project Leads that comprise the IRIS Management Team are hired by and report to the IRIS President.
- IRIS Program Managers communicate with the IRIS President through the IRIS management structure.

### **Coordination and Communication between SCs, the BoD and Management:**

- SC chairs have the principle responsibility for communication between the SC and the Board. There are three formal avenues for communication with Board: (1) through CoCom, (2) through Board liaisons and (3) through participation in Board meetings.
- Program Managers and SCs should meet on a biannual basis to allow for the Management Team

to report on program status, provide and review budget proposals, and receive advice from the IRIS community.

- The IRIS Management Team will facilitate these meetings and coordinate with the SC Chair on setting the agenda and objectives for each meeting. Meetings should be scheduled at a time and place so as to enable all committee members, including the Board liaison, to attend, if at all possible. If the Board liaison cannot attend a SC meeting in person, they should call in to the meeting.
- Appropriate observers are encouraged to attend SC meetings (subawardees, network operators, etc.), but are not voting members of the SC.
- Executive Sessions may be called to remove conflicted participants from the discussion, or may occur regularly at SC meetings. Executive Sessions will generally include SC members, the Program Manager and the Board liaison. The SC Chair may call an Executive Session without the IRIS Program Manager present to discuss management issues, but the results of these discussions should be shared with the Program Manager, or if more appropriate, with IRIS senior management and the BoD.
- Regular calls should be held between the Program Manager and the SC Chair to keep the chair informed and to avoid any “surprises” at SC meetings. The frequency of these calls should be determined by the SC Chair and Program Manager.
- Conference calls or online meetings may be called between the regularly scheduled SC meetings, as appropriate.
- To facilitate communication between the BoD and SCs, SC Chairs will be invited to participate in at least one meeting of the Board of Directors each year, including an Executive Session with the Board. At other BoD meetings, time will be allocated for SC Chairs to virtually communicate key issues and concerns during the regular CoCom report.

#### **Strategic Planning:**

- SCs will review the strategic goals of the program on a regular basis and provide advice on prioritization of these goals to the Program Manager.
- SCs will review, with the Program Manager and appropriate IRIS staff and subawardees, technical and budgetary impacts to the program and how they relate to the program’s strategic priorities. If necessary, the SC will review program goals and revise as required.
- SC members are the representatives of the broader IRIS community and must represent not only their own programmatic needs, but based on discussions with other community members, the needs of all IRIS facility users.

#### **Budget Planning:**

- NSF (or other funding agencies) will provide the BoD and the IRIS President with budget guidance for the coming year.
- The BoD and the IRIS President will provide annual programmatic budget targets to Program Managers and SCs based on guidance provided by NSF (or other funding agencies).
- Program Managers will develop draft budgets for review by the SCs based on the strategic guidance and programmatic priorities established by the SCs and implementation requirements. The level of budget detail provided should be sufficient for the SCs to gain a meaningful understanding of how resources are being allocated by task.
- SCs and Program Managers should discuss and evaluate this draft budget. SCs may recommend changes to programmatic priorities if the budget will not allow full implementation, in which case management will make appropriate changes to the budget.

- The SC should approve the annual budget before it is forwarded to the Board. If the SC and Program Manager cannot agree on a proposed budget a final decision will be made by the BoD in accordance with its legal responsibility for approving the Annual Plan and Budget.

**Accountability:**

- “Action Items” and “Abbreviated Minutes” from SC meetings agreed to by the Chair and Program Manager will be posted on the web; progress in completing these Action Items should be tracked. Action Items should be available within two weeks of the SC meeting.
- Technical and Schedule Accountability:
  - SC should annually review progress management is making toward achieving program goals and priorities including meeting appropriate performance metrics; possible modifications to strategic goals should be discussed by both Governance and Management.
- Cost Accountability:
  - SC should annually review with Program Managers spending of last year’s budget, including any carryover funds, compared to the proposed budget and, as needed, discuss the origin of any significant variances. The level of budget detail provided should be sufficient for the SC to gain a meaningful understanding of how resources have been utilized.