

# Short Handbook for the GBIF Science Committee

## Introduction

This document is meant as a quick help to new Science Committee members and will give a short overview of the duties and responsibilities of the GBIF Science Committee. For more details and links to the GBIF governance documents please see the full Handbook for the GBIF Science Committee [here](#).

## Role of the committee

The Science Committee is an advisory committee that will oversee the development and progress of the GBIF Work Programme and make recommendations to the Governing Board, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

All members have the responsibility to act at all times in the interest of GBIF and not represent their national interest in the committee. The Science Committee will strive to work by consensus in drafting its advice and recommendations.

These are the main responsibilities of the Science Committee:

- Provide advice and guidance to the Secretariat regarding the development of the GBIF Work Programme and make recommendations to the Governing Board regarding the Work Programme
- Contribute to the setting of longer-term strategic directions and the making of strategic investment decisions by the Governing Board
- Promote GBIF in various fora
- If necessary, propose that the Executive Secretary establish *ad hoc* groups for specific time-limited tasks
- In collaboration with the Secretariat, organise the GBIF Science Symposium
- Provide advice to the Governing Board and the Executive Committee regarding the procedures and requirements for the Ebbe Nielsen Prize and the Young Researchers Awards, review nominations for the ENP and the YRAs, and select the annual winners

## Members

The Science Committee consists of:

- 1 Chair (elected)
- 3 Vice-chairs (elected)
- Up to 5 appointed (at-large) members
- 5 ex-officio members (Chair and 3 Vice-chairs of the Governing Board and the Executive Secretary)

Both the Science Committee Chair and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-will be elected from Voting Participants. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-chairs may be from Voting or Associate Participants. All are elected for a two-year term and may be elected for only two consecutive terms in the same position. The up to 5 appointed (at-large) members are appointed by the Executive committee based on recommendation from the Governing Board, GBIF committees and the Secretariat.

## Meetings

The Science Committee will normally meet at least twice a year, with one meeting held back-to-back with the annual Governing Board meeting and one or two held intersessionally. The Science Committee may also hold teleconferences as often as necessary.

It is recommended that the Science Committee meetings and teleconferences are coordinated to precede the meeting of the Executive Committee by approx. a week as the Science Committee Chair can then report to the Executive Committee.

In order to have a quorum, a Science Committee meeting has to include at least two of the four elected officers (Chair and Vice-chairs). If a quorum is not present, the committee may provide recommendations but will have to indicate which committee members are providing the advice.

The GBIF Secretariat will provide administrative support in connection with meetings of the Science Committee. This includes helping with drafting and sending out agenda and documents, setting up meeting room, minute-taking, etc.

The agenda and supporting documents should be sent out to the committee no later than one week before the agreed date of a Science Committee meeting.

The Secretariat will keep a record of each meeting of the Science Committee and will circulate the record to the committee members shortly after the meeting.

The Secretariat has created a secure web repository where the meeting agendas and supporting documents for each committee meeting can be found. Only current members of the committee will have access to the documents.

## Funding

The Chair, Vice-chairs and members of the GBIF Budget Committee are not paid positions.

Whenever Science Committee meetings and related activities (e.g. Science Symposium, Ebbe Nielsen Challenge award, etc.) are held in conjunction with the annual Governing Board meeting, the travel, hotel and per diem costs are normally to be paid by the Participant from which the *elected* committee member comes. Committee members from Voting Participant developing countries (i.e. countries that qualify for the developing country discount under the Financial Model) may apply for partial travel support to attend the relevant Committee meeting and Governing Board, so long as the Participant is in good standing. Approval of such support will be at the discretion of the Secretariat based on the availability of funds.

If it is deemed necessary for *at-large* members to attend such committee meetings, the Secretariat will cover the costs for those *at-large* members.

Whenever Science Committee meetings are held intersessionally, the committee members' costs for participating in these meetings will be covered by the Secretariat.

The [GBIF Travel Guidelines](#) offer more information about travel approval and travel reimbursement.