

Short Handbook for the GBIF Participant Node Managers Committee and the Nodes Steering Group

Introduction

This document is meant as a quick help to new Nodes Committee and Nodes Steering Group members and will give a short overview of the duties and responsibilities of the GBIF Participants Node Managers Committee (Node Committee) and the Nodes Steering Group. For more details and links to GBIF governance documents please see the Full Handbook for the GBIF Participant Node Managers Committee and the Nodes Steering Group [here](#).

THE PARTICIPANT NODE MANAGERS COMMITTEE (NODES COMMITTEE)

Role of the Nodes Committee

The Participant Node Managers Committee (Node Committee) serves as a forum for sharing information about the status and best practices of Participants' nodes, and as an advisory committee that will make recommendations to the Governing Board, the Executive Committee, the Science Committee and the Secretariat concerning relevant issues for the nodes.

The committee will strive to work by consensus in drafting its advice and recommendations.

These are the main responsibilities of the Nodes Committee:

- Facilitate data publishing among Participants
- Identify and share best practices in developing and managing GBIF Participant Nodes as well as identifying barriers to data publishing experienced by Participants
- Communicate the Nodes' requirement to the Science Committee and Secretariat for the development of GBIF standards and data-publishing technology
- Help test new versions of standards and data-publishing technology
- Help observers and new Participants understand and achieve benefits available from publishing data via GBIF and establishing a Node
- Provide the Governing Board with advice on the challenges and practical requirements faced by Participant Nodes, and the ways in which the GBIF Work Programme can help address them
- Provide expertise and advice to the GBIF Secretariat in support of the delivery and implementation of the GBIF Work Programme as well as participating network development
- Promote the GBIF Participant Node concept to the international biodiversity community
- Encourage Participants to use their expertise to help each other directly in developing their Participant Nodes through exchange of knowledge, informal partnerships, or longer term interactions

Members of the Nodes Committee

The Nodes Committee consists of:

- 1 Chair (elected)
- 2 Vice-chairs (elected)
- 1 node manager from each Participant

Both the Nodes Committee Chair and 1st Vice-will be elected from Voting Participants. The 2nd Vice-chair 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. It is required that nominations for the Chair and Vice-chair position are drawn from members of the Nodes Committee and recommended that they are people directly involved with active Nodes.

Each GBIF Participant is entitled to have one representative on the Nodes Committee (the node manager).

Meetings of the Nodes Committee

The Nodes Committee will normally meet at least once every other year for a Global Nodes meeting. Wherever feasible, the meeting will be organised back-to-back with the Governing Board meeting. Whenever feasible, it is recommended that Node managers be included in Participant delegations to the Governing Board meetings. Nodes meetings may also be planned to coincide with GBIF training or other relevant activities.

A quorum for the Nodes Committee meeting is defined as a total attendance, constituted by at least 50% of the Voting Participants, coming from at least 4 regions, plus either the Chair or one of the Vice-Chairs, and some representation from associated countries.

The GBIF Secretariat will provide administrative support in connection with meetings of the Nodes Committee and the Nodes Steering Group. This includes helping with drafting and sending out agenda and documents, setting up meeting room, minute-taking, etc. See separate document 'GBIF Secretariat administrative support to committees' for more information.

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

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

The Secretariat will keep an electronic library of relevant documents and presentations for the benefit of committee members.

Funding of the Nodes Committee

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

Whenever Nodes Committee meetings and related activities (e.g. Training, 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.

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

NODES STEERING GROUP

Role of the Nodes Steering Group

A small Nodes Steering Group has been established to ensure an effective planning and execution of the mandate of the Participant Node Managers Committee and to act as an interface between the Nodes and other parts of the GBIF Governance.

These are the main responsibilities of the Nodes Steering Group:

- Formulate specific recommendations to the relevant GBIF bodies (the Executive and the Science Committees, the GBIF Secretariat, and the Nodes Committee themselves) based on the feedback provided by Participant Nodes individually or collectively – including priorities, needs, solutions, opportunities, suggestions
- Communicate to the Nodes Committee members any recommendations or relevant information from other GBIF bodies or groups
- Provide advice on the GBIF Work Programme to ensure it addresses effectively the priorities identified by Participant Nodes, and that Participant Nodes are actively involved in its planning and implementation
- Establish working/steering groups to be responsible for executing specific Nodes related parts of the Work Programme, in consultation with the Secretariat

Members of the Nodes Steering Group

The Nodes Steering Group consists of:

- 1 Chair (Nodes Committee Chair)
- 2 Vice-chairs (Nodes Committee Vice-chairs)
- 6 Regional representatives (representing each of the GBIF regions)

The elected Nodes Committee Chair and Vice-chair will be the Chair and Vice-chairs of the Nodes Steering Group. Each GBIF region will select a Regional representative who will serve on the Nodes Steering Group for an initial two-year period, which can be extended with an additional two years. Each regional sub-committee decides how to select their regional representative.

Meetings of the Nodes Steering Group

An annual meeting of the Nodes Steering Group will be scheduled as part of the GBIF mid-term committee meetings. The regional deputies can on request replace the regional representatives in NSG meetings if required. The NSG may also hold teleconferences as often as necessary.

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

A quorum for a Nodes Steering Group meeting is defined as at least three regional Nodes representatives, or their deputies, plus either the Chair or one of the Vice-chairs.

The GBIF Secretariat will provide administrative support in connection with meetings of the Nodes Committee and the Nodes Steering Group. This includes helping with drafting and sending out agenda and documents, setting up meeting room, minute-taking, etc. See separate document 'GBIF Secretariat administrative support to committees' for more information.

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

The Secretariat will keep a record of each meeting of the Nodes Steering Group and will circulate the record to the committee members shortly after the meeting. The Secretariat will keep an electronic library of relevant documents and presentations for the benefit of committee members.

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

Funding of the Nodes Steering Group

The Chair, Vice-chairs and members of the GBIF Nodes Steering Group are not paid positions.

Whenever meetings of the Nodes Steering Group are held in conjunction with the annual Governing Board meeting and related events, the travel, hotel and per diem costs are normally to be paid by the Participant from which the group members come. 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.

Whenever the Nodes Steering Group is meeting intersessionally such as the annual mid-term meetings, the group members' costs for participating in these meetings will be covered by the Secretariat.

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

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