

## **Operational guidelines for the election of Regional Representative and deputy, for Regional Sub-committees of the GBIF Participant Node Managers Committee**

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### **Context**

These operational guidelines are agreed by the Nodes Steering Group (NSG) as the recommended process for electing regional nodes representatives and their deputies, as described in the [Terms of Reference for the Nodes Committee](#) (ToRs). Section III, paragraph 2.3 of the ToRs states: “Each Regional Sub-committee elects its Regional Representative and deputy according to a recommended process set forward in the operational guidelines by the NSG.”

These guidelines may be amended at any time by the NSG without the need for amendment of the ToR.

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### **Mandate, eligibility and terms for election**

The mandate and functions of the Regional Sub-Committees are set out in section III of the ToRs. One of the stated responsibilities is to “appoint a Regional Representative, and deputy, to the Nodes Steering Group preferably from among its Voting Participant members” (section 3, paragraph 2, preamble).

Only Node Managers as official members of the Nodes Committee are eligible to be appointed as Regional Representatives or their deputies (ToRs, section III, paragraph 2.1). Regional representatives and deputies are appointed for an initial two-year period, extendable for a further two years (ToRs, section III, paragraph 2.2).

The ToRs do not explicitly prohibit an individual Node Manager from holding the position of Chair or Vice Chair of the Nodes Committee at the same time as being a Regional Representative or deputy. However, it is recommended that if an existing Regional Representative or deputy is elected to the position of Nodes Committee Chair or Vice Chair, they should vacate the regional position so that a new election may be held using the process described below. Equally, a current Chair or Vice Chair of the Nodes Committee is recommended not to put their name forward for election as Regional Representative or deputy. Exceptions may be made in cases where there is a short overlap between the expiry of one role and election to the additional role, so that the period of holding two posts is kept to a minimum.

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### **Recommended process for election**

At least one month before a post of Regional Representative or deputy becomes vacant, the following procedure is recommended.

1. A neutral election coordinator is appointed. This role is normally provided by GBIF Secretariat, but may be requested from a neutral third-party institution through consensus decision by the Regional Sub-Committee.
2. The election coordinator requests all Node Managers in the region to indicate privately whether they wish to be candidates in the election. This expression of interest should be accompanied by a short statement explaining why they wish to serve in the role (vision statement). A period of one week should be provided for such expressions of interest to be communicated by email to the election coordinator.
3. If the current holder of the post is eligible to be appointed for a second two-year term, the election coordinator first asks them to indicate whether they wish to be considered for re-election, and to provide a vision statement. The election coordinator communicates this information to Node Managers in the region, while inviting further expressions of interest.
4. After the deadline for expressions of interest has passed, the election coordinator informs the Regional Sub-Committee which Node Managers have put their names forward for election. If only one expression of interest is received, this Node Manager is appointed as Regional Representative or deputy. If no expressions of interest are received within a week, the election coordinator may extend the period for candidates to put their names forward.
5. If more than one expression of interest is received, the election coordinator sets up an online ballot form including all candidates, accompanied by their vision statements, to be distributed to the Node Managers of all current Participants in the region.
6. A single round of voting is conducted over a period of one week, with each Node Manager able to vote for only one candidate on the ballot form. The candidate with the highest number of votes after the period of the election is declared appointed to the post.
7. In the event of a tied vote, any candidate from a Voting Participant member will take precedence. If both or neither of the candidates is from a Voting Participant country, the election coordinator will seek consensus from the Regional Sub-Committee on the way forward, either through a further round of balloting or agreement among the candidates on which should be appointed to the role.
8. If all eligible Node Managers have voted before the expiry of a week, the election coordinator may declare the result.
9. If a current deputy is elected to the position of Regional Representative, an immediate election is held to fill the vacancy for deputy, using the same procedure.
10. If the post of Regional Representative and deputy fall vacant at the same time in a region, it is recommended to begin with election of the Regional Representative, followed by election of the deputy, using the procedures described above, held sequentially.