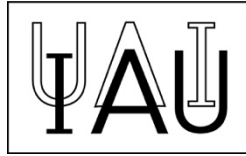


IAU Working Group Rules



Background and Existing Rules:

Working Groups are established by the Executive Committee, by Divisions, or by Commissions, to undertake certain well-defined tasks for limited time-periods.

Working Groups of the Executive Committee undertake essential functions on behalf of the IAU as a whole.

Functional Working Groups are Working Groups whose scope and purpose are institutional and naturally extend beyond the IAU three-year cycle.

Rules on lifespan of the WGs, request for Functional status and rotation of the WG Chairs was first brought up at the EC-103 and was again discussed at the OM 2020. At EC-104 (May 11th-15th) a proposal was made and the EC approved the below guidelines for Working Groups.

According to the Bye-Laws V. SCIENTIFIC DIVISIONS and VI. SCIENTIFIC COMMISSIONS :

21. With the approval of the Executive Committee, a Division may establish Working Groups to study well-defined scientific issues and report to the Division. Unless specifically re-established by the same procedure, such Working Groups cease to exist at the following General Assembly.

24. With the approval of the Division, a Commission may establish Working Groups to study well-defined scientific issues and report to the Commission. Unless specifically re-appointed by the same procedure, such Working Groups cease to exist at the following General Assembly.

According to the IAU Working Rules IX TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR DIVISIONS:

40. A key responsibility of the Steering Committee is to maintain an internal organization of Commissions and Working Groups in the Division which is conducive to the fulfillment of its mission. The Steering Committee shall take the following steps to accomplish this task in a timely and effective manner:

40.a. Within the first year after a General Assembly - with a business meeting of the Division at the General Assembly itself as a natural starting point - the Steering Committee shall discuss with its Commissions, and within the Steering Committee itself, if changes in its Commission and Working Group structure may enable it to accomplish its mission better in

the future. As a rule, Working Groups may be created (following the rules in [Bye-Law 21](#) and [Bye-Law 23](#)) at any time for new activities that are either of a known, finite duration or are exploratory in nature. If experience, possibly from an existing Working Group, indicates that a major section of the Division's activities require a coordinating body for a longer period (a decade or more), the creation of a new Commission may be in order ([Statutes, § 22](#)), and a corresponding Call for Proposals for Commissions considered.

40.b Whenever the Steering Committee is satisfied that the creation of a new Division Working Group or Commission is well motivated, it may take immediate action as specified in [Bye-Law 21](#) or [Bye-Law 23](#), independently of General Assemblies. However, in preparation for General Assemblies, the Steering Committee must submit for approval its complete proposal for the continuation, discontinuation, or merger of its Commissions and Working Groups to the General Secretary at least one month in advance of the Executive Committee meeting being held before the relevant General Assembly.

According to the IAU Working Rules X. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMISSIONS:

44. At least six months before each General Assembly, the Organizing Committee shall submit to the parent Division(s) a report on its activities during the past triennium, with its recommendation as to whether the Commission should be continued for another three years, or merged with one or more other Commissions, or discontinued. If a continuation is proposed, a plan for the activities of the next triennium should be presented, including those of any Working Groups which the Commission proposes to maintain during that period.

[Regular Working Groups](#) should rotate on 3-year cycles as most of the IAU activities do. At the end of each triennium at the final EC meeting before the GA, the Division Presidents should present to the EC those Working Groups which should be renewed for the following triennium, providing the proper justification (reports on activity, reasoning behind why the WG is still needed etc.). Any **Working Groups which are not actively renewed at this time will automatically end at the GA in 2021. The same rules should follow for the Chair who should rotate every three years.** The new Division and Commission Presidents at the start of the following triennium also have the ability to terminate or establish new Working Groups as needed. Working Group mandates unlike Divisions and Commissions can start or end at any time and may have a duration shorter than a triennium.

[Functional Working Groups](#) are Working Groups whose scope and purpose are institutional and naturally extend beyond the IAU three-year cycle. These **should have a maximum automatic lifespan of 6 years.** Their Functional status should be revisited at that 6-year mark by the EC and a decision should be taken on whether the Functional WG should be renewed or terminated. The **Functional WG Chair would also follow the 6-year term** and the renewal of the Chair would also be discussed at this time.

These WGs report to their respective parent-bodies but should **also have oversight by the EC.** A process should be put in place whereby the parent-body requires a formal request to be renewed for another 6 years with arguments and data to back up their Functional long-term status request. The relevant parent-body will review the request and make its recommendations. The **parent-body will then forward these recommendations on to the EC for a final decision** before the EC Meeting in the spring preceding the GA.

When an existing WG wishes to *become* Functional, it should **make a formal request to its parent-body**. This parent-body will review the request and forward its **recommendations to the EC for final approval** before the EC Meeting in a given year. Finally, the approved Functional WGs would need to be forwarded to the IAU Secretariat to make the appropriate changes to the database and webpages.

Executive Committee Working Groups: Working Groups of the Executive Committee undertake essential functions on behalf of the IAU as a whole. It is at the discretion of the EC how long the ECWG continues. **Every three years there should be an evaluation of the current Chair as well as the continuation of the WG. A second term could be considered but no longer (6 years max).**

All Working Groups should have a **minimum of 5 members**. All WGs should submit an **annual WG report and a triennial report** once per triennium as do the other scientific bodies.

Working Group Chair Rotation: If the Chair of a WG wishes to remain longer than his or her term, he or she should provide a statement of motivation as to why he or she should remain detailing the specific goals he or she has accomplished in the WG and those he or she hopes to accomplish in the coming triennium. The **parent-body should also solicit an internal call for candidates**. If other candidates step forward, they should conduct an internal election to determine if the current Chair remains on or if he or she should be replaced by a new individual. **The WG Chair would then make a proposal to the relevant parent-body to either re-appoint the WG Chair or inform them of the election results for a new Chair.**

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