

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

# DiSSCo Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) Terms of Reference

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#### A. Premise

DiSSCo is a Research infrastructure aiming at providing end-user scientific services in support of frontier data-intensive science. As such, its development and operation is heavily predicated upon its continuous ability to serve the needs of a diverse set of scientific, policy and industrial users. As those needs change, DiSSCo needs to constantly develop its services through a permanent and productive dialogue with its users. To this end, the DiSSCo Scientific Advisory Board will take stock in this process by providing expert advice across the DiSSCo governance and executive structures.

#### B. DiSSCo Scientific Advisory Board mission

The DiSSCo Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) mission is to provide expert consultation services in all matters related to the scientific mission and service objectives of the DiSSCo Research Infrastructure.

#### C. DiSSCo SAB objectives

1. Understand and analyse relevant scientific challenges and translate them into research infrastructure needs at European and Global scale;
2. Work closely together with science users across scientific disciplines to understand and describe current and future data and infrastructure service requirements;
3. Define metrics for assessing the overall performance of the Research Infrastructure in relation to its scientific agenda and expected impact across fields of science;
4. Provide expert advice on the needs to enhance digital capacity across DiSSCo users and partner facilities;
5. Draft annual science reports and provide input to the development of the mid- and long-term science strategy of DiSSCo;
6. Provide ad-hoc expert advice on requests from the DiSSCo governance bodies and act as external advisory boards to DiSSCo-linked projects;
7. Represent DiSSCo in external meetings, presenting the technical vision and progress of the infrastructure;
8. Evaluate internal project proposals and review key documents.

#### D. Rules of participation

##### D.1. Structure of the body

The DiSSCo SAB consists of at least 10 and up to 15 statutory members. Additional participants can be invited, on a temporary and ad-hoc basis, to complement the expertise of the members for specific topics, following invitation extended by the chair of the DiSSCo SAB.

DiSSCo SAB members operate independently, as individual experts. In their capacity as DiSSCo SAB members do not represent interests of other organisations, initiatives or specific scientific disciplines and sub-domains. They are expected to draw on their experience and expertise to provide objective expert advice on all matters of SAB business

## D.2. SAB Membership

### *D.2.1. SAB Appointment*

SAB members are appointed by decision of the DiSSCo General Assembly (or the equivalent decision-making body in the DiSSCo governance). The process includes the approval of a single slate proposed by the DiSSCo Coordination and Support Office (during the preparatory phase governance) or the board of directors (during the operational phase governance model) or any equivalent executive board of DiSSCo.

For the compilation of the SAB slate the DiSSCo Coordination and Support Office or the Board of Directors or the equivalent executive board can decide to open a call for nominations or directly select candidates to be included in the slate.

The DiSSCo SAB slate is presented to the General Assembly (or its equivalent decision-making body) along with a full justification, in relation to the DiSSCo vision and mission. The slate can be accepted or rejected by the General Assembly (or its equivalent decision-making body). In case of slate rejection (by majority), the DiSSCo Coordination and Support office will move for approval by the General Assembly (or its equivalent decision-making body) of each one of the included names in the slate.

Members to the SAB can be added at any given point, as long as the total number of members complies with the limitations described under Section D.1, and according to the process described in this Section.

### *D.2.2. Membership duration*

Each SAB member serves for two years, which equals to the duration of a SAB term. Mid-term retiring members are not replaced, unless the number of remaining members falls short of the requirements described in Section D.1. SAB membership can be renewed for a maximum of three full terms.

### *D.2.3. Ex-officio participation*

The DiSSCo coordinator and deputy coordinators can participate to the SAB meetings *ex-officio* and do not count against the number of appointed SAB members.

### *D.2.4. SAB leadership*

The SAB Chair and vice-chair are appointed by decision of the General Assembly (or the equivalent decision-making body) among the SAB elected members. Once appointed, a SAB Chair (and vice-chair) serves for a duration equal to one term. Mid-term retiring chairs are replaced by the vice-chair for time equal to the remaining time of their original term. Mid-term retiring vice-chairs are not replaced. If no vice-chair is available to replace a mid-term retiring chair, a new chair and vice-chair are appointed through the process described in the beginning of this section. The maximum number of mandate renewals as a SAB chair is two.

### *D.2.5. Principles for member selection*

The following criteria are hereby presented for guidance purposes. They should not be considered as exhaustive nor restrictive.

1. Strong scientific background and demonstrated knowledge of open science and open data practices;
2. Strong understanding of the research data infrastructure landscape;
3. Experience with participation in advisory boards;

4. Strong knowledge of natural science collections practices;
5. Good communication abilities and a strong public science profile and overall academic citizenship.

#### *D.2.6. Conflict of Interest*

Nominated SAB members are expected to declare all actual, potential and perceived conflict of interest. Specifically, perceived conflict of interest occurs where it could reasonably be perceived, or give the appearance, that a competing interest could improperly influence the performance of the SAB member. Conflict of interests are declared formally (in written communication) to the DiSSCo Coordination and Support office as soon as they become apparent to the nominated or elected SAB member.

### E. Rules of procedure

#### E.1. Agenda setting

##### *E.1.1. Introduced topics*

The DiSSCo SAB discusses and provides expert advice on current and anticipated matters. The services of the SAB can be requested by the DiSSCo Coordination and Support Office (during the preparatory phase) or the Board of Directors (during the operational phase) on specific urgent or standing issues. The SAB Chair communicates the planned timetable of discussions in response to the requests by the executive board, to the DiSSCo Coordinator or DiSSCo CEO.

##### *E.1.2. Standing topics*

Further topics can be introduced for discussions and advice by any of the SAB members, after the approval of SAB Chair. These topics should pertain the current or anticipated needs of the DiSSCo infrastructure or the wider supporting community.

##### *E.1.3. Annual science review*

An annual scientific review is to be produced by the SAB. The review shall provide valuable guidance on the scientific performance of DiSSCo and guidance on future activities in relation to the infrastructure scientific mission.

##### *E.1.4. Relationship with other DiSSCo bodies/structures*

The DiSSCo SAB keeps abreast with the developments across the DiSSCo portfolio of projects. Specifically, the SAB acknowledges all outputs of the projects and provide consultation when needed, acting in an external advisory board capacity for those projects. Items discussed by the SAB need to remain aligned with the ongoing priorities of the DiSSCo-linked projects.

#### E.2. Meetings

##### *E.2.1. Frequency of meetings*

The SAB convenes physically or virtually (teleconference) at least every six months, or as frequently as needed.

##### *E.2.2. Record of meetings*

The SAB must register and make public the agenda and the (redacted) minutes of the SAB meetings through DiSSCo public and the consortium communication channels. Non-redacted versions of the minutes will be made fully accessible to all DiSSCo governance bodies.

### *E.2.3. Decision making process*

The SAB members operate individually within the SAB and provide expert opinion on matters arising based on their best judgment. The SAB chair strives to develop internal consensus on matters. In case on diverging opinions, however, the chair is responsible for recording all expressed opinions on the matters discussed. Consensus view of the SAB on business matters is expected but not required.

### *E.2.4. Order of business*

The order of business and the agenda for each meeting is defined by the SAB chair, in consultation with the DiSSCo Coordination and Support office and after acknowledging the requirements of section E.1. The chair circulates the agenda of the meeting, along with supporting documentation, at least five days prior to the meeting.

SAB members can recommend additional business matters to the chair prior to the circulation of the agenda.

### *E.2.5. Attendance*

The chair records attendance and apologies of SAB members. This information is included in the minutes of each meeting and is made publicly available upon request.

SAB members failing to attend more than three consecutive DiSSCo SAB regular meetings, are requested by the chair to justify their extended absence.

### *E.2.6. Notice of resignation*

SAB members are expected to hand notice of resignation from the SAB by written communication to the SAB chair. Notice of resignations come into effect at least four weeks after formally submitted, except when conflict of interest is brought forward as a reason, in which case the resignation becomes effective immediately. SAB members, serving as chairs, submit their notice of resignation to the DiSSCo coordination and support office.

## **E.3. Support to SAB**

### *E.3.1. Communication and Collaboration*

The DiSSCo Coordination and Support Office provides the necessary access to services, including access to communication and project management services, for the seamless operation of the SAB. The SAB Chair can request additional services according to the needs of the SAB. Such requests are processed at a discretionary basis by the DiSSCo Coordination and Support Office.

### *E.3.2. Costs reimbursement*

DiSSCo SAB members participate on a solely voluntary basis and are not entitled to any direct or indirect financial reimbursement for their services to SAB.

Costs linked to travel and subsidy, in relation to the SAB business, can be claimed by the DiSSCo Coordination and Support Office. These costs include flights, accommodation and meal costs. Reimbursement procedures are defined at a separate policy document and can be adjusted at any time.

## **E.4. SAB representation**

The SAB chair (or vice-chair) participates ex-officio to the DiSSCo General Assembly without voting rights. The SAB chair and vice-chair act as spokespersons of the SAB and respond to public or consortium enquiries regarding items of SAB business; Participate to public events representing DiSSCo as a Research Infrastructure; and provide public opinions when needed.