

Ocean Observatories Initiative Facility Board: Terms of Reference

General Purpose

The Ocean Observatories Initiative Facility Board (OOIFB) provides independent input and guidance regarding the management and operation of the Ocean Observatories Initiative (OOI). All such input and guidance will be communicated to the OOI Operator.

Mandate

1. Have the leadership role in community oversight of the OOI Science Plan.
 - Annually examine accomplishments of the OOI Operator, in order to provide guidance as to the contributions of the Annual Work Plans (AWPs) to the progress of the OOI Science Plan.
 - Via workshops, community meetings, and/or other mechanisms, stimulate and engage the user community in keeping the accomplishments of the OOI at the cutting edge of scientific inquiry and technological innovation.
2. Serve as the prime scientific and technical conduit between the oceanographic community, NSF, and the OOI Operator.
 - Develop and implement strategies to expand scientific and public awareness of the unique scientific and technological opportunities of the OOI, and ensure that the oceanographic community is kept informed of developments in the OOI.
 - Identify existing and potential end-user communities, their needs for data and meta-data information from the OOI, and provide guidance on the OOI's effectiveness in disseminating this information to end-user communities and the general public.
3. Help identify collaborative relationships with potential governmental, industrial, educational, and international partners in the OOI, where appropriate.
4. Ensure fair and consistent access to the OOI by all sectors of the user community.
5. Monitor community adherence to applicable NSF policies for data collection, sample archiving, etc. as pertains to OOI activities.
6. Monitor the appropriateness of existing, and/or facilitate the evolution of, performance standards for hardware and cyberinfrastructure, and in doing so address issues such as short- and long term instrument calibration, incorporation of novel technologies, sampling, expansion of technological upgrades, etc.

Structure

The OOIFB will be responsible for establishing and/or continuing committees (either standing or ad hoc), and determining their mandates (technical, regional, etc.), representation, schedules, etc. Such committees will report directly to the OOIFB, which will monitor their functionality and composition with regard to expertise, training, demographics, and other parameters.

Membership

Membership of the OOIFB will include:

1. Seven non-conflicted scientists, one of whom will be Chair, from the oceanographic community. An institution may have only one Member on the OOIFB at any given time. Conflicts will be identified according to standard NSF policies. These persons will represent all career stages, include member(s) from industry and education fields where appropriate, and reflect the breadth of scientific inquiry and technological capability of the OOI.
2. Two members from the OOI Operator.
3. Committee chairs will be considered as “non-voting” Members.

Non-Member liaisons to the OOIFB, as approved by the OOIFB, could include the Chair(s) of any bodies providing internal advice to the OOI Operator (if not included in the formal representation described above), and appropriate UNOLS representative(s).

Non-Member observers to the OOIFB will include representatives from NSF, and may include representatives from other institutions not covered above, such as other federal funding agencies or international entities with significant investments in ocean observing.

Chair

The Chair of the OOIFB will be a leading scientist selected for his/her scientific and managerial leadership. The Chair will serve for two years in this role, and the OOIFB will either appoint his/her successor from one of the non-conflicted scientific Members on the OOIFB, or may choose to seek nominations (including self-nominations) from the U.S. scientific community. The Chair-elect will serve for one year to overlap with the outgoing Chair’s second (final) year. The Chair may attend meetings of the OOIFB committees (if any), and select national and international scientific conferences.

Scientific Representation and Appointments

The seven non-conflicted scientists will be selected to serve on the OOIFB for 3-year staggered rotations. A person may serve two consecutive 3-year terms. A vacancy appointment shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacancy, and an individual so appointed may subsequently be appointed for two full 3-year terms if the remainder of the unexpired term is less than 1.5 years. After rotating off the OOIFB or a committee, a person will not be eligible for membership for a period of three years (one term).

The initial appointments will be made by NSF, with subsequent appointments handled by the OOIFB and approved by NSF. In both cases, an open nomination process (including self-nominations) with outreach in the public domain will be employed.

Committee members will be appointed by the OOIFB. An institution may have only one Member on a given committee at any given time. Perceived conflicts for sub-committee members may be considered subordinate to specifically valued technical and scientific expertise in the sub-committee appointment process.

Meetings, Decisions, and Reporting

The OOIFB will convene at least once annually to execute its mandate. NSF anticipates that in the early phases of the OOIFB meetings would occur twice per year. The OOIFB may convene a virtual meeting as appropriate, if approved by NSF.

The OOIFB will operate via consensus of the Members present. Such consensus need not be unanimous, as defined. When consensus cannot be reached in a timely manner the Chair may call for a vote. When dissenting opinions are expressed, they must be clearly indicated in the appropriate record of the discussion.

Minutes of each meeting of the OOIFB and any (sub) committees of the external OOI Advisory Structure will be taken by the OOIFB Administrative Support Office and the draft (provisional) minutes will be made publicly available within one month of a meeting's occurrence.

At the end of each calendar year, the OOIFB will provide a public summary of that year's external OOI Advisory Structure activities to be distributed widely in the public domain.

Modification and Discontinuation

NSF may redefine the Terms of Reference, and/or adjust or discontinue the OOIFB as needed, to address changes in OOI operations, partnerships, or scientific and technical representation.