

## **Organisational Structure and Governance**

This document provides a summary of the organisational structures and the governance model for a new international coordinating mechanism for scientific collections ("SciColl"). Following final endorsement by the Global Science Forum, an interim executive board will develop more detailed, technical documents to formally establish the organisation (e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding or Terms of Reference / Rules of Procedure/Business Plan).

### Organisational Principles:

The following principles are proposed based on discussions at the Global Science Forum, the Steering Committee and its Working Groups:

- a globally oriented, international organisation, open to any interested country, relevant organisation or institution from around the world,
- a new, free standing organisation outside the OECD and other existing international umbrella organisations; it will be physically located in relevant collections oriented organisation
- an organisation primarily devoted to the advancement of scientific collections as research infrastructure and the basic and applied research based on and using those collections.

### **Proposed model of SciColl organisation and membership**

Several organisational models for a new mechanism were considered by the Steering Committee and its dedicated Working Group on "Governance, Business Plan & Budget", ranging from independent Inter Governmental Organisations to distributed, institutional-based membership associations. The governance structures and *modi operandi* of several already existing international scientific organisations were examined (see also previous reports to the GSF). The consensus from these discussions was that SciColl should be a membership organisation in both national interests and individual organisations could be represented.

### Membership

The following 3 membership categories are proposed

#### 1. Single national representation / national focal points

Country representation (with a minimum of one active relevant institutional member) is designated by a government. It is likely to be a relevant public body (e.g., science coordination or science policy offices, national research councils, public science funding organisations, etc) usually responsible for scientific collections and representing national science policy interests.

For the initial start-up phase of three years, national members will be expected to contribute financially (through a scaled contribution based on GERD), and are offered one seat with voting rights in the Executive Board, as well as representation and vote in the General Assembly.

Following the initial start-up phase of three years, direct financial contributions for national representation will decrease (although project funding will still be sought), together with a possible change of composition and voting rights in the Executive Board.

## 2. Individual institutions

Membership will include private or public institutions holding collections and/or associated research activities; emphasis should be on institutions with an international perspective in their collections and/or research. Each will have a seat with voting rights in the General Assembly. For individual institutions, 4 membership categories with scaled financial contributions are proposed using criteria such as: size/importance; number of staff; operating expenditures/budget; GERD/GDP per capita for the respective country.

Smaller institutions can apply jointly for membership as a consortium. Institutional members are eligible for a seat with voting rights on the Executive Board.

Scientific collections and related institutions are expected to form the heart of the organisational membership, especially after the initial start-up phase. The number of institutional members is expected to increase steadily, with a possible delay at the early establishment phase of SciColl.

## 3. International organisations

This group includes international organisations with a significant interest or involvement in scientific collections and the associated research (e.g., IGOs concerned with basic and applied research, scientific unions and associations, international research projects, etc). Generally, international organisations would be non-paying and non-voting members. Organisational members participate in the General Assembly, but without voting rights. International organisations would be eligible to sit on the Executive Board (not more than 10% of total membership), but without voting rights. It is expected that international organisations could bring financial support for specific SciColl work programmes or activities, in which case they would be entitled to take part in decisions affecting that specific program or activity.

In due course, SciColl could benefit from offering associate membership, observer status and/or other forms of cooperation for relevant partners not covered by these categories (e.g., research projects, commercial enterprises, sponsors, etc).

### SciColl governance and organisational bodies:

The following governance structure and organisational bodies for establishing and operating SciColl is proposed:

#### **Secretariat**

The Secretariat acts as the SciColl international office, the organisations' main executive arm, also providing membership services and implementing work programmes. The secretariat is lead by an Executive Director (SciColl CEO), with a key senior role for leadership, management, representation, and diplomacy. The Executive Director is appointed by the Executive Board and confirmed by the General Assembly; a performance evaluation is carried out by the Chair and Vice-chairs of the Board. He/she serves as secretary to the Executive Board. In addition to the Executive director, the following staff are desirable for the effective functioning of the initiative:

Communication specialist, executive assistant, 1-2 secretaries/administrative office help; 2 Program Officers (may be funded or seconded through SciColl activities); an ICT/web specialist, possibly part-time, who may be contracted out

The Secretariat is hosted by a SciColl member (country, institution) providing building/rooms, basic facilities & services [for detailed requirements, see annexe 4 "Request for proposal to host the SciColl Secretariat"]. The selection of the host organisation will be made by the by the Interim Executive Board. A special agreement with the host organisation/institution, defining the mutual responsibilities will need to be signed at the outset. In the longer term, the Secretariat host may be changed by a decision of the General Assembly.

## **General Assembly**

The General Assembly represents the entire SciColl membership, including national level representation, individual institutions, and organisations. It is the ultimate decision taking and governance body for SciColl and will determine strategies, the work programmes as well as agreeing the budget. The GA elects the Executive Board once the organisation is established and is expected to meet once a year during the establishment phase, with a possible lower frequency later on. SciColl members may send more than one representative to the General Assembly, but will have one vote only. GA meetings are preferably held each time in a different geographical location (hosted by a membership country/institution), possibly in conjunction with an annual policy forum, science fair or scientific conference. The meetings of the GA will be chaired either by the Chair of the Executive Board or a meeting chair specifically elected at the meeting.

## **Executive Board**

The Executive Board oversees the day to day work of the organisation, and the operation of the Secretariat. During the establishment phase (first 3 years), the Executive Board is composed of national members representatives (1 per country), and an equal number of institutional or international organisation members chosen by the national members. After the 3 year establishment phase, the Executive Board will be elected by the General Assembly, following a proposal by the Executive Board ensuring a balance in terms of geography and disciplines, with up to 1/3 of its members composed of national representatives (the General Assembly may accept or reject the overall proposal but not individual members). National representatives not elected onto the Executive Board will retain a seat in the General Assembly. The Executive Board is elected for a 3 years term, with a mechanism for rotation.

The Executive Board will have a Chair and two Vice-Chairs. During the establishment phase (first 3 years), the Chair and Vice-Chairs are elected by the Executive Board. If the Chair is a national representative, then at least one of the Vice-Chairs should be from an institutional member. After the initial phase, the Chair and Vice-Chairs are elected by the General Assembly, following a proposition from the Executive Board.

The Executive Board should meet regularly (at least 3 times/year), usually with the Executive Director in attendance. As a general rule, it will meet at the Secretariat location. The expenses for the Chair are covered from the organisation's budget, but no salary or remuneration is paid.

## **Scientific Advisory Board**

The Scientific Advisory Board is to provide high level advice on scientific issues to the Executive Board and the Secretariat, especially in further developing the programme of work. It proactively develops visionary themes and agendas for wider science involving scientific collections, and makes proposals how better to manage and engage scientific collections in ongoing research activities. The EB helps SciColl link to relevant scientific user communities, and stakeholders especially outside SciColl membership. The SAB is composed of up to 10 individuals with a senior science background ("national academician" level), to be chosen on the basis of their individual capacity and expertise. Membership is for a 2-year term, renewable once. Candidates for the SAB are nominated by the General Assembly, and members will be appointed by the Executive Board. The Scientific Advisory Board elects a Chair from among its members.

Operating costs for meetings (travel, logistics) of the SAB are supported by the SciColl budget. The Secretariat will provide secretariat support to the SAB.

## **Special committees and ad hoc task groups**

As part of the work programme of SciColl, special committees and ad hoc task groups may be established by special appointment of the Executive Board and/or the General Assembly, with a time-limited mandate and for specific tasks. These specific activity-related groups are expected to be supported by seconded staff and resources provided by individual members.