

CoARA Rules of Procedure Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and Steering Board

Version: 3.1

To be approved by the CoARA General Assembly on 23 June 2025.

History of proposed amendments to the “CoARA Rules of Procedure Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and Steering Board” Core Document (hereinafter RoP).

Date	Version of the RoP	Change requested by	Change
20.10. 2022	1.0		Original draft published and approved by the CoARA General Assembly in December 2022.
25.04. 2024	2.0	CoARA Steering Board based on input received at the CoARA General Assembly	<p>Suggestion to include the geographical balancing criteria to the Steering Board election process.</p> <p>The current document “Ensuring a diverse CoARA governance: adding the geographical dimension to the Steering Board election criteria” (hereinafter “supporting document”) serves as a background paper, providing a more detailed context for the amendments proposed.</p>
24.05.2024	2.1	European Commission	<p>Removal of the reference to the “Phase 2” in the RoP core document and keeping it only as a further contextual information in the current supporting document. The voting from CoARA members is therefore requested only for Phase 1.</p> <p>Clarification on the prioritization between the 3 balancing criteria.</p> <p>A clarification was made between the supporting document and the RoP, emphasising that the vote will only concern the revised RoP document.</p>
24.05.2024	2.1	DFG, German Research Foundation	<p>Removal of the reference to the “Phase 2” in the RoP core document and keeping it only as a further contextual information in the current supporting document. The voting from CoARA members is therefore requested only for Phase 1.</p> <p>Clarification on the prioritization between the 3 balancing criteria.</p>

			Deletion of the text limiting the number of SB seats to a given country to one.
24.05.2024	2.1	Steering Board (in response to the amendments received from the DFG)	Extending the country limit from one to two Steering Board members per country.
23.06.2025	3.1	Steering Board	Arranging a knowledge transfer period across the leaving and coming Chairs as well as across leaving and coming Steering Board members.

Introduction

The role of these Rules of Procedure (RoPs) is to describe the processes governing the establishment and renewal of the Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and Steering Board members of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment ([CoARA](#)). This Rules of Procedure document is the responsibility of the CoARA General Assembly. It can be amended, based on suggestions from CoARA member organisations or the Steering Board, to be reviewed by the Steering Board, and approved by the General Assembly.

1. Rules of Procedure - Chair and Vice-Chair(s)

The responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair(s) are outlined in the CoARA Governance document. The Chair and Vice-Chair(s) will contribute in kind to the activities of the CoARA. Reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses for participating in CoARA meetings or representing CoARA at external events might be foreseen, only to the extent that the financial resources of the CoARA are sufficient and the CoARA agrees to reimburse such expenses.

1.1. Chair

The role of the Chair is to represent the interests of the CoARA, not to represent their own interests, those of the employer or other organisational interests.

The Chair is expected to have expertise in research and research assessment, as well as strong leadership, management, and communication skills. The Chair is expected to infuse energy, passion and demonstrate coherent actions and behaviours. Such competencies should be coupled with a clear vision, mission, and commitment to changing research assessment and commitment to the activities of the CoARA.

The Chair must be an employee of, or otherwise affiliated or having a contractual relation with a member of the CoARA.

Term of Elected Chair

The Chair serves for a term of two years, non-renewable.

Chair Resignation

- The Chair can resign at any time during the term. The intention to resign is communicated to the Secretariat and includes a minimum of two weeks' notice. If the position of the Chair is vacated during a person's term, the position is filled by a Vice-Chair until a new Chair is elected. The Chair is replaced by the Vice-Chair having obtained the most votes when elected.

Chair Termination

- The Chair can be dismissed from the role on the grounds of not following the CoARA Code of Conduct and/or the principles outlined in the Governance document and

in this document. Any decision in this regard will be made by the General Assembly on hearing evidence. Termination is decided by the General Assembly with a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly members present or represented. Reaching of the quorum does not apply to this vote. While awaiting the General Assembly decision, the Chair will be suspended from the role.

1.2. Chair Election

The election of the Chair is a separate election from that of the other Steering Board members.

Nominations

Any CoARA member organisation can nominate one of its employees, or other persons affiliated or having a contractual relation with them, as candidate for election as the Chair.

Each candidate must submit a brief motivation statement and a narrative CV describing their background and expertise, including how they match the profile sought for the Chair position. Candidacies must be received by the designated deadline set by the Secretariat, which will be at least two weeks before the scheduled vote.

Voting

The Chair election process is synchronised with General Assembly meetings so as to make best use of greater engagement, where possible. All CoARA member organisations are eligible to vote in the Chair elections. An on-line voting system will be available for the election.

Process

The Secretariat will provide information on each candidate at least one week before the election and support informed membership voting. The Secretariat runs the election and takes the following steps:

- Each CoARA member can give one vote for the Chair.
- Votes are cast in person or online, anonymously, and the candidate with the most votes is elected as the Chair.
- In the unlikely event of a draw, the Secretariat will define a mechanism to ensure a fair outcome (e.g., the Interim Chairs will be provided each with an extra vote). Such a mechanism will be agreed with the General Assembly, to ensure transparency.
- The Secretariat confirms the validity of the election and announces the new Chair as soon as the results have been confirmed. **The new Chair begins their term upon announcing the election results. During the first three months of their operations, the leaving Chair is requested to support the work of the new Chair and ensure smooth knowledge transfer.**

1.3. Vice-Chair(s)

The role of the Vice-Chair(s) is to represent the interest of the CoARA, not to represent their own interests, those of their employer(s) or other organisational interests.

The Vice-Chair(s) must be employee(s) of, or otherwise affiliated or having a contractual relation with members of the CoARA.

The Vice-Chair(s), together with the Chair, form an Executive Committee that discusses the main orientations of the Coalition to be agreed with the Steering Board and adopted by the General Assembly.

Term of Elected Vice-Chair(s)

- The Vice-Chair(s) serve(s) for a term of two years. The term can be renewed once by one-year consecutive period.
- The first election of the Steering Board (SB) will however foresee staggered terms for the ten members of the SB other than the Chair. Five SB members will be elected for a one- year term while five SB members will be elected for a two-year term. As member(s) of the SB, the staggered term for the first election will apply to Vice-Chair(s) as well.

Vice-Chair Resignation

- A Vice-Chair can resign at any time during the term. The intention to resign is communicated to the Secretariat and includes a minimum of two weeks' notice.
- If the place of a Vice-Chair is vacated during a person's term, a new Vice-Chair is elected by the Steering Board to finish the term. Candidates are identified within the current members of the Steering Board.

Vice-Chair Termination

- A Vice-Chair can be dismissed from the role on the grounds of not following the CoARA Code of Conduct and/or the principles outlined in the Governance document and in this document. Any decision in this regard will be made by the General Assembly on hearing evidence. Termination is decided by the General Assembly with a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly members present or represented. Reaching of the quorum does not apply to this vote. While awaiting for the General Assembly decision, the Vice-Chair will be suspended from the role.

1.4. Vice-Chair(s) Election

Nominations

Any candidate for election to the Steering Board can at the same time declare candidacy for a Vice-Chair position.

Voting and Process

- The candidate(s) who receive most votes in the election to the Steering Board

and who had also declared candidacy for Vice-Chair, are nominated Vice-Chair(s).

- In the unlikely event of a draw, the Secretariat will define a mechanism to ensure a fair outcome (e.g., the Chair will be provided with two extra votes). Such a mechanism will be agreed with the General Assembly, to ensure transparency.
- The Secretariat confirms the validity of the election and announces the new Vice-Chair(s) as soon as the results have been confirmed.

2. Rules of Procedure – Steering Board

2.1. Background

The Steering Board (SB) is responsible for the overall oversight, success, strategy, work plan and sustainability of the CoARA. The Steering Board is a collegial body, that aims to reach decisions by consensus, otherwise the Chair may organise votes.

The SB responsibilities are outlined in the CoARA Governance document. SB members will contribute in kind to the activities of the CoARA. Reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses for participating in CoARA meetings or representing CoARA at external events might be foreseen, only to the extent that the financial resources of CoARA are sufficient and the CoARA agrees to reimburse such expenses.

Engagement with other CoARA bodies

- The SB participates in the General Assembly to ensure optimal coordination and to allow the SB to raise issues that need a General Assembly decision.
- The SB is chaired by the Chair, who is also a member of the SB.
- The SB has access to support from the CoARA Secretariat.

SB Reporting

The SB decides on the frequency and mechanisms for its meetings. The Coalition Secretariat will take notes at each meeting. The decisions and outputs of the SB are shared with CoARA members.

2.2. SB Membership

The role of SB members is to represent the interest of CoARA, not to represent their own interests, their employer(s) or other organisational interests.

While a diversity of profiles is valued, SB members are expected to have expertise and a broad overview of research assessment issues and be committed to participate in CoARA activities. They are also expected to have strong leadership and communication skills.

The SB consists of a maximum of 11 elected members, including the Chair and up to two Vice-Chairs. The total number of members must be an odd number.

By casting their votes, each General Assembly member organisation will endeavour to

ensure balance in the SB membership in terms of types of organisations represented, geographic coverage, gender, and diversity of disciplines and expertise.

A balancing algorithm will be used by the Secretariat to ensure representativeness and diversity of the SB (See section 'Balancing algorithm').

SB members will agree among themselves on which Vice-Chair will act as the Treasurer. The Treasurer will oversee the management of the financial affairs of the CoARA and will be supported by the Secretariat.

Term of Elected SB Members

- SB members are elected for an initial term of two years. The term can be renewed twice by one-year consecutive periods. The total term of a SB member cannot be more than four years.
- The first election of the SB will however foresee staggered terms for the ten members of the SB other than the Chair. Five SB members will be elected for a one-year term while five SB members will be elected for a two-year term.

SB Membership Constraints

- SB members must be employees of, or otherwise affiliated or having a contractual relation with members of the CoARA. In case the organisation leaves the CoARA, or in case the SB member leaves the organisation member of the CoARA, its term as SB member will terminate.
- SB members could be members and/or chairs of Working Groups. However, in order to ensure the independence of the SB, SB members abstain from any SB decisions about Working Groups of which they are chairs.

Observers to the SB

To ensure coordination of the SB with other CoARA bodies, observers may be invited to participate in SB activities. This may include at least one representative from the Secretariat, to provide support as needed.

Individual experts may also be brought in as SB observers, for specific tasks, if and when needed and agreed by the SB.

SB Resignation

- SB members can resign at any time during their term. If a position on the SB is vacated during a person's term, the SB will co-opt a new member to fill the vacancy until the end of the term. The co-opted member will be identified based on suggestions from the SB members. Where possible, a balanced composition of the SB should be maintained.

SB Termination

- SB members can be dismissed from SB on the grounds of not following the CoARA Code of Conduct and the principles outlined in the Governance document and in this document. Any decision in this regard will be made by the General Assembly on

hearing evidence. Termination is decided by the General Assembly with a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly members present or represented. Reaching of the quorum does not apply to this vote. While awaiting the General Assembly decision, the SB member will be suspended from the role.

2.3. SB Election

The election of the SB members is a separate election from that of the Chair.

Aim

In order to fulfil their role, SB members should originate from a diverse set of organisation types (see section on “SB Membership”). The SB composition should aim for balance in types of organisations, geographic coverage, gender, and diversity of disciplines and expertise. A diverse SB makes better decisions for a diverse community, and CoARA member organisations are encouraged to take this into account when voting. The SB election process is designed to support the maintenance of some of these balances within the SB by making it clear which backgrounds the individual candidates have.

Nominations

Any CoARA member organisation can nominate one of its employees, or other persons affiliated or having a contractual relation with them, as candidate for election to the SB.

Each candidate must submit a brief motivation statement and a narrative CV describing their background and expertise, including how they match the profile sought for the Steering Board member / Vice-Chair position. Candidacies must be received by the designated deadline set by the Secretariat, which will be at least two weeks before the scheduled vote.

Voting

The SB election process is run on a yearly cycle, which is synchronised with General Assembly meetings so as to make best use of greater engagement, where possible. All CoARA members are eligible to vote in the SB elections. A system for voting in person or online (e.g., LimeSurvey) is used to conduct the election.

Each CoARA member can give one vote for each vacancy on the SB.

Process

The CoARA will ensure a balanced SB by providing information on each candidate at least one week before the election, supporting informed membership voting, and by implementing an algorithm based on balancing criteria. The Secretariat runs the election and takes the following steps:

- A list is prepared of the terms open for election, of which organizational category (see section on “SB Membership”) are expected to be addressed, and of what geographical origin, gender, disciplines and expertise are desirable. This information is made available for General Assembly review approximately two weeks before the scheduled vote.

- Members are invited to make candidacies and all information with the balancing criteria is available to them.
- Each CoARA member organisation can give one vote for each vacancy on SB (i.e. three seats = three preferences / votes).
- Votes are cast in person or online, anonymously, and the candidates with the most votes are elected to SB with the caveat that the criteria for the six types of organisations and gender balance are met. To meet balance, the Secretariat will use a balancing algorithm (See section 'Balancing algorithm'). In the unlikely event of a draw, the Secretariat will define a mechanism to ensure a fair outcome (e.g., the Chair could be assigned with extra vote(s)). Such a mechanism will be agreed with the General Assembly, to ensure transparency.
- The Secretariat confirms the validity of the election and announces the new SB members as soon as the results have been confirmed. **New Steering Board members begin their term upon announcing the election results. During the first two months of their operations, leaving Steering Board members are requested to support their work and ensure smooth knowledge transfer.**
- In the event of an organizational category not having reached the minimum number of SB members required, or if there are not enough candidates to fill all vacant seats, the Chair and the General Assembly will decide on how to resolve the situation.

3. Balancing algorithm

The following three criteria will be taken into account in the balancing algorithm:

1. Geography

Definition of geographical coverage

Geographical balance of the Steering Board is determined based on the country in which Steering Board members are located. This may not always correspond to the location of their nominating institutions.

For optimal representation of their countries, ideal candidates will have worked for at least 3 years at their location.

Geographical balancing criteria for the CoARA Steering Board elections

Minimum two Steering Board members should be located in each of the following geographical regions¹; provided candidacies have been presented for each of these regions:

Region A: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

¹ Regions A, B and C have been defined by following the European Commission's classification provided in the Horizon Europe Regulation. Along these lines, Region A corresponds to EU [WIDENING countries](#), Region B corresponds to other European countries while all other countries belong to Region C.

Region B: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Ukraine

Region C: All other countries.

The number of Steering Board members affiliated in one country cannot exceed two. Thus, candidates located in a country with two existing members on the Steering Board can only be put forward for election in the year that at least one member is stepping down.

These mechanisms will be implemented alongside the already existing balancing criteria. However, the geographical balancing criteria are prioritized over the criteria based on organisation type, and gender, in that order.

The overall, long-term vision for CoARA is that its members originate from countries of all regions of the world and its governance includes balanced representation from each region.

II. Type of organisation

At least one SB member should be originating from each of the following types of organisations, provided candidacies have been presented for each of these categories:

- Universities, and their associations.
- Research centres, research infrastructures, and their associations.
- Academies, learned societies, and their associations, and associations of researchers.
- Public or private research funding organisations and their associations.
- National/regional authorities or agencies that implement some form of research assessment and their associations.
- Other relevant non-for-profit organisations involved with research assessment, and their associations.

However, there could be no more than four elected SB members originating from the same type of organisation.

III. Gender

The following gender balance will be applied: 25:25:50 (25% men; 25% women; 50% open) in an effort to attract the best candidates and support diversity.