

CLIVAR Membership Guidelines

Issued on 19 November 2025 (added introduction section – 25 Nov. 2025)

Introduction

These Membership Guidelines outline the principles, responsibilities, and procedures that support scientific excellence, diversity, respectful collaboration, and continuity across all CLIVAR entities to ensure that they function in a transparent, inclusive, and accountable manner. CLIVAR (Climate and Ocean: Variability, Predictability and Change) operates under the overarching scientific, ethical, and community values of the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP). All CLIVAR members are expected to adhere to [WCRP Code of Conduct](#).

The following three sections cover membership guidelines for:

- I. CLIVAR Scientific Steering Group (SSG);
- II. CLIVAR panels, Research Foci and working groups/task teams;
- III. Emeritus and Ex Officio members.

I. Membership guidelines for the CLIVAR Scientific Steering Group (SSG)

Based on the WCRP membership guidelines for high-level steering committees¹: <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/about/Guidelines-on-Membership-and-Responsibilities-of-WCRP-Bodies-27-Sept-2022.pdf>, which have different conditions from other CLIVAR entities. This includes:

- Length of appointment: 4 years with up to two 2-year possible extensions. When moving up to co-chair, the appointment length clock is reset, with the expectation that only in rare circumstances would any individual serve on the same committee for longer than 10 years.
- Size and diversity: there are no rules on the size of the committee as long as the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee (JSC) is satisfied that the committee size is sufficient for it to undertake its responsibilities, covers sufficiently diverse scientific disciplines, career stage, geography and gender, and allows efficient functioning of the committee. To align with WCRP's goals, it is expected that a single gender should not dominate the membership by more than 60%, and at least one third of all members should be resident in countries not designated as high-income economies.

In addition:

- A member of the SSG must not serve as a co-chair of a CLIVAR panel or Research Foci (RF).
- A member of the SSG must not serve as a member of a CLIVAR panel.
- A member of the SSG is permitted to serve as member of CLIVAR Research Foci or Ex-Officio of a CLIVAR panel.
- A member of the SSG is allowed to serve as a member of working groups and task teams (refer to CLIVAR membership guidelines).
- There is no Ex-Officio/Emeritus position on the SSG.
- Adhere to WCRP Code of Conduct: <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/wcrp-code-of-conduct>

¹ Decision from JSC-46: From 1 January 2026, Joint Scientific Committee (JSC) Members of WCRP will be ineligible to hold JSC membership at the same time as holding membership of any other WCRP body.

II. Membership guidelines for CLIVAR panels, Research Foci and working groups/task teams

Goal

To set in place transparent, accountable, and effective procedures for appointing members of CLIVAR that define members' responsibilities, honor the commitment and contribution of volunteering individuals, and ensure fairness, inclusion, and equity.

Applicability

Unless specified otherwise, these guidelines are applicable to all CLIVAR panels, research foci, and working groups/task teams – collectively referred to below as the entity or entities.

Responsibilities of members

- Contribute to the development of the entity's scientific and programmatic goals and objectives in accordance with the CLIVAR and WCRP Science Plan and Implementation Strategy;
- Provide overall scientific guidance to ensure that the entity progresses towards achieving these scientific and programmatic goals / objectives;
- Actively participate in and / or lead various activities of the entity, including meetings, workshops, coordinated analysis, coordinated experiments, field work, publications, etc.;
- Represent the entity and promote the entity's activities when needed / voluntarily in scientific meetings, public discourse, and relevant scientific outlets, in line with CLIVAR's missions, objectives, and science plan;
- Liaise with other entities to coordinate and collaborate on activities that would benefit from such joint efforts; and
- Adhere to WCRP Code of Conduct: <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/wcrp-code-of-conduct>

Length of appointment

Panel members

The initial term of service for members is **three years**, with one possible extension of two years. In exceptional cases, a further one-year extension may be considered, subject to suitable justification. When moving up to a co-chair position, another two years will be added to the panel member's current term. The total time served on the panel is not to exceed 7 years, including those years as chair.

Others

Length of appointment for members of Research Foci, working groups, and task teams is determined by each individual entity according to the fulfilment of the terms of reference of the entity.

Membership

The membership of CLIVAR entities is on a voluntary and rotating basis.

An entity consists of two co-chairs and members. Three co-chairs may be permitted for a short period (less than one year) to buffer transitions due to membership rotations and exceptional circumstances.

A member should not hold a co-chair position for more than one panel. For other entities, justifications are required.

A member may hold a membership position for more than one panel only under exceptional and fully justified circumstances.

Entrainment procedure

Every year CLIVAR panels must identify (a) members who are able and willing to renew their membership, (b) members who will rotate off, (c) new members to replace the rotated-off members.

An open call for panel membership nominations is announced annually. Nominations are submitted via an online form provided by the International CLIVAR Project Office. For each open position, more than one candidate should be provided to the SSG ordered according to panel's preference with full justifications. Open call for working group/task team membership may be announced as deemed necessary by the entity.

When considering all nominations, CLIVAR panels, research foci, and working groups/task teams should take into account the scientific expertise that will support fulfilment of the panel's terms of reference, and then seek endorsement from the CLIVAR SSG for the proposed new slate of members. Scientifically qualified nominations that support gender and geographical balance and promote opportunities for early career scientists and researchers from developing countries to participate in CLIVAR activities are encouraged. Entities should try to avoid a single gender dominating the membership by more than 60%, and aim for at least one third of all members to be resident in countries not designated as high-income economies.

Size

The size of an entity is dependent on each entity's need for it to run efficiently to meet its objectives and upon SSG's approval. However, it should not exceed 14 for panels and 20 for Research Foci, Working Groups, and Task Teams. In general, a panel should not have less than 12 members.

Expected participation

Entities are expected to meet regularly to review scientific progress, address research priorities, coordinate activities, develop best practices, guidelines and recommendations for the community as a whole and promote scientific capacity development.

Meetings

Entities conduct business inter-session by e-mail and conference calls, with the consideration of reducing carbon footprint. It is strongly suggested that online tools are utilised for ongoing asynchronous interactions.

Entities should hold at least two meetings in any given year. Members' absence from a meeting should be notified to the co-chairs in advance. Members should withdraw (or their membership should be terminated) from the panel if they are absent for more than 50% of meetings in a given year.

The quorum for an entity meeting for their proceedings to be valid is more than 50% of the total number of their members.

In-person meetings

Entities may also meet in person. Note that WCRP has limited funding to support the costs associated with meeting attendance. Members are encouraged, wherever possible, to partially support their travel and/or lodging. Funding is allocated to panels and Research Foci via an annual funding request process. Working Groups and Task Teams can request WCRP funding through their respective panels and RF.

If dependent on WCRP funding, in-person meetings should not be held more frequently than once every 18 months and will only be organised if planned in conjunction with trainings for early career scientists and / or workshops/conferences.

In-person meetings must be made accessible to all members of the entity, including those unable to travel. The ability to cover their own travel costs should not be a criterion for not including members from lower income countries. By reducing travel costs, more members can be included from countries where travel costs would be prohibitive / not affordable.

III. Membership Guidelines for Emeritus and Ex Officio Members

Emeritus

Emeritus membership is intended to provide continuity and institutional memory for a panel's activities for a short term to buffer transitions due to membership rotations. Following procedures apply to Emeritus members (EMs):

- CLIVAR Scientific Steering Group (SSG) makes the EM appointments based on recommendations and justifications from panels.
- EMs are nominated from the group of panel members just rotating off. The nomination must provide a strong justification for why a particular EM role is essential for the panel.
- The number of EMs for each panel is capped at three (3).
- EMs serve only up to one three-year term consistent with the intention of these memberships.
- EMs should serve only in one panel.
- EMs do not have voting privileges in a panel.

Ex Officio

Ex Officio membership is intended to facilitate a linkage between a CLIVAR entity and a project/program/activity/group external to the entity including SSG and co-sponsors. They need not be a past or current member of CLIVAR. An ex-officio membership is tied to a position, not to a person. For example, a co-chair of a WCRP-related panel A may serve as an ex-officio member of another panel B where the ex-officio position in B is filled by whoever is serving as the co-chair of A. Ex Officios do not have voting privileges.

Emeritus and Ex Officio members must observe WCRP Code of Conduct: <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/wcrp-code-of-conduct>.

Panels are expected to review these guidelines which will be applied with the next panel membership cycle starting on 01 January 2026.