

Working Group (WG) Rules

This document details the rules for any E-MRS Working Group. It is intended to provide guidelines and thereby assist members of WGs in order to optimize their effectiveness and productivity.

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1. Purpose of a Work Groups

The objective of establishing a WG is to promote a specific scientific topic and/or strategic aspect considered to be relevant for E-MRS. It must operate solely for the benefit of the Society. The benefits and effectiveness of the WG will be subject to regular assessment by the Executive Committee, which may make recommendations for an extension of its scope, the maintenance of its terms of reference or the termination of the WG.

2. Creation of a Work Group

The creation of a WG must follow the steps listed here below:

A proposal to establish a WG may be made by any member of the Executive Committee, the Senate or any individual member of the society in collaboration with a Board member who would support the mandate to the E.C. All such proposals should be discussed at a formal meeting of the Executive Committee and a decision made to accept or reject the proposal.

When a decision to establish a WG is taken by the Executive Committee, three members of the Society should be mandated to establish the WG, at least one of whom should be a member of the Committee or the Senate as the WG Leader, the others may be members of the Executive Committee, the Senate, the Board of Delegates or ordinary members of the society.

The scope and terms of reference of the WG should be agreed by the appointed leader(s) of the WG and the elected officers and General Secretary of Society.

When the scope and terms of reference of the WG have been agreed a "Call for Volunteers" should be sent by HQ to all members of the Executive Committee, the Senate and the members of the Board of Delegates. In addition the call should be posted on the website to achieve a broad representation and participation in the Working Group.

3. Composition of a Work Group

A WG must always consist of at least two active members:

The WG Leader: who should ensure that the WG complies with the rules and acts within the agreed scope and terms of references. He/she should call meetings where appropriate, preside over the groups deliberations, and manage the process to ensure that all members of the WG can contribute to the discussions. The WG Leader should encourage members to participate in discussions and seek to achieve a representational balance. If the Leader believes that the WG lacks the necessary expertise, efforts must be made to enlarge the group by invitation, or undertake consultation, to bring that interest or expertise into the group.

The WG Vice-Leader, should support the work of the WG Leader by ensuring continuity in case of absence, sharing the workload, and permit the leader to become fully engaged in particular debates. In addition he/she should act as secretary of the WG and keep written records of the activities of the WG and prepare minutes of any face to face meetings of the group

All members of a WG, are expected to participate, contribute and further the work of the group. Examples of members' responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Develop and draft working-group documents;

Contribute ideas and knowledge to the working group's discussions;

Actively and constructively participate in the decision making process.

4. Operation of a Working Group

For financial and logistic reasons it is recognised that formal 'face to face' meetings of a WG are likely to be feasible only during the Spring and Fall Meetings of the Society. Consequently the 'meetings' of the WG will need to be undertaken principally by conference calls, skype calls, by an appropriate 'chat room' discussion or e-mail exchanges. The method to be employed should be agreed by the members of the WG. The WG leader must liaise with E-MRS HQ on the proposed agenda, date and timing of meetings and HQ should inform members of the WG. In many cases the contacts and discussion within the WG will be entirely done by e-mail, but HQ should be kept informed of progress. Where meetings are arranged, the President, Vice- Presidents and General Secretary of the Society may participate in the meeting, but without voting rights.

5. Participation in a Working Group

Although it is recognised that all members of a WG are volunteers, it is hoped and expected that they will actively participate in the WG meetings, phone conferences and initiatives. The WG Leader is expected to make an assessment at the start of every meeting whether a sufficient number of WG members are present to proceed with the meeting and discussions. A record of members' participation should be kept and a note or minutes of the meeting/conference call, etc., must be prepared and communicated to all members of the WG and to HQ.

6. Transparency and communication

The WG leader must ensure that all members of the WG are in receipt of a copy of these WG rules and a statement on the scope and terms of reference as agreed by the Executive Committee.

Each WG has the obligation to keep E-MRS HQ informed by any appropriate method of any major actions or decisions taken by the WG. In some cases HQ may decide that it is necessary, as a matter of urgency, to inform all members of the Executive Committee of the WG's actions or decisions.

Each WG leader must submit a short formal written report giving details of all the major actions undertaken, decision taken, information gathered and proposals for future activity to EMRS HQ not less than 10 working days before each meeting of the Executive Committee. Such reports will be circulated to all members of the Executive Committee with the final Agenda for the meeting.

During the Executive Committee meeting, the WG Leader or Vice Leader should answer any questions arising from the report and may, if necessary, make an oral presentation of all the major actions, decision and proposals made since the previous meeting of the Executive Committee. The report and/or presentation may be discussed by the members of the Executive Committee and appropriate comments or recommendations for further action agreed.

If the WG needs to propose an item which requires a formal vote by the Executive Committee the WG Leader must inform EMRS HQ of the precise question, proposal and phrasing on which a decision is required so that the item is included in the Agenda. The matter will need to be formally proposed by the WG leader at the meeting.

7. Accountability

Leading a WG is an honorary appointment which should be seen as a privilege and opportunity to represent the Society's interests in a specific scientific topic and / or strategic aspect of benefit to the Society and the materials community at large. However, it is associated with the obligations described above.

If a WG Leader fails to deliver the required report on the work of the specific WG for two successive Executive Committee meetings, without providing an explanation acceptable to the officers of the society, an alternative WG leader will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

8. Misconduct

If the Executive Committee considers that a WG is not respecting these rules, especially the 'Purpose', the Committee may take any decision in deems appropriate, which may be to require changes in the WG's method of operation, change the leadership, or formally close the WG.

9. Termination of a WG

If the scientific topic or the strategic aspects for which the WG was established ceases to be relevant, or is not proving to be of benefit to the Society, the Executive Committee may decide to close the WG. However, such a decision must be made only by a majority of members voting, in a secret ballot, at a scheduled Executive Committee meeting.

When prior notice of the vote is given in the Agenda for the meeting, a member submitting apologies for absence may submit a proxy vote, in writing, to the General Secretary not less than 48 hours before the meeting.

10. Implementation of the WG Rules

All WGs established prior to the approval of these rules by the Executive Committee (WG European Affairs, WG Conference Quality, WG Energy, WG Bilateral, WG industry, WG Cultural Heritage), must shortly comply with the rules.

11. Approval of the WG Rules

These rules were accepted by the Executive Committee at the meeting to be held in February 2016. The WG rules can be modified only after consideration of the proposed modification and a majority vote in favour of the modification by the Executive Committee.