

Schema Board Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference v1.1

(Changes approved by the Board on 29 August 2019; see [Schema Editorial Board Notes, 29 August 2019](#))

Purpose

The REFEDS Schema Editorial Board is responsible for the various schema managed and maintained by the REFEDS community. The Board will act as a panel of experts in determining any changes or future development of the schemas managed by REFEDS. Maintenance of the actual registries for each schema will vary and be clearly laid out in the metadata for each schema. While each individual schema has its own business drivers and levels of deployment within the global R&E community, the principles of collaboration and consensus guide all changes for all schemas.

Note that all participation in the REFEDS community is governed by the REFEDS [Participant's Agreement](#).

The Board will:

- monitor and review the structure and costing of support for the schemas managed by REFEDS;
- respond in a timely fashion to proposals submitted by members of the community;
- set the strategic direction for the various schemas under the Board's purview; and,
- educate the REFEDS community about the purpose and evolution of the various schemas.

The Board will be advised by the REFEDS community, in particular participants on the schema-discuss@lists.refeds.org mailing list, and may establish other sub-committees with appropriate subject matter experts as required. Requests for changes (e.g., additional attributes, new schemas, etc.) should be introduced via the schema-discuss@lists.refeds.org mailing list.

Membership

The Board will consist of seven to nine members nominated by the REFEDS community who will serve staggered two-year terms of service, and one ex officio member appointed by GÉANT to act as Secretary. Membership should represent the breadth of stakeholders in the REFEDS community, including federation operators, identity providers, service providers, researchers, etc. Nominations will be announced on the REFEDS mailing list and the Board Secretary will take into account any comments received before taking the final decision about the appointments.

A Board member may be nominated for removal prior to the end of their term when they are deemed non-participating by the Chair or Secretary, or due to violation of this ToR. The remaining Board members must reach consensus to remove the nominated Board member.

If a member withdraws or is removed from the Board in the middle of their term, taking the Board below the seven membership minimum, a call for nominations will go out to find someone to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

The Board shall nominate a Chair from the Board members. The Chair will serve for the duration of their Board term; if their term is extended, they may continue as Chair with the consensus of the Board.

The ex officio member shall hold the same privileges and responsibilities of community Board members, except that the authority for appointment and removal of the ex officio member shall remain with GÉANT in its sole discretion.

The Board may, from time to time, issue a standing invitation to a subject matter expert not otherwise represented on the Board for their expertise. This individual attends the meetings solely in an advisory capacity.

Powers of the Board

The Board may not make any decisions or act in a manner that acts against the principles described in the REFEDS Participant's Agreement.

The Board may decide, after appropriate consultation with the community via the schema-discuss@lists.refeds.org mailing list, whether or not to accept new schema or change existing schema.

The Board may establish sub-committees including for the purpose of, but not limited to, delegated management of a particular schema or topic. The Board may dissolve a sub-committee that has become dormant or when the consensus of the Board is that the sub-committee no longer meets its designated purpose. Upon dissolution the responsibility for the sub-committee's designated schema or topic reverts to the Board.

Sub-Committees

All sub-committees must have at least one Board member participating. Sub-committees may follow a typical working group model and be opened to more public participation, as long as any final proposals are posted to the broader community via the schema-discuss@lists.refeds.org mailing list. Sub-committees may not act in a manner that acts against the principles described in the REFEDS Participant's Agreement.

A sub-committee shall be considered dormant if it has not met at least once in the previous calendar year, unless it has otherwise demonstrated activity (for example via mailing list discussions).

Decision Making

Decisions at a meeting of the Board, or of any sub-committee appointed by the Board, are decided by consensus of the Board or sub-committee present at the meeting. If there is no consensus, then the decision is not carried.

If all members of the Board have expressed via email that they are in favour of a decision set out in a document or email, that decision is deemed to have been passed at a meeting of the Board held on the day the document or email was last signed by a member of the Board.

Decisions may be carried out via email when all of the following conditions are met:

1. A document or email describing the decision has been provided with no less than 240 hours allocated from the time the document or email is presented for Board members to review and reply.
2. At least the same number of members that constitute a quorum have explicitly approved the decision.
3. No member has explicitly blocked consensus.

If these conditions are met, the decision is deemed to have been passed at a meeting of the Board held on the day of the closure of the review window described in condition 1. If these conditions are not met, the decision must be moved to a meeting for further review.

All Board members must declare any conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as any instance where a member has a direct financial or other interest which influences, or may appear to influence, proper consideration within the Board on a matter or proposed matter. Where the member does not voluntarily exclude themselves from any decision-making process, the Board will, where the remaining members deem it necessary, decide by resolution of the remaining members whether the member should exclude themselves from the consideration of the item.

Meeting Frequency & Quorum

The Board must meet at least once each calendar year at the place and time that the Board may decide. More frequent meetings are required when a schema is under revision, or a new schema is under consideration.

A meeting may be conducted by videoconference or teleconference at the discretion of the Board. Items may be dealt with outside of meetings via email under the guidance of the Chair as required.

A quorum shall be 50% of the members of the Board (not including invited subject matter experts), increased to the next integer. (For example, the quorum for an 8 member board is 5 members present, while the quorum for a 9 member board is also 5 members present.) If a quorum is not present, the meeting will not make any formal decisions.

At meetings of the Board, the Chair presides. If the Chair is not present, a remaining member of the Board may be chosen by the members present to preside.