



# INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES (IUGS) COMMISSION ON GEOSCIENCE EDUCATION (COGE) TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Revised by COGE at December 2025)

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The IUGS Commission on Geoscience Education (COGE) is an international scientific committee established by and acting under the auspices of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS). It is bound by the IUGS Statutes and the IUGS By-Laws for commissions and was established in 2004 by the IUGS to assist developed and developing countries in maintaining, expanding, or providing better Earth Science education.
- 1.2 Recent global assessments of geoscience education reveal persistent disparities and a strong need for improvement worldwide. Studies show that nearly one-third of countries still lack geoscience in their school curricula, and where it is included, implementation is often inconsistent: curriculum guidelines are frequently overlooked, teachers receive limited support, and instructional materials are commonly of moderate or poor quality (Stewart, Lewis & Szabó, 2020; King & Sinnott, 2021; UNESCO IGCP–IUGS, 2022). Evidence highlights that the most effective strategy for strengthening geoscience education is to support educators directly through high-quality teaching resources and sustained professional development (Mogk, 2021; Petcovic & Stokes, 2020).
- 1.3 Academic literature (Stewart *et al.*, 2020; UNESCO IGCP–IUGS, 2022) also recognises the diversity of the geoscience education community, which can be broadly grouped into:
  - 1.3.1 higher-education instructors;
  - 1.3.2 school and college teachers with strong geoscience backgrounds;
  - 1.3.3 teachers with limited disciplinary preparation;
  - 1.3.4 providers of informal geoscience education; and
  - 1.3.5 researchers specialising in geoscience education
- 1.4 This framework supports the design of targeted resources and capacity-building initiatives to meet the distinct needs of each educator group.

## 2. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, VISION, AND MISSION

- 2.1 COGE's primary goal is to collaborate globally with stakeholders to develop and promote strategic geoscience education, focusing on underrepresented regions and modern challenges.
- 2.2 Specific Objectives
  - 2.2.1 Promote and coordinate geosciences education activities at the international,

national and regional levels through robust collaboration with global stakeholders, including research, workshops, conferences, and publications.

2.2.2 Establish a global geoscience education network that represents at least two representatives per country, as well as gender equality and a diverse age range among its members.

2.2.3 Develop and disseminate information and guidelines for good practice in geosciences education.

2.2.4 To oversee the Geoscience Education Field Officer Programme in collaboration with the EGU Education Committee.

2.2.5 To recognise outstanding geoscience educators around the world with the Chris King Medal.

2.2.6 Report the work performed, plans, and budget for the following year annually to the IUGS.

2.2.7 Develop targeted initiatives to enhance geoscience education in underrepresented regions, ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities.

2.2.8 Integrate contemporary challenges such as climate change, sustainability, and technological advancements into geoscience education programmes and resources.

### 2.3 Mission

2.3.1 Advocating for geoscience education policies, providing professional development for educators, and collaborating on developing and disseminating educational resources globally.

### 2.4 Vision

2.4.1 To facilitate collaboration and innovation globally to promote geoscience education and raise awareness about the importance of the field, enabling individuals to make informed decisions about the Earth's future.

## 3. STRUCTURE

3.1 Regular Voting members are elected to form the COGE Board, which guides the commission in achieving its objectives. It includes the following positions:

3.1.1 A **Chair**, as the principal leader and official representative of the Commission, according to the specifications of Appendix 3. This role involves overseeing the strategic and institutional direction and operations of COGE, ensuring alignment with its mission/vision and long-term goals. Key responsibilities include:

- Chairing Board meetings, quarterly meetings, and General Assemblies.
- Guiding high-level development, approval and implementation of COGE's initiatives.
- Liaising with the IUGS Executive Committee, IUGS commissions and partner organisations at the strategic or diplomatic level.
- Representing COGE at international events, negotiations, and official

engagements.

- Overseeing cohesion, accountability, and effective communication across COGE leadership.
- Promoting collaboration, inclusion, and a healthy working environment within the Commission.
- Serving as a member of the Finance Committee

3.1.2 A **Vice-Chair** who provides operational and governance coordination, ensuring that COGE's internal structures and activities function effectively and remain aligned with Board decisions. The role complements but does not duplicate the strategic leadership of the Chair. Key responsibilities include:

- Supporting the operational implementation of priorities and decisions approved by the Board.
- Coordinating with subcommissions, committees, working groups, and programmes to monitor progress and facilitate information flow.
- Fostering collaboration among COGE members and ensuring timely communication across teams.
- Step in as acting Chair during the Chair's absence.
- Providing periodic updates to the Board on areas under their coordination.
- Being a member of the Finance Committee
- Maintaining regular and proactive communication with the Board.
- Ensuring that decisions, actions, and engagements relevant to governance, operations, or external representation are documented and shared with the Board.
- Including the Board in all official communications with external organisations, including IUGS bodies, partner institutions, and commissions.
- Ensuring that official external engagement aligns with COGE's approved positions and governance processes.

3.1.3 A **General Secretary** who is responsible for completing the following duties:

- Manage internal communications, such as meeting agendas and minutes.
- Maintain accurate and current archives for the commission activities.
- Work with the Board to organise/call meetings and communicate to members when relevant.
- Elaborate forms/development surveys.
- Facilitate communication with regular/associated members of the commission.
- Serving as a member of the Governance & Membership Committee GMC.
- Act as a liaison between the COGE Board and its subcommittees/committees to ensure strategic initiatives are aligned with the organisation's mission and governance standards.
- collect all reports, assemble the official COGE Annual Report, ensure consistency and accuracy, and submit to IUGS by the deadline.

### 3.1.4 Compliance Advisor

- Ensure all the commission activities comply with the COGE Terms of Reference and the IUGS Bylaws.
- Oversee adherence to ethical guidelines, regulatory obligations, and internal governance policies.
- Conduct half-yearly reviews of projects under the commission to ensure compliance with established procedures and report findings directly to the Board.
- Identifying governance or operational issues and recommending solutions to the Board.
- Lead the development and implementation of compliance training programmes for all COGE members.
- Facilitate the review and update of the Terms of Reference as necessary, coordinating with the IUGS to ensure alignment with broader organisational policies.
- Manage and mediate any disputes within the board or broader membership, ensuring that resolutions adhere to the established governance frameworks

3.1.5 A **Treasurer**, responsible for managing the commission's financial affairs. This position includes overseeing budget preparation, financial planning, and reporting. Other responsibilities:

- Ensures the financial integrity and sustainability of the Commission by monitoring income and expenditure, maintaining accurate financial records and ensuring compliance with relevant financial regulations and standards.
- Advises the Chair and other members on financial matters.
- Assists in fundraising efforts and contributes to the strategic financial planning to support COGE's activities and goals with the COGE finance committee.

3.2 As Board Members hold shared executive responsibility, the following requirements apply:

- 3.2.1 Attend coordination emails/meetings, provide monthly updates on assigned tasks and ongoing responsibilities, and communicate promptly regarding urgent governance matters.
- 3.2.2 Document any action, decision, or communication that affects COGE operations, external partnerships, governance processes, representation, or the workload of members, and submit this documentation to the GMC to ensure transparency and institutional memory.
- 3.2.3 Work collaboratively with all Subcommissions, Committees, Working Groups, and Programmes, maintaining respectful and transparent communication, and avoiding isolated or unilateral actions, particularly in matters involving external representation or commitments.
- 3.2.4 Respond in a timely manner to Board communications and governance requests. Consistent delays or lack of engagement may be referred to the GMC for review.
- 3.2.5 Maintain proactive and continuous engagement in all areas of responsibility. If any responsibilities outlined in this ToR are not fulfilled, or if there is prolonged inactivity without a rational explanation, the GMC will first issue an "Urgent

Required Action” notice. Should the situation persist, the Committee may review the case to ensure alignment with the leadership obligations specified in this ToR, which could ultimately lead to a recommendation for transition from the position held on the Board, limiting other leadership positions as well.

3.3 The following sub-commissions and committees have been established to fulfil the goals and objectives of COGE better:

3.3.1 Sub-commissions

- International Relations
- Education, Outreach and Policy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

3.3.2 Committees:

- Social Media & Communication
- Publications
- Awards
- Finance
- Membership

3.4 All COGE Leaders (Board members, Subcommissions chairs, Committees responsables, Programmes Leads, coordinators of Working Groups or initiatives) are subject to the governance, communication, reporting, coordination, and oversight obligations established in this ToR and shall comply with the following governance standards:

3.4.1 Participate in official Board discussions and provide input as requested.

3.4.2 Adhere to the Internal Communication Guidelines set forth in Appendix 3, Section B, including the protocol to respond to official communications from the COGE Board or the GMC within fourteen (14) days.

3.4.3 Comply with all reporting obligations, including the timely submission of quarterly activity reports, as detailed in the Internal Communication Guidelines (Appendix 3, Section B) and using the templates specified in Appendix 5.

3.4.4 Coordinate in advance with the Board, and when applicable with the respective Subcommission or Committee, any action that may affect COGE programmes, committees, external partnerships, member workload, governance processes, or the representation of COGE.

3.4.5 Represent COGE externally with prior Board approval, adhering to the Official Spokespersons and Branding Protocols detailed in Appendix 3, Section A. Activities conducted without approval are considered personal, not using the COGE name, logo, or affiliation, and may not be reported as COGE work.

3.4.6 Maintain and safeguard institutional documentation (actions, decisions,

meetings, and outputs), making such documentation available upon request for governance, evaluation, or Annual Report purposes, in accordance with the Transparency and Handover requirements specified in Appendix 3.

- 3.4.7 To prevent overload and burnout, no member may hold more than one leadership role at the same time without Board approval and a formal workload plan. If dual roles are approved, the leader must fulfil both responsibilities and promptly report any workload issues. Failure to do so will be considered a breach of leadership duties.
- 3.4.8 Support the preparation of the Annual Report required by the IUGS EC, providing all required content, metrics, and supporting evidence (photos, reports, websites, media), as detailed in Appendix 5.
- 3.4.9 Comply with the Leadership Transition and Handover Procedures (Appendix 3, Section C) for any planned or unforeseen departure or request for temporary leave. This includes submitting a detailed transition or delegation plan to the Board and the GMC for approval.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 COGE's Membership is primarily by nomination from existing commissioners. However, individuals who can demonstrate valuable experience in geoscience education and a strong potential to contribute to COGE are also welcome to apply without a COGE member sponsor. To maintain geographical diversity and representation, priority will be given to candidates from under-represented regions, as detailed in Appendix 1 (Membership Nomination & Elections Framework).
- 4.2 COGE's Membership Types are:
  - 4.2.1 Regular Members (national representatives with voting rights)
  - 4.2.2 Associate Members (contributors without voting rights)
- 4.3 The term for both categories is four years.
- 4.4 Each country may have up to two representatives (ideally one regular and one associate).
- 4.5 Associate members with three or more years of demonstrated contribution in geoscience education and/or geoscience communication may apply to become Regular Members during the next electoral cycle.
- 4.6 Rights and Responsibilities
  - 4.6.1 Regular Members:
    - Vote on proposals submitted to the COGE Board.
    - Elect the COGE Board and may be nominated for Board positions.
    - Nominate regular and associate members, with priority to candidates from underrepresented regions.
  - 4.6.2 All Members:
    - Participate actively in subcommissions, committees, projects and events.
    - Promote national and regional geoscience education initiatives.
    - Contribute to publications and capacity-building activities.

- Support global outreach aligned with COGE's mission.
- Engage in international events that strengthen global geoscience education.

## **5. ELECTIONS, BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP DURATION**

- 5.1 Key considerations and steps when selecting voting members or associated members are described in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 Regular members elect the Board of COGE following the procedure in Appendix 1.
- 5.3 Criteria for selecting leaders of Sub-Committees and Committees are also found in Appendix 1.
- 5.4 Board members may apply for only one consecutive additional term.
- 5.5 Regular members may serve no more than two consecutive terms, unless the Board determines that no suitable replacement is available.
- 5.6 Former Board members may act as advisors with the approval of the majority of the Board, without voting rights.
- 5.7 Elections are organised every four years by the General Secretary, who convenes a special committee for this purpose (Appendix 1).
- 5.8 All regular members must return a vote (including abstentions) in any official survey or proposal.
- 5.9 If a voting process does not reach a quorum, the Board may issue a casting vote.
- 5.10 Mid-term vacancies are resolved via a virtual poll or, if agreed, an extraordinary meeting.
- 5.11 The COGE membership list must be submitted to the IUGS Secretariat five months before the next International Geological Congress, for review and approval. Once approved, members will have a 4-year term, beginning and ending at successive IGCs.
- 5.12 Each year, all members reaffirm their continuation. Engagement is assessed every six months by the GMC.
- 5.13 Failure to respond to consultations, meeting calls, or key communications as specified in the Communication Guidelines (Appendix 3, Section B) will result in a review of membership status by the GMC.
- 5.14 After two inactivity reports, regular membership is transitioned to associate status.
- 5.15 Associate membership may be terminated following inactivity or violation of these ToR.

## **6. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

- 6.1 All COGE members are expected to:
  - 6.1.1 Foster a supportive environment for idea exchange and collaborative development.
  - 6.1.2 Uphold the Commission's ethos and goals, practising geoethical values such as honesty, integrity, transparency, and respect.
  - 6.1.3 Maintaining respectful and professional interactions at all times, including in meetings, written communication (following Appendix 3, Section B), and collaborative work. Disrespectful or unprofessional behaviour towards other members is strictly unacceptable.

- 6.2 Concerns or conflicts regarding professional conduct will be reviewed by the GMC according to the procedures outlined in Appendix 2 (Dispute Resolution Procedures).
- 6.3 After investigation, the GMC may issue an “Action Required” notification or, if warranted by the severity of the breach or actions incompatible with the Commission’s ethos, aims, and values, the Board may initiate termination of membership or veto future roles, following the due process established in Appendix 2.

## **7. SUB-COMMISSIONS, WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES**

- 7.1 The Commission shall appoint Sub-Commissions, Working Groups, and Committees as necessary to carry out its purposes. These subordinate bodies are defined as follows:
- 7.2 Sub-Commissions are bodies within the Commission of unlimited duration, created to study and investigate geoscience education strategies all over the world.
- 7.3 Working groups are bodies within the Commission or sub-commissions constituted to carry out specific tasks of limited duration or in a limited area of specialisation and have official support to be able to move on, represent and have the support to speak in their countries.
- 7.4 Committees are bodies created for specific administrative or organisational tasks which may lead to the setting up of a new working group or, eventually, a sub-commission.
- 7.5 The COGE Board shall submit the proposal to create these new bodies to the COGE regular members through a virtual form for feedback. Once confirmed, the initial members and officers from each proposed body can be selected from among COGE members who decide to apply. The IUGS Executive Committee will need to give the official approval of each sub-commission, working group, and committee.
- 7.6 The process for creating sub-commissions, working groups, and committees includes seeking feedback from regular members and allowing members to apply to be part of these groups.
- 7.7 Leadership roles within each sub-commission are open to COGE members who voluntarily apply and are ready to support and work, demonstrating their commitment and expertise. The selection process for these roles adheres to the ToR Appendixes that guide all kinds of elections.
- 7.8 COGE activities and organisational culture are aligned with principles of equity, inclusivity and diversity.
- 7.9 Members are encouraged to freely choose to apply for joining the Sub-Commissions or Committees that align with their interests and expertise, fostering a proactive and engaged community within COGE, and collaboratively working towards achieving COGE's mission.
- 7.10 Specific responsibilities of subcommissions, committees, and their respective leaders, including the GEFO Programme Leader, are outlined in Appendix 2 of this ToR.
- 7.11 Leadership handovers and succession planning procedures are described in Appendix 3.
- 7.12 Accountability and Compliance
  - 7.12.1 The GMC will monitor compliance with transition and handover protocols (Appendix).
  - 7.12.2 Leaders who fail to adhere to these protocols may face a review of their appointment and future eligibility for leadership roles, as outlined in Section 5.

7.13 In cases of leadership vacancies, the GMC, in consultation with the COGE Board, will:

7.13.1 Appoint an interim leader considering team members to maintain momentum within the group.

7.13.2 Open applications for the vacant leadership role, ensuring adherence to the selection process outlined in this ToR.

7.13.3 In the case of permanent departure, the vacancies' replacement should go through an internal vote within the Sub-Commission or team.

## **8. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS**

8.1 The COGE Board will maintain contact via email and call extraordinary sessions when needed.

8.2 Regular virtual meetings of voting members are held at least quarterly.

8.3 A general assembly is organised every year.

8.4 It is expected that COGE will organise and lead a thematic meeting/session at every IGC.

8.5 Sessions and meetings related to COGE's objectives may be organised in collaboration with partner organisations.

## **9. DELIVERABLES AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

9.1 The primary mechanism for internal accountability is the Quarterly Governance Report (QGR), which Sub-Commissions and Committees must submit to the General Secretary for sharing with Voting Members during regular meetings. The specific content, format, and evidence requirements for both Quarterly and Annual reports are fully detailed in Appendix 5.

9.2 COGE provides regular, consolidated news contributions to the IUGS via the Monthly IUGS E-Bulletin. This collaborative contribution is managed and submitted by the Social Media & Communication Team, following the strict word count and formatting guidelines outlined in Appendix 5, Section 2.

9.3 The Commission's primary official deliverable to the IUGS Executive Committee is the Annual Report. This document must provide a comprehensive overview of activities, quantifiable achievements, budget utilisation for the current year, and a budget proposal to support the delivery of the upcoming year's activities, as specified in Appendix 5, Section 3.

9.4 All financial requests, reimbursements, and fund allocations are governed by and must strictly follow the procedures and documentation requirements described in Appendix 4. Failure to comply with these guidelines may cause the rejection of financial claims.

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## **10. CONTROVERSY SOLUTIONS**

- 10.1 Any controversy arising from the application or interpretation of this ToR, including disagreements between members, ethical concerns, or complaints, shall be referred to the IUGS Commission on Geoethics for guidance and resolution, in coordination with the COGE Governance and Membership Committee.
- 10.2 For any other matter not explicitly regulated in this ToR, the IUGS Statutes and Bylaws shall apply, serving as the overarching legal and procedural framework governing COGE's operations.

## **11. REVIEW OF TOR**

- 11.1 The whole or part of this ToR may be modified as deemed necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective, considering the Commission's mission and goals.
- 11.2 Any proposed amendments will be subject to endorsement and approval by the IUGS Council.



## Appendix 1 Membership Nomination, Selection & Elections Framework

**1. Purpose:** This appendix looks at providing a globally inclusive framework to support the Commission's governance and ensure continuity and integrity in all appointments. It outlines the operational procedures that govern:

- the nomination, assessment, and selection of Regular and Associate Members;
- advancement from Associate to Regular membership;
- election of the COGE Board;
- selection of Committee Leaders and Coordinators;
- membership review, conduct oversight, and disciplinary actions.

### 2. Membership Categories & Eligibility

Global Representation Principle: COGE aims to appoint up to two representatives per country (ideally one Regular and one Associate) and promote inclusion of under-represented regions. Exceptions (e.g., large or strategic regions) may be approved by the Board.

#### A. Regular Members (Voting)

Eligible candidates must:

- demonstrate sustained involvement in geoscience education, communication, capacity building, or related research;
- provide evidence of academic or professional contributions (e.g., publications, leadership roles, projects);
- represent their country within COGE (normally one regular member per country).

#### B. Associate Members (Non-voting)

Eligible candidates must:

- demonstrate interest and active engagement in geoscience education or outreach;
- commit to contributing to COGE's programmes and activities.

### 3. Nomination & Selection Process

#### A. Nomination

- Regular Members may nominate candidates for either category.
- Self-nominations are accepted, especially from underrepresented countries.
- All applications must include:
  - a short CV;
  - a motivation statement;
  - evidence of activities relevant to COGE's mission.

#### B. Evaluation & Decision

- The GMC screens candidates based on merit, diversity, and country representation.
- The final list is submitted for electronic endorsement by Regular Members.

- Approved candidates are added to the official roster and reported annually.

#### **4. Advancement from Associate to Regular Membership**

Associate Members may apply for Regular membership when they have contributed actively for at least **three years**, and provide evidence of achievements (e.g., events, publications, programmes). The GMC evaluates applications and presents recommended Regular Members for voting during the next election cycle.

#### **5. Election of the COGE Board**

##### **5.1 Elections special committee**

- It is composed of non-board members a year prior to the culmination of the Board's quadrennial term (at least six months before an IGC).
- In case of unexpected Board vacancies, an interim Elections Subcommittee is formed to fill the vacancy, adhering to the same election protocols.

##### **5.2 Opening of Positions**

- The Elections Special Committee announces the call for vacant positions on the COGE Board, providing position descriptions and application requirements.
- Geographic diversity and inclusivity are emphasised in the call.

##### **5.3 Application Requirements**

- Applicants must be COGE regular members. If no regular members apply or only one does, the Elections Subcommittee may accept applications from associate members with the majority agreement of voting members. Current board members are eligible for re-election only once.
- They submit:
  - o Curriculum Vitae (CV): Highlighting academic qualifications, professional experience, research contributions, and relevant leadership roles.
  - o Statement of Plans for the COGE Board: Up to 500 words outlining the applicant's vision and plans for the desired position, including specific ideas for advancing COGE's initiatives and promoting geoscience education globally.
  - o Statement of Experience and Contributions to COGE: Up to 500 words detailing significant contributions and involvement in COGE activities.

##### **5.4 Candidate Presentations**

- Candidates' application documents are emailed to COGE voting members for review.
- Candidates present their backgrounds, qualifications, and COGE development plans during a quarterly meeting. A link to the presentation recording is provided for members unable to attend.

#### **6. Circulation of Nominated Candidates**

- The Elections Subcommittee presents proposed candidates to all voting

commissioners (COGE regular members) for a one-week voting period.

#### 7. Election Criteria and Terms

- A new board will be elected every four years.
- A quorum of at least 60% of the regular members' votes must be reached to determine the election of the COGE Board.
- Each board member can apply to the next election for only one consecutive term.
- Former board members may continue supporting the new board as advisors only if most board members agree. They do not have right to decide any board's affairs.

#### 5.5 Voting

- A survey form (Google Form) is distributed to all regular (voting) members via email with clear instructions and a deadline for voting.
- Voting members evaluate the candidates based on their qualifications and willingness to serve on the Commission.
- The Elections Subcommittee officially declares the newly elected Board members, who assume their responsibilities after approval by the IUGS Executive Committee and ratification by the IUGS-IGC Council.

#### 5.6 Terms & Re-election

- Board members serve one 4-year term and may apply for one consecutive re-election.
- Outgoing board members may remain as advisors (non-voting) upon majority agreement of the new Board.

#### 6. Selection of Committee Leaders & Coordinators

- A. Committee leaders and working group coordinators are appointed based on:
- expertise relevant to the committee's aims;
  - demonstrated commitment to COGE activities;
  - geographic and gender diversity considerations.
- Procedure
- The Board identifies upcoming leadership needs.
  - A call for expressions of interest is shared with all members.
  - The GMC reviews applications and submits recommendations.
  - The Board approves appointments.
- B. Terms normally follow the 4-year cycle but can be renewed based on performance.

#### 7. Membership Review, Conduct & Disciplinary Procedures

The GMC oversees compliance with COGE's values, responsibilities, and geoethical conduct; and investigation of conflicts, misconduct, or inactivity.

Possible actions include:

- request for improvement;
- suspension of participation;
- recommendation for termination of membership.

Final decisions rest with the COGE Board.

## 8. Record Keeping & Reporting

- The Secretariat maintains the official list of members, country representation, terms, and status.
- Annual updates are included in the COGE Annual Report.
- Membership lists are submitted to the IUGS Secretariat **five months before each IGC**.

## 9. Transparency & Appeals

- All decisions regarding membership and elections must be documented.
- Members may request reconsideration of decisions by submitting a written appeal to the GMC.

## Appendix 2. Operational Roles, Responsibilities and Coordination Framework

### 1. Purpose

This appendix defines the operational roles and responsibilities that support the effective implementation of COGE's subcommissions, committees, programmes, and working group leaders. Ensures clarity, accountability, and smooth coordination across all teams and initiatives.

### 2. Responsibilities of Subcommissions and Committees

#### A. Sub-commissions

##### 1. International Relations Sub-commission

- **Foster and maintain global partnerships with geoscience organisations and educational bodies.**
  - Establish memorandums of understanding (MoUs), letters of collaboration and other agreement frameworks with geoscience and educational institutions worldwide.
  - Promote values-based collaborations reflecting shared principles such as equity, diversity, inclusion, and local impact.
  - Support and promote international collaboration, projects and joint strategic initiatives to advance geoscience education
- **Promote COGE Visibility in international forums and conferences.**
  - Identify and support participation in high-impact events aligned with COGE's mission, including conferences, technical sessions, and symposia.
  - Facilitate connections between speakers, institutions, and COGE initiatives for local and international events.
  - Maintain a strategic list of recurring anchor events where COGE should be visible annually.
- **Broaden Global Representation in COGE**
  - Engage new countries, organisations, particularly in under-represented regions such as Central America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Central Asia.
  - Implement surveys and polls to track international reach, relevance, and feedback of IR activities.
- **Foster Cross-team Collaboration within COGE**
  - Work closely with the EOP and EDI teams to integrate international partnerships with outreach, education, and inclusion initiatives.
  - Coordinate with the Board to align MoUs, joint projects, and strategic agreements with COGE's objectives.
  - Collaborate with the Governance & Membership team to oversee active participation from existing regular and associate members, ensuring regional balance and supporting global educational impact.
- **Monitor, Report, and Strengthen Impact**
  - Track progress and outcomes of all international agreements, partnerships, and joint actions.
  - Submit regular reports and updates to the COGE Board on IR activities and achievements.

- Share insights, lessons learned, and recommendations to continuously enhance COGE's global presence and collaboration effectiveness.

## 2. Education, Outreach and Policy (EOP) Sub-commission

### Core Responsibilities:

#### ● **Oversee the GEFO Programme**

- To appoint every 3 years a specific leader and regional Coordinators (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, etc.) for overseeing and coordinating the GEFO Programme.
- Support the selection, training, and mentoring of Field Officers to promote high-quality teaching (High school and Undergraduate) and professional development in geoscience education.
- Collaborate with the International Relations Subcommittee to establish partnerships and MoUs with educational institutions to adapt the Programme activities to regional and cultural contexts.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the GEFO workshops, reports, and outreach actions through structured feedback and progress indicators.
- Prepare annual GEFO performance reports, ensuring documentation of impact, best practices, and continuous improvement.

#### ● **Educational Outreach and Public Awareness**

- Requests to the GEFO coordinator to draft the activities plan annually to present to the Board and get approval.  
Lead the coordination of public education campaigns, including the monthly "*Geoscience in Our Daily Lives*" initiative—developed jointly with the COGE Social Media Team.
- Create and disseminate educational materials, such as infographics, videos, and Wikipedia content, addressing priority topics (water, hazards, climate resilience, critical minerals) and highlighting geoscience educators monthly (Campaign Geoscience Educator of the Month - GEM).
- Support GEFOs with modular outreach kits and accessible resources to promote understanding of Earth systems and sustainable development.

#### ● **Community and Cultural Engagement**

- Organise and maintain the flagship project "GeoArt", connecting science, creativity, and culture to engage the public through exhibitions, performances, and educational storytelling.
- With the support of GEFO Programme members and local organisations: deliver community-based activities (science festivals, field trips, school visits) that promote inclusivity and intergenerational learning.
- To appoint a specific responsible commissioner in charge of the GeoArt project, and others managing the remaining programmes and projects under the EOP.

#### ● **Education Policy and Curriculum Development**

- Work with the EDI team of COGE and regional stakeholders to advocate for the inclusion of geoscience in education policies and curricula, ensuring alignment with sustainability goals and societal needs.

- Provide evidence-based recommendations and frameworks to guide geoscience literacy standards and teacher training.
- Collaborate with other COGE Subcommissions to integrate EDI and global citizenship perspectives into curriculum initiatives.
- **Monitoring, Reporting, and Collaboration**

Maintain transparent reporting on deliverables through quarterly and annual submissions to the COGE Board.

  - Promote collaboration with international partners and other IUGS commissions to expand the reach and recognition of COGE's educational mission.

### 3. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Subcommittee (EDI)

- **Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across All COGE Programmes and Partnerships**
  - Integrate EDI principles across all COGE activities, ensuring accessibility, balanced participation, and inclusive communication in programmes such as GEFO, workshops, and campaigns.
  - Work jointly with the EOP and Social Media Team to embed EDI visibility in outreach, publications, and digital platforms, promoting inclusive narratives and diverse representation.
- **Foster Representation, Mentorship, and Capacity Building**
  - Encourage gender balance, regional diversity, and intergenerational participation within COGE leadership, working groups, and events.
  - With the support of the EOP team, coordinate mentorship and peer-learning initiatives connecting early-career educators and professionals with experienced geoscientists worldwide, emphasising inclusive professional growth and cultural sensitivity.
- **Collaborate with COGE teams to Strengthen Global Impact**
  - Work closely with the International Relations Subcommittee to ensure MoUs, partnerships, and joint projects reflect COGE's EDI standards and foster equitable opportunities for all regions.
  - Advise the EOP team to promote inclusive learning environments and equitable access to resources.
  - Support cross-cutting actions such as inclusive webinars, collaborative campaigns, and recognition programmes coordinated with the EOP and Social Media teams.
- **Monitor and report on the progress of EDI initiatives**
  - Establish clear indicators to measure diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity across COGE activities.
  - Collect feedback from members and partners to identify needs and improvement areas.
  - In collaboration with the Board and the Social Media team, regularly share EDI outcomes, success stories, and recommendations through reports and social media channels, enhancing transparency and continuous improvement.

## **B. Committees**

1. Finance Committee
  - Prepare an annual budgetary proposal based on the proposed annual work plan of the Commission to be submitted to IUGS.
  - Focus the budget on consolidating the position and role of COGE sub-commission/programs in the context of other global and international programmes.
  - Provide financial support to activities involving direct communications/discussions with key global stakeholders if included in the annual budget allocation (subject to IUGS approval).
  - Seek sponsorship for specific projects and activities when relevant.
  - Under COGE approval, administrate fund requests and reimbursement (Appendix 4: Regulation for Approving Fund Requests and Reimbursement of Expenditure).
  
2. Social Media Committee
  - Manage and update the COGE website with previous approval from the COGE Board.
  - Maintain sections for relevant documents and COGE activities for transparency.
  - Disseminate commission activities through COGE social media platforms.
  - Launch content weekly after online review by the COGE Board, ensuring accuracy and alignment with its mission/goals.
  - Require approval from two leaders (subcommission chairs or Responsible of Committees) not included on the COGE Social Media Committee prior to sharing any publication on COGE social media channels and website.
  - The Social Media Coordinator develops, presents and implements a social media strategy previously approved by the Board every year and has to report activities in quarterly meetings and when required.
  - The webmaster manages the website and coordinates with the COGE social media team members to update web content in COGE social media accounts to engage under the approval of the COGE Board.
  
3. Publications Committee
  - Oversee the production and distribution of COGE publications, including newsletters, reports, and academic papers.
  - Ensure the quality and relevance of content published under the COGE name.
  - Collaborate with external publishers and journals to promote COGE's work.
  
4. Awards Committee
  - Manage the nomination and selection process for the Chris King Medal and other awards.
  - Ensure a fair and transparent selection process, adhering to COGE's values and goals.
  - Promote and publicise award recipients and their contributions to geoscience education.
  
5. Governance & Membership Committee
  - Maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of COGE members.

- Evaluate and approve new membership applications.
- Engage with members to ensure active participation and contribution to COGE's activities.
- Conduct periodic reviews of member engagement and report findings to the COGE Board.
- To ensure transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency, any corrective actions result strictly from documented non-compliance with these ToR.

### 3. Detailed functions of Programme Leads and Coordinators

- A. General Responsibilities: all leaders in the commission must comply with governance, operational, and reporting standards in the ToR. They are expected to maintain transparency in their leadership of all programme-related activities and proactively report operational challenges or workload concerns.
- B. In the case of the GEFO Programme Lead, this position involves the following responsibilities:
- Lead the operational management of the Programme.
  - Maintain regular communication with Field Officers and Regional Coordinators.
  - Organise quarterly coordination meetings and consolidate activity reports.
  - Prepare the annual GEFO activity plan for Board approval.
  - Monitor engagement, reporting inactivity or gaps in participation.
  - Ensure alignment between GEFO activities, the EOP Sub-commission, and the International Relations Sub-commission.
  - Submit quarterly and annual reports to the Board, contributing to the Annual Report.
  - Coordinate training, guidance documents, and resources for Field Officers.
  - Report operational challenges promptly to the Board.
- C. Leaders of other programmes, projects or working groups
- Manage specific activities in alignment with the subcommission/committees objectives.
  - Coordinate with the Board and relevant sub-commissions before undertaking actions affecting budgets, collaborations, or external representation.
  - Maintain accurate records of activities, outputs, and participation.
  - Submit quarterly activity updates and contribute to the Annual Report.
  - Ensure engagement of early-career researchers and international partners, as appropriate.

### Appendix 3. Communication & Leadership Transition Protocols

**Purpose:** To establish standardised protocols for coherent external and internal communication, ensure professional brand management, and detail formal procedures for effective leadership transfer across all COGE directorial roles.



## A. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND BRANDING PROTOCOLS

### 1. Official Spokespersons and External Coherence

- The **Chair** and the **General Secretary** are designated as the principal official spokespersons for the Commission.
- Any other individual speaking on behalf of COGE (including Subcommittee and Committee Chairs) must obtain **prior approval** from one of the principal spokespersons. This ensures consistency of the institutional message, adherence to geoethical values, and alignment with the IUGS mission.

### 2. Channels, Branding, and Crisis Management

- The **Social Media Committee** is delegated the responsibility for active dissemination of COGE activities, website maintenance, and overseeing compliance with the communication policy.
- Consistent and professional use of the **COGE and IUGS logos and branding** is required on all official publications, presentations, and materials.
- Any media inquiry or sensitive situation must be **immediately escalated** to the Chair and General Secretary for a coordinated crisis management response.

## B. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

The following protocols ensure professional, timely, and documented communication among all COGE components:

### 1. Email Formatting Standards

- **Subject Line Format:** Use the precise format: **COGE [Subcommittee/Committee/Working Group Acronym]: Subject**
- **Recipients:** Include all relevant Board members or coordinators in **CC** to maintain transparency and situational awareness.

### 2. Response Times

- Members must respond to the Board or GMC communications within fourteen (14) days of receipt.
- A written explanation must be provided if unavoidable delays occur.

### 3. Reporting, Escalation, and Transparency

- Members must promptly notify the Board or GMC of any issues affecting operations, external representation, member workload, or governance stability.
- The **General Secretary** is responsible for calling Board meetings and distributing agendas and minutes promptly to all voting members.
- All leaders must utilise **designated COGE storage and communication platforms** to maintain accessible and transparent documentation, facilitating audit and institutional



continuity.

- Maintain a personal record of communications that impact COGE responsibilities.

## C. LEADERSHIP TRANSITION AND HANDOVER PROCEDURES

These procedures apply to all leadership roles within COGE to ensure continuity and prevent disruption.

### 1. Succession Planning

- To foster stability and continuity, all leaders are required to:
  - **Identify deputies or collaborators** early in their term to act as interim leaders in case of unforeseen absences or departures.
  - **Submit a brief Succession Plan** to the GMC.
  - **Work with the GMC** to implement the succession plan to ensure uninterrupted operations and a balanced workload among the team.

### 2. Handover Protocol (Documentation)

- Outgoing leaders are **required to provide a Handover Report** that outlines pending tasks, critical contacts, key stakeholders, and ongoing activities.
- This report must be submitted to the GMC and the incoming leader **within two (2) weeks of departure**.

### 3. Transition Support

- A **minimum four (4) week transition period is recommended** to assist incoming or interim leaders appointed by the Board in fully understanding their responsibilities and ongoing projects.

### 4. Accountability

- Leaders **failing to comply with these Leadership Transition protocols** may face a **review of their appointment** and potential **loss of eligibility for future leadership roles** within COGE.

## Appendix 4. Regulation for Fund Allocation, Requests and Reimbursement of Expenditure.

### Criteria for Fund Allocation

To ensure transparency, equity, and alignment with COGE's mission, funding requests will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

#### 1. Priority Funding Categories

[In Review and awaiting ratification from the IUGS EC](#)



**Mandated Attendance:** Full support for Main Board Members (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and General Secretary) to attend IUGS-mandated meetings, ensuring COGE fulfils its governance responsibilities.

**Early-Career Support:** Partial funding for Regular and Associate Members (with priority for early-career professionals) to attend geoscientific events that align with COGE's mission and strategic goals.

**Additional Requests:** Limited funding for other initiatives or activities, subject to budget availability and alignment with evaluation criteria.

## 2. Evaluation Criteria for Additional Requests

**Alignment with COGE Objectives:** Activities must align with COGE's mission, goals, and strategic priorities.

**Significance of the Activity:** Requests must demonstrate meaningful potential for impact within the geoscientific and educational communities.

**Impact:** Priority will be given to activities offering both immediate benefits (e.g., networking, outreach) and long-term outcomes (e.g., fostering collaborations, developing sustainable networks).

**Geographic Representation:** Special consideration will be given to projects that promote diversity and reach underrepresented regions or communities.

**Collaborations and Partnerships:** Requests that demonstrate collaboration with institutions or organisations will be prioritised for maximising impact.

**Feedback and Evaluation:** Applicants must outline a plan to assess the success of their activities and provide a report post-completion.

**Financial Need and Availability of Other Funding:** Requests will also consider whether applicants have access to other funding sources, ensuring equitable resource allocation.

**Urgency and Timeliness:** Activities that address critical deadlines or immediate opportunities will be prioritised.

## Reimbursement Policy

The reimbursement policy is designed to ensure responsible fund management and support for COGE members engaging in approved activities.

### 1. Eligibility

**Tier 1:** Full reimbursement for Main Board Members attending IUGS-mandated meetings and essential governance activities.

**Tier 2:** Partial support for early-career regular and associate members participating in geoscientific events.

**Tier 3:** Additional reimbursements for activities aligned with COGE's mission, based on available funds and evaluation criteria.

### 2. Eligible Expenses

Travel (e.g., flights, local transportation)

Accommodation

Meals during events

Registration fees for conferences or workshops

### 3. Limits on Reimbursement

**Tier 1:** Fully reimbursed as part of the annual budget.

[In Review and awaiting ratification from the IUGS EC](#)



Tiers 2 and 3: Capped at \$500 or \$1000 per individual, depending on budgetary constraints. Exceptions require prior Finance Committee approval. International bank transfer fees will be covered by COGE to ensure fairness to recipients.

#### 4. Request Submission

Requests must be submitted within 30 days of completing the activity.

Required documentation includes:

Activity description

Itinerary and receipts/invoices for claimed expenses

#### 5. Annual Deadlines

Requests for activities completed in the prior calendar year must be submitted by April 1 of the current year.

#### 6. Advance Proposal Submission

Members are encouraged to submit proposals for travel support before the activity, ensuring clarity on reimbursement eligibility and available funding.

#### 7. Review and Approval

All reimbursement requests are reviewed by the Finance Committee, ensuring compliance with COGE guidelines and IUGS-mandated priorities.

#### 8. Reporting Obligations

Recipients must submit a report (maximum 500 words) summarising the outcomes of their funded activities within one month of completion.

#### 9. Transparency and Publication

Summaries of funding decisions, without identifying recipients, will be shared as part of quarterly internal reports for transparency.

Decisions will not be published in the newsletter to protect confidentiality but will remain available to members upon request.

### **Unused Funds**

Unused funds from the annual budget will be re-evaluated and redistributed to support priority activities, with a preference for geographic diversity and early-career participation.

## **Appendix 5. Reporting Templates and Deliverables**

**Purpose:** To define the mandatory documentation and reporting standards that serve as the foundation for COGE's governance, performance evaluation, Annual IUGS Report submission, and transparent external communication. Compliance with these standards is a core responsibility for all leaders.

### **1. QUARTERLY GOVERNANCE REPORT (QGR)**

The Quarterly Governance Report is a mandatory internal accountability tool submitted by all

leaders, Sub-Commissions, and Programme Leads to the General Secretary and the GMC.

Category	Rationale and Utility for Governance	Required Content
<b>Progress &amp; Activity</b>	Tracks active contribution and commitment; informs workload review.	Summary of activities conducted and meetings attended.
<b>Responsibility Status</b>	Measures performance against mandate and stated objectives.	Progress on assigned responsibilities and defined objectives.
<b>Collaborations &amp; Outreach</b>	Measures external impact and strategic partnership development.	Details of internal and external collaborations and partnerships.
<b>Measurable Outputs</b>	Quantifies results for the Annual Report and IUGS evaluation.	Specific measurable outputs (e.g., resources created, presentations, data gathered).
<b>Challenges &amp; Support</b>	Early escalation system for risks and resource deficiencies.	Identification of critical challenges requiring Board or Secretariat support.

## 2. MONTHLY IUGS E-BULLETIN CONTRIBUTION

This report is a consolidated news contribution promoting COGE's work to the global geoscience community via the IUGS E-Bulletin.

Standard	Requirement for Submission	Rationale
<b>Content Creation</b>	All COGE Leaders must contribute short updates to a <b>shared Google Doc template</b> managed by the Social Media Team. The total consolidated contribution (text and figures) <b>must not exceed 300 words</b> .	Ensures a concise, collaborative contribution while meeting the E-Bulletin's strict space limitations.
<b>Format (Internal)</b>	All Leaders contribute directly to the shared document; no individual PDF submission is required from contributors.	Simplifies the process for all leaders.
<b>Format (External)</b>	The Social Media Team is solely responsible for exporting the final 300-word contribution in <b>two formats (.docx and .pdf)</b> before submitting it to the IUGS E-Bulletin Editor.	The PDF file guarantees the preservation of layout and formatting for the editor.

<b>Submission Lead</b>	The Social Media Committee Coordinator is responsible for compiling and submitting this final report.	Ensures timely submission and message consistency.
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### 3. ANNUAL REPORTING (IUGS-MANDATED)

The annual submission compiles data from the Quarterly Reports for IUGS compliance and public disclosure.

Category	Rationale and Utility for Governance	Required Content
<b>Strategic Summary</b>	Provides high-level review of goal achievement.	Summary of annual activities and overall progress towards the strategic objectives.
<b>Impact &amp; Events</b>	Documents global outreach and community engagement.	Events organized or attended by COGE representatives.
<b>Scholarly Output</b>	Verifies scientific contribution and academic rigor.	Publications directly supported by or produced by COGE members (must include DOIs).
<b>Capacity Building</b>	Measures success in developing the next generation of geoscientists.	Engagement of early-career researchers (ECRs) in COGE activities.
<b>Financial Transparency</b>	Required for IUGS audit and future budget planning.	Summary of budget usage and planned financial requirements for the following year.
<b>Evidence Documentation</b>	Validation for all claims made in the report.	Supporting evidence (high-resolution photos, detailed reports, website links, media coverage).

### 4. DOCUMENTATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- **Transparency Mandate:** All leaders must **maintain accessible records into the Corporate Google Drive**. Actions, decisions, meetings, and outputs should be included in the designated folders. This is mandatory for governance purposes, annual reporting, and facilitating the audit process.
- **Submission Protocol:** Templates must be submitted to the General Secretary in a timely manner according to the deadlines specified in **Appendix 3** for consolidation into the COGE Annual Report. Compliance with this timeline is an essential leadership obligation.