



**INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES (IUGS) COMMISSION
ON GEOSCIENCE EDUCATION (COGE)
TERMS OF REFERENCE
(Revision, March 2024)**

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).
- 1.2 COGE is bound by the IUGS Statutes and the IUGS By-Laws for commissions.
- 1.3 The COGE was established in 2004 by the IUGS to examine and develop programs to assist developed and developing countries in maintaining, expanding, or providing better Earth Science education within their country.
- 1.4 Global surveys of geoscience education have shown variability and great scope for improvement worldwide. They show that around a third of countries worldwide do not have geoscience in their school curriculum; for those countries that do, it is common for schools not to follow curriculum guidelines related to geoscience, teachers of geoscience are not well supported, and the textbooks and teaching materials they rely on are of only moderate or inferior quality. In this regard, the most effective way to improve geoscience education is to target teachers and other educators, providing them with suitable teaching materials and especially training them on how to use these documents most effectively.
- 1.5 Experience indicates that geoscience educators can be sub-divided into five main groups:
 - 1.5.1 Teachers of geoscience in Higher Education.
 - 1.5.2 Teachers of geoscience in schools and colleges with solid geoscience backgrounds.
 - 1.5.3 Teachers with weak backgrounds in geoscience.
 - 1.5.4 Providers of informal geoscience education.
 - 1.5.5 Researchers into geoscience education.

2. GOAL, OBJECTIVES, VISION, AND MISSION

- 2.1 COGE's primary goal is to actively collaborate with other Commissions, organizations, and networks at all scales to develop activities and resources to support geoscience education across the globe.

ToR v0.1 formally approved by COGE on Feb 12, 2024, reviewed by IUGS Council on March 3, 2024 and waiting for ratification during the IGC 2024.

2.2 Specific Objectives

- 2.2.1 Promote and coordinate Geosciences Education activities at the international, national, and regional levels: including research, workshops, conferences, and publications.
- 2.2.2 Establish a global geoscience education network that represents at least 2 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 administrate the Geoscience the Education Field Officer Program
- 2.2.5 To recognize 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.

2.3 Mission

- 2.3.1 Advocating for geoscience education policies, providing professional development for educators, and collaborating on the development and dissemination of educational resources globally.

2.4 Vision

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

3. STRUCTURE

3.1 The COGE Board is formed by ordinary members and leads the commission towards achieving its objectives. It includes the following positions:

3.1.1 A **Chair**, as the leader and main representative of the Commission. This role involves overseeing the strategic direction and operations of COGE, ensuring alignment with its mission/vision and goals. Key responsibilities include:

- Chairing meetings
- Guiding the development and implementation of COGE's initiatives
- Liaising with the IUGS commissions and other relevant organizations
- Representing COGE at various events and platforms.

- Facilitating collaboration among COGE members, fostering a productive and inclusive environment.
- Is a member of the Finance Committee

3.1.2 A **Vice-Chair**, whose responsibilities are:

- Assist the Chair in strategic planning and execution.
- Oversee subcommittees, members activity and targeted projects as needed.
- Step in as acting Chair during the Chair's absence.
- Facilitating collaboration among COGE members, fostering a productive and inclusive environment.
- Is a member of the Finance Committee

3.1.3 A **General Secretary**, to complete the following duties:

- Manage internal communications, such as meeting agendas and minutes.
- Maintain accurate and current archives.
- Work with the Board to organize/call meetings and communicate to members when relevant.
- Elaborate forms/development surveys.
- Facilitate communication with regular/associated members of the commission.
- Is a member of the Membership Committee

3.1.4 A **Treasurer**, responsible for managing the Commission's financial affairs. This 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.

3.1.5 A Social **Media coordinator**, to complete the following actions:

- Develop and implement a social media strategy for COGE.
- Manage website and coordinate with COGE social media team members to update contents in COGE social media accounts to engage under approval of COGE Board.
- To report activities, updates in quarterly meetings and when required.
- If no webmaster is appointed, social media coordinator undertakes that role.

3.2 The following Sub commissions and Committees have been established to fulfil the goals and objectives of COGE better:

3.2.1 Sub-commissions

- International Relations
- GEFO Program
- Public Outreach and Communication
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

3.2.2 Committees:

- Social Media
- Publication
- Awards
- Finance
- Membership

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 All members must follow the Commission's ethos and goals, as well as practicing interpersonal geoethical values such as: honesty, integrity, conviction, transparency and respect for others.

4.2 Regular (Voting) Members

4.2.1 The term for Regular members is four years, and there will be one representative per country.

4.2.2 Have a record of demonstrated experience in geosciences education.

4.2.3 Can nominate and sponsor a Regular and Associate member every year.

4.2.4 Will represent a Country in the Commission and have the right to vote on any proposals formulated by the COGE Board.

4.2.5 Can elect the Board of COGE.

4.2.6 Can be eligible to be appointed for one of the positions on the Board.

4.2.7 Must participate in the COGE Quarterly Meetings and be part of COGE's Sub-commissions/Working Groups/committees

4.3 Associate Members

4.3.1 The term for Associate members is four years, and there will be one representative per country.

4.3.2 Are representatives interested in contributing to and participating in COGE's Sub-commissions/Working Groups/committees or projects.

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4.3.3 Despite not holding office or making nominations, Associate Members benefit from COGE membership.

4.3.4 After three years of being associate members, those with verified activities and publications on Geosciences' education and/or communication of Earth Sciences could apply to become Regular Members.

4.4 COGE members participate actively in:

4.4.1 The commission projects/activities

4.4.2 Promotion and diffusion of local/regional/national research initiatives on Geoscience education.

4.4.3 Publication of individual and collective works on Geosciences education.

4.4.4 Participating in international events aimed at improving the quality of geoscience education worldwide.

4.4.5 Creating a supportive space to exchange ideas and discuss collaborative projects related to geoscience education.

5. ELECTIONS, BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP DURATION

5.1 The Regular members will elect the Board of COGE following the **COGE Board election procedure** (available on COGE website).

5.2 A new Board will be elected every three years.

5.3 A quorum of at least 60% of the Regular members' votes must be reached to determine the election of the COGE Board.

5.4 Each Board member can apply to the next election for only one consecutive term.

5.5 Regular Members should spend no more than two consecutive terms on the Commission representing their country. However, the Board reserves the right to extend this term when no suitable alternative candidates are available to continue representing a country as a commission member.

5.6 Former Board members may continue supporting the new Board as advisors only if most Board members agree. However, they do not have rights to decide any Board's affairs.

5.7 Elections will be organised every three years by COGE General Secretary, who will call a special committee to set up the elections.

5.8 All Regular Members must have returned a vote (including abstentions) on any Commission Survey/Proposal.

5.9 When a voting process does not yield a quorum, the Board reserves the right to make a casting vote.

- 5.10 Any mid-term vacancies that may arise within the established Board period will be discussed and resolved using a virtual poll or if the Regular members agree, in an extraordinary meeting.
- 5.11 COGE Members list must be submitted to the IUGS Secretariat for review five months before the next IGC (International Geological Congress). IUGS Commission on Geoethics will review the list before IUGS council evaluation. Once approved, members will have a 4-year term, beginning and ending at successive IGCs.
- 5.12 Every year (during the term of an elected Board), members (regular and associated) are asked to reaffirm their membership and involvement activity will be assessed every six months by the Membership Committee that will inform the Board.
- 5.13 Failure to respond to COGE consultations (e.g., voting on time, responding to meeting callings, and relevant communications) will result in a membership status review.
- 5.14 COGE Board will follow up on engagement of all members in the above-mentioned activities.
- 5.15 Upon two inactivity reports a Regular Membership is transitioned to Associate status.
- 5.16 Associate Membership will be terminated if the membership committee reports inactivity or violation of the rules outlined in this ToR.

6. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- 6.1 Each voting member and officer of the Commission should treat others with respect.
- 6.2 Disrespectful and unprofessional comments directed at other commissioner's whether in person or over e-mail will not be tolerated.
- 6.3 Should a contentious situation occur, the Board and membership committee will initially deal with the matter.
- 6.4 After an investigation, the Board may issue a warning or terminate the membership of those involved in unprofessional conduct.
- 6.5 Activities considered inappropriate or in opposition to the Commission's ethos, aims, and values (item 4.1) may also result in termination or veto of the COGE membership.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF 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.

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- 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 specialization.
- 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.

8. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 The COGE Board hold virtual meetings every two months but may call for extraordinary sessions at any time.
- 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 organize and lead a thematic meeting/session at every IGC.
- 8.5 Sessions and meetings related to COGE's objectives may be organized in collaboration with partner organizations.

9. DELIVERABLES

- 9.1 Monthly reports from subcommittees shall be sent to the General Secretary of the Commission. These reports will be summarized and included in the IUGS e-bulletin via the social media team.
- 9.2 The Commission's annual report must include an overview of activities, achievements, and the budget for the current year.
- 9.3 The annual Work Plan-Strategy includes a budget proposal to support the delivery of activities of the subcommittee/committees and products for the upcoming year.

10. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 10.1 Finance Committee prepares an annual budgetary proposal to be submitted to IUGS based on the proposed annual work plan of the Commission.
- 10.2 Budget will focus on consolidating the position and role of COGE sub commission/programs in the context of other global and international programs
- 10.3 Under approval of IUGS, COGE could provide financial support to activities involving direct communications/discussions with key global stakeholders if those are included in the annual budget allocation.

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10.4 COGE will seek sponsorship for specific projects and activities when relevant.

11. SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE

11.1 The COGE website is managed and updated by the commission's webmaster with previous approval from the COGE Board.

11.2 The website includes sections in which relevant documents (Annual Reports, meeting minutes, and others) and COGE activities will be posted and documented for transparency.

11.3 The commission activities will be disseminated through the COGE social media platforms.

11.4 Contents may be launched weekly preview online review by COGE Board ensuring accuracy and alignment with COGE mission/goals.

11.5 An approval from two Board members not included on the COGE Social Media Committee is required prior to share any publication on COGE social media channels and website.

12. CONTROVERSY SOLUTIONS

12.1 Any controversy arising from the application of this ToR, its interpretation, disagreements between members that may become subject to compromise and the resolution of complaints and ethical issues will be referred to the IUGS Commission on Geoethics.

12.2 To regulate what is not specified in this ToR, all the rules laid and contained in the IUGS By Laws will be considered, recalled and transcribed.

13. REVIEW OF TOR

13.1 The whole or part of this ToR may be modified as deemed necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective in light of the Commission's mission and goals.

13.2 Any proposed amendments will be subject to endorsement and approval by the IUGS Council.