

Guidelines for Proposing a New IOCCG Task Force

IOCCG establishes semi-permanent “Task Forces” to address issues that require an ongoing capability and/or expertise. The deliberations of an IOCCG Task Force should lead to long-term advancement of the field of study and should help to enhance international, and often inter-agency, collaboration on an ongoing basis. IOCCG Task Forces differ from the IOCCG working groups in that they do not require a report as the final outcome, although they may develop a peer-reviewed publication and/or some other product that will advance the topic on which the Task Force is focused. Furthermore, there is no guaranteed funding from the IOCCG to attend meetings (although limited funding may occasionally be available). There is also no time constraint on IOCCG Task Forces - they are expected to continue until the need no longer exists. The progress of each Task Force will be reviewed annually at the IOCCG Committee meeting to determine whether it merits renewal or termination.

Prior to submitting a proposal for a new Task Force it is recommended that interested parties should contact the [IOCCG Project Office](#) or one of the [IOCCG Executive Committee members](#) for feedback about the Task Force idea and how it aligns with other past and current IOCCG activities. The outline for a new IOCCG Task Force should include the following sections (1-2 pages in length):

- Proposed by (name, affiliation, and contact information)
- Task Force title
- Task Force Chair and Co-Chair(s)
- Scientific and programmatic background and rationale
- Terms of reference
- Expected outcomes with timeline
- Proposed functioning of the Task Force
- Proposed membership

Ideally proposals should be submitted to the IOCCG Project Office no later than one month before an IOCCG Committee meeting (usually held in the February/March timeframe each year) or mid-term Executive meeting (often held in October), for discussion and approval at the meeting. Consult the IOCCG website for upcoming IOCCG meetings. Proposals submitted at other times may require a longer review period.

Background and Rationale

Proposals should explain the scientific and societal importance of the proposed Task Force, why the Task Force is needed and why the activity is better done through an IOCCG Task Force rather than through some other mechanism. In addition, the proposal should explain how the project will benefit from an international approach and how the proposed Task Force relates to other existing and planned international activities.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Task Force should be concise and clearly define the primary themes of the working group’s activity and what the group hopes to achieve. The proposal should also be clear about how the Terms of Reference will be met.

Task Force Membership

IOCCG Task Force members volunteer their time. There is no limit to the membership of an IOCCG Task Force although it is often easier to make progress with a smaller group. Individuals should attempt to locate their own travel support to attend Task Force meetings, most of which will be meetings of opportunity. On occasion, limited funding may be available from IOCCG to help support a Task Force meeting. The Task Force membership should include individuals with the expertise to meet the proposed terms of reference and should have good geographic and agency representation (where applicable). It is not required that proponents are IOCCG members.

Functioning of a Task Force and Expected Outcomes

In general, IOCCG Task Force members meet virtually or opportunistically to reduce travel expenses e.g., on the occasion of the International Ocean Colour Science (IOCS) or Ocean Optics meetings. IOCCG can help promote these meetings on the IOCCG website and through IOCCG news bulletins, and can also facilitate arrangements for meeting venues etc. The expected outcomes should indicate whether a peer-reviewed publication and/or some other product will be developed to advance the topic.

Reporting Procedures

Chairs of all IOCCG Task Forces are requested to submit a short annual progress report (~1 page) on the current status of the group's activities and future plans. Progress reports must be received by the Project Office no later than one month prior to the annual IOCCG Committee meeting.

Termination of a Task Force

The progress reports from the Task Force chairs should help the IOCCG Executive Committee to decide whether the Task Force should be renewed for another year, or terminated.

Submitting a Proposal

Proposals should be submitted to the IOCCG Scientific Coordinator with a copy to the current IOCCG Chair (see <http://ioccg.org/contact/>).