Governance of GO FAIR as of 2022

The current governance structure[1] has been established by the founding countries (France, Germany, and the Netherlands). With the development of GO FAIR into a global initiative, the National Support Office (NSO) representation in governance is sought while the engagement of ministerial representation from the founding countries will play a minor role in the future, if at all.

The proposed revised GO FAIR governance structure is determined by the expressed needs of the GO FAIR Implementation Networks (IN) and the participating National Support Offices (NSO). It is overseen by an Executive Board (EB), aggregating representatives of the IN and NSO/ISCO.

This draft document was prepared by the ISCO staff and Directors in May 2021 in preparation for discussions with the NSO.

1. National Support Offices (NSO)

Expectations and responsibilities of the NSO are described in this document revising the existing rules for engagement on national level:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zo_9X1hwzWOIAF7__z2IVy5KueIYtpH04LTlxPZqQ4E/edit?usp=sharing

2. International Support and Coordination Office (ISCO)

The ISCO is the international body which regroups NSOs. Its functions are defined by the EB depending on the plans and needs of the IN community and taking into account available resources. Those functions are shared among the NSOs, either in cash or in kind.

The revised list of functions/support for the GO FAIR community:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jmyCd6jvHCZXgJf56sswRuvC2MmAWYVCrVjiC9vAX3g/edit?usp=sharing

3. Implementation Networks

GO FAIR Implementation Networks (INs) form the GO FAIR community. The composition, role and responsibilities of INs are defined at:
https://www.go-fair.org/implementation-networks/.

Each IN is represented by one or more coordinators who interact with the NSO, ISCO and EB on a regular basis.

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[1] Current governance structure: https://www.go-fair.org/go-fair-initiative/governance/
How to organize our operations?

4.   Stakeholders' forum (SF)

The Stakeholder Forum[2] consists of the IN coordinators. The SF would nominate/elect six members of the Executive Board to represent the IN community (see also section 5.).

The SF proposes practical work programmes, detects 'white spots' (gaps to be filled), enables cross-IN coordination and exchange of views, practices, technologies, standards etc. Regular meetings of the SF members are encouraged.

5.   Executive Board (EB)

The role of the EB is to set the GO FAIR long-term goals and to ensure that the operational structure of GO FAIR Offices (NSO and ISCO) is set adequately to support the INs in the implementation of the long-term and short-term goals and the interaction/linking to international initiatives, including but not limited to Data Together.

The EB is constituted of six representatives from the INs, two for each pillar of GO FAIR (Change, Train, Build), the Board of Directors of the NSO, and representative(s) from ISCO (if separately formed in addition to the ISCO distributed function among offices). The IN representatives are nominated by the Stakeholder Forum.

As per the EB terms of Reference[3], the EB elects a Chair and a Vice Chair, with the objective to ensure distribution of expertise, IN and geographical representation.

The chair will conduct discussion, looking for a consensus.

6.   Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) / Board of Experts

The SAB may be formed, at the initiative of the EB, to advise on specific aspects of the GO FAIR community implementation. Establishment of a longer or shorter term expert advisory body/group would be driven by the decisions of the EB. The SAB would be composed of scientific experts, possibly coming from a variety of initiatives.

The SAB, when formed, has a mandate to provide strategic guidance to the GO FAIR initiative on matters flagged by the EB or beyond, if deemed appropriate in connection to the consultation sought and term of the SAB.

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[2] Stakeholder Forum: https://www.go-fair.org/go-fair-initiative/governance/stakeholder-forum/
[3] Current EB ToR:
https://www.go-fair.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/GO_FAIR_Executive_Board_Terms_of_Reference_30082019.pdf An update of the ToR should be performed prior to first meeting of the extended EB and an anonymous approval of the ToR shall be sought.