

SPARC SSG Members Terms of Reference

This document specifies and clarifies the procedures and responsibilities with regard to the SPARC Scientific Steering Group (SSG) operations and SSG members expected responsibilities, tasks and duties. It aims to set in place a transparent, accountable and effective procedure that honours the commitment and contribution of volunteering individuals.

SPARC strives to ensure balanced and effective scientific advisory bodies fitting the relevant scope and taking into account all values for international science coordination.

The international coordination for the SPARC community is carried out by the International Project Office (IPO) under the guidance of the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) including its co-sponsoring organizations, the SPARC sponsors and its main stakeholders, which includes the relevant scientific community.

Number of Panel Members

Co-chairs: 2 to 3 preferred with alternating/overlapping appointments to sustain continuity in leadership

Regular members: 12 – 14 with varying starting and end dates to sustain continuity

SPARC strives for a well-balanced leadership, with respect to gender, geographical representation and also to scientific excellence in the areas of research laid out in the SPARC strategy. In addition, in the leadership of our SPARC activities a good mix of senior, mid-level and early career researchers is advised.

The SSG may invite special activity leads or relevant agencies' representatives, outside the regular membership, when it is needed for the implementation of relevant SPARC activities.

Lengths of Appointment

Co-chairs: 4 years membership can be renewed twice by 2 years

Regular members: 4 years membership can be renewed twice by 2 years

With a change in appointment (e.g. becoming a co-chair) the membership term starts anew. The length of the appointments is a guideline and, in consultation with the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee (JSC) and the Joint Planning Staff (JPS), can be amended under special circumstances. In such cases please contact the SPARC international project office (IPO) (office@sparc-climate.org).

Nominations, Review and Approval by SPARC SSG

The new SSG member appointments and renewals are made every year upon recommendation of the co-chairs and are upon favourable review approved by the JSC during its annual meeting (usually in 2nd quarter of each year). The IPO and SSG are to be informed about any planned changes in membership in advance. In special cases, intermediate appointments can be made, and approval needs to be sought from the co-chairs via email to the project office (office@sparc-climate.org) and is contingent upon approval by the JSC. Upon confirmation of the appointment, a letter of appointment will be sent to the SSG members by the JPS along with these terms of reference.

Every year, an open call for nominations to the SPARC SSG is announced and open for at least 6 weeks. (Self-)Nominations can be made through a nomination form on the SPARC webpage or via email to the IPO.

At the end of the term of a SSG member a letter of appreciation will be sent from the JPS on behalf of the WCRP leadership.

Duties and Responsibilities of SSG Members

General Duties and Responsibilities










SPARC SSG members, at forefront of new and exciting science, are volunteering some of their time and resources to help shape the international research agenda and collaborations. SPARC SSG members are part of a leadership body that acts in support and on behalf of the wider scientific community. Using their scientific experience, they are expected to give guidance to the activities in a consulting-type manner. Some SPARC SSG members will be assigned to a specific SPARC activity as a liaison.

SPARC SSG members are expected to adhere to and support the SPARC mission, goals, and objectives as well as the overarching mission of the WCRP.

SPARC SSG members are expected to attend the SSG meetings (usually once per year) and relevant activity meetings as per your expertise (in consultation).

Limited travel support is available primarily from WCRP with priority for early career scientists and those from lesser developed countries (per WMO list). SSG members are encouraged to provide for their own travel support when possible in particular to attend the SSG meeting.

Specific Duties

-  Provide scientific guidance and oversight to SPARC community and its activities
-  Participate in developing and reviewing the scientific strategy for the SPARC community
-  Oversee specific activities
-  Contribute to the annual reporting
-  When applicable organise and support workshops
-  When applicable organise and facilitate summer schools
-  Liaise with other activities both within and beyond SPARC and WCRP
-  Engage with Early Career Researchers (ECR) networks
-  Attend the yearly SPARC SSG meeting and contribute the panel review activities