



Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

This document describes the framework for Interdisciplinary Committees and outlines the authority, composition, terms of office, tasks, and practical rules regarding all Interdisciplinary Committees. In addition to these Terms of Reference (ToR), the Interdisciplinary Committees shall adhere to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* and the *OSAC Code of Responsibility*.

1. Purpose

Interdisciplinary Committees (ICs) are established to address matters that span several Subcommittees across Scientific Area Committees (SAC). ICs shall bring together subject matter experts for specific disciplines to review, catalyze, and propose interdisciplinary standards or to work on another specific interdisciplinary task. An IC may recommend documents for the OSAC Registry.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

ICs shall be established by the Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB). Each IC shall be responsible for:

- adhering to a specified scope and
- managing task groups needed to accomplish objectives of the IC.

2.1 Task Groups

The chair of an IC may establish task groups for the committee. Such task groups may be chaired by an IC member, an OSAC member, or an OSAC affiliate appointed by the IC Chair. If not chaired by an IC member, the task group shall include an IC liaison.

3. Membership

Members shall be appointed with the approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the FSSB in accordance with the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* and the *OSAC Nominations Procedure*. The composition of an IC will depend on its task and scope. Membership shall not be limited to forensic science practitioners; statistical, legal, human factors, quality assurance, standards development, scientific research, or other expertise will be included as needed. The FSSB shall appoint a liaison to each IC. Other OSAC units may appoint a liaison.

4. Organizational Authority

An IC shall oversee and coordinate its task groups.

5. Operation

5.1 Executive Officers

The Executive Officers of an IC are the chair, vice chair, and executive secretary.

- The chair shall manage the activities of the IC. This duty includes approving meeting agendas, presiding over meetings, inviting guests to meetings, preparing and presenting IC activities at OSAC public update meetings, and disseminating draft documents and other work products within the OSAC.
- The vice chair shall assume the chair's role in the absence of the chair and manage all of its task group activities.
- The executive secretary shall be responsible for recording meeting participation, assisting with the development and distribution of meeting agendas, preparing minutes, and distributing documents.

5.2 Terms of Office

5.2.1 Committee Members

- Members serve terms that last no more than three years commencing at the beginning of the federal fiscal year. The FSSB may sunset an IC once a task is complete. Membership terms end when the IC ceases to exist.
- IC members who resign or are unable to complete their terms may be replaced in accordance with the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws and OSAC Nominations Procedure*. The term of a member appointed to fill a vacancy created by the departure of a member shall commence when the replacement is made and conclude at the end of two more fiscal years.
- A member may be removed for insufficient participation or for other good cause as specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*. Such removal requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the FSSB.

5.2.2 Officers

- The FSSB shall appoint the IC chair.
- The members of the IC shall elect the vice chair and executive secretary by majority vote of the IC's total membership.
- A member may hold only one officer position at a time.
- If the chair resigns, becomes incapacitated, or is removed from office, the vice chair shall assume the title and duties of the chair until the FSSB appoints a new chair.

5.3 Interdisciplinary Committee Meetings

5.3.1 Frequency

- The IC meets at least quarterly.
- Meetings may be called by the chair with at least 48 hours' notice.

5.3.2 Venue

- Each IC may meet in-person or virtually.
- NIST shall approve the venue for any in-person meetings.
- Meetings shall be closed to the public.

5.3.3 Participation

- Members shall participate in accordance with the *OSAC Unit Participation Requirements*.
- Members shall attend as many meetings as possible.
- The chair may invite guests to attend meetings. Guest invitations for in-person meetings require approval from the OSAC Program Office.

- Active healthy debate is encouraged. OSAC processes and voting requirements support a consensus decision where different perspectives are provided an opportunity to be heard and dissenting opinions are recorded but the process moves forward after the required level of support is achieved.

5.3.4 Manner of Acting

- Meetings may be conducted without following formal rules of procedure; however, if a member objects to a procedure or the chair deems it appropriate, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be followed.

5.3.5 Agendas

- Agenda items may be suggested by the FSSB chair, SAC chairs, IC chair and members, and FSSB resource task group chairs.
- The executive secretary shall ensure the meeting agenda is distributed at least 24 hours prior to the start of each meeting.

5.3.6 Minutes

- The executive secretary (or designee) shall take the minutes of each meeting and distribute them for approval by the IC prior to the next meeting.
- The approved minutes shall be made available to the IC within ten days of approval.

6. Voting

- Two-thirds (2/3) of an IC's membership constitutes a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct business in which a vote is required.
- Each member shall have one vote.
- IC members who will not be present at a meeting may notify an IC officer of their votes in advance of the meeting or may designate proxies.
- Proxy voting contributes to the voting quorum.
- Unless otherwise specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* or these *Terms of Reference*, a simple majority vote of the membership is required to pass a motion.
- A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership is required to forward a standard for consideration.
- Votes may take place during IC meetings or via an electronic poll.

7. Representation and Communication

- The IC chair, or designee, may be invited to represent OSAC at the request of NIST.
- An IC member has no authority to make official representations about OSAC *positions* without the specific prior, written approval of NIST.

8. Amendments

These *Terms of Reference* may be amended in writing upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the full FSSB.