

October 29, 2025

In the month of October, Chair Christine Gabrielse called for several votes by email that included the full Steering Committee for discussion, followed by a voting period by the voting members.

1. Updating the By-laws regarding Steering Committee involvement on Focus Group proposals

On 2025-10-29, the Steering Committee voted between two options to reword the by-laws about Steering Committee involvement as leaders on a Focus Group proposal. The Steering Committee had deemed the previous wording unclear and required updating. The selected option had 8 votes, whereas the unselected option had 7 votes (2 abstained, 1 was unavailable due to government shutdown). The new wording is:

Voting members of the Steering Committee shall not be allowed to be a leader of a new Focus Group.

Non-voting Steering Committee members are allowed to be a leader of a new Focus Group, but they shall not be present during the proposal discussion and voting period at the Steering Committee meeting (including other proposals).

Anyone on the Steering Committee is encouraged to help Focus Group proposing teams craft their proposals, which helps ensure the proposals are compliant and address important science.

2. Considering Jing Liao as a non-voting member of the Steering Committee for the purposes of proposing a Focus Group in 2025

Given the rule about voting Steering Committee members not proposing a Focus Group, the Steering Committee had to vote whether to consider Jing Liao as a voting or non-voting member of the Steering Committee for the purposes of proposing a Focus Group at mini-GEM 2025. Jing has been the GEM meeting organizer along with Chris Mouikis since ~2022 and will conclude her role with Mini-GEM. Meeting Organizers are allowed one vote per the by-laws. Thus, the request was made for Chris to be the voting member of the Steering Committee in December as the Meeting Organizer, which would allow Jing to participate in the Focus Group proposal process.

The Steering Committee voted to allow her to propose, thus considering her a non-voting member of the Steering Committee and expecting her to sit outside of the room during the Focus Group discussion at the Steering Committee meeting at mini-GEM. There were 9 Yes votes, 8 Abstains, and 1 unavailable due to the government shutdown.

3. Allowing Focus Groups to conclude at mini-GEM instead of during the summer workshop

It has been the habit for Focus Groups to conclude their final year at the summer workshop, so that a group that is, for example, selected at Mini-GEM in 2024 starts leading sessions in the summer of 2025 and has their final sessions in the summer of 2029. While there was no rule

about whether they could participate in Mini-GEM of their close-out year (2029), it was ambiguous. Thus, the Steering Committee voted to officially allow it, though it is optional.

Thus, moving forward, **Focus Groups have the option to conclude their Focus Group during the summer workshop OR at the Mini-GEM of their close-out year.** This change had 10 Yes votes, 7 abstains, and 1 unavailable due to the government shutdown.