

National Science Foundation  
**Polar Geospatial Center**

Science Operations Committee (SOC)  
Terms of Reference

Spring 2015

**COMMITTEE FUNCTION AND OBJECTIVES**

As noted in the NSF PGC Cooperative Agreement (NSF Award [1559691](#)), the PGC Director, in consultation with NSF, will establish the PGC Science and Operations Committee and will facilitate the work of this advisory group to PGC. The Science and Operations Committee (i.e., the SOC) will provide advice and guidance regarding the management and strategic direction of the NSF PGC Cooperative Agreement. The SOC is the primary external advisory body to the project and is expected to comment on scientific strategy, research directions, and quality of deliverables from the Center's various activities.

**Board Membership and Selection Process**

The SOC Chair and Members of the SOC are selected by the Center Director and approved by the NSF. SOC membership consists of at least five advisors with knowledge of and influence in the major research areas of the PGC. Members may propose nominees for SOC membership at any time by submitting names and supporting information to the Center Director.

**Qualifications**

Members of the SOC will possess high professional ethics and integrity, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the PGC. Members must have an inquisitive and objective perspective, practical wisdom, and scientific judgment. The SOC will contain diverse experience in science and technology and depth and breadth of knowledge in areas that are relevant to the PGC. Members must be willing to devote sufficient time to effectively carry out their responsibilities, and be committed to serve on the SOC for their entire term. Members may be removed from the SOC for cause at any time by the Center Director with concurrence from the NSF Program Manager. Potential conflicts of interest (COI) should be discussed with the Center Director. Unpublished information disclosed by SOC members will be treated as confidential.

## **Responsibilities**

The SOC will assess progress of the project annually and provide guidance to the PGC towards its goal of providing geospatial support for science and operational activities at both poles while also providing access to new data sources. The SOC will specifically:

- Provide guidance on a general framework for the prioritization of requests.
- Evaluate unusual or non-standard user requests to ensure that they are commensurate with proposed research and operational activities.
- Guide the center to ensure that services provided are aligned with research and operational needs for both the Arctic and Antarctic.
- Advise PGC on the most effective means to communicate its services to the community.
- Prepare a report that documents guidance of the SOC to the Center Director.

## **Terms of Service**

SOC members will serve a three-year term. Members on the SOC may serve up to three consecutive terms based on the discretion of the Center Director.

## **SOC ACTIVITIES AND DUTIES**

### **Frequency of Meetings**

The SOC will have opportunities throughout the year to interact with PGC staff and students. The SOC will meet annually at the University of Minnesota or elsewhere in order to gain in-depth knowledge of relevant science and technology activities. There will also be a mid-year update teleconference meeting. Delegates are not permitted.

### **Annual Board Agenda**

The PGC Center Director will discuss the agenda with the SOC in advance of each scheduled meeting. Members of the SOC are urged to make suggestions for agenda items or to request pre-meeting materials.

### **Reimbursement for Board Members**

Travel reimbursement for attendance to PGC SOC annual meetings will be provided according to NSF guidelines and practiced at the University of Minnesota.

### **Access to PGC Management, Staff, and Students**

SOC members are encouraged to contact the PGC Center Director, Managing Director, staff, and students as necessary to fulfill their duties.