

# The IAU Global Cluster on Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development (HESD)

## Terms of Reference for Cluster Membership

*Effective 15 November 2023.*

*The following Terms of Reference (ToR) have been agreed upon by the IAU Board Members forming part of the IAU HESD Working Group, on 6 November 2023. It is shared with all Cluster Members and is available on the website [here](#). This ToR may be revised every year and updated if needed by a unanimous decision of the HESD WG and IAU Secretariat. Cluster Members can also make suggestions for changes.*

*The term 'Cluster Members' includes Leads and Satellites (and Observers).*

## Membership and Responsibilities

### Leads:

- are motivated and committed to engaging and guiding the group;
- have signed a commitment letter and informed their university's leadership when they took on this role at the creation of the Cluster in 2018/19 or at a later moment if the Lead changed;
- are expected to keep in regular contact with the Satellites and report back to the IAU quarterly;
- are expected to monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of their SDG Subcluster and report back in written form yearly (Activity Reports);
- take part in the biannual Global Cluster Meetings organized by IAU;
- take the initiative and propose 1 to 2 projects per year based on conversations with Satellites;
- seek funding externally or at the university level for Cluster projects;
- take the initiative to connect researchers and students of Cluster Members;
- are IAU Members and agree to facilitate contact with the institution's leadership when necessary for membership-related requests or invitations for leadership to take part in events;
- are appointed for an initial period of 4 years which can be reassessed by the IAU HESD WG. The Lead can decide to pass on the responsibility to another member of the Cluster on this occasion. The Lead can change/be reassigned by IAU upon staff changes or if the above responsibilities are not fulfilled.

## Satellites:

- are motivated and committed to being part of a peer-to-peer network;
- are open to networking and collaborating with other Satellites;
- contribute to the work on the SDG and are in regular contact with the Lead and IAU;
- make sure the Lead and IAU have the contact of 1-2 focal points for the Cluster work and nominate a different focal point in case of staff change;
- attend meetings proposed by the Lead and IAU;
- are invited to propose projects to the Lead or IAU;
- seek funding externally or at the university level for Cluster projects;
- inform their leadership of the engagement in the Cluster;
- are IAU Members or in the process of seeking IAU membership. \*

*\*see rules of procedure for non-IAU members in the Cluster below.*

*Following discussions with the WG Members, and requests from Cluster Members, a third category of Cluster Membership is introduced:*

## Observers:

- are motivated to share their expertise and learn from others in the Cluster network;
- are non-IAU Member institutions or individual academics with demonstrated expertise and have a standing connection with the Cluster Lead or IAU;
- present a letter of commitment (from the individual), stating why they would like to be affiliated with the Cluster and how they can contribute;
- can *share* with and *receive* information from Cluster Members, will be listed as **Observer** and can attend meetings;
- can be project partners in projects with the Subcluster.
- However, they will have no access to the full IAU services;
- they will not be offered support by the IAU or additional information on the funding of projects (such opportunities will only be shared with Members).

## IAU:

- is in charge of the coordination as far as SDG 17 is concerned;
- is providing support in the form of consultation, convening, communication and visibility to the Cluster Members;
- is sending regular updates (monthly or bi-monthly) to the Cluster Members to inform them about current projects and upcoming opportunities to engage;
- creates profiles on the IAU HESD Portal for all Cluster Members and updates these on a priority basis;

- provides visibility to the cluster and the Cluster Members' activities on international platforms, including key policy convenings at UNESCO/UN;
- offers discount on IAU conference registration fee to Cluster Members;
- offers to issue certificates and other letters/documents to acknowledge the institutional or individual commitment to the Cluster.
- is exploring external funding opportunities to share these with the Cluster, as well as applying for project grants for the Cluster when possible.

## Rules of Procedure

### Institutions wishing to join the Cluster:

- The Cluster accepts new members on a rolling basis if the Lead and the Satellites in the existing group agree;
- New members need to be IAU Members and have no outstanding membership fees;
- New members need to fulfil the aforementioned conditions and commit to investing time into the project;
- A focal point/main contact at the university to facilitate contact with IAU/the Cluster needs to be identified;
- A pre-meeting with the Lead is suggested and a letter of commitment identifying possible projects is drafted.

### Change of Lead institution:

A change of the lead institution is possible if:

- a. A transfer of lead institution to another active member of the Subcluster after 4 years, in agreement with the previous Lead and all group members.
- b. The Lead decides to pass on the responsibility to another institution, in this case, it is first offered to one of the active Satellites in the group. The Lead can remain part of the SDG as a Satellite, or an Observer (in case the HEI is no longer an IAU member).
- c. The Lead is inactive for a significant period of time, and/or reporting back to IAU and Satellites has been difficult. In this case, IAU and the IAU Working Group can exert the right to suggest a restructuring of the Cluster and invite another IAU Member institution with expertise on the SDG in question to take the Lead.
- d. The Lead's HEI leaves IAU Membership (see below non-member procedure). Then the remaining members of the SDG group might nominate a new Lead.
- e. In exceptional cases, IAU, in agreement with the HESD Working Group, can decide to remove a Lead if the HEI or individual has acted in opposition to [IAU's core values](#) and the IAU Constitution.

## Inactive Satellites or non-members

- IAU, in discussion with the Lead/other members of the SDG in question, will make several attempts to involve Satellites if they are inactive or a focal point is not responsive to emails anymore. However, if these efforts are unsuccessful, the Satellite will be removed from the list after 6 months if no reply is received or the institution names no new focal point.
- Non-members that are Satellites, or Satellites whose institutions have decided to end IAU membership, are contacted by IAU and the Lead to discuss the options. If no (re)joining of the IAU is possible, the Satellite will be removed from the list after 3 months. Active Satellites where the HEI cannot (re)join at this stage, or the adhesion process longer than 6 months, can remain a part of the Cluster as Observers.

## Voluntary Commitment

By signing this, I have read and understood these Terms and Conditions (ToR) for Members (Leads and Satellites) of the IAU HESD Cluster. I commit to following these to the best of my abilities to support the work of the Cluster.

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*Date*

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*Name and University*

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*Signature*