



Ukraine NGO Forum Steering Committee

Ground Rules

GENERAL

The Steering Committee (SC) is delegated by the NGO Forum members to provide strategic and principled guidance on their behalf with the objective to support and steer the NGO Forum and the NGO Forum Secretariat. The SC is accountable to the NGO Forum members. The SC is required to ensure that the NGO Forum acts in accordance with its mission through meaningful oversight of operations and policy guidance in a way that assures integrity and effective management but without leading to board involvement in Ukraine NGO Forum day-to-day activities.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- The SC consists of five members elected for a six month period. In addition, two alternates are elected by the NGO Forum members. Steering Committee members are appointed in their individual capacity and elected for their proven personal skillset. For this reason, an NGO Forum SC member cannot be replaced in the position by another person from within his/her organization. The members recognize that membership of the Steering Committee serve in a voluntary capacity, for no pay.

ALTERNATES

SC alternates can be invited to SC regular meetings by the SC chairperson. They will on these occasions not have voting rights, but act as resource persons.

The alternates will replace regular SC members, in cases of valid absence, for example due to extended sickness or when a regular SC member leaves the mission.

Alternates may temporarily step in when SC members take annual leave where leave exceeds two weeks; the seat is only permanently taken over by the alternate where leave results in an extended absence.

In such cases, national alternates should primarily be used to replace national SC and international alternates used to replace international SC members.

MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION

The SC meetings are called and organized by the Secretariat in coordination with the SC Chairperson. Minutes are distributed among members and records are kept by the NGO Forum Secretariat.

In addition to face-to-face meetings, the Steering Committee communicates regularly via email and through conference calls.

At any given time, the SC may request an ad-hoc NGO Forum meeting to discuss an issue of significance.

The minutes of the SC meetings are distributed electronically among members and records are kept within the Secretariat. Minutes are prepared by the Secretariat and approved for circulation by the Steering Committee no later than three weeks after each meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

A chairperson of the SC will be elected at the constituting meeting. The Chairperson will strive to optimize the relationship between the SC and NGO Forum secretariat management, chair SC meetings, and ensure effective SC functioning. The Chairperson, in coordination with the Secretariat, will call SC meetings.

ATTENDANCE

SC members who fail to attend two consecutive meetings (face-to-face or via skype) of the SC and/or who fail to respond to SC communications over the period of two weeks, will be potentially asked to step down due to inactivity. Cases of valid absence, for example due sickness or vacation, do not constitute a breach of SC duties. However, the absentee should notify in advance the Chairperson of the absence in so far as possible. Notification is particularly important for extended absences particularly for the convocation of the alternate SC member to the meeting (see above).

DECISION-MAKING

Wherever possible, the SC takes its decisions by consensus. When consensus cannot be achieved, a decision can be taken by a vote of the simple majority.

QUORUM

A minimum attendance at each meeting is needed to ensure that the different viewpoints of committee members are adequately represented. The minimum of 3 steering committee members constitutes a valid meeting.

COURTESY

Committee members should treat each other with respect, listen to each other, work cooperatively, and allow all members to voice their opinions.

While differences of opinion are sure to arise, SC members should seek to keep disagreements impersonal. By practicing discretion and accepting decisions made on a majority basis, board unity and confidence will be promoted.

SC committee member should consider the extent to which their involvement in operating – as opposed to strategic – activities benefits or hinders the ability of NGO Forum management to perform.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Anything discussed in the Steering Committee meeting will be considered confidential until minutes are agreed as being accurate and correct by the SC members.

On occasion, some minutes may require being kept confidential, for example related to private information, a process for retaining such confidential information agreed by SC members.

SC business will only be discussed in SC meetings or in closed conversations with SC Members, or with the NGO Forum Secretariat staff, unless it has otherwise been decided by the SC.

SC members will be held personally responsible for information shared with others.

DUTY OF LOYALTY

The member of the SC should exercise their powers in the interest of the NGO Forum and all its members and not in their own interest or the interest of another entity or person and should not be furthering his or her own interests at the expense of the NGO forum.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The SC sets the overall strategic direction and oversight for Ukraine NGO Forum by:

- assisting in the preparation of the work plan and strategy developed by the Secretariat
- acting as a sounding board for the Senior Forum Coordinator
- approving the Ukraine NGO Forum work plan, strategy and budget as presented by the NGO Forum Secretariat;
- ensuring that the Ukraine NGO Forum fulfils its objectives as outlined in the work plan and strategy;
- attending the Ukraine NGO Forum coordination meetings regularly, prepares for and contributes appropriately and effectively;
- prioritising and proposing activities and specific focus areas to guide advocacy and activities;
- assisting the Secretariat in developing the NGO forum policy/advocacy documents (i.e. letters, statements, etc), project proposals and advocacy initiatives;
- appointing the NGO Forum Senior Coordinator and approves the creation of any new positions supporting the Secretariat;
- monitoring, evaluating, determining the compensation level of and – if necessary – replacing the NGO Forum Senior Coordinator.
- undertaking to understand the organization's risk profile and re-viewing and overseeing the Ukraine NGO forum management of risks
- assisting in obtaining resources through making personally meaningful contributions, fundraising and/or grant-writing or facilitating secondments.
- approving budgets, financial plans and financial statements; expenditures; monitoring and ensuring the integrity of the organization's financial reporting processes, internal control systems and audit; hiring the independent auditor (if and when required) and assuring itself of the auditor's independence
- deciding upon the exclusion of a member on account of breach of conduct or outstanding membership fee.

OTHER

The list of Steering Committee members (names and organizations) and a general email address, info@ngoforum.org.ua, to which the Chairman and Deputy Chairman have access, will be posted on the Ukraine NGO Forum website.