

URISA Committees

The following committees are described within the URISA Policy Manual, adopted October 2015. Each committee's purpose and scope; membership and chairmanship; and committee-specific policies and procedures are included.

Advocacy Agenda Committee

Purpose and Scope. The purpose of the Advocacy Agenda Committee is to develop the URISA Advocacy Agenda based on input from membership for Board review and approval.

Membership and Chairmanship. The Chair of this committee is elected by committee members. Participation in this committee is restricted to URISA members.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. Specific responsibilities include:

- Soliciting and synthesizing input from Chapters and their members, GIS Pro conference attendees, other URISA committees and the Board.
- Determining need to modify previous Advocacy Agenda to incorporate input.
- Producing annual summary of Advocacy Agenda progress.

Chapter Advisory Board

Purpose and Scope: The Chapter Advisory Board provides governance, communication, and support by and between URISA and its chapters. The Chapter Advisory Board has five specific responsibilities:

1. Maintain contact with active chapters through electronic mail, phone calls, and quarterly conference calls.
2. Provide information and assistance requested by chapter leaders, support new chapter development, and evaluate requests for affiliate status.
3. Communicate chapter needs to the URISA Board, and recommend Board actions.
4. Train and support chapter leaders by conducting the annual Chapter Leaders Forum and maintaining the Chapter Leader's Manual.
5. Issue the Outstanding Chapter Award (annual award to recognize innovation, education, outreach and community impact).

Chapter Representation and Board Structure. Each chapter as well as the URISA Board shall appoint a representative to the Chapter Advisory Board, The term of service for the URISA Board representative shall be one year. The term of service of each chapter representative is to be determined at the discretion of the chapter. Each member of the Chapter Advisory Board shall be a member of URISA in good standing and of the chapter he or she represents. Each year the Chapter Advisory Board shall select a Chair Elect from among its members, who shall serve successive one-year terms as the Vice-Chair, Chair, and Past Chair over a three-year period.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. Additional Chapter Advisory Board policies and procedures are given in the Chapter Leaders Manual.

Conference Committee – Annual Conference

Purpose and Scope. The Committee is charged with producing the Association's annual educational conference.

Membership and Chairmanship. The Annual Conference Committee shall be composed of the Conference Chair, Program Chair and Vice-Chair. Annually, the Vice-Chair will rotate upwards to Program Chair and then to Conference Chair the following year.

The Vice-Chair will be annually nominated by the Annual Conference Committee and approved by the Board. Vice-Chair nominees shall be knowledgeable in the range of sectors and disciplines covered by the Conference. Effort will also be made to ensure that nominees represent different member sectors from year to year.

This committee is open to any URISA member. If the Annual Conference is done in partnership with other organizations, those organizations may also designate individual(s) to serve on this Committee.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. The Conference Committee is tasked with creating each year's conference organization that it determines best meets the conference goals. However, ninety and sixty minute sessions with individual presentations of twenty to thirty minutes each or whole session panels will be most common.

- **Keynote Speakers.** The Annual Conference typically has one or two keynote speakers as part of the program. Keynotes should strive to be informative, entertaining and address conference themes and issues. If the conference budget allows, one or more keynote speakers may be contracted.
- **Workshops.** The Annual Conference typically includes workshops held the day before the start of the conference program. The Conference Committee may select URISA approved workshops and solicit new workshop proposals. Workshops, where appropriate, will include workbooks and other material. Vendor sponsored workshops may also be held on this day as long as the vendor's sponsorship is clearly indicated.
- **Awards.** URISA awards are typically given at the Annual Conference and the program shall include them. The Conference Committee is free to decide when to schedule the awards as long as it is in a prominent spot in the program.
- **Meals and Refreshments.** Based on the budget, the Executive Director will determine all conference food service. Sponsorships for food service may also be solicited.
- **Exhibits.** The Executive Director is responsible for organizing the exhibit hall and for working with exhibitors. The Conference Committee is encouraged to contact any companies or agencies to exhibit.

Conference Committees – Specialty Conferences

Purpose and Scope. Additional conference committees are charged with producing specialty conferences such as the URISA Caribbean GIS Conference, GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference, GIS in Transit Conference, and the GIS in Public Health Conference. On an as-needed basis, other committees may be formed, or individuals designated, to develop and deliver regional and special interest conferences to meet the needs of the membership.

Membership and Chairmanship. Open to any member of URISA or another co-sponsoring association. Each committee has a Chair and Vice-Chair.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. None

Exemplary Systems In Government (ESIG) Awards Committee

Purpose and Scope. This Committee is charged with the development, administration and selection of awards for recognition of exceptional achievement in the application of information technology that has improved the delivery and quality of government services.

Membership and Chairmanship. Open to any URISA member.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. None.

GISCorps Core Committee

Purpose and Scope. The GISCorps Core Committee plans and directs the work of the GISCorps. The GISCorps coordinates short term, volunteer based GIS services to underprivileged communities and for humanitarian relief. The GISCorps Core Committee solicits and assigns volunteers to provide GIS services.

Membership and Chairmanship. The GISCorps Core Committee is comprised of between three and seven URISA members, selected by the criteria and procedures set forth in the GISCorps Organizing Principles and Policies. Volunteers affiliated with GISCorps missions need not be members of URISA.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. Additional committee policies and procedures are given in the GISCorps Organizing Principles and Policies.

GIS Management Institute (GMI) Committee

Purpose and Scope. The GIS Management Institute (GMI) develops, manages, and implements professional GIS management products, and services, necessary to assess the maturity and capability of GIS operations. It coordinates administrative activities that support, market, and provide GMI products and services as performed by URISA headquarters staff and volunteers.

Membership and Chairmanship. Open to all URISA members.

Committee Specific Policies and Procedures. The GMI Committee provides a representative (Chair or other representative) to be a member of the Professional Educational Committee (PEMC), and that representative participates in the semi-annual professional education materials coordination meetings convened by the PEMC. Each month the GMI representative transmits a list of professional education activities to the other committees represented on the PEMC.

Journal Editorial Board

Purpose and Scope. The Editorial Board is charged with producing the Association's refereed journal. The primary purpose of the journal is to provide and share knowledge about information systems among managers, users, developers and educators, so that improved systems can be developed and used more effectively and equitably at all levels of government. The Editorial Board administers the Horwood Paper Award and recommends recipients for consideration by the URISA Board.

Membership and Chairmanship. Publication of the URISA Journal shall be vested in an Editor-in-Chief who serves a 3 year term. An Editor-in-Chief may be reappointed to additional three year terms. An Associate Editor will be appointed assist the Editor-in-Chief for a 3 year term. Should the Editor-in-Chief role become vacant, the Associate Editor may choose to assume the role of Editor-in-Chief. If that is not the case, the Board of Directors will appoint a new Editor-in-Chief. Other Editors shall be appointed by the Editor-in-Chief for three-year terms and may also be appointed for additional terms. The Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor and other Editors shall comprise the URISA Journal Editorial Board. Additional article reviewers shall also be selected by the Editorial Board on an as needed basis.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. The Editorial Board shall develop criteria and procedures for reviewing papers and recommending Horwood Paper Award recipients for consideration by the Board.

Leadership Development Committee

Purpose and Scope. This Committee is charged with recommending a slate of candidates to serve on the URISA Board of Directors in accordance with the Association's Bylaws and to propose candidates to serve in the post of Whistleblower Policy Compliance Officer. This Committee also identifies people for future leadership roles. This committee fulfills the role of the Nominating Committee as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution.

Membership and Chairmanship. The Immediate Past President shall propose, and the Board approve, the members of the Committee. No fewer than five or more than seven members shall serve. The Chair of the committee shall be someone who previously served in a URISA leadership position. Other members shall be solicited from outside the Board. No member shall serve more than three consecutive years on the Committee.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. Committee member terms of office begin on January 1 and end of December 31. The committee will use the following guidelines when proposing nominees.

Nominations Criteria for Board Members. These characteristics are essential for Board candidates.

- Leadership. Candidates for the Board of Directors should clearly demonstrate the ability to think and act as leaders, able and willing to take the time and effort to continually grow and improve URISA.
- Team Skills. Board candidates should have teamwork skills, and understand the importance of a collaborative approach to policy and decision-making.
- Strategic Thinking. Potential Board members must be able to analyze internal and external environmental factors, formulate issues that are of strategic importance to URISA, and develop measurable objectives to address the issues and move the association forward.
- Policy-Making Skills. Experience working at the senior executive level or in other policy-making and analysis roles is critical for the new Board members in URISA. The Board has fundamentally redefined its role, from a working/operations-oriented body, to a policy-making group, which analyzes market intelligence brought to it by staff, and acts upon it strategically.
- URISA Participation. Past participation in three or more URISA activity areas.
- Commitment to Attend Board Meetings. Board members are expected to attend Board meetings as well as the Annual Conference.

These characteristics are desirable for Board candidates:

- Demographics. It is a general, though not over-riding goal, to have the composition of the Board of Directors profile the URISA membership in terms of nationality, ethnicity, gender, and type and size of organization. While this is important in terms of membership representation, it is listed here as a general goal, which is secondary to the importance of getting the brightest and best-qualified members to run for the Board. This may include persons who can help URISA enter new markets.
- Knowledge of the IT/IS/GIS Industry. Broad knowledge and contacts within the "industry" and/or its various sectors will be very helpful. A potential candidate's recognition and visibility will also benefit the association.
- Other Affiliations. The Candidate should not be overly committed to other organizations or volunteer activities, so that time and energy is available for URISA commitments. However, it is a strategic goal of URISA to penetrate other markets, so candidate affiliations with other related organizations may be very helpful.

Nominations Criteria for President. The criteria for President include those presented above for Board members, as well the following additions:

- Employer support.
- Demonstrated willingness to dedicate considerable energies to the needs of URISA, including travel to other conferences and events to represent URISA.
- Recognized stature in the IT/IS/GIS industry.
- Familiarity with issues, operations and mechanics of the Board, and of the Association in general.
- Proven leadership and decision-making skills.

Statement to Board Nominees. The following statement will be conveyed to all Board nominees so that they may understand fully their potential commitment.

“Each Board member is expected to attend and actively participate in meetings. Three to four face-to-face meetings are scheduled. Two are held in conjunction with the annual conference and the remainder, which are typically one to two days in length, are scheduled during the spring and summer of each year. Board members are expected to cover their own travel expenses, although the Board may allow for a stipend to be made available. In addition to these meetings, all Board members are expected to participate in monthly conference calls. Regular costs that are incurred to carry out normal Board members business (e.g. telephone calls) are the responsibility of the Board member.

Board members do much more than attend meetings. They are the leaders of URISA and are expected to be actively involved in initiating, overseeing, participating in, and coordinating various activities that fall under the URISA mission (educational programs, publications, industry relations, and public relations). With the Executive Director, URISA staff, and a host of volunteers, Board members are expected to apply their time and energy to worthwhile projects and programs. It is assumed that Board members will have the support of their agencies for time and resources in support of URISA and also that they make a personal decision, taking into account all other professional and personal commitments, to make a meaningful contribution to URISA during their three year term.”

Marketing Committee

Purpose and Scope. This committee is charged with developing and implementing programs to: market the organization; advertise its activities, events, programs and initiatives; and attract and retain URISA members.

Membership and Chairmanship. Open to any URISA member.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. None.

Past Presidents Council

Purpose and Scope. The Past President’s Council provides advice to URISA’s Board upon request, and may, at Board request or with Board approval, take up specific matters for the good of the Association. In addition, each year the Council reviews and makes recommendations to the Board on nominations for the GIS Hall of Fame, using the criteria and procedures detailed below. The Past Presidents’ Council operates under the principle that, upon conclusion of their terms, Past Presidents should step away from direct involvement in Board affairs. In recognition of the wear and tear associated with presidential service, the Past Presidents’ Council is designated a Sitting Committee of the Association.

Membership and Chairmanship. The URISA Past Presidents’ Council is comprised of all persons who have completed a term as President of the URISA Board of Directors, are not members of the Board, and are URISA members in good standing. The term of membership is not limited. The Past Presidents’ Council is chaired by the person who has most recently completed a term as Immediate Past President. That person shall have the title of “Rocking Chair”. Other Council members may be known as the “Rockers”, or, as appropriate, “Off Their Rockers”.

Council-specific Policies and Procedures:

Meetings. The Past Presidents’ Council shall meet annually at the Past Presidents’ breakfast, convened at each Annual Conference of the Association. A quorum shall consist of all those Past Presidents who make it to breakfast. At the meeting the Immediate Past President leaving the Board at the conclusion of that Annual Conference shall be recognized as the incoming Rocking Chair, and that person shall provide a brief unwritten report on the health, focus, and financial state of the association, and any matters on which the Board might value Council input. During the course of each year additional meetings and discussions may be held as needed by email listserv or teleconference. Any Council member may raise any topic germane to the business or purposes of the Association; discussion shall be informal and self-moderated.

Hall of Fame Award Nomination Procedures and Evaluation Criteria. URISA's GIS Hall of Fame honors persons and organizations that have made significant and original contributions to the development and application of GIS concepts, tools, or resources, or to the GIS profession. Hall of Fame laureates are expected to exemplify vision, leadership, perseverance, community-mindedness, professional involvement, and ethical behavior.

Hall of Fame Award Nomination Procedures. Anyone may nominate a person or organization for induction to URISA's GIS Hall of Fame. To make a nomination, submit a written statement to URISA describing:

- The nominee's achievements, emphasizing significant and original contributions to the development or application of GIS concepts, tools, or resources, or to the GIS profession; and
- The significance of the nominee's contributions, in terms of their enduring impact on the GIS field or profession, and their social benefit.
- The nomination statement may be of any length, but it must be preceded by a one-page stand-alone summary. Email nomination statements to URISA's Executive Director by May 1 of each year. The Past Presidents Council will review all nominations and make recommendations to the URISA Board of Directors by mid-June. Presentation occurs at URISA's Annual Conference. This honor need not be given every year, and in some years there may be multiple recipients.

Policy Advisory (PAC) Committee

Purpose and Scope. The Policy Advisory Committee is charged with recommending formal policy positions on matters that:

- Pertain directly to URISA's mission
- Do not involve partisan political lobbying or direct support for a political party or candidate
- Are raised and reviewed, and the position recommended, in accordance with the established procedures of the Committee.

The Committee may take up matters upon referral by the Board, upon its own initiative, or upon request by any URISA member. Further, the Committee shall prepare, for consideration by the URISA Board, recommendations for official resolutions, position statements, or formal comment submittals on policy matters.

The Committee shall provide advice and recommendations to the Board. The Committee shall not make decisions for the Association related to policy or other matters. Nothing herein shall preclude the Board from considering any policy matter or taking any policy position without seeking advice from the Committee.

Membership and Chairmanship. Open to any URISA member. The Committee shall include at least one member of the Board of Directors who will serve as the official Board Liaison.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. None.

Professional Education Materials Committee (PEMC)

Purpose and Scope. The Professional Education Materials Committee (PEMC) oversees the development and maintenance of URISA-approved professional educational materials and standards. It establishes guidelines, policies, and standards for the development, review, and publication of URISA approved professional educational materials. The committee ensures that these materials are developed and presented in accordance with URISA policies, membership interests, and Board strategic goals. The committee also coordinates the URISA portfolio of educational materials, identifying gaps, resolving overlaps, and assessing balance. Originating committees may establish appropriate authorship and peer review policies and procedures for their materials, within the guidelines established by the PEMC.

Membership and Chairmanship. Open to any URISA member. To ensure coordinated development and maintenance of the URISA portfolio of educational materials, the Chairs (or their representatives) of the GMI,

Professional Practices, ULA, and any other committees creating URISA-approved professional education materials are members of the PEMC.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. General professional educational materials policies are given in Policy Manual section 4.2.

To ensure coordinated development and maintenance of the URISA portfolio of educational materials, the PEMC convenes, twice yearly or more often as needed, a meeting of the Chairs (or their representatives) of all other committees whose activities include the creation of URISA-approved professional education materials. One meeting occurs at the annual conference and the other approximately six months thereafter. The meetings:

- Review the full range of current and planned URISA-approved professional education materials activities against URISA policies, membership interests, and Board strategic goals, to determine what changes might be needed in URISA's portfolio of educational materials.
- Identify specific gaps, overlaps and needed updates in the portfolio, related work efforts among the committees, and specific points of collaboration between them.
- Review any issues concerning content, authorship, or review of URISA-approved professional education materials, to ensure that committee practices are consistent with the criteria given in Policy Manual section 4.2.
- To provide for coordination between meetings, the committees represented on the PEMC shall each month, or more frequently as necessary, transmit a list of professional education activities to the PEMC.
- The Professional Education Materials Committee maintains the Workshop Development Manual, which provides additional workshop development policies and procedures.

Professional Practices Committee (PPC)

Purpose and Scope. The Professional Practices Committee (PPC) investigates, reviews, compiles, develops, and distributes geospatial best practices. Geospatial best practices describe processes and criteria that have been successfully implemented in multiple organizations with repeated success. Best practices are developed and published according to an authoritative peer review process. The PPC also develops guidelines for best practice development and documentation.

Membership and Chairmanship. The PPC is composed of no less than five members led by a Chair. It is supported by workgroups on an as needed basis. Each workgroup is chaired by an individual selected by the Committee. Workgroup Chairs are also members of the Committee. Members of workgroups may include both URISA members and non-members who offer subject matter expertise that is important to the mission of the workgroup. However, all workgroup Chairs and Committee members must be URISA members.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. The Committee Chair serves for a term of one year. No less than four months prior to the Annual Conference, a Committee Chair Elect is nominated by the Committee and presented to the Board which may elect to endorse the nomination or request an alternate nomination. The Chair Elect assumes the role of Chair at the end of the Annual Meeting. The PPC provides a representative (Chair or other representative) to be a member of the Professional Educational Committee (PEMC), and that representative participates in the semi-annual professional education materials coordination meetings convened by the PEMC. The PPC each month transmits a list of professional education activities to the other committees represented on the PEMC.

Special Awards Committee

Purpose and Scope. This committee is charged with developing awards that recognize members for their contributions to the association and community at large. Each year the committee nominates, for consideration by the Board, members who meet the criteria for the following awards:

- Horwood Service Award - an occasional award given for long-term service to URISA and the profession. This award is URISA's ultimate award for service and leadership to URISA and within the geospatial industry. Awardees will have demonstrated significant contributions to both URISA and the geospatial technologies industry.
- Leadership - Presented to members who have demonstrated exemplary leadership to URISA, creativity, innovation, and dedicated support of URISA activities. The recipient should be a member of URISA for enough years to show a pattern of leadership. Typically the recipient will have been responsible for new activities, or significantly enhanced an existing activity, so that it takes URISA in a new direction and/or enhances our standing in the professional community.
- Service - Presented to members who have demonstrated faithful service to URISA and participation in its activities over a period of several years. This award is for specific service to URISA. It should require a significant number of years of (not necessarily consecutive) service in a number of committees, and a willingness to take on challenges without regard to the potential for recognition.
- Barbara Hirsch Special Service Award - Presented to members or staff who have made special contributions to URISA. This award was created to honor URISA's former Chief Financial Officer, Barbara Hirsch. Barb made her mark at URISA by being an exceptional professional who would always step forward when a point needed to be made, but never stepped to the front for recognition. It is in the spirit of this dedication that the Board of Directors created an award for special service to URISA. This award will be given to individuals or committees who have shown a similar consummate level of service to URISA through an ongoing commitment to our success as an organization.

The Special Awards Committee coordinates with the following committees in administering the awards program at the Annual Conference:

- Chapter Advisory Board (Outstanding Chapter Award)
- Exemplary Systems In Government Awards Committee (ESIG Award)
- Journal Editorial Board (Horwood Paper Award)
- Past Presidents Council (GIS Hall of Fame Award)
- Vanguard Steering Committee (Young Professional of the Year Award)

Membership and Chairmanship. The Immediate Past President shall serve as the Chair of the Special Awards Committee, and shall appoint at least two additional members, including at least one current URISA Board member and one non-Board member, to serve on the committee.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. None.

Teller Committee

Purpose and Scope. The Committee annually validates the votes from the annual ballot distribution.

Membership and Chairmanship. The Committee is open to any URISA member except members of the Board and candidates. Membership is limited to three persons named from year to year by the Executive Director.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. The work of this Committee is anticipated to be completed on-line.

URISA Leadership Academy (ULA) Committee

Purpose and Scope. The ULA Committee produces the ULA, a one week leadership and management course for developing GIS leaders. It focuses on GIS leadership and management techniques, strategic planning, team development, organizational capacity building, program investment and justification, change management, and ethics and professional challenges, among other topics. The ULA is the only leadership training program of its type, tailored to industry leaders and practitioners faced with unique challenges of GIS leadership and management who

want to make an impact leveraging the power of GIS. The ULA has typically been held annually at locations around North America.

Membership and Chairmanship. While there is no formal structure, there are typically two Co-Chairs and a small group of volunteers. These volunteers, along with a larger group of instructors, team-teach throughout the ULA.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures.

- A venue is selected to maximize attendance.
 - The Co-Chairs poll the group of instructors for availability to teach.
 - Works with local GIS community to identify a closing keynote speaker.
 - The teaching material is reviewed and updated prior to each ULA.
 - All instructors must be qualified in their topic area, have teaching experience, and be ULA graduates. The committee reviews ULA graduates to identify new instructors to grow the teaching pool.
 - The ULA Committee provides a representative (Chair or other representative) to be a member of the Professional Educational Committee (PEMC), and that representative participates in the semi-annual professional education materials coordination meetings convened by the PEMC. The ULA Committee each month transmits a list of professional education activities to the other committees represented on the PEMC.
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Vanguard Cabinet

Purpose and Scope. The Vanguard Cabinet was established to provide the means for young professionals to receive encouragement and to have a stronger role in the guidance of URISA. The Cabinet's mission is to collaborate with the URISA Board of Directors in creating and promoting programs and policies of benefit to young professionals.

Membership and Chairmanship. Membership in the Cabinet is by appointment only and is restricted to members of URISA who are 35 years of age and under. Each year, five young professionals will be selected by the Vanguard Steering Committee to serve a two-year appointment. The Cabinet members may select a Chair at their discretion.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. Each Cabinet member is required to participate in the activities of at least one special or standing committee of URISA. Other policies are defined in the Vanguard Cabinet Vision, Mission and Members Policies document.

Vanguard Steering Committee

Purpose and Scope. The Vanguard Steering Committee is charged with oversight of the Vanguard Cabinet (VC). Direct responsibilities of the Vanguard Steering Committee are to annually select new members of the VC, annually select a Young Professional of the Year and to mentor members throughout their tenure on the VC.

Membership and Chairmanship. The Vanguard Steering Committee is comprised of four individuals appointed by the Board: three of whom have served, or are currently serving on the Board, and one of whom has been a Vanguard Cabinet member and will serve one year on the Steering Committee.

Committee-specific Policies and Procedures. None.