



IHTSDO Research and Innovation Committee

Terms of Reference



IHTSDO RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Approved: February 2008

Terms of Reference

From the Articles of Association June 2007, Section 9.7.2:

The Research and Innovation Committee will be responsible for and will advise the Management Board on the primary or secondary investigation of terminology challenges that will be required in the 3-5 year time frame and for testing new and unproven ideas in terminology development for their potential implementation.

Purpose

The Research and Innovation Committee supports the mission of the IHTSDO by advising on factors relevant to developing solutions for identified problems and issues with SNOMED CT, investigating emerging opportunities for the further development and implementation of SNOMED CT, and supporting the international research and development capacity to pursue the objectives and endorsed standards.

The over-arching objective of the Research and Innovation Committee is to provide advice and assistance which enables the effective practical implementation of SNOMED CT by widely used software applications in ways that aid the management of clinical information and assist clinical decision making.

The Committee will maintain a focus on medium to long term solutions which will meet current IHTSDO and Member needs, but will support other IHTSDO needs for more responsive or short term innovations. Encouraging greater collaboration among the community of practice and establishing transparent and inclusive mechanisms for broad participation in R & I initiatives will be key to success.

Scope

The Research and Innovation Committee supports the work plan of the IHTSDO. Therefore its activities will reflect the current priorities and objectives identified in that plan. The scope of work of the committee includes:

- Design: Address difficult issues which need resolution; conceptual framework for binding other terminologies or information models; primary and secondary investigation and issue resolution (eg: description logic formalisms, compositional expressions, advice and testing of concept and constraint models).
- Standards: Within the scope of IHTSDO harmonisation activities liaise with other standards bodies. Develop standards and provide advice that other committees would operationalise (testing and stewardship of IHTSDO standards, for example Interchange Release formats).
- Consultation: Deliberate on priorities and compromises, provide advice about new domains and innovative ways of supporting existing domains; interact with other Committees.
- Proof of concept, testing new or unproven ideas or proposals: Investigate scalability and processes to support reproducibility and valid measures of Understandable Reproducible Useful methodologies and metrics; test new and unproven ideas in terminology development (for example, provision of evidence of utility of innovative solutions, such as implementations).



- Implementation: Assess how design decisions can be implemented; test these practical solutions; explore how to interact with information models, such as HL7, electronic health records, value set definitions; investigate binding to other information models.
- Research: Evaluate and research usability of terminology by end users, reliability of coding and representation. Undertake pure research. Establish and promote links to external research community.

Responsibilities

- Advisory role to assist the Board in terms of prioritization of IHTSDO activities related to the Committee's scope, identifying emerging opportunities and predictable difficulties, and reviewing project outputs as required.
- Provide advice and assurance that the IHTSDO standards and recommendations are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the broader community of interest.
- Advise on design issues and impacts, including developing proof of concept demonstrations.
- Advise on implementation strategies including consideration of normative examples and compliance and conformance issues.
- Advise other Committees, Project Groups and Special Interest Groups on Research and Innovation initiatives; monitor priority and progress of identified work program items being addresses by Project Groups.
- Identify and manage potential overlaps with the work of other Committees. In particular there is potential for overlap with the Technical Committee who will likely assume responsibility for technology platform issues which will operationalise the recommendations or example demonstrations arising out of Research and Innovation Committee work items. In all cases, responsibility for Technical Specifications will transfer to the Technical Committee at the time they are ready for Trial Use.
- Establish and maintain effective communications with internal (IHTSDO) and external stakeholders relevant to the Research and Innovation Committee scope, including vendors, academic researchers, other relevant Standards Organisations and the broader community of practice.
- Contribute to other aspects of the IHTSDO's mission and work plan as appropriate.

Principles

From the Articles of Association June 2007, Section 1.3.1:

The Association will seek to govern itself and conduct all of its activities in accordance with principles of openness, fairness, transparency and accountability to its Members.

The IHTSDO is based on openness. Openness implies transparency, communication and accountability. Transparency cannot exist with a purely one-way communication – and it requires dialogue and participation to be involved in a democratic process.

The intention should basically be to be open in both the planning process and the execution of the meetings. The experts around the world are only few, and all the persons with knowledge are needed and should feel invited to flow into the committees and working groups.

Participation in Meetings

According to the principles mentioned above, the standing committees should operate as follows:

1. Committees should be open to non-members who should be known as observers.
2. Approval to attend or invitation of observers should be brought through the Chair of Committee, so that suitable logistical arrangements can be made – if at all possible.



3. Observer contributions are at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee.
4. Observers cannot vote and should respect the need for the Committee to reach conclusion in the discussions.
5. Seating arrangements at physical meetings are at the discretion of the Chair of Committee. The Chair will ensure that all the Committee members will have full access to facilities to undertake their duties.
6. Attendance policies will be established by the Management Board.¹

Membership

From the Articles of Association June 2007, Section 9.7.3:

The Research and Innovation Committee will comprise the following members selected as follows:

- (a) the Management Board shall appoint one Director to be member of the Research and Innovation Committee as its Chair, and if reasonably possible such Director will possess an appropriate and relevant background to the functions of the Research and Innovation Committee;*
- (b) the Research and Innovation Officer;²*
- (c) a representative of Affiliates in accordance with clause 9.11;*
- (d) at least one and no more than three members for and on behalf of, but not necessarily resident in, each of the Geographical Constituencies. These members will be nominated and elected in the same manner that Directors are elected to the Management Board pursuant to clause 9.1.5, subject to the exception that Members shall be free to nominate up to three candidates and vacant seats will be filled from these candidates according to the votes each received.*

NOTE: Members do not represent Geographical Constituencies; they bring their individual expertise to the work of the Committee.

A full list of current members of the Research and Innovation Committee can be found on the IHTSDO Website <http://www.ihtsdo.org/about-us/standing-committees/>

Ways of working

Face to face meetings will be held at least two times a year. Monthly conference calls will be scheduled so that business may be addressed more rapidly if required.

Members will respond in a timely manner to requests from the Chair for input to decisions that are required between meetings.

The IHTSDO principles of openness and collaboration will underpin the Committee's working methods, with the support of technical/communications infrastructure for the sharing and management of documents and for consultation with others.

¹ The General Assembly has agreed as follows "Beginning in 2009, if a member has been absent from at least 50 % of meetings held during the year, the Research and Innovation Committee Chair would typically contact the member to discuss the situation. Except in extenuating circumstances, he/she would then recommend to the Management Board that the member in question be deemed to have resigned and would notify the member of this recommendation." In such cases of persistent non-attendance, the General Assembly has the option at the next Committee elections to elect an individual to fill the vacancy caused by this resignation.

² This position may also be filled by an Executive Officer of the IHTSDO assigned responsibility for Research and Innovation (as appropriate).



In keeping with IHTSDO policy, members will declare potential or actual conflicts of interests with Committee agenda items and these will be managed by the Chair.

The Committee will uphold the Articles of Association and conform to the IHTSDO Regulations, Policies and Procedures where they apply to the Committee activities.

The Meeting Minutes from each Committee will be published on the IHTSDO web site and notified to and/or posted on the Collaborative Space.

The Committee will periodically review these Terms of Reference and will revise them as necessary and appropriate. This will ensure that Committee responsibilities accurately reflect the IHTSDO work plan, and the activities, interests and contributions from Members and the community of interest.

The Chair will take responsibility for taking the Committee's recommendations to the Management Board and providing members with feedback on the outcomes of their contribution.

The Chair will work with Chairs of the other Committees to ensure co-ordination across Committees, Project and Interest Groups and effective joint working when appropriate.

During face to face meetings, parallel sessions cannot be avoided. The Committee is keen to promote joint meetings with other Committees, particularly on areas of joint interest.