

OCUL Executive Committee – Terms of Reference

Mandate

The Executive Committee acts on behalf of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL), ensuring good governance and providing strategic oversight. The Executive Committee oversees operational and strategic decisions and fiscal management of OCUL. The Executive Committee meets regularly to discuss, and when appropriate makes decisions on, matters requiring attention between meetings of the Council membership.

Purpose and Functions

The Executive Committee is established according to Article I of the OCUL Bylaws and is responsible for supporting the Council in fulfilling its purpose as laid out in Article II of the OCUL Constitution.

The Executive Committee's specific responsibilities are to:

1. Ensure effective implementation of the strategic plan and strategic alignment of OCUL services and programs.
 - Oversee hiring and performance evaluation of the Executive Director.
 - Provide direction and feedback to the Executive Director regarding OCUL policies and priorities.
 - Guide and monitor the strategic planning cycle and development led by the Executive Director.
 - Review and approve, or at their discretion move to Council members for approval, proposals for funding opportunities, new initiatives, and changes related to OCUL and Scholars Portal services or agreements with vendors.

- Oversee the development of effective measures for the assessment of OCUL and Scholars Portal services and programs.
 - Oversee and provide direction for the activities of Standing Committees and Communities to identify synergies and gaps in support of OCUL's strategic plan.
2. Oversee the administrative elements of the organization (policies, procedures) and its relationships with its parent organization Council of Ontario Universities and University of Toronto Libraries as the service provider for Scholars Portal.
 3. Establish and implement governance principles and practices.
 - Review and recommend approval of changes to Standing Committee Terms of Reference; recommend chair appointments for Standing Committees; and monitor Standing Committee work, providing direction, support, evaluation, and ensuring work plans reflect OCUL strategic priorities.
 - Review and approve guidelines or changes to terms of reference for the function of and reporting from Communities; review proposals for new Communities and present to Council for approval.
 - Oversee orientation programs for members of Council, Standing Committees and other groups, and new administrators involved in COU governance.
 - Provide direction and put forth the agendas for biannual Council meetings.
 4. Oversee the development of the annual budget and financial plan, with advice from the OCUL Financial Management Advisory Committee.
 5. Oversee the development of effective internal and external communication and advocacy strategies and ensure that substantive decisions are reported to Council in between meetings.
 6. Undertake other activities as required to advance OCUL's mission.

Membership

The Officers of Council and their terms shall be:

- A Chair (one year)
- A Vice-Chair who shall be Chair-Elect (one year)
- A Secretary (two years, renewable one time)
- A Treasurer (two years, renewable one time)
- A Director-at-Large (one year, renewable one time)

The Secretary and Treasurer terms are staggered.

Position descriptions for each Executive Officer, describing roles and responsibilities, provide further information to support the appointment process, orientation, and ongoing operations.

Appointment Process

As per OCUL Bylaws, the election of the Executive Committee officers takes place at the spring annual meeting. A Nominating Committee consisting of the Vice-Chair, as Nominating Committee chair, and two other Council Directors shall present a slate of member nominees reflecting the various regions and sizes of institutions. If there is more than one nomination for an officer role, the meeting shall agree on election rules before voting. No one shall be nominated without their consent.

Reporting and Decision-Making

The Executive Committee is accountable to the Council membership. The Executive Committee advises the Executive Director on the ongoing administration of OCUL and has the authority to make decisions on behalf of Council members where policies and practices have been established. The Executive Committee consults with the Council members on matters of strategic importance, throughout the year as appropriate, and takes the annual budget and plan to Council membership for approval. In general, the Executive Committee works by consensus, with votes only undertaken in exceptional circumstances.

The Chair of the Executive Committee reports on its activities biannually at Council Meetings and provides monthly updates on decisions to the Council as appropriate. Minutes and documents of the Executive Committee are managed by the Secretary or delegate and distributed to Executive Committee officers.

Meetings, Resources and Budget

The administrative work of the Executive Committee is supported by the Executive Director or delegate. In general, the Executive Committee works via email, videoconference or other distance means. Travel and other meeting expenses are the responsibility of the Executive Committee officers' institutions.

The Executive Committee meets at the call of the Chair. Typically, the Executive Committee meets monthly, but may meet biweekly in the month prior to a Council meeting. The OCUL Executive Director, OCUL Assistant Director for Collaborative Initiatives, and Scholars Portal Director are standing guests at Executive Committee meetings at the invitation of the Chair. Additional guests can be invited to and attend an Executive Committee meeting to provide additional information and/or expert advice but shall not participate in the regular business of the meeting.

Confidentiality

Executive Committee officers will not disclose confidential information belonging to or obtained through their affiliation with the consortium. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where required by law.

Terms of Reference Review

These terms shall be reviewed every 3 years by the Executive Committee, with revisions to be approved by the Council membership.

Approved by: OCUL Council

Approved on: V001 – May 30, 2024