

## Global Grid Forum Management Structure and Processes

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### Abstract

This document describes the management structure of the Global Grid Forum (GGF), including the roles of individual positions and committees and the processes for formation and approval of GGF working groups and research groups.

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## 1. Introduction

The Global Grid Forum (GGF) is a group of individuals engaged in research, development, deployment, and support activities related to high-capability distributed software systems, or “Grids.” The scope of the applications that motivate these activities is quite broad, including high-performance processing applications, distributed collaborative environments, distributed data analysis, and remote instrument control. A defining characteristic is a perceived need for services beyond those provided by today’s commodity Internet.

This document describes the management structure of the GGF, including the roles of individual positions and committees and the processes for formation and approval of GGF working groups and research groups.

## 2. GGF Groups

The GGF intends to emulate, as appropriate, the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF, [www.ietf.org](http://www.ietf.org)) and to support and complement the Internet Standards Process as outlined in [2]. It is therefore advantageous that the GGF structure and process closely mirror those of the IETF. At the same time, some GGF activities more closely resemble the work of the Internet Research Task Force (IRTF, [www.irtf.org](http://www.irtf.org)). Because GGF is composed of both IETF-like and IRTF-like activities, the overall GGF structure and process will be slightly different from those of the IETF. Ideally, however, GGF groups (i.e., research groups and working groups) will function in similar fashion to groups of the same name within the Internet Standards Process.

A separate document is being developed to provide an overview of the functional structure of GGF. Briefly, GGF is composed of a combination of working groups (similar to IETF working groups) and research groups (similar to IRTF research groups). For management purposes, GGF working groups and research groups are organized into “areas” under the direction of one or more GGF Steering Group (GFSG) members, who are designated “area directors.”

## 3. GGF Organization and Management

The GGF is managed by a general chair, a steering group, and working group and research group chairs. The GGF Steering Group (GFSG) comprises a combination of area directors and general members. An external advisory group, the GGF Advisory Committee (GFAC), provides long-term strategic input to the GGF chair and the GFSG. The GGF chair also works with a GGF editor, who guides the document process [3] and a GGF Secretariat, which is a support team for the logistics of the GGF operation. All of these groups and individual roles are described below. The processes for filling these roles via appointments, elections, and/or other means are described in [4].

### 3.1 GGF Chair and Vice Chairs

The GGF chair is responsible for ensuring that the GGF as a whole and the research groups and working groups in particular produce coherent, coordinated, architecturally consistent, and timely output as a contribution to the overall evolution of Grid architecture and technologies. In addition, the GGF chair may arrange for topical or regional workshops attended by the GGF and perhaps other experts in the field.

The GGF chair oversees the content of the GGF activities, working with the GFSG to manage the creation of new working groups, research groups, or areas and in some cases encouraging the

formation of a group rather than waiting for proposals. The GGF chair works with the GFSG to ensure that working groups and research groups receive adequate assistance from area directors and other GFSG members. The GGF chair serves as chair of the GFSG, and as such is responsible for guiding the group to consensus and making operational decisions based on this consensus, while taking into account input from other sources, including group chairs, the GFAC, the GGF Secretariat, and individual GGF participants.

The GGF chair works with the GFAC in areas regarding long-term strategy for GGF.

The GGF chair also works with the GGF Secretariat to oversee the planning and management of GGF meetings and to ensure that the GGF Web site is kept up to date. The GGF chair works with the GGF editor to ensure smooth operation of the document process, and in particular to oversee the review function of the process, which is the responsibility of the GFSG.

The GGF chair selects one or two vice chairs from the GFSG, who will assist the GGF chair as needed. The role of the GGF Vice Chairs is to (1) provide backup for the GGF chair (for example, to chair GFSG discussions in the absence of the GGF chair) and (2) ensure that multiple individuals are familiar with and trained in the role of GGF chair.

### 3.2 GGF Steering Group and Area Directors

The GFSG is composed of area directors and other senior members of the GGF community. The GFSG, chaired by the GGF chair, oversees and coordinates the activities of working groups and research groups. The GFSG meets face-to-face at all GGF at-large meetings and holds regular teleconference meetings.

The GFSG is responsible for the GGF document series from the standpoint of architectural and technical quality and coherency, working with the GGF Editor to this end. The GFSG role in the document series process is described in [5]

Each area director works with the chairs of the groups within his or her area to guide the group formation process for proposed working groups and research groups (see §4), coordinate the work done by those groups, and oversee the document process as it relates to these groups.

### 3.3 GGF Advisory Committee

The GFAC works closely with the GGF chair and GFSG to evaluate long-term strategies and directions for the GGF. The GFAC is often asked by the GGF chair or GFSG to comment on operational or near-term issues as well. The GFAC is run by a chair and vice chair selected from within the GFAC membership [4]. The GGF chair and GGF executive director serve as ex-officio members of the GFAC. The GFAC meets face-to-face at a minimum of one GGF at-large meeting annually but will interact primarily via email and periodic teleconference calls as needed.

### 3.4 GGF Participants

Participants in the GGF advise the GGF chair and/or GFSG on the chartering of new working groups and research groups and on other matters relating to the smooth operation of the GGF. GGF participants are not required to attend the regular GGF meetings. It is difficult to contribute, however, without some participation in these meetings. Thus, individuals are highly encouraged to participate not only in electronic dialogs of GGF groups but also in the face-to-face meetings.

Participants also are encouraged to contribute to the working groups by evaluating and discussing document drafts and by serving as authors, suggesting topics for documents and/or volunteering to co-author.

### 3.5 Group Chairs

The working group or research group chair is responsible for ensuring that the group makes progress toward the objectives outlined in the group charter and that the group process is fair, open, and marked by consensus. An excellent overview of the responsibilities and role of a working group chair can be found in [1], and a similar overview of the responsibilities and role of a research group chair can be found in [5].

Participants in GGF groups are volunteers and as such do not report to the group chairs. As a result, the group chair must foster a group culture that is productive (in the sense that visible and deliberate progress is made) yet is informal and consensus driven.

The group chair is responsible for ensuring that agendas are planned for GGF meeting sessions or other meetings (including electronic or teleconference) of the group, and is responsible for running those sessions. The chair ensures that minutes are taken at all group meetings and posted to the group mailing list. The chair also ensures that the group Web site (or, in some cases, a simple Web page) is kept up to date so that new participants can use the Web site to rapidly come up to speed in order to contribute to the work of the group.

In addition, the group chair monitors and guides the mailing list discussions to encourage open exchange while discouraging long discussions on issues that are not of relevance to the work of the group. The chair also periodically summarizes the points of consensus and progress made in both meeting and mailing list discussions and sends regular updates to the list regarding overall GGF developments, meeting planning process, agendas, or new documents or Web sites of potential interest to the group.

The chair coordinates with the area director(s) regularly regarding the progress of the group in attaining its objectives. The chair also works with the area director(s) to plan documentation, including selection and recruitment of authors and document topics and outlines.

### 3.6 GGF Editor

The GGF editor works closely with the GFSG and the GGF Secretariat to oversee the logistics of the GGF document process. This involves tracking the status of documents and actions taken by the GFSG in moving documents through the document review and approval processes [3], and ensuring that documents conform to the requirements set forth in [3].

### 3.7 GGF Secretariat and GGF Executive Director

The GGF Secretariat consists of volunteers and other support staff who perform support functions related to meeting planning and logistics, the document process, sponsorship programs, and other activities necessary to the work of GGF. The GGF Secretariat is managed by an executive director.

## 4. Formation and Management of Working Groups and Research Groups

Working groups (WGs) and research groups (RGs) are the activity centers in the GGF. A WG is typically created to address a particular implementation or operational area related to infrastructure necessary for building "Grids," and an RG is typically created to address topics where there may not yet be sufficient experience to develop detailed technical specifications or recommendations track documents. WGs and RGs are expected to have a core of stable, committed membership in order to promote collaboration and teamwork. Participation in both types of group is by individual contributors, rather than by representatives of organizations.

#### 4.1 Approval of New Groups

A WG or RG may be established at the initiative of an individual or group of individuals. Anyone interested in creating a GGF WG or RG should first discuss the idea with one or more area directors to determine which area is most appropriate as a home for the proposed group. A proposed charter must then be submitted to the area director or GGF chair along with a list of proposed founding members.

The area directors and/or GGF chair, in consultation with the GGF Steering Group (GFSG), will review the charter for approval. In some cases a group will be encouraged to meet as a birds-of-a-feather group until critical mass or focus can be achieved. In other cases the GFSG may provide specific feedback suggesting a target topic or set of objectives for a group in order to promote focus.

Unless the GFSG determines that the group is well outside of the parameters of approval (see §4.2) the draft charter will be posted to the general mailing list of the relevant GGF area to allow for interested parties to comment.

Once the group has been approved by the GFSG, the group chair will work with the GGF Secretariat to integrate information about the group into the GGF Web site. In order to ensure that potentially interested individuals may participate in the formative stages of the group, the new group will be announced within 30 days via email and on the GGF Web site.

#### 4.2 Criteria for Formation

In determining whether a proposed WG or RG is appropriate, the GFSG will consider several issues. The GFSG may determine that a proposed WG should be formed as a RG or vice versa.

- Is the scope of the proposed group sufficiently focused? For working groups, the focus is expected to be much tighter than for research groups; however, it is important to appropriately scope research groups as well. For example, a broad topic such as “security” is more appropriate as an area than as a WG or RG. A more focused topic such as “security requirements for portals” might be an appropriate research group. A topic such as “GSI authentication for portals” is a reasonably focused topic for a working group.
- Are the topics that the group plans to address clear and relevant for the Grid research, development, implementation, and/or application user community?
- Will the formation of the group foster work that would not be done otherwise? For instance, membership drawn from more than a single institution, more than a single country, and so on is to be encouraged.
- Do the group’s activities overlap inappropriately with those of another GGF group or to a group active in another organization such as IETF or W3C? Depending on the nature and extent of the overlap, the proposed group may still be formed, or the GFSG may recommend that the work be done within the existing GGF (or external) group.
- Are there sufficient interest and expertise in the group’s topic, with at least several people willing to expend the effort that is likely to produce significant results over time? To help in this determination, a proposal to create a group should include a list of potential charter members.
- Does a base of interested consumers (e.g., application developers, Grid system implementers, end-users) appear to exist for the planned work? Consumer interest can

be measured by participation of end-users and implementers within the GGF process, as well as by less direct means.

- Does the GGF have a reasonable role to play in the determination of the technology? If other organizations are working in similar areas, the proposed group must outline how the members will coordinate with these other efforts.

#### 4.3 Charter

A charter is a contract between an RG or WG and the GFSG to work on the designated topics. Charters may be renegotiated periodically to reflect changes to the current status, organization, or goals of the group.

The formation of an RG or WG requires a charter that is initially negotiated between the prospective group chair(s), relevant area directors, and the GGF chair in cooperation with the GFSG. When the prospective chair(s), relevant area director(s), and the GGF chair are satisfied with the charter form and content, and is approved by the GFSG, it becomes the basis for forming a WG or RG.

A GGF WG or RG charter consists of two components:

- Administrative: Group name, names, and contact information for the group chair(s), name and contact information for the group secretary, mailing list address, and Web site (or Web page) address.
- Description and Objectives: Description of group (including type – RG or WG), goals for the group, and schedule of milestones (particularly important for working groups).

##### 4.3.1 Administrative

Group Name:	A group name should be reasonably descriptive or identifiable. Additionally, the group must define an acronym (maximum of 8 printable ASCII characters) to reference the group in the GGF directories, mailing lists, and general documents. The name and acronym must not conflict with any other GGF name and acronym.
Chair(s):	The group must have one or two chair(s) to perform the administrative functions of the group. The email address(es) of the chair(s) must be included in the charter.
Secretary:	The group must have a secretary (one of the chairs may serve the role), who will ensure that minutes are made available for meetings and who will manage the group's mailing list and website.
Mailing List:	Each group will have an Internet mailing list open to all interested parties and operating within the bounds of the GGF mailing list acceptable use policies. For short-term working groups, the area director(s) may recommend that the main area mailing list (if one exists) be used for discussions in order to minimize the overhead of creating and running the working group. This list is used for an open discussion of the issues and announcements of results as they become available. Included should be the address to which an interested party sends a subscription request for the interest list, the procedures to follow when subscribing, and the location of the interest mailing list archive. The mailing list traffic must be archived for future reference and to allow newcomers to review in preparation for joining the work.

##### 4.3.2 Description and Objectives

Focus/Purpose: The focus and intent of the group must be set forth briefly. By reading this section alone, individuals should be able to decide whether this group is

relevant to their own work. The first paragraph must give a brief summary of the topic area, basis, goal(s) and approach(es) planned for the group. This paragraph will frequently be used as an overview of the group's effort. To facilitate evaluation of the intended work and to provide ongoing guidance to the group, the charter must describe the problem being solved and should discuss objectives and expected impact with respect to the following:

- Architecture
- Deployment and operations
- Security
- Application development and runtime issues
- Scalability
- Transition (where applicable)

**Goals/Milestones:** The group charter must establish a timetable for specific work items. While this timetable may be renegotiated over time, the list of milestones and dates facilitates the GFSG's tracking of group progress and status, and it is indispensable to potential participants as a means of identifying the critical moments for input. Milestones must consist of deliverables that can be qualified as showing specific achievement; for example, "Draft document on Topic X finished" is fine, but "discuss via email" is not. It is helpful to specify milestones for every 3-6 months, so that progress can be gauged easily. This milestone list is expected to be updated periodically. Research groups may have much more general milestones and longer time frames.

**Website:** Each group will maintain a Web site, which may be a single Web page on the Web site associated with the relevant GGF area. This site or page should contain relevant information about the group, including at minimum all charter items and a link to the main GGF Web site.

## **5. Security Considerations**

Security issues are not discussed in this document.

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## Glossary

Area	A set of loosely related working groups and/or research groups, managed by one or more area directors.
Area Director	Member of the GGF Steering Group with management responsibility for a set of working groups and/or research groups, known as an "area."
GFAC	Global Grid Forum Advisory Committee, an external advisory group.
GFSG	Global Grid Forum Steering Group, consisting of selected senior GGF participants and area directors, chaired by the GGF chair.
GGF	Global Grid Forum (see <a href="http://www.globalgridforum.org">www.globalgridforum.org</a> )
GGF Chair	Chair of the GFSG and general chair of GGF.
IETF	Internet Engineering Task Force (see <a href="http://www.ietf.org">www.ietf.org</a> )
IRTF	Internet Research Task Force (see <a href="http://www.irtf.org">www.irtf.org</a> )
RG	Research Group.
WG	Working Group.2

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