

IOC Circular Letter No 3014
(Available in English, French, and Spanish)

IOC/VR/EH
22 November 2024

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for Liaison with the IOC
C.c. : Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States
IOC Officers
Chairs of GOOS Steering Committee

**Subject: Open call for applications: Chair GOOS Observations
Coordination Group (OCG)**

Action required:

(i) *Share with your networks to promote applications for the Chair of the GOOS Observations Coordination Group (OCG), deadline 18 December 2024*

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO is lead sponsor of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and collaborates closely with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as co-sponsor, together with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and International Science Council (ISC). GOOS is the major ocean observing programmatic element of the [IOC Medium-term Strategy 2022–2029](#) and the [WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy](#),

GOOS is the global locus for ocean observing coordination. GOOS supports ocean observing frameworks and coordinating infrastructure, it works with its 84 contributing nations, observing networks, institutions, and community of scientists, technicians and practitioners to strengthen the global ocean observing system through standards, best practices, FAIR data implementation, and co-design towards a fit-for-purpose ocean observing information delivery system. GOOS advocates across the United Nations and within the Ocean Decade for ocean observing and the need to view ocean observing and data delivery as critical infrastructure. GOOS connects to partners and policy instruments around climate, weather, biodiversity and disaster risk reduction to ensure that the GOOS Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs) meet national needs for ocean data.

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Mr Vidar HELGESEN
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GOOS is seeking applications for the position of Chair of its Observation Coordination Group (OCG). The Observations Coordination Group (OCG) works to guide and strengthen the implementation of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS) through identifying, coordinating and developing relevant initiatives across the global ocean observing networks (see the OCG Terms of Reference, membership, governance, and operating principles [here](#)). There are now 13 mature ocean observing networks and 3 emerging observing networks, see OCG Network Attributes [here](#), and the OCG also manages the Work Plan of the IOC-WMO Joint Operational Centre – OceanOPS – which provides services to GOOS, WMO, and to the global ocean observing networks.

This is a significant and important role for GOOS. The work of the Observation Coordination Group (OCG) is at the heart of strengthening, streamlining, and evolving the ocean observing system to be responsive to the needs of Member States and other users. This role is an active working role and requires someone who is experienced in ocean observing at a senior level and interested in evolving the OCG 'enterprise', within the overall GOOS vision, strategy, governance, and implementation plan. The set of attributes and skills that GOOS is seeking in candidates, are laid out in Annex 1, and the commitments in Annex 2. The OCG Chair has support from IOC and WMO secretariats, and as a guide can expect that the role will take 15% of a normal working week. The selected applicants will need to demonstrate that they have permission from their employer, as appropriate, to undertake this role. The OCG Chair is appointed for a term of up to 5 years and the IOC Secretariat will organize a handover period between the incoming and outgoing OCG Chairs.

The IOC Secretariat will appreciate receiving applications no later than 18 December 2024 at 13:00 CET. The selection will be made before 31 December 2024. We anticipate the successful candidate commencing in January 2025, following approval by the GOOS Steering Committee.

Applicants are kindly requested to send a CV and covering letter, indicating how they meet the attributes and skills required, as outlined in Annex 1, with confirmation that they have or anticipate receiving permission, as relevant, from their employer. Please send the applications via email to Ms Forest Collins (f.collins@unesco.org), any questions about the role can be addressed to Ms Emma Heslop (e.heslop@unesco.org).

Thanking you in advance for your consideration,

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosures (2): 1/ Attributes, skills, and experience required and/or advantageous for Chair OCG Role
2/ Commitments and background information

1/ Attributes, skills, and experience required and/or advantageous for Chair Observations Coordination Group (OCG) Role

Attributes required:

- Demonstrated ability to develop a compelling strategic vision, and develop organizations within an overall vision, strategy and implementation plan.
- Demonstrated capability to lead others and develop functional coalitions.
- Ability to delegate responsibilities and actions to OCG Vice-Chairs and sub-bodies as required.
- Demonstrated ability to represent the interests of ocean observing networks, OCG, and GOOS to science, government, and policy decision-maker communities.
- Committed to diversifying participation in GOOS and the development of early career professionals.

Skills required:

- Strong strategic leadership capabilities.
- Demonstrated ability to lead teams, in marine science and/or ocean observing.
- Demonstrated leadership in complex and/or distributed organizations.
- Ability to communicate with diverse stakeholders.
- Analytical thinking and decision making.

Experience required:

- Practical working knowledge of the global ocean observing system and observing networks.
- Experience working with intergovernmental bodies (e.g. WMO, IOC).
- Knowledge of, and interest in, the application and impact of ocean observing to end users through value chains.
- Knowledge of the application and impact of ocean observing to societal issues.

Experience that would be advantageous:

- Demonstrated success in securing support for infrastructure.
- Systems thinking and a system-wide perspective is important.
- Appreciation of private and public sector roles in advancing ocean observing.

2/ Commitments and background information

The OCG includes the Chair, the Vice Chairs of Data Management, Standards and Best Practices, and Technology, the OceanOPS Manager, the IOC and WMO secretariats, an ECOP/developing country focal point, the leadership of the 13 global ocean observing networks and the leadership of emerging networks. See the OCG Terms of Reference, membership, governance, and operating principles [here](#) for more details.

The OCG meets annually, generally in person, for 3.5 days to report on progress, discuss emerging and ongoing issues, take decisions and to set the annual work plan. There are also 3 OCG Roundtables (online) per annum, which are forums to evolve the work and interact on emerging issues.

The OCG Executive Committee, which includes the Chair, the Vice Chairs of Data Management, Standards and Best Practices, and Technology, the OceanOPS Manager, representatives of the IOC and WMO secretariats, an ECOP/developing country focal point meet biweekly (online) to evolve the tasks and discuss work plan.

The OCG Chair is a member of the OceanOPS Management Group, which meets regularly (bi-monthly online) with the IOC and WMO Secretariat.

The OCG Chair is a member of the GOOS Executive Committee, representing the OCG, with the leadership of the other GOOS components. The GOOS Executive Committee takes part in the annual GOOS Steering Committee Meeting (ex officio) which is generally in person and of 3.5 days duration, and also meets online every quarter to discuss the GOOS Implementation Plan.

Tasks include:

- Guiding strategic focus and actions of the OCG.
- Leading the bi-weekly OCG Executive Group calls.
- Chairing the annual (in person) OCG Meeting and supporting the development of the OCG Work Plan.
- Representing the OCG and reporting on progress to the annual (in person) GOOS Steering Committee Meeting.
- Working with the secretariat to evolve the various OCG Task Teams and lines of work, towards reaching the long-term goals of OCG and GOOS.
- Participating in the management of OceanOPS.

Support:

- There is permanent secretariat support from IOC and WMO for the OCG – OCG Chair.
- It is helpful if candidates can enlist some support within their institution/organization.

Time commitment:

The time commitment for the OCG Chair role is approximately 15% of a normal working week.