

International Research Group on Ostracoda

Draft Constitution

The International Research Group on Ostracoda (IRGO) is a voluntary membership organisation that exists to advance knowledge and education of living and fossil Ostracoda, in the widest sense, by:

- holding meetings for the presentation of original papers and posters;
- promoting research and supporting publication of results;
- promoting communication between professional and citizen scientists interested in Ostracoda and with the wider scientific world and general public.

IRGO Committee and Officers – elections, roles, terms of office

The IRGO Committee consists of Officers detailed below, whose task it is to administer IRGO affairs from one IRGO Business Meeting to the next (that is for four years from one Business Meeting to the next, held in the context of the International Symposia on Ostracoda (ISO)). Candidates for election to Officer positions should be nominated by two other persons (one of whom should be present at the IRGO Business Meeting if a supporting case needs to be made). All proposals for new officers must be submitted at least 1 month before the IRGO Business Meeting and circulated via the IRGO website and OSTRACON. In this way colleagues will be better informed should a vote be necessary. Candidates for election do not have to be present at the meeting, although they should attend online.

Composition of the IRGO Committee:

Chair.

Role: To liaise with members of the IRGO Committee on the timely and effective management of IRGO business especially in terms of organisation of the next ISO, organizing (agenda, soliciting proposals for future ISO, management of IRGO prizes) and chairing IRGO Business Meeting at ISO, communication with the international community of ostracod workers, both professional and citizen scientists, and liaison with other associations (The Micropalaeontological Society, The Crustacean Society, Pal. Ass., I.P.C., etc.). It is likely that the IRGO Chair will be an active research scientist and therefore have both an interest in and a concern for the status and effectiveness of ostracod research within a broader scientific and social context.

Where necessary, the Chair may exceptionally make decisions relating to the running of IRGO but normally should consult the other Officers and if appropriate seek a vote of approval from them.

(Elected position; with tenure until end of next IRGO Business Meeting when a new appointment is made, normally a single cycle only).

Vice Chair.

Role: To represent the next International Symposium on Ostracoda (ISO) Organising and Scientific committees on the IRGO Committee and to report on progress as requested by the IRGO Chair; they are nominated by the ISO Organising Committee.

(Ex-officio position; with tenure one ISO cycle).

Past-Chair.

Role: The *immediate* past-Chair provides continuity of experience of IRGO management and deputises for Chair IRGO if necessary.

(Ex-officio position; by definition with tenure only for one symposium cycle).

Secretary.

Role: Is responsible for the routine administration of IRGO business, its correspondence and, in co-operation with Communications Officer, advising the community (via IRGO website, next ISO website, and OSTRACON) of upcoming Officer vacancies, management of voting for future IRGO Committee members (if necessary) and for next ISO venue. Provision of approved IRGO Business Meeting minutes and updated record of prize winners to Communications Officer for IRGO website. Liaise with Committee members at least twice a year.

(Elected position; tenure until end of the next IRGO Business Meeting where new appointment will be made; normally only appointed for a single cycle).

Treasurer.

Role: To liaise with Chair SF*IRGO as necessary in relation to IRGO funds (ex-AMOCO) held by that organisation and to other activities directly related to IRGO, liaison with Vice Chair in relation to the fiscal background to the next ISO (note that each ISO is financially independent), liaison with funders of IRGO prizes at ISO (currently SF*IRGO and The Micropalaeontological Society).

(Elected position; with tenure until end of the next IRGO Business Meeting where a new appointment will be made. Normally this position is only appointed for a single cycle but may stand for re-election to a *maximum* of two cycles due to the nature of the role).

Communications Officer.

Role: To ensure effective and timely communication between IRGO and the international ostracod community primarily through the IRGO website, and via liaison with the Editor, *Cypris*. Their primary responsibility is for regular (3 month?) update and upkeep of the website which may also involve management of web hosting and migration to alternative providers from time to time. Liaison with relevant colleagues as necessary on securing future management of OSTRACON. Should social media accounts for IRGO be created and managed by Communications Officer they must be passed on to next incoming Communications Officer.

(Elected position; tenure until end of the next IRGO Business Meeting where a new appointment will be made; normally only appointed for a single cycle but may stand for re-election to a *maximum* of two cycles due to the nature of the role).

Editor, *Cypris*.

Role: To solicit and edit contributions to the *Cypris* newsletter and arrange for its online publication in collaboration with the Communications Officer.

(Elected position; tenure until end of the next IRGO Business Meeting where a new appointment will be made; normally only appointed for a single cycle but may stand for re-election to a *maximum* of two cycles due to the nature of the role).

Summary:

Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Officer and Editor, *Cypris* are elected positions, whereas Vice Chair and Past-Chair are ex-officio positions. Should the IRGO Committee need to reach a decision by a vote then each member has a single vote (currently 7 officers, however, should the IRGO Committee be enlarged then the Chair holds a casting vote).

International Symposia on Ostracoda (ISO)

International Symposia on Ostracoda are held every four years at a venue decided during the Business Meeting of the previous ISO. ISO arose following meetings held in Naples in 1963 and Hull in 1967 (now designated ISO 1 and ISO 2 respectively). The organisation of the next ISO, its programme, facilities, excursions, finances and any publication(s), is the responsibility of the proposers and the ISO Organising and Scientific committees. Thus, in making a proposal for a future ISO venue it is recommended that the following points be addressed: 1. Is there a viable number of scientists and supporters to organise and run the ISO. 2. Minimum number of places available (should be able to host at least 100). 3. Ease of travel/access. 4. Range of accommodation and prices. 5. Facilities to host video presentations and electronic posters. 6. Guaranteed video and audio streaming of all oral presentations for non-attending delegates (note: author permission necessary to share online). 7. The offer of one to two field excursions with budgets.

The Vice Chair is the key link between the next ISO organisers and IRGO Committee.

The ISO programme, list of delegates and abstracts should be available both electronically and as paper format (for the time-being, helpful to prize judges). Given that many abstracts are only expressions of intent, the Abstract Volume should not be a citable publication. List of delegates should indicate persons eligible for a prize (registered students).

Conduct of IRGO Business Meetings

ISO Organising Committee should schedule the IRGO Business Meeting in their programme. A time towards the end of ISO is desirable to allow time for delegates to discuss potential candidates for election as Officers and potential venues for the following ISO. All proposals to host future ISOs should be circulated via IRGO website and OSTRACON in advance of the meeting and as a poster displayed from the start of each ISO (and posted electronically) to allow delegates time to discuss/consider proposals during the conference, with the final vote taking place following formal presentation(s) during the IRGO Business Meeting. The IRGO Secretary prepares and circulates an agenda and supporting papers, e.g. Officer reports (electronically via website, but paper copies should be available at the meeting). The meeting to be chaired by Chair IRGO, and if unavailable by the Past-Chair. All Officers should submit a report and be available in person or online to receive questions.

Voting. Only registered ISO delegates are entitled to vote at the IRGO Business Meeting.

IRGO Prizes – terms and conditions.

Sylvester-Bradley Prize – best student oral presentation (funded by The Micropalaeontological Society). Value to be confirmed at start of each ISO by IRGO Secretary.

IRGO Poster Prize – best student poster presentation (funded via SF*IRGO). Value to be confirmed at start of each ISO by SF*IRGO Treasurer to IRGO Secretary.

ISO programmes should identify student delegates to assist the judges.

Oral and poster presentations to be judged by two separate committees of no more than 4-5 judges, although it is recommended that at least one judge serves on both judging panels to ensure consistency of approach. Judges are appointed by ISO organisers drawn from members of the ISO Scientific Committee and other senior researchers, all of whom should be *in-person* attendance at the meeting. Members of judging panels who are supervisors of student candidates should abstain from voting.

IRGO Awards

Lifetime achievement award (Order of the Amphidont Hinge).

(IRGO Constitution Working Group. 21 July 2024)