

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF RADIO SCIENCE**

February 6, 2025

**Article I. Purpose**

The purpose of the National Committee (USNC-URSI) is to effect appropriate participation by radio scientists and engineers of the United States in the International Union of Radio Science (URSI) through the National Academies of Sciences (NAS), which adheres to the URSI on behalf of the radio scientists of the United States.

**Article II. Functions**

The duties and functions of the National Committee are (a) to advise the President of the NAS on all matters concerning United States participation in the URSI; (b) to promote the objectives of the URSI in the United States; (c) to promote radio science and allied research in the United States with special emphasis on aspects that require international cooperation; (d) to promote public awareness of, and education in, radio science; (e) to nominate delegates or representatives of the United States to URSI general assemblies; (f) to organize technical meetings in the United States in consonance with the objectives of the URSI; and (g) to deal with radio-science questions in general involving the participation in the URSI of the United States through the NAS as the adhering body.

**Article III. Membership**

The National Committee shall consist of its officers (see Article V), members and liaison representatives in the following categories:

1. National Society Members with vote

Six representatives from national societies and groups in the United States. Membership shall rotate among appropriate societies and groups as recommended by the USNC-URSI. Other members of the USNC-URSI may also be designated as representatives of the six societies or groups as an additional responsibility, provided the number of societies and groups represented does not exceed six. No individual representing a society or group shall serve more than two consecutive full (three-year) terms in that capacity unless specifically requested by the society or group and approved by the USNC-URSI.

2. Members-at-Large with vote

Six members-at-large selected from among scientists and engineers by the National Committee as provided in Article IV. A member-at-large normally

serves one three-year term and shall in no case serve more than two consecutive full (three-year) terms in that capacity.

3. Ex-Officio Members with vote (except as noted)
  - a. Chairs of Commissions established by the National Committee.
  - b. Officers and members of the Secretariat of the URSI resident in the United States, including honorary Presidents.
  - c. Chairs and Vice Chairs of Commissions of the URSI resident in the United States.
  - d. International Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, who serves without vote.
  - e. Chair of the Women in Radio Science (WIRS) Committee, elected by the WIRS Committee.
  - f. Early Career Representatives who serve without vote and are Early Career Members of one or more Commissions as provided in Article IV.
  - g. Additional representatives from other USNCs or scientific organizations as required by NAS.
4. Honorary Members without vote

Honorary members selected by the National Committee as provided in Article IV.
5. Liaison Representatives from Government Agencies (nonvoting)

Up to six representatives from relevant agencies of the U.S. Government, with these representatives rotating among appropriate agencies as recommended by the USNC-URSI. Other members of the USNC-URSI may also be designated as representatives of the Government agencies as an additional responsibility. No individual representing an agency shall serve more than two consecutive full (three-year) terms in that capacity.
6. National Academies Representative with vote

This shall be a member of the National Academy of Sciences or National Academy of Engineering, nominated in consultation with the appropriate NAS/NAE Sections. The person filling this position shall serve no more than two consecutive full (three-year) terms.

## **Article IV. Selection and Appointment of Members**

Members from national societies and liaison representatives from government agencies shall be nominated by the societies and agencies (see Articles III-1 and III-5).

Six members-at-large shall be elected by the National Committee at the end of each triennium for three-year terms beginning at the start of the next triennium, thereby ensuring the presence of six members-at-large on the National Committee at all times.

Honorary members may be nominated for life membership on the National Committee. Nominations shall be by two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the meeting of the National Committee, provided that a quorum (see Article VI) is present. The number of honorary members on the National Committee at any one time shall not be greater than four.

Early Career Representatives shall be nominated by the Chairs of the Commissions in which they are Early Career Members. Up to four Early Career Representatives shall be elected by the National Committee to serve in the following triennium and may serve no more than two consecutive full (three-year) terms in that capacity.

In accordance with established NAS procedures, all members shall be appointed by the President of the NAS upon the recommendation of the National Committee.

All appointments shall be for a period of three years commencing January 1, unless otherwise specified. There shall be restrictions with respect to reappointment, as specified in Articles III and V. In particular, a member, except in unusual circumstances, shall not serve more than two consecutive full (three-year) terms in any one capacity.

## **Article V. Officers**

The officers of the National Committee shall be a Chair and a Secretary, along with the immediate past Chair of the National Committee and an Accounts Manager. The Secretary shall normally succeed to the position of Chair in the subsequent triennium. They shall be elected from among the present and past voting members of the Committee.

In accordance with established NAS procedures, the officers shall be appointed by the President of the NAS upon recommendation of the National Committee.

Nomination of candidates for offices shall take place shortly before or at the annual meeting of the National Committee preceding each general assembly of the URSI or shortly thereafter, with election of candidates taking place at the annual meeting or shortly thereafter. E-mail or other electronic means may be used for nominations and/or elections if these are not done at the annual meeting. All officers shall serve from January 1 after a general assembly of the URSI through December 31 following the next general assembly. An officer shall not be eligible to serve more than one full term in the same office, with the exception of the Accounts Manager.

## **Article VI. Meetings**

The National Committee shall meet once a year at a designated annual meeting. Additional meetings may be held upon the call of the Chair, and may be held telephonically or electronically.

The annual meeting of the USNC-URSI is usually held in conjunction with a National Radio Science Meeting (or Symposium) comprising technical sessions, which are open to the public (subject to payment of any registration fee that may be charged), and business sessions of the Commissions (see Article IX).

Quorum: A majority (more than 50%) of the full voting membership of the National Committee for a meeting held in person shall constitute a quorum. For a vote taken by e-mail or other electronic means, a majority (more than 50%) of the full voting membership of the National Committee must proactively participate in the voting process in order for a quorum to be established.

The meetings of the National Committee shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article VII. Voting**

Each member of the National Committee, except as may be specified otherwise in Article III, shall have one vote. No member serving on the National Committee in more than one capacity shall have more than one vote because of such occurrence.

Votes of the National Committee and the Commissions may be carried out by e-mail or other electronic means.

## **Article VIII. Executive Committee**

There shall be an executive committee of the National Committee to do such planning, preparation, and executive work as may be necessary in the intervals between meetings of the National Committee. The executive committee shall be composed of the Chair, Secretary, immediate past Chair of the National Committee, the Accounts Manager, and any others appointed by the Chair.

All members of the executive committee shall serve terms from January 1 following a general assembly of the URSI through December 31 after the next general assembly.

The executive committee may establish subcommittees as required. It may also, in the name of the National Committee, take such other action consistent with articles of this constitution as may be necessary to accomplish the work of the National Committee.

## **Article IX. Commissions**

The National Committee may establish technical bodies serving as national Commissions corresponding in general to the international Commissions of the URSI. It may decline to establish a Commission corresponding to an international Commission or it may, consistent with the overall field of interest of the URSI, establish Commissions for which no corresponding international Commissions exist. All Commissions shall participate in the annual meeting (see Article VI).

The Chairs, Vice Chairs and Early Career Representatives of national Commissions are elected by the National Committee on the recommendation of the respective Commissions. Early Career Representatives shall be nominated from within the respective Commission's roster of Early Career Members. Early Career Members may continue in their position if they are elevated to Associate Members during their term. All shall serve terms from January 1 after a general assembly through December 31 after the next general assembly. Chairs and Vice Chairs can be replaced by a vote of the National Committee. Except in unusual circumstances, the Vice Chair succeeds automatically as Chair.

New members of a national Commission are normally elected by their Commission at regular business meetings upon a favorable vote by a majority of the members of the Commission present. Commission members may also be elected by the National Committee.

National Commission members shall serve until they ask to be removed, or (at the option of the Commission) are removed due to inactivity.

## **Article X. Finances**

All funds, contributions, registration fees, contracts and grants, shall be solicited, received, and disbursed in accordance with prevailing policies and practices of the NAS.

It is the responsibility of the NAS to assure payment of the annual URSI dues and the USNC-URSI shall abide by guidelines with respect to the fulfillment of dues obligations. In particular, the USNC-URSI shall seek NAS agreement on any increase of dues.

## **Article XI. Amendment to this Constitution**

This constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the National Committee subject to subsequent review and approval by the Executive Director of the Policy and Global Affairs Division at the NAS.

Proposals for amendments shall be voted upon at a regular meeting of the National Committee, or by electronic means between regular meetings of the National Committee.

## **Article XII. General Provisions**

This constitution shall come into force following its adoption by the National Committee and subsequent review and approval by the Executive Director of the Policy and Global Affairs Division at the NAS.

### Change History:

- As approved at 1/05/16 USNC-URSI meeting.
- Modified at 1/03/18 USNC-URSI meeting to specify that officers had to be chosen from present or past voting members.
- Modified at 1/09/21 USNC-URSI meeting to increase the number of government representatives to up to five.
- Modified on 4/19/2021 by email vote to include WIRS Chair as a voting member of USNC-URSI
- Modified on 2/6/2025 by email vote for the addition of ECRs on the Committee and within Commissions, as well as members deemed necessary to satisfy NAS policies.