

ECSA by-laws

Mission statement

The ECSA strives to build a strong and inclusive early career workforce at NCAR/UCAR.

1. Who we are

The Early Career Scientist Assembly (ECSA) is a permanent standing committee of the NCAR Scientist Assembly (NSA). The ECSA is organized according to its own by-laws. The ECSA and its Steering Committee (ECSA-SC; hereafter SC) have the right to issue position statements without the approval of the NSA Executive Committee (NSA-EC). Any statements issued will include a standard disclaimer that such positions represent only the ECSA or SC and are not necessarily endorsed by the NSA as a whole or by the NSA-EC.

2. Purpose of the ECSA

The ECSA represents the interests of early career scientific and research engineering staff within NCAR, and the SC voices concerns, solutions, and successes from early career scientists to NCAR/UCAR management to guide institutional policies. In order to achieve our mission statement of creating a strong and inclusive early career workforce at NCAR/UCAR, the ECSA strives to:

- Foster a community of mutual respect and cooperation within NCAR/UCAR
- Promote effective early career scientist participation in the management of NCAR
- Facilitate early career scientific interaction across NCAR/UCAR
- Enhance communication in matters of concern between NCAR early career scientists/engineers and NCAR management
- Host early career focused events for NCAR staff
- Engage NCAR early career scientists and research engineers in the development of NCAR's programs
- Advise NCAR management and UCAR governance concerning scientific and research engineering policy and related matters affecting the institution.

2.1 Communication

The ECSA communicates and engages constituents using many forms including but not limited to the following:

- a. Townhalls: The ECSA will host a plenary “townhall” at least once a year with its members, and the physical location will rotate between the different NCAR campuses¹. All ECSA members will be invited to attend via email invitation and the event will be

¹ Mesa Lab, Foothills Lab, and Center Green

webcast. The agenda of the meeting will be provided to ECSA members by email or any appropriate source of communication.

- b. Face-to-face communication: during the at-large assembly (see a, above), topical meetings, or SC meetings.
- c. E-mail: used for internal direct communication including, but not limited to, SC committee openings [see section 4.6], announcements of ECSA meetings, announcement of ECSA policy positions, and special announcements.
- d. Website: <https://asp.ucar.edu/early-career-scientist-assembly/home>
The ECSA website posts include, but are not limited to, guidelines for travel and visitor funds, the current SC representatives, and announcement of SC committee openings [see section 4.6].

3. ECSA Membership

All members of the NCAR scientific² and research engineering staff who identify as early career can opt into the ECSA. The ECSA nominally defines early career as NCAR staff who are within 12 years of having earned their highest degree. However, there are many reasons³ a staff member may identify as early career outside this time window. If an NCAR staff member is outside the job classifications or time window listed above, but they feel that the ECSA represents them, then they can be considered for membership.

By default, no one is a member of the ECSA. NCAR staff who wish to be part of the ECSA must opt in by emailing ecsa+subscribe@ucar.edu. If at any time an ECSA member no longer identifies with or feels represented by the ECSA, they may opt out by emailing ecsa+unsubscribe@ucar.edu.

4. The ECSA Steering Committee

4.1 Responsibilities

- Communicate actively between the ECSA constituents, SC, and NCAR/UCAR leadership.
- Consult with NCAR/UCAR leadership on topics relevant to ECSA members.
- Manage ECSA designated Visitor Fund Grants
- Manage ECSA designated Travel Fund Grants
- Organize professional development activities or topical meetings relevant to ECSA members

² Associate Scientists, Machine Learning Scientists, Post-Docs, Project Scientists, Scientists, Software Engineers, and Visiting Scientists.

³ Reasons for temporal extensions include but are not limited to: parental leave, family leave, medical leave, military service, or any other career interruptions.

4.2 Meetings

The SC will meet at least quarterly or more frequently if needed. The SC representative will represent the opinions of their constituents, and, if relevant, the SC member is expected to communicate with their constituents before and/or after an SC meeting. If an SC member will be absent from a meeting that requires a vote, the SC member will designate a proxy delegate from their lab to vote.

4.3 SC Composition

The ECSA steering committee (SC) will consist of one (1) to two (2) representatives from each NCAR Laboratory. Additionally, the SC will consist of no less than one postdoctoral researcher who may also be, but is not required to be, a home laboratory representative. A chair and/or co-chair(s) will lead the SC [see section 5].

4.4 SC Qualifications

Any member of the ECSA is eligible to serve on the SC. We strive to have representation of all job categories, race, age, creed, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or pregnancy.

4.5 SC Terms

An SC term appointment is for two (2) years. The SC representative term ends automatically at the end of two (2) years. The SC representative can opt to renew their appointment for a maximum of two (2) times during a tenure, or six (6) years total serving on the SC, provided that the SC representative continues to satisfy the definition of an ECSA member. After two (2) renewals, the SC representative would have to apply for re-election to continue serving on the committee. A term begins the day of an election's results, and ends two (2) years after on the day prior to a new election.

To ensure continuity within the ECSA-SC, the election of SC members will be staggered.

On even years, ACOM, CGD, CISL, and EOL will elect their ECSA representatives.

On odd years, HAO, MMM, and RAL will elect their ECSA representatives. In the case of a dual affiliation, an SC member must choose a primary affiliation that they will represent.

If the SC member feels they can no longer fulfill their duties they may step down at any time after notifying the SC chair and/or co-chair(s) in writing by email. In such circumstances, a new election is initialized to find a replacement who will complete the term of the original SC representative.

In the event a position is not filled during a regular election, the SC can propose a provisional election at any time to fill that position.

4.6 Selection of SC Members

New SC members may be added at the end of a current SC member's term [see section 4.5] and/or if there is a need to replace a current SC representative [see sections 4.5 and 4.7]. When SC positions become available, the SC chair and/or co-chair(s) will communicate via email to all ECSA members about the available SC openings.

The nominations to the SC are conducted in the individual NCAR laboratories. In the event a candidate has a dual affiliation, they must choose which lab they wish to be primarily affiliated with and represent on the SC. Candidates for the SC can be self-nominated or nominated by other employee(s) from the respective laboratories. If not self-nominated, the nominee(s) must accept the nomination in order to be eligible to serve on the SC. Each nominee must be informed of the SC representative duties and confirm they are willing to stand for election.

The election is then conducted as follows:

- a. If exactly one (1) candidate in a single laboratory is nominated and willing to serve a term, that candidate is automatically appointed SC representative for that laboratory.
- b. If two (2) or more candidates in a single laboratory are nominated and willing to serve a term, the ECSA members within that laboratory will vote to choose an SC representative following voting procedure [see section 6]. This election can be supervised/organised by the current SC representative of that lab (if not standing for election) and/or a representative appointed by the SC.
- c. In the event that no candidate comes forward, the current SC representative will continue to serve another term, if willing to do so. If the current SC representative no longer wishes to serve, then they will step down and the laboratory they represent will not have a SC representative until a new candidate from that laboratory is willing to step into the role.

4.7 SC Representative Recall Procedure

An SC representative can be recalled under the following conditions:

- a. The SC representative is no longer an ECSA member.
- b. If 2/3 of the ECSA members from the SC representative's home laboratory sign a petition requesting recall. In this case, the petition should be brought to the attention of the SC chair and/or co-chair(s), who will then inform the rest of the SC. The SC will take the necessary steps to decide on the consequences of the petition: a removal or a probation time.

- c. If SC representative is not fulfilling expectations⁴, the SC-at-large can decide to terminate the term of the representative and seek a replacement. If 2/3 of the SC votes that expectations are not being met, the chair and/or co-chair[s] will notify the SC representative in writing. The SC representative may respond in three ways:
- i. If the SC representative wishes to continue serving they will have a probation period of three (3) months to resume fulfilment of the SC representative duties. If expectations are not being met at the end of the probation period the SC will vote again and the SC member will be removed if 2/3 of the SC vote that they are not fulfilling expectations.
 - ii. The SC representative may decide to step down immediately.
 - iii. If the SC representative does not respond within two (2) weeks, the seat will automatically be deemed vacant.

If the SC member is recalled in any of the above procedures, a new election [see section 4] is initialized to find a replacement who will complete the term of the original SC representative [see section 4.5].

5. The ECSA chair and co-chairs

The SC will elect a chair and/or co-chair(s) to lead the SC.

5.1 Responsibilities

The chair and/or co-chair(s) have the same duties as of the SC representative. In addition, the chair and/or co-chair(s) are expected to:

- Determine the SC and ECSA-at-large meeting schedule.
- Prepare the agenda for and preside over SC meetings and ECSA-at-large meetings.
- Manage any budget allocated to the ECSA.
- Delegate tasks to SC representatives as needed. This may include tasks outside the standard SC representative's duties and financial or administrative tasks.
- Serve on the NSA executive committee.

5.2 Qualifications

The chair and/or co-chair(s) must be ECSA members and part of the SC. The chair and/or co-chair(s) may have any home laboratory.

5.3 Term

The term of a chair and/or co-chair is one (1) year. This can be renewed with no limits as long as the chair and/or co-chair(s) remain SC representatives [see sections 4.4 and 4.5].

⁴ Failure to meet expectations includes, but is not limited to, not attending or participating in SC meetings, not being involved in ECSA activities of any kind, excessive absences, lack of responsiveness and communication.

5.4 Selection

The chair and/or co-chair(s) are chosen by the SC. If only one (1) person is willing to serve as the chair and 2/3 of the SC votes in favor, that person becomes the chair. If multiple co-chair(s) wish to serve, the SC determines the selection procedure.

5.5 Recall

A chair and/or co-chair[s] can be recalled under similar circumstances as for an SC representative [see section 4.7] or not fulfilling the responsibilities defined in section 5.1. Removal is an extreme measure and should be used under extraordinary circumstances. Removing a co-chair or a chair does not necessarily imply the removal from the SC and depends on the cause of removal:

1. If the chair/co-chair fulfills the SC representative duties defined in section 4.7 but not the ones in section 5.1, then the chair/co-chair can keep the status of SC representative. Under such circumstances, the recalled chair/co-chair can opt to step down from serving on the SC right away.
2. If the chair/co-chair does not fulfill the duties outlined for an SC representative in section 4.7, then the chair/co-chair is removed from the SC.

Once a chair/co-chair recall has happened, the SC organizes a new selection of a chair/co-chair and/or an SC representative if needed.

6. Voting Procedure excluding SC member's elections

A number of circumstances may require the ECSA or SC to vote, and votes can represent two separate bodies: the SC only or the ECSA-at-large. A vote will be taken whenever the ECSA and/or the SC wishes to state an official position on an issue under consideration or on propositions of diverse nature.

6.1 Calling for a vote

The process for calling for a vote will be dictated by Roberts Rules of Order, i.e., a motion is introduced, a second is requested, discussion of the motion and refinement (if necessary), a vote is conducted. In order to pass, a motion must receive 2/3 of the votes of a quorum.

The SC chair or co-chairs are exempt from the Roberts Rules of Order for standard business matters during a SC meeting, and they can call for a vote of the SC only at their own discretion. At an SC meeting, any SC member can introduce a motion as long as it satisfies the requirements outlined in this section and section 6.2. Additionally, any member of the ECSA can bring a matter to the attention of the SC and request a vote by the SC.

At an ECSA general meeting, any member of the ECSA or any SC member can introduce a motion and call for a vote. A motion and call for a vote from the ECSA-at-large can be introduced by the SC if $\frac{2}{3}$ of the SC votes affirmatively to introduce the motion. The relevant voting body - the SC or the ECSA-at-large.

6.2 Voting procedure

A vote has to be authorized by the SC prior to taking place. By default a co-chair will announce the authorization unless an SC member has been chosen to do so.

If a vote only concerns the SC, the vote might be made public on the ECSA website or not, depending on its impact on the ECSA-at-large. Often, the SC has to vote on an issue that does not require the attention of the ECSA-at-large. The ECSA-SC votes following the procedure defined in section 6.2.1.

If a vote concerns the ECSA-at-large, the SC will determine the date of the vote. The ECSA-at-large will be notified of a vote by email no later than five (5) days prior to a vote in order to give voters enough time to fully consider the motion. The motion to be voted on will also be posted on the ECSA website along with any relevant discussion. The vote will follow the procedure defined in section 6.2.2.

6.2.1 Votes by the SC alone:

Before a meeting, the chair or co-chair lays out an agenda and warns the ECSA-SC of potential voting items. Any SC member who is not attending a meeting can then choose to cast a vote following one of the methods suggested below.

During a meeting, the SC chair, co-chair, or an appropriate delegate, will propose and organize a vote that was scheduled. In some circumstances, a vote can take place spontaneously during a meeting without previous notice. That vote will be mentioned in the minutes of the meeting.

The chair, co-chair, or an appropriate delegate can opt to defer a vote at any time.

Unless an SC member specifically requests a secret vote, the default voting procedure is as follows:

- If an SC member is physically present for the vote, the default voting method will be a show of hands.
- If an SC member is voting remotely, the member will cast a vote verbally with a “yes” or “no”.

- If an SC member cannot take part in the vote physically or remotely, the member has the option to cast a vote by email through an email to the entire SC. A member who joins remotely, or cast a vote by email, is counted as being present for the vote.

In the event of a secret vote, all the votes will be cast anonymously using ballots. Ballots will be sent by email to the voting parties at the time of notification of the vote. The secret voting procedure is conducted as follows:

- If an SC member is physically present for the vote, the member will complete an individual ballot and place it in a voting box meant to gather all such votes.
- If an SC member cannot be physically present for the vote, after an email notification to the entire SC that member has the possibility of mailing a ballot in an enclosed envelope to the member organizing the vote. The envelope must include the name of the member who casts the vote. Upon receipt, the SC member will confirm with the sender. The ballot will be opened the day of the vote in front of all SC members present. The ballot will be placed in the voting box without being read.

A quorum is defined as the presence of at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the SC for a secret vote. A member voting by mail ballot counts as being present. Once all ballots have been received, two (2) members of the SC count the votes. The first member reads the bulletin out loud one by one until all the votes have been counted, while the other member verifies each vote. In either a default voting or secret voting procedure, a motion passes with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

6.2.2 Votes by the ECSA-at-large

For a vote of the ECSA-at-large, the SC chair, co-chair, or an appropriate delegate, will organize the vote. The email notification to ECSA members will provide information about the origins of the motion, possible pros and cons, and consequences. In this email the name and contact information (email, phone number, office number) of each of the SC members will be explicitly included to facilitate any ECSA member contacting an SC representative.

An ECSA member can cast a vote as follows:

- The ECSA member can vote electronically with an open ballot emailed to a SC member.
- The ECSA member casts a vote on a physical ballot and places that ballot in an enclosed envelope with their name on it. This envelope is then placed in a container at an SC member's office. The ballot will be opened the day of the vote in front of all SC members present and the ballot will be placed in the voting box without being read.
- The ECSA member casts a vote on a physical ballot and places that ballot in an enclosed envelope with their name on it. This envelope is then mailed to any SC member. Upon receipt, the SC member will confirm with the sender. The ballot will be opened the day of the vote in front of all SC members present and the ballot will be placed in the voting box without being read.

In the event a voter casts more than one vote, those votes will be disregarded.

A vote will remain open for a period of seven (7) days, and the final day to vote will be specified in the vote notification email. After the final day, the SC meets and counts the votes. Prior to counting the votes, the SC verifies that each individual has voted only once. Then the count is performed as follows:

- No fewer than two (2) SC members account for the electronic ballots. The first member reads the bulletin out loud one by one until all the votes have been counted, while the other members verify each vote.
- No fewer than two (2) SC members count the physical ballots. The first member reads the bulletin out loud one by one until all the votes have been counted, while the other member verifies each vote.

A quorum for an ECSA-at-large vote is defined as 25 recorded voters. A recorded voter can be tallied through both electronic or physical ballots. Depending on the number of votes, the SC will decide to create several counting teams to facilitate the counting process. A motion passes with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

6.3 Reporting results of a vote

The SC will report the results of any formal vote and the number of votes cast to the ECSA-at-large in a timely manner. The results will be communicated by email and posted on the ECSA website.

7. Changing the by-laws

The by-laws can be changed during a SC meeting with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote. The changes to the by-laws will then be communicated to the ECSA-at-large, the NSA chair, and the NCAR directorate.