

International Asteroid Warning Network (IAWN) Steering Committee Terms of Reference 2024

The IAWN [Statement of Intent](#) states that “representatives of core capabilities for the IAWN intend to form a Steering Committee to better coordinate the operation and interchange of the network, and guide its growth, enhancement and evolution” and identifies such capabilities as “survey telescope operations; critical follow-up observations; orbit computation and hazard analysis; observations to characterize specific NEO¹s; data distribution, processing, and/or archiving; or other analysis and infrastructure contributions.”

IAWN Steering Committee duties include approval of new IAWN Signatories, participating in periodic meetings to discuss issues and assess the status of IAWN, advising IAWN activities such as observing campaigns, and determining a notification protocol for informing UN COPUOS/UNOOSA of a possible impact threat.

IAWN Signatory representatives may nominate individuals from the Signatory community to serve on the Steering Committee. Nominations must include a curriculum vitae and a letter of justification. Nominations will be approved, deferred, or disapproved by a vote of sitting Steering Committee members with the goal of maintaining representation across the core capabilities of the IAWN and representing the diversity of IAWN Signatories. Steering Committee membership is not to exceed the eleven (11) voting members defined below. Steering Committee members serve for a term of four (4) years that is renewable for a second consecutive term, with staggered participation for retaining institutional memory.

Certain core capabilities of the IAWN and the worldwide NEO community – survey telescope operations, orbit computation and hazard analysis, and data distribution – are currently provided by [NASA](#)’s Planetary Defense Program administered by its [Planetary Defense Coordination Office \(Minor Planet Center, Center for Near-Earth Object Studies, NEO survey operations\)](#) and by [ESA](#) Space Safety Programme’s [Planetary Defence Office \(NEO Coordination Centre\)](#). As such, the Steering Committee membership will include NASA’s Planetary Defense Officer or designee and ESA’s Planetary Defence Office Head or designee.

Steering Committee membership will also include IAWN signatory members that represent these core areas:

- Data Management, Archiving, and Distribution
- Large-Scale Surveys
- Astrometric Follow-up
- Small Observatories/Independent Observers
- Orbit Determination
- Physical Characterization
- Impact Effects Modeling
- Interface to Emergency Management Organizations
- Public/Media Information

¹ near-Earth object

Ex-officio representatives are included in the IAWN Steering Committee as Permanent Observers: The [United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs \(OOSA\)](#), the international [Space Mission Planning Advisory Group \(SMPAG\)](#), and the [International Astronomical Union Near-Earth Object Working Group](#).

A Coordinating Officer for the IAWN Steering Committee will be provided by the Signatory that organizes the Steering Committee and the [IAWN.net](#) website and activities (currently NASA). The Coordinating Officer works closely with the Steering Committee, the Signatories, and the management of IAWN.net. The Coordinating Officer organizes and chairs Steering Committee meetings, proposes times and agendas for the meeting, and oversees the initial drafts of the minutes from the meetings. The Coordinating Officer or a nominated Steering Committee member will represent IAWN for its Permanent Observer status at [UNCOPUOS² Scientific and Technical Subcommittee annual meetings](#) and provide a report on IAWN activities.

² United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space