

# Operating Principles for the ISBT Working Parties



## Glossary:

WP	Working Party
BoD	Board of Directors
CO	Central Office
ToR	Terms of Reference

## Background

Working Parties (WPs) are a critical component of the ISBT. They serve the society and its individual members by providing a forum for the study and management of clearly defined issues. In addition to their role as special interest groups, they generate information and recommendations reflecting the aims and objectives of the Society and provide educational materials and programs. WPs are ultimately reporting to the ISBT Board of Directors (BoD), which approves the existence of each WP, its terms of reference (ToR), funding and program of work.

Each WP is entitled to core financial support from ISBT but may, with prior approval of the BoD, work with ISBT to secure additional funds from other sources. All funding must be based upon an approved budget and expenditures must be accounted for. ISBT is not able to carry over unused funds at the end of the fiscal year; WPs will operate under ISBT BoD-approved ToR which must meet the requirements below.

### 1. Accountability

Each WP is accountable to the ISBT BoD; activities must be aligned with the strategic priorities of the Society and compatible with the ISBT Code of Ethics. The ToR for each WP is prepared using the current template ([Appendix 1](#)). Each WP should formally review its ToR, plans and progress at least once every four years. Original and updated versions of WP ToR are approved by the ISBT BoD, and the latest version is made available on the ISBT website.

Each WP should outline its anticipated outputs in an annual workplan. These may include reports, publications, workshops, meetings, educational programs, and other deliverables. All reports and publicly available outputs (e.g., consensus nomenclature, guidelines) must undergo peer review within the WP and receive approval from the WP Chair prior to publication or submission. WPs may publish their work in *Vox Sanguinis* free of charge. ISBT WP publications will be featured on a dedicated webpage.

### 2. Membership

All full members of WPs must be individual members of ISBT (including honorary, exempt and the designated representative of an affiliated organisation). Non-members of ISBT may participate in WP meetings as observers but may not hold office in the WP and are not entitled to vote in elections.

Observer status should be temporary and limited to no more than two years, with the exception of named liaisons from other governmental agencies and supra-national organizations (EU, WHO, etc.). Individuals in this category should be identified as such. Industry representatives interact with the ISBT WPs according to the guidance in the current WP ToR template. Each WP should describe its own membership categories (e.g. full member, observer, liaison etc.) in the ToR, in line with the guidance in [Appendix 1](#).

### **3. Leadership roles and responsibilities**

Each WP must have a Chair and Vice-Chair and/or Secretary, elected by the WP members. Where deemed necessary, WPs can opt to have Co-Chairs who will share responsibilities. Other elected positions (Secretary, Treasurer, sub-group Chair) may be established according to the needs of the individual WP. Each WP should nominate a member as an education liaison to work with the ISBT Central Office (CO) to maintain educational resources in the WP area of expertise. Larger WPs may also have subgroups, with the subgroup Chairs forming a part of the WP secretariat. All posts are to be filled by election among the WP members. The leadership structure should be defined in the ToR. Guidance on leadership roles and responsibilities can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

The term of office for WP officials is a maximum of 4 years, renewable no more than once. Voting is limited to full members of the WP and requires ISBT membership. Observers or liaisons from other organizations or other ISBT WP cannot vote. For continuity within the WP, it is recommended that not all roles are renewed at the same time. The ISBT CO assists WPs with elections and guidance on the election process can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

### **4. Business meetings**

WP business meetings are held at the International and the European Regional ISBT congresses. The WP meeting schedule is coordinated by the ISBT CO. These meetings are closed meetings accessible for WP members. However, the WP may decide to hold an open meeting, but this needs to be communicated in time to the ISBT CO. During these business meetings, online attendance will be possible, the CO provides the WP with zoom links. As part of the benefit of their partnership with ISBT, official Corporate Partners of ISBT will be invited by the CO to attend WP meetings as observers.

### **5. WP webpages**

WPs have dedicated pages within the ISBT website. Each WP maintains its own pages, featuring its aims, activities, leadership, ToR, and relevant resources. These public pages must be reviewed at least annually. In addition, each WP has a private group area—accessible only to members—for sharing documents, discussions, and scheduling meetings.

### **6. Resources and Budget**

Each WP can apply for an operating budget using the guidance provided in [Appendix 5](#), which gives examples of common requests, but is not exhaustive. Expenditures should be clearly defined and justified and will be considered for approval by the ISBT BoD. Proposals to approach organizations outside ISBT for funding must also be approved by the ISBT BoD.

A detailed annual operating budget and any requests for additional funding must be prepared to cover the forthcoming society year (1 April – 31 March) using the template [Appendix 4](#). The budget requests must be submitted by the WP before February each year, so that they can be presented by the WP Board Liaisons at the February ISBT BoD meeting for consideration and approval as part of the budget for the following financial year.

The ISBT Executive Committee is responsible for the delegation of budgets to the WPs. Each WP Chair is responsible for monitoring their budget and ensuring that any overspending or income reduction against budget is restricted to a minimum.

Each WP will be allowed up to five free registrations at all ISBT congress where WP business meetings take place, i.e. International and European Regional ISBT congresses, to be used by the WP Chair and Secretariat or allocated to another member requiring assistance to attend, at the discretion of the WP Chair.

The ISBT BoD aims to ensure that all WPs have the funding they need for operation. All applications for operation and specific projects will be reviewed by the ISBT BoD and granted where possible in the context of the overall ISBT available budget and of the priority of applications. If no funding is required, a 'nil return' is requested to ensure that all requests have been collected for consideration by the BoD. See [Appendix 5](#) for further guidance.

If funds are not spent within the financial year, the surplus will not roll over at the end of the year.

## **7. WP interactions with the ISBT CO**

The ISBT CO provides admin support for WPs with their activities including online- and in-person meetings, social media posts and publication of short articles in Transfusion Today, creating educational content, adding new members and renewing membership, updating the WP pages etc. [Appendix 6](#) includes the support that the office can and cannot provide.

## **8. Reporting and communications with the ISBT BoD**

Each WP must file an annual report for inclusion in the ISBT Annual Report, detailing the WP's progress and accomplishments in the context of its ToR and action plan, and using a template provided by the ISBT office.

The Chair of each WP is automatically a member of the International Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC) and is expected to participate in the meetings of this committee biannually, once at the June ISBT congress and once online. ISAC serves as a forum for WPs to engage with each other, with ISBT BoD and the ISBT Scientific Secretary, on issues concerning all WPs, joint projects and congress activities. WP Chairs who are unable to attend the meeting should designate a representative from their WP to attend on their behalf.

Each WP also has a named 'Board Liaison' to create an informal route of communication between the WP and the BoD. The intention is to give both the ISBT BoD and the WP a better understanding of each other's work and requirements. The Board Liaison provides support but does not direct the activities of the WP and attends WP meetings when possible but is not expected to attend all WP meetings. The role is outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

Following appointment of a new “Board Liaison”, e.g., when new BoD members or WP Chairs are appointed, an introductory virtual meeting will be facilitated by the ISBT CO. Subsequently, the Board Liaison should contact the WP Chair around every three months for an informal update on the WP, and to give the WP Chair an opportunity to raise any issues or concerns related to the WP or questions to the BoD. WP Chairs are requested to discuss their annual WP plan and budget proposal with the Board Liaison so the Liaison can explain it if needed at the ISBT BoD meeting when WP plans and budget proposals are discussed.

## **9. Activities**

The activities of each WP are expected to be relevant to the overall aims and objectives of the ISBT and WPs are expected to engage in activities that directly benefit ISBT and its members. Each WP should submit an annual workplan along with the annual budget request.

The activities are wide-ranging and will vary by WP, however each WP is expected to provide active support to the ISBT Academy by proposing and helping to develop educational programs for Academy Day sessions at ISBT Congresses and, where appropriate, regional Academy events. Additionally, WPs should propose and, if requested by the scientific secretary, help to develop sessions and workshops for inclusion in ISBT International and Regional Congresses. ISBT WPs are invited to develop eLearning materials for the ISBT Education portal in collaboration with ISBT CO. More detailed guidance on WP involvement in ISBT congresses is available in [Appendix 8](#).

The In Focus section of the quarterly published [Transfusion Today](#) magazine features WPs. WPs are invited to participate with 5-10 articles highlighting their area of work. The publication of these articles is coordinated by the ISBT CO.

### **Appendices – to be found on this page**

Appendix 1 - [WP ToR template](#)

Appendix 2 - [WP leadership roles and responsibilities guidance](#)

Appendix 3 - [WP nomination and election procedure guidance](#)

Appendix 4 - [WP annual plan and request for funding template](#)

Appendix 5 - [WP funding application examples and guidance](#)

Appendix 6 - [ISBT CO support for WPs](#)

Appendix 7 - [Role of ISBT Board Liaison](#)

Appendix 8 - [WP congress guidance](#)