

**Terms of Reference for the NSIDC DAAC User Working Group (UWG)  
Last Updated 01/15/2021**

The NASA Distributed Active Archive Center at the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC DAAC) is one of twelve DAACs within the NASA Earth Observing Data and Information System (EOSDIS). Established in 1991, the NSIDC DAAC is located at the University of Colorado at Boulder within the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES). The NSIDC DAAC User Working Group (UWG) is an external advisory group representing the user communities that the DAAC serves and providing guidance on the DAAC's operations and planning.

**DAAC Management**

The DAACs are managed by the Earth Science Data and Information Systems (ESDIS) project. A NASA Program Scientist, representative of the DAAC's scientific domain, is identified for each DAAC and provides scientific and strategic guidance. For NSIDC DAAC, Program Scientist is the Cryospheric Sciences Program Manager. The NSIDC DAAC Manager is responsible for the execution of the DAAC contract at NSIDC.

**UWG Member Responsibilities**

Responsibilities of the UWG include:

- Reviewing the progress and performance of the DAAC relative to the NSIDC DAAC's mission;
- Representing the user community in the development and operation of the NSIDC DAAC products and services;
- Providing guidance on NSIDC DAAC activities, including data acquisition, mechanisms to enhance user access to data, generation of value-added products, user support, operational functions, and software development;
- Providing strategic guidance and advice to NASA and the DAAC on the NSIDC DAAC objectives, priorities, target user communities, implementation approaches, and other issues;
- Serving as ambassadors for NSIDC DAAC.

**Membership**

The NSIDC DAAC UWG members are appointed to four-year terms. Members may be extended for a second term by mutual agreement between the Member, DAAC Manager, and UWG Chair. Appointments are staggered to balance turnover. The UWG Chair is appointed to a two-year term, with a reappointment option at two-year increments. Individual members may resign at any time by writing to the NSIDC DAAC Manager and UWG Chair. Appointments are subject to termination due to modification of the NSIDC DAAC contract, conflicts of interest, or lack of participation.

## *Terms of Reference*

New members are suggested by the ESDIS, Earth Sciences Data System (ESDS) Program Executive, Cryosphere Program Scientist, DAAC Manager and/or the UWG members. New members are formally invited by the DAAC Manager, ESDIS and the Program Scientist through a letter inviting them to serve on the UWG for a term of four years.

The UWG is intended to represent a broad spectrum of the NSIDC DAAC cryosphere discipline users and also to include expertise on key issues relevant to the NSIDC DAAC such as information technology, data archive management, interdisciplinary data integration, and applications. UWG members generally come from a variety of institutions, including government, academic and research institutions, and the private sector. One member is typically selected from the University of Colorado to help represent the host institution research community. Due to cost constraints, UWG members are primarily based in the U.S., but many have strong international connections. The number of UWG members (including the Chair) is limited to 15.

At least two NASA representatives are invited to participate in the UWG. These are the NASA Cryosphere Program Scientist and a staff member from the ESDIS Science Operations Office (SOO). The Program Scientist and ESDIS representative may participate in UWG Executive Sessions. Representatives of other DAACs may be invited to attend when they have interests in common with the NSIDC DAAC.

The NSIDC DAAC has a UWG Coordination Team, consisting of the DAAC Manager, DAAC Scientist, the User Services Lead, and the NSIDC Executive Assistant. The team is led by an assigned DAAC UWG Coordinator who, with input from the DAAC UWG Coordination Team, assists the UWG Chair in developing the UWG agenda and in preparing UWG reports. The DAAC UWG Coordinator may participate *ex officio* in UWG Executive Sessions at the discretion of the UWG Chair.

### **Meetings**

The NSIDC DAAC holds an annual in-person UWG meeting. The meeting is typically held in Boulder, CO and is one to two days in length, depending on need and availability. A draft agenda with background material is sent out in advance of the meeting. UWG members are encouraged to contribute topics to the agenda. UWG members may also be asked to lead discussions on a particular topic or give presentations on their own work. Executive sessions, which consist of only UWG members, are scheduled during the annual meeting, and an informal summary is provided to the NSIDC DAAC Manager at the end of the meeting.

Following the meeting, the NSIDC DAAC UWG Coordinator and the UWG Chair finalize and post the minutes and actions from the meeting. The NSIDC DAAC UWG Coordinator, UWG Chair, and DAAC Manager develop an executive summary of the meeting which the UWG Chair sends to ESDIS, the ESDS Program Executive, and the Cryosphere Program Scientist. The NSIDC DAAC tracks the actions identified during the meeting and provides status at UWG quarterly telecons or via email. Recommendations from the UWG that may lead to changes in specific contract requirements or deliverables cannot be implemented until authorized by the NASA Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR).

### **Telecons**

## *Terms of Reference*

The NSIDC DAAC holds quarterly telecons throughout the year, set up by the NSIDC DAAC UWG Coordinator and the UWG Chair. Telecon notes and actions are drafted by the UWG Chair and the NSIDC DAAC UWG Coordinator and provided to the NSIDC DAAC Manager. The NSIDC DAAC tracks the actions identified during the telecons and provides status at future meetings or via email. In the event a quarterly telecon is not held, an email is sent to the UWG providing status on key actions and initiatives.

### **Communications**

UWG members are subscribed to the [nsidc\\_daacuwg@nsidc.org](mailto:nsidc_daacuwg@nsidc.org) mail list. UWG members are also given access to a Google Site and Google Team Drive to support UWG meetings, communication, and collaboration. Meeting agendas, conference call agendas, background materials, reports, and other logistical information are posted and/or archived.

UWG members can reach the NSIDC UWG Coordinator, the DAAC Manager, the DAAC Scientist, and others at NSIDC DAAC involved in UWG activities through the [uwgcoord@nsidc.org](mailto:uwgcoord@nsidc.org) mail list.

### **Compensation**

The UWG membership role is considered to be a service to the community. Time spent on the UWG activities is not reimbursed by the DAAC and must be supported by the member's employment position. Travel costs of UWG members are reimbursed in accordance with University of Colorado's travel policies for non-employees, as detailed on the NSIDC DAAC UWG website.