



## CODATA Executive Committee Recommendations Regarding Task Group Proposals 2014

Task Groups have been established to support CODATA's overall mission to strengthen international science for the benefit of society by promoting improved scientific and technical data management and use. More specifically, Task Groups must remain relevant in a fast changing environment and contribute to the realisation of CODATA's strategic objectives and activities, as articulated in the [CODATA Strategic Plan, 2013-18](#).

A total of fourteen proposals were received. It should be noted that the TG on Fundamental Physical Constants, an important and longstanding activity, has in accordance with the recommendations of the ICSU Review of CODATA been established as a 'standing committee'.

Three completely new proposals were submitted.

1. Big Data Analysis for Scientific Data Management
2. Interoperable Data Publications
3. Science and the Management of Physical Objects in the Digital Era

One proposal was submitted that represents a significant refocusing by an existing group.

4. Anthropometry, Fit and Accommodation for Special Populations

Finally, 10 existing Task Groups applied for renewal.

5. Advancing Informatics for Microbiology (AIM) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/advancing-informatics-for-microbiology>
6. Data at Risk (DAR) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/data-at-risk>
7. Data Citation Standards & Practices (CODATA-ICSTI) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/data-citation-standards-and-practices>
8. Earth and Space Science Data Interoperability (ESSDI) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/earth-and-space-science-data-interoperability>
9. Global Information Commons for Science Initiative (GICSI) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/global-information-commons-for-science-initiative>
10. Global Roads Data Development <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/global-roads-data-development>
11. Linked Open Data for Global Disaster Risk Research (LODGD) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/linked-open-data-for-global-disaster-risk-research>
12. Materials Data Representation in support of Research and Education <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/exchangeable-materials-data-representation-to-support-scientific-research-and-education>
13. OCTOPUS: Mining Space and Terrestrial Data for Natural Phenomena Predictions and Improved Human Livelihood <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/octopus-mining-space-and-terrestrial-data-for-improved-weather-climate-and-agriculture-predictions>
14. Preservation of and Access to Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries (PASTD) <http://www.codata.org/task-groups/preservation-of-and-access-to-scientific-and-technical-data-in-for-with-developing-countries-pastd>

On the basis of peer review and its own assessment, the Executive Committee makes the following recommendations to the General Assembly, which it hopes will be considered attentively.

CODATA has a limited budget for Task Groups, although Groups are expected to find other sources of funds and CODATA endorsement should assist with this. The Executive Committee asks the GA to bear in mind that the more TGs are endorsed, the more thinly the CODATA resource is spread. The Executive Committee recommends the total amount available for TG funding for FY15-16 be 33,000 euros. It is the responsibility of the Executive to do budget allocations to those TGs which are approved by the GA. Therefore, a maximum of 8-10 TGs may be optimal in these circumstances.



## CODATA Task Group Proposals: Executive Committee Recommendations

### 1. Big Data Analysis for Scientific Data Management

This proposal certainly touches on an important area. However, the group is not as broad-based as it should be and – importantly – the workplan does not provide optimal detail. Most significantly, following the very successful [CODATA Workshop on Big Data for International Scientific Programmes](#) there remains the intention of establishing a CODATA Working Group on Big Data issues. It is proposed that this group should be incorporated in that activity.

**RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT ENDORSE, roll this group into the CODATA WG on Big Data.**

### 2. Interoperable Data Publications

The proposal is timely, fills a niche and comes from a strong team. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the group increase geographic diversity. Above all, however, attention will need to be paid to engagement and collaboration with other groups and activities in this area (e.g. WDS, RDA, FORCE 11 etc). It is suggested that bringing these organizations or ICSTI (see item 7 below) in as a partner may help with this. Additionally, although the deliverables are valuable, real attention will need to be paid to how they are disseminated and how uptake is promoted.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE, with recommendation to broaden membership, engage with other groups and plan for dissemination.**

### 3. Science and the Management of Physical Objects in the Digital Era

This proposal was very warmly received as addressing an important but relatively neglected area. It has the potential to fill an important gap. The proposed Task Group membership needs to be broadened significantly. There are a number of emerging initiatives in this area, particularly in the US with which the group should engage.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE, with recommendation to broaden membership and engage with other initiatives.**

### 4. Anthropometry, Fit and Accommodation for Special Populations (Global Fit Mapping)

The EC regards this as a strong refocusing of the previous WEAR TG. The geographic spread of membership is strong. It is recognized, however, that this is a specialized area that may not address the generic and fundamental data issues with which CODATA has a mission to address, and the GA may wish to take this into account.

**RECOMMENDATION: ENDORSE**

### 5. Advancing Informatics for Microbiology (AIM)

This is another strong proposal within its domain and a group which has done some good work. Again, it might be asked how well the group's specialised focus sits within the CODATA mission. Given the limited resources of CODATA we have to consider a balance between highly effective but specialized activities and the broad data issues that must be addressed. It is recommended that the group seek to focus on generic and Big Data challenges related to the area of enquiry.

**RECOMMENDATION: ENDORSE**



## 6. Data at Risk (DAR)

The Task Group has been very active at a number of events and has been very involved in the preparation sessions for SciDataCon. It would be good for the Group to focus activity on a written output, such as the proposed *Guidelines for the management of analogue scientific data*. A dynamic and active group that stands to have significant impact.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE**

## 7. Data Citation Standards & Practices (CODATA-ICSTI)

The CODATA-ICSTI TG on Data Citation Standards and Practices published a major report, [Out of Cite, Out of Mind](#) and contributed to the incorporation of this work into the [Joint Declaration of Data Citation Principles](#). This has been an extremely impactful and valuable TG. The planned work – a genuinely global series of workshops on data citation issues – is extremely welcome.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE**

## 8. Earth and Space Science Data Interoperability (ESSDI)

The Task Group has engaged well with the EC Liaison and TG work was featured at a major conference in Kaluga, Russia. The proposed further edition of the Atlas of the Earth's Magnetic Field would be a valuable output. There is concern, however, that the TG should broaden the diversity of its membership and the geographic focus of its activities.

**RECOMMENDATION: ENDORSE, with recommendation to broaden geographic membership.**

## 9. Global Information Commons for Science Initiative (GICSI)

Although the idea of a data commons is valuable, and the TG has done important work in the past, the EC is not convinced by the present proposal. Although some effort has been made to engage with other organizations (OKF) it is felt that the proposal does not demonstrate sufficient focus or sense of purpose or end objective. The EC recognizes the importance of the idea of Data Commons. It may be that activity here is better taken forward in different ways, by the CODATA Data Policy Committee or other initiatives, for example. But on the basis of the current proposal, the EC does not feel it can endorse this.

**RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT ENDORSE**

## 10. Global Roads Data Development

The Task Group has been involved in a [major international conference](#) and has published a valuable '[Review of Roads Data Development Methodologies](#)' in the CODATA Data Science Journal. The proposed publication on validation of Open Street Map could be valuable. The EC recognizes the value of this group and encourages it to be ambitious in its future work.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE**

## 11. Linked Open Data for Global Disaster Risk Research (LODGD)

The Task Group organized a valuable workshop in November 2013 and is currently developing a White Paper. The TG has responded well to requests to engage more closely with IRDR and this has resulted in an invitation to help disseminate the White Paper at the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. The EC applauds the TG's efforts to include early career scientists but urges that this should be done on a more genuinely international basis.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE, with recommendation to broaden geographic membership of early career scientists.**



## 12. Materials Data Representation in support of Research and Education

The proposal as submitted was not very convincing and was barely complete. However, the TG has recently initiated a co-branded [CODATA-RDA Interest Group on Materials Data Representation](#) and this may be a valuable collaboration and the proposed White Paper could be valuable if better defined. It is not necessary for the TG to be endorsed for the collaboration to continue with CODATA support as other joint activities have been initiated and are regarded from the CODATA side as ad hoc Working Group. On the basis of the proposal, the EC does not feel able to recommend endorsement, although it recognizes that this is a potentially important area and that collaboration with the RDA will be valuable.

**RECOMMENDATION: DO NOT ENDORSE, but encourage continuation as an ad hoc Working Group in order to define activities and partner with RDA.**

## 13. OCTOPUS: Mining Space and Terrestrial Data for Natural Phenomena Predictions and Improved Human Livelihood

The EC expressed concerns that the proposal may be over ambitious and felt that the General Assembly may require more convincing that the proposed approach is feasible and can deliver. The EC also felt that the deliverables could be expressed in more concrete terms. Perhaps a recalibration to more targeted outputs of data mining methodologies would be useful? If the Qatar Grant has been granted, that would reinforce the idea that the group can deliver. Notwithstanding these concerns, the EC recognizes that Group comprises participants from countries hitherto little involved with CODATA

**RECOMMENDATION: WEAKLY ENDORSE**

## 14. Preservation of and Access to Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries (PASTD)

In August 2014, the Task Group organized a major [International Workshop on Open Data for Science and Sustainability in Developing Countries](#) in Nairobi, Kenya. This workshop produced a set of principles and guidelines (forthcoming) and led directly to Kenya joining CODATA and to further collaboration with Kenyan institutions (primarily the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and the Kenyan National Academy of Sciences). The TG has taken steps to broaden its approach and membership.

**RECOMMENDATION: STRONGLY ENDORSE**