

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE  
NOAA RESEARCH COUNCIL  
COOPERATIVE INSTITUTE COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

The Cooperative Institute (CI) Committee is a standing committee of the NOAA Research Council (RC). The CI Committee (hereafter referred to as the CIC) was established to provide the RC with support to fulfill its oversight responsibility of the NOAA CI program, as described in the NOAA CI Policy (NOAA Administrative Order 216-107). In so doing, it helps the RC address its responsibility to provide corporate oversight and develop policy to ensure that NOAA research activities are of the highest scientific quality, meet long-range societal needs, take advantage of emerging scientific and technological opportunities, shape a forward-looking research agenda, and are accomplished in an efficient and cost effective manner.

The mission of the Committee is to ensure compliance with the policy described in NAO 216-107. It accomplishes this mission by developing and maintaining policies and procedures specifically associated with the NOAA CIs and providing the RC with general CI program information, when requested, to assist with general oversight of the CI program by the RC.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The CIC operates within a set of guiding principles approved in Cooperative Institute Committee Memorandum (CICM) 11, dated 2 August 2011. These Principles outline the intellectual approach that the CIC takes in fulfilling its oversight mission for the Research Council:

- NOAA CIs provide a long-term institutional relationship between NOAA and external academic partners to support research directly linked to NOAA's mission, particularly where NOAA does not have sufficient internal capabilities or capacity.
- NOAA CIs support graduate education and professional scientific training of a workforce well-versed in NOAA disciplines by granting graduate degrees in these disciplines; and provide opportunities for students to interact with NOAA scientists.
- NOAA CIs promote strong collaborations between NOAA and academic scientists, particularly when groups of CI and NOAA scientists are needed.
- NOAA CIs provide a mechanism to allow external partners to address emerging needs and evolving NOAA research priorities.
- NOAA CIs are competitively awarded to institutions with outstanding national and international expertise in NOAA-relevant disciplines.
- NOAA CIs promote long-term relationships at the highest level between university partners and NOAA leadership.

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## **MEMBERSHIP**

Chair: Appointed by the RC Chair.

**NB**: The current Chair is the OAR Cooperative Institute Program Director, as OAR houses, funds, and manages the majority of CI awards..

The committee shall consist of a representative from each NOAA Line Office (LO) including the Office of Program Planning and Integration (PPI) and the NOAA Acquisition and Grants Office – Grants Management Division. An attorney from the Federal Assistance Law Division within the Department of Commerce Office of General Counsel serves as an ex officio member to advise the Committee on legal issues. Members are appointed by the Chair of the RC based on recommendations from the Research Council LO representatives and the Director of the Office of Acquisitions and Grants. Members shall represent the interests of his or her Line Office and shall serve as the primary Point of Contact (POC) for CI matters within their respective LOs. Members shall also serve as the action agents for soliciting LO input to CIC decisions, briefings, and guidance. LO reps shall bring forward proposals on behalf of LOs wishing to sponsor new CIs, recompute existing CIs, or sunset existing CIs at the natural end of their awards.

## **PRINCIPALS:**

NOAA Acquisition and Grants Office, Grants Management Division (AGO/GMD) representative

NOAA Fisheries (NMFS) representative

NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) representative

NOAA Oceans and Coasts (NOS) representative

NOAA Office of Program Planning and Integration (PPI) representative

NOAA Research (OAR) representative

NOAA Satellites and Information (NESDIS) representative

## **SUB-COMMITTEES**

The Committee may form ad hoc subcommittees as required to achieve specific tasks. Such subcommittees may include persons who are not members of the Committee; the Committee will seek to include a member on all sub-committees. Subcommittees will use the same decision making process followed by the Committee (see ‘Roles and Responsibilities’). The Committee may terminate sub-committees at will.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Propose for RC approval and oversee policies and procedures for the NOAA CI Program to ensure compliance with the NAO 216-107.
- Serve as the primary NOAA source for information on the NOAA CI program.
- Take action on topics and issues related to the CI program as directed by the RC.
- Serve as the initial working group for NOAA analyses (following lead/sponsoring LO

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recommendations) of the need for:

- new CIs,
- recompleted CIs,
- decisions to terminate for cause,
- and decisions to not recomplete a CI at the natural end of its lifecycle (10 years).

## **DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

The Committee, the support of Committee staff, line and program offices, will collect and analyze information to support its recommendations and oversight responsibilities.

- Decisions will be accomplished by informed consensus. The Chair will strive for consensus on every issue.
- When there is not a consensus within the Committee, the chair shall retain the option of tabling the decision for further discussion at a subsequent meeting OR presenting the issue with a set of options with pros and cons to the full RC for decision making.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS**

- The Committee reports to the NOAA RC.
- The Committee will hold regular meetings, at least six times per year or at the call of the Chair. The Committee shall establish and promulgate a draft meeting schedule at the start of each fiscal year.
- The Committee will take action on CI topics and issues recommended by members and others.
- CI topics and issues accepted by the Committee will be assigned to a Committee member or his/her designee(s) for action.