

SEA GRANT RESEARCH COORDINATORS NETWORK

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: NAME

A group named the Research Coordinators Network, hereinafter referred to as the RCN.¹

ARTICLE II: MISSION AND PURPOSE

Mission: Improve the management, administration, and coordination of the research functions of the various Sea Grant programs.

Purpose: The purpose of the RCN is to facilitate communication, professional development, and networking among its members, as well as with others in and outside of the Sea Grant network. It interacts with the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), the Sea Grant Association (SGA) and other Sea Grant groups. It serves as a resource for Sea Grant, internally and externally, as appropriate and necessary. The chair of the RCN, or a designee, represents the RCN at SGA and other relevant Sea Grant meetings.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

The RCN is composed of one voting member from each Sea Grant program in the Sea Grant network who has, as a primary function or responsibility, the management and/or coordination of the research activities of their respective Sea Grant program. In the event that more than one individual within a Sea Grant program is responsible for these activities, that program's director will appoint the individual most responsible for the management and coordination of research activities to be the voting member. Other individuals with responsibilities are welcome at all meetings of the RCN as non-voting attendees. A liaison designated by the NSGO shall serve as an ex officio non-voting member of the RCN.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

1. **Officers**

The officers of the RCN shall be the Chair, Chair-Elect, and Immediate Past Chair.

2. **Terms²**

Figure 1. Schematic of term progression



- a) *Chair.* The Chair shall serve a two-year term beginning January 1 and ending two years later on December 31, assuming the duties described in Article IV, subsection 3a. Upon completion of the two-year term as Chair, the Chair shall become the Immediate Past Chair.
- b) *Chair-Elect.* The Chair-Elect shall be elected by ballot (Article IV, subsections 4 and 5) and shall serve in that capacity for a one-year term beginning January 1 of the year following the election and ending one year later on December 31, assuming the duties outlined in Article IV, subsection 3b. Upon the completion of the one-year term, the Chair-Elect shall become the Chair.
- c) *Immediate Past Chair.* The Chair shall become the Immediate Past Chair at the close of their term and shall serve a one-year term beginning January 1 and ending one year later on December 31 and assuming the duties stated above in Article IV, subsection 3c.

- d) *Unfulfilled Term.* Should the Chair be unable to fulfill their term for any reason in Year 1 of their two-year term, the Immediate Past Chair will become Chair and an election for Chair-Elect will be held in accordance with Section IV.5. The Chair-Elect will assume the Chair position and serve a two-year term starting January 1 of the following year. Should the Chair be unable to fulfill their term for any reason in Year 2 of their two-year term, the Chair-Elect will become Chair for the remainder of the outgoing Chair's term, and they remain Chair through the end of their original, expected term. Before stepping down, the outgoing Chair, in collaboration with the Chair-Elect, must appoint a member of the RCN who has previously served as an RCN officer to complete the term of Immediate Past Chair.
- e) *Eligibility.* Previous officers may be nominated and elected to serve as Chair-Elect, but only after having served as Immediate Past Chair.

3. **Duties**

- a) *Chair.* The Chair shall preside at meetings of the RCN and shall serve as the RCN liaison with the NSGO and the SGA. The Chair, or their designee, shall be the RCN's representative at all relevant meetings of these organizations and report to the RCN on those activities. The Chair, or their designee, shall serve as an ex officio member of the SGA Program Mission Committee (PMC) and as a member of the SGA Networks Advisory Council (NAC). The Chair will convene a formal, annual business meeting of the RCN, reporting on the RCN's accomplishments and making appropriate recommendations for on-going activities as needed, and will maintain a current list of active and voting RCN members. The Chair may choose to promote other projects and activities and to convene RCN meetings, to support the RCN and its functions, as needed.
- b) *Chair-Elect.* The Chair-Elect shall serve as the assistant to the Chair and shall assume the duties of the Chair at the end of their term. The Chair-Elect shall preside at all RCN meetings in the absence of the Chair, shall be appointed to attend events for which the Chair cannot be present, and shall report to the RCN on those activities. The Chair-Elect shall assume the duties of the Chair in the event that they can no longer function as Chair.
- c) *Immediate Past Chair.* The Immediate Past Chair shall act as an advisor to the Chair and to the RCN. The Immediate Past Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair and preside at RCN meetings, shall be appointed to attend meetings in the event the Chair cannot be present, and shall report to the RCN on those activities.

4. **Nomination**

Elections are held only for the Chair-Elect. The Chair shall be responsible for securing nominations from the RCN for the position of Chair-Elect. The Chair will notify in writing all persons who have been nominated and will acquire notification of acceptance from each nominee indicating willingness to serve in the capacity of the office as stated above in Article IV, subsection 3a in the event they are elected to the position.

The Chair of the RCN shall release the request for Chair-Elect nominees at least sixty (60) days prior to the beginning of the Chair-Elect's term, with the nomination period closing after 30 days. The announcement shall notify all RCN members of their right to submit written nominations to the Chair. RCN members may nominate other members of the RCN or may volunteer by notifying the Chair in writing of their willingness to serve in that capacity. Each nominee shall be required to submit a one-paragraph biographical sketch to be distributed along with the ballots.

5. **Election**

- a) *Announcement.* The Chair or their designee shall distribute a ballot containing the

- names of all Chair-Elect nominees to all voting RCN members at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the Chair-Elect's term. The biographical sketch submitted by each nominee will be included.
- b) *Voting.* Voting will take place through electronic vote if no business meeting occurs within 30 days of the year prior to which a new Chair will take office. The number of votes shall be limited to voting members of the RCN as representing their respective programs.
 - c) *Calculation of Results.* The Chair shall be responsible for tabulating and reporting the results to the RCN. In the event of a tie vote, a revote will be initiated with only those individuals who were tied. Only RCN members who cast votes in the first round will be eligible to cast votes in a tiebreaker. The Immediate Past Chair, or a designee, must verify the tabulation. The person with the most votes shall be the RCN Chair-Elect.
 - d) *Installation.* The current Chair shall announce the induction of the new Chair-Elect to the RCN, and to the SGA at their next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE V: APPROVAL OF BYLAWS

1. Responsible Party

- a) The Chair of the RCN or their appointed designee shall be responsible for the maintenance of the bylaws. The Chair or Chair's designee shall receive and prepare all proposed bylaw amendments and shall distribute such proposed amendments to the RCN for review and consideration.

2. Amendments

- a) These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the RCN members in attendance at any RCN meeting or via electronic vote, provided there is a quorum of 75% of voting members.
- b) Any voting RCN member may propose an amendment to the bylaws. The proposed amendment shall be:
 1. Submitted in writing to the Chair.
 2. Distributed by the Chair to the RCN membership for consideration.
 3. Discussed prior to, and voted upon at, the next RCN business meeting or other agreed upon venue.
 4. Declared to be in effect immediately, if approved by vote, unless otherwise specified.
 5. Distributed as part of the new bylaws in their amended form to the RCN.
 6. Supplant all earlier bylaws and amendments.
 7. Bylaw amendments will be described in endnotes of the document to retain a history of and context to amendments.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Annual Business Meeting

There shall be an annual business meeting of the RCN, either in conjunction with Sea Grant Week, or if Sea Grant Week does not occur, then through another available meeting/conference convening mechanism.

2. Other Meetings

There may be other meetings of the RCN as deemed necessary by the chair. The RCN will strive to do all business virtually, so as to minimize costs to the Sea Grant programs.

3. Communications

The Research Coordinators shall communicate through various media and venues as appropriate and relevant to the time, place, and needs of the communications to be

undertaken.

¹ Bylaws amended September 2022 to reflect a name change from Research Coordinator Delegation (RCD) to Research Coordinator Network (RCN) to better correspond to other network groups. Wording throughout the bylaws was altered to better reflect new mechanisms and opportunities for communications and conducting group business. Amended bylaws were approved by vote on October 27, 2022.

² Term of service was shortened from two-year to one-year span for both Immediate Past Chair and Chair-Elect. This was done to reduce the total length of service as an RCN officer from 6 years to 4 years.